A. **When are plans required in order to obtain bids or a permit?**

If bids are obtained for a project with an estimated construction cost in excess of $50,000, inclusive of labor, materials and fixed equipment, then plans and specifications must be prepared that are complete enough to allow a contractor to prepare its bid and understand how to construct the project. Additionally, competently prepared drawings and specifications allow bidders to provide accurate bids based on a common set of parameters. This requirement flows from the Public Contract Code (PCC), as follows:

**PCC §10503.** Before entering into any contract for a project, the University shall cause to be prepared estimates and either:

a) **Complete plans and specifications** setting forth such directions as will enable a competent mechanic or other builder to carry them out;

b) Documents for the solicitation of bids on a design-build basis; or

c) Documents for the solicitation of bids under such other contracting mode as the DCS Director determines to be in the best interest of the University.

The California Building Standards Code (CBSC) does not have a dollar threshold for when plans and specifications are required rather it defers this requirement, on a limited basis, to the Building Official. (CBC107.1 Exception)

B. **When are plans required to be prepared by a licensed professional?**

If a project with an estimated construction cost in excess of $50,000 - inclusive of labor, materials and fixed equipment then the PCC requires the University to prepare estimates and either:

a) **Complete plans and specifications**;

b) Documents for the solicitation of bids on a design-build basis; or

c) Documents for the solicitation of bids under such other contracting mode as the Director determines to be in the best interest of the University. (ref PCC §10503).

The Business and Professions Code further requires that the documents be prepared by a licensed professional as required under the following code sections:

**Plans and Specifications:**

**B&P Section §5536. 1.** Calls for plans and specs to be signed by the preparer. The preparer must be a licensed architect OR licensed engineers, landscape architect, exceptions in B&P Section 5537 apply. It's a misdemeanor for an unlicensed person to prepare plans and specs for projects that do not fall under the exceptions in §5537 and §5538.

If a building permit is required, submittal documents consisting of construction documents, statement of special inspections, geotechnical report and other data shall be submitted. The construction documents shall be prepared by a registered design professional.
When are plans not required?
B&P §5538 and CBC107.1 Exception – These regulations allow some limited exceptions to the drawings and specification requirement. Exceptions are at the discretion of the UCSB Building Official/CBO.

B&P Section §5538 allows non-licensed persons (contractors) to “provide labor and materials, with or without plans, drawings, specifications, instruments of service, or other data covering such labor and materials” for certain projects such as interior alterations, non-structural projects, and fixture or equipment installations. The California Building Standards Code does not recognize this distinction since there are many code applications not related to these items: fire & life safety, means of egress, access compliance, fire ratings, plumbing code, electrical code, mechanical code, etc. Therefore the UCSB Building Official/CBO, in most instances, will require drawings and specifications competently prepared that articulate the proposed changes to the structure. This allows the UCSB Building Official/CBO to understand code impacts prior to issuing a Building Permit. Furthermore, drawings provide an as-built record for the changes made to the facility.

CBC 107.1 Exception: The building official is authorized to waive the submission of construction documents and other data not required to be prepared by a registered design professional if it is found that the nature of the work applied for is such that review of construction documents is not necessary to obtain compliance with the Building Code. (2022 CBC). This would only apply on a very limited basis to very small projects that do not impact structure, building systems, access compliance, means of egress, fire ratings, fire & life safety systems, etc.