

WINDOW REPLACEMENT REQUIREMENTS

DEFINITIONS

Window frame - Consists of the header, king stud, cripple stud, sill, and associated supports.

Window flashing - The thin material installed around a window frame to prevent moisture or wind infiltration between the window where it meets the exterior wall of a house.

Retrofit Window - A retrofit window is one that is installed within the existing opening without altering the surrounding walls or the existing flashing.

PERMITS AND INSPECTIONS

- Help keep your property safe
- Help assure the quality of your remodeling investment
- Are required by law

We'll answer your questions about permits.

[Contestaremos sus preguntas referente a permisos en Español.](#)

[Chúng tôi sẽ trả lời thắc mắc về giấy phép của quý vị bằng tiếng Việt.](#)

DEVELOPMENT SERVICES PERMIT CENTER

San José City Hall
200 E. Santa Clara St.
San José, CA 95113
408-535-3555
www.sanjoseca.gov/PermitCenter

DO WINDOW REPLACEMENTS REQUIRE A BUILDING PERMIT?

If you are replacing the window with a Retrofit window and aren't making any alterations, then a permit is not required. A permit IS required when:

- Window framing (see sidebar) is altered, such as to handle damage repair or to lower the sill to comply with egress requirements.
- Existing flashing (see sidebar) is altered, including when removing the nailing fin.
- Exterior wall finish is removed, such as when removing stucco to remove a window.

See page 2 for instructions on preparing a site plan with window information and for submitting your [Building Permit Application](#).

REQUIREMENTS FOR WINDOWS ON HISTORIC BUILDINGS

Whether or not a building permit is required, if a property is listed on the City's [Historic Resources Inventory](#), historic review by the Planning Division is required when windows are proposed for replacement. Replacements of original windows should only be proposed if refurbishment is not possible, and new windows shall match the original design as closely as possible. Learn more at the City's [Historic Resources webpage](#) or contact a City Planner at ZoningQuestions@sanjoseca.gov or call 408-535-3555 during Planning's [phone service hours](#).

REQUIREMENTS FOR ALL WINDOW REPLACEMENTS

Whether or not a building permit is required, **the replacement window must conform to current construction standards**, including:

Window design. Even if the existing framing is not altered, the design of the replacement window must comply with current requirements for new construction as much as possible. For example, when replacing a window that has become a noncomplying single-hung style, a new style must be chosen that is in compliance.

Window size. The replacement window must meet size regulations that apply to new construction, including the egress size required for emergency exit. If installed in an existing frame, then the replacement window must meet the dimension standards as much as possible. Current sizing regulations are summarized below:

- *All habitable rooms* - Must have exterior windows with an area that totals a minimum of 4% of the floor area for ventilation and a minimum of 8% of the floor area of the room for light.
 - *All sleeping rooms and basements* - Must meet these specifications:
 - Minimum 5.7 square feet opening*
 - Minimum height of 24 inches
 - Minimum width of 20 inches
 - Maximum height to bottom of clear opening of 44 inches
- * To meet the required minimum 5.7 square-foot opening, either the width, height or both must exceed the minimum dimensions shown. If the bottom of a clear opening is less than 44 inches above outdoor adjacent grade, then a minimum 5 square feet is acceptable.

Safety glass. New glazing in existing openings must be safety glass if the opening is in a hazardous location as defined in current standards for new construction.

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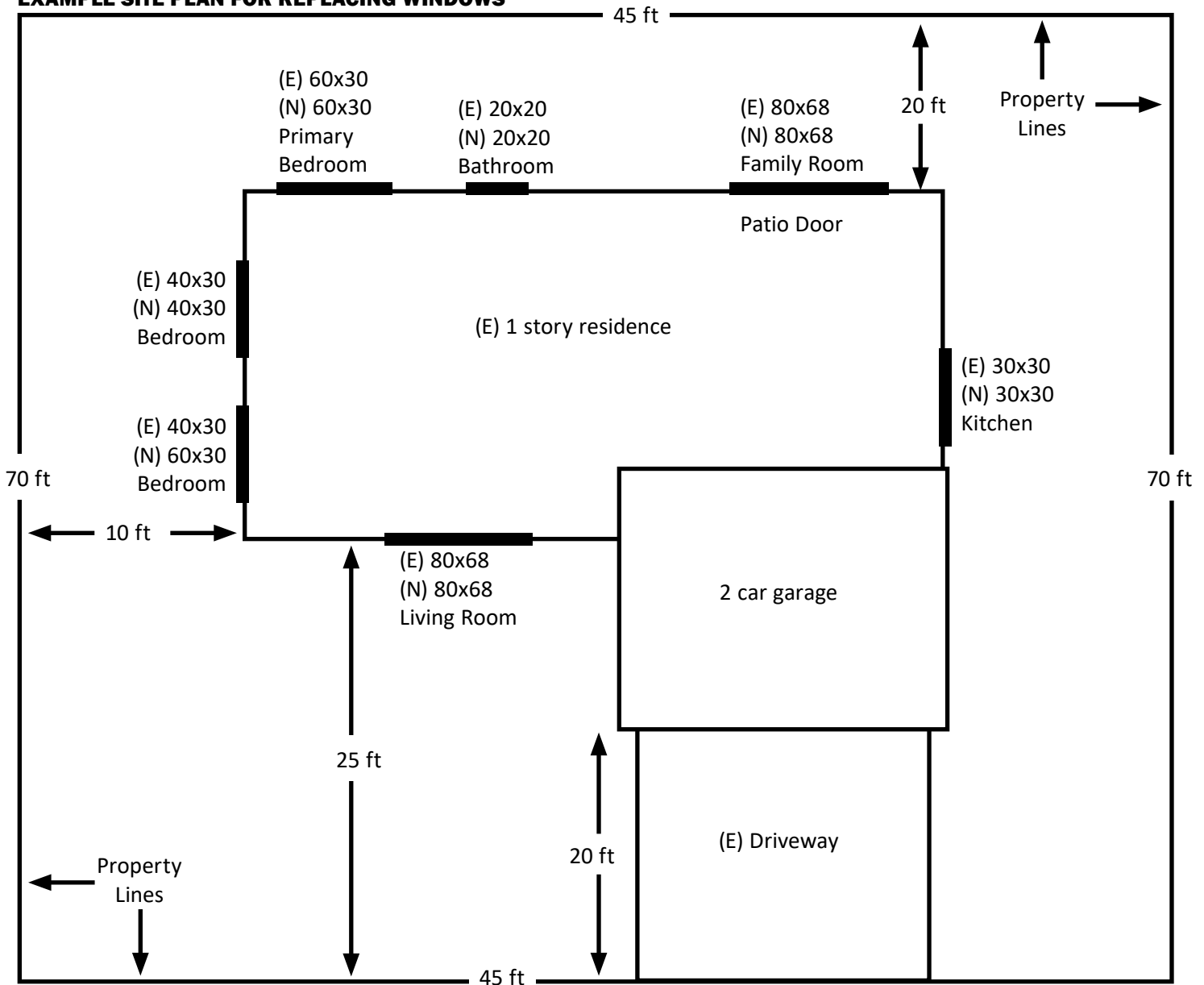
WHAT & HOW TO SUBMIT

- **Residential properties** - Use the no-appointment walk-in [Simple Projects Service](#) to obtain a building permit. **Bring 2 copies of the site plan.**
- **Commercial/industrial properties** - Start your application at [SJPermits.org](#) and follow the online instructions to upload a PDF of your Site Plan to SJePlans.

Site Plan Requirements. The site plan must be drawn on a minimum 11" x 17" sheet. Show the following:

- Lot dimensions, the shape of the building, and distances to the property line
- Existing (E) and proposed new (N) window sizes
- The type of room in which the window is located, e.g., bedroom

EXAMPLE SITE PLAN FOR REPLACING WINDOWS



Property owner information:

Jane & John Doe
 XX Santa Clara St.
 San José, CA 95113

Plans prepared by:

XX Construction Company
 Mike Smith

Scope of work description:

Six (6) like-for-like window replacements with the same size and type, no framing altered. One new 60"x30" window replacing a 40"x30" window.