

California Site Certification Program - Frequently Asked Questions

What is the purpose of the Site Certification program?

The Site Certification program was developed to assist with the commercial and industrial business site selection, planning and development process in the state whereby local governments can register commercial or industrial sites that are “project ready” and market them as locations for new business investment and expansion.

What is the process to get a site certified?

Cities or Counties that have a site that meets the minimum site threshold (currently 15 acres) will cause to be prepared a Site Certification Program Questionnaire along with the required attachments and any other supporting documentation to the California Department of Real Estate (DRE). DRE staff will review the submittal and required supporting documentation to ensure a site meets specific criteria including, but not limited to, verification and availability of utilities, site access, environmental concerns, plan conformance and potential site development costs. Upon acceptance of the site into the program the DRE will provide and maintain a current inventory of certified sites (including site profile information) on its website.

How long will a certified site display on the DRE website?

The DRE will maintain a certified site in its inventory for as long as the site is available and remains qualified as meeting the established criteria. The applicant (City or County) must confirm the status of the site annually by filing a letter to the DRE stating that the site remains available and qualified or confirming if the site has been successfully developed.

Are there any costs for filing an application for a certified site?

There are currently no application filing fees to submit for site certification to the DRE, although the applicant (City or County) and owner are likely to incur costs in preparing a qualifying site for submittal such as the costs incurred in obtaining necessary entitlements, environmental assessments and providing infrastructure necessary for site development.

Does certification of a site by the State of California enable site development and construction to proceed?

No. Qualifying under the State of California Site Certification Program is actually contingent upon the representations and support of the specific local governing agency (City or County) that the development of the site conforms to local land use policy, the uses are permitted under the respective zoning ordinance, the necessary infrastructure is in place or will be in place and that there is a commitment towards timely permitting among other things. There may in fact be

permitting requirements of other State of California departments or Federal agencies that will not be covered by site certification.

What are the benefits of obtaining Site Certification status?

The benefits of inclusion in the program include:

- Marketing support through the Governor's Office of Economic Development and local jurisdiction
- National exposure to site selectors
- State recognition
- Faster time to market
- Lower initial Developer investment
- Sites are immediately available
- Site ownership is clear and price has been set
- Terms and conditions of sale or lease are established
- Have all utilities in place
- Are physically developable
 - Transportation infrastructure is in place
 - Topography is suitable for construction
- Are technically developable
 - Property is zoned correctly
 - Ordinances contain outright permitted uses
 - Environmental assessments have been reviewed and approved
 - Wetlands delineations and, if necessary, mitigation plans have been completed and approved
 - Site is compatible with surrounding uses
 - In most cases, aerial photos and maps are available