



**COUNTY OF SAN LUIS OBISPO  
DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING & BUILDING**

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**CAYUCOS HILLSIDE DEVELOPMENT – FAQs**

The county receives many inquiries about requirements for development on parcels located in the Morro Strand and Morro Rock View subdivisions located east of Highway One outside of the Cayucos urban area. This document is intended to provide answers to some of the questions that commonly arise regarding this area.

**ZONING AND ALLOWED USES**

The Cayucos hillside lots are zoned Rural Lands and are located outside of the URL. This reflects the fact that urban services such as community water and sewage disposal are currently not available to this area. This area is also located within a Geologic Study Area (GSA) combining designation that identifies areas where geologic and soil conditions could pose serious hazards for development. Many uses are allowed in the Rural Lands land use category. Some uses such as crop production and grazing, and keeping of animals in certain cases generally do not require any permits. Other uses require varying types and numbers of permits.

**SERVICES**

The hillside lots are not within the water service area boundaries of County Service Area number 10. A community sewage disposal system is currently not available to the Cayucos hillside.

Fire protection to the Cayucos hillside is currently provided by CalFire.

Some roads were graded on the hillsides many years ago, but have since been subject to erosion and slope movement. The existing roads do not meet county or CalFire standards for all weather site access, and there is no assurance that the location of these roads actually correspond to the street right of ways that were shown on the subdivision maps from the 1920's. Therefore, much of the hillside areas are inaccessible at this time.

**PERMIT INFORMATION**

In order to build a residence on the hillside under the present conditions (i.e. without community water and sewage disposal services), the following are several prerequisites must be met:

- The building site needs to be at least one acre in size in order to allow development with a water well and septic system.
- The building site and access right of ways need to be physically located on the ground which may require work by a licensed land surveyor.
- The building site must have legal and all weather access (road design and construction standards are established by the Coastal Zone Land Use Ordinance).

- Potential soils, geologic and slope stability concerns must be resolved. This requires submitting a geologic report prepared by a state licensed engineering geologist. The report could recommend extensive foundation work to mitigate geologic hazards and this could add significantly to construction costs.
- An adequate quantity and quality of water from a water well must be demonstrated, and an adequate onsite septic system must be provided as per county building and health standards.
- The property owner will also need to potentially pay for the extension of gas, electricity and telephone services by making arrangements with those service providers.
- Several permits may be required. These may include a coastal development permit, a grading permit and a building permit. If the project involves more than 40,000 square feet of site disturbance for the pad and road or grading on slopes of greater than 20 percent, the coastal development permit will require notification of surrounding property owners and a public hearing. If the development involves grading on slopes greater than 30 percent, approval of a variance at a public hearing will be required. If the development involves grading on slopes greater than 10 percent, environmental review will be conducted to assess potential environmental impacts and to investigate mitigation measures to avoid or reduce those impacts.

The preceding items summarize some of the basic requirements that need to be met before building can occur in this area. A description of all the permit procedures and site development standards including building height, setbacks, and grading standards are contained in the Coastal Zone Land Use Ordinance and the Building and Construction Ordinance. It is highly recommended that an applicant for development on the Cayucos hillside schedule a formal pre-application meeting with the Department of Planning and Building prior to development application submittal.

## **SUBDIVISION HISTORY**

The Morro Rock View subdivision is the northern-most of the two subdivisions. It is located northerly and easterly of Highway 1 and southerly of Little Cayucos Creek Road. The hillside portion of the Morro Rock View subdivision located outside of the Urban Reserve Line (URL) includes Morro Rock Units 1, 2 and 4. This hillside area contains 940 lots created by subdivision maps that were recorded between 1927 and 1929.

The hillside portion of the Morro Strand subdivision that is located outside of the URL is located next to the southern portion of Cayucos, easterly of Highway 1 and southerly of Old Creek Road. This area includes Morro Strand Units 1 through 4 and contains 1,743 lots created by subdivision maps that were recorded between 1928 and 1929.

Prior to 1980 the Cayucos hillside lots were zoned R-1 (Single Family District). In 1974 the Cayucos General Plan was amended to exclude the hillside area described above from the URL. In 1980, with the adoption of the Land Use Element, the land use category (zoning) was changed to Rural Lands. The land use category remained the same with the adoption of the Local Coastal Plan which became effective in 1988.

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