

This bulletin contains information intended to assist you in obtaining permits for tenant improvements. Tenant improvements are defined as non-structural alterations to an existing commercial or industrial space, such as: completion of the interior of a shell building; conversion of warehouse space to office use; installation of a commercial exhaust hood for a restaurant; window and door awnings; facade work; plumbing, mechanical, and electrical additions, and similar items that generally don't affect the structural components of a building.

Even though no structural systems are affected by a tenant improvement, the alterations will be reviewed for compliance with the non-structural provisions of the Building Codes for such areas of concern as exiting, disabled accessibility to the improved area, the specific use of the area of improvements, framing of the interior walls and suspended ceilings, lighting, electrical layout and wiring, duct work, plumbing, energy compliance, zoning and parking requirements, and water and sewer requirements.

There are three phases of the Tenant Improvement Permit process in Carlsbad. They are: (1) Plan Check, (2) Permit Issuance, (3) and Inspections. Upon completion of the plan check process, the City issues a "combination" Building Permit. This is a permit for the complete tenant improvement. The permit will include any proposed structural modifications, plumbing, electrical, and mechanical alterations shown on approved on the plans. Once the permit is issued, certain field inspections are required to ensure that the work complies with the approved plans and the California Building Codes.

PLANS AND DOCUMENT REQUIREMENTS

Please bring the following to your initial submittal appointment:

- ◆ Plans: 1 (Building), 1 (Planning), 1 (Engineering), 1 (Fire)
- ◆ Two (2) sets of any supporting documentation, i.e. energy, structural calculations, etc.
- ◆ Completed Permit Application
- ◆ Completed Hazardous Material Questionnaire
- ◆ Completed Industrial Water Discharge Survey
- ◆ Application for Disabled Access Unreasonable Hardship Exception (if applicable)
- ◆ Completed Storm Water Compliance form E-29 or an Erosion Control Plan
- ◆ Plan Check Deposit

Please schedule your submittal appointment by calling (760) 602- 2723. You can also email your request to DevAppt@carlsbadca.gov.

The Plans Must Include:

Cover Sheet / Site Plan - The plans must identify the intended use or nature of the business (i.e., electronic assembly, general office, retail sales). The site plan shows the general layout of the site and indicates the location of the tenant improvement. It is also necessary to show the entire floor the building even though the proposed tenant improvement covers only a portion of the floor area so that exiting can be reviewed. It is acceptable to use a copy of an existing plan for the building so long as the scope of work is clear and the plan is readable.

Floor Plan - This plan contains the interior dimensions of the improved space and the use of all the rooms. Typically the floor plan shows existing walls, the walls to be removed, and any new walls. It distinctly notes interior partitions, demising walls, one hour rated corridor walls, and other rated walls. It shows windows and doors, door hardware and threshold details, and the location of plumbing fixtures. The plan also clearly notes new, relocated, existing, and removed fixtures and the location of any electrical equipment and devices.

Reflected ceiling plan - This plan shows the layout of the lighting and ceiling system and may show ceiling air registers. Please distinctly note existing and new systems and areas where the ceiling tile will be replaced.

Framing details - These details contain section views specifying framing, bracing, insulation, and wall coverings for all the wall and ceiling systems.

Electrical plan - The electrical plan should include a single line diagram of any proposed new and all existing panels. Please show existing circuits, new circuits, the rating of the panel, and total demand on the panel. When the electrical service overcurrent device is made larger, a load calculation for the service is required.

Lighting Plan - This plan shows any new or relocated lighting fixtures and how they are switched. This may be shown on the ceiling plan.

Mechanical Plan - This plan shows the type and location of new and existing air conditioners or heating units, and the associated ducts for each system. The plan must show any required fire dampers. If you only propose to relocate existing ceiling diffusers, please note that on the ceiling plan along with their proposed locations.

Plumbing Plan - This plan shows the size, type and location of all rough plumbing and fixtures. Complex plumbing system modifications require the submittal of an isometric diagram of the proposed modification to the DWV system.

Title 24 Energy Compliance Plans - For adding new conditioned space, replacing heating/cooling systems, or revising the lighting system, please show compliance with the energy package for the existing building or submit plans with Title 24 calculations. Information and publications on Title 24 Energy Standards are available from the California Energy Commission, (800) 772-3300.

Disabled Accessibility - All privately funded public accommodations and commercial facilities are required to be accessible to persons with physical disabilities. During plan review, the tenant improvement will be reviewed for compliance with the California State Building Standards Code (Title 24). Please refer to the NOTICE TO APPLICANTS FOR BUSINESS LICENSES AND COMMERCIAL BUILDING PERMITS at the end of this document.

Existing buildings and facilities must comply with current access requirements when alterations, repairs, and additions are made. Compliance requirements for existing buildings include providing a primary entrance to the facility, a path of travel to the area being altered, sanitary facilities, drinking fountains (if provided), and public telephones (if provided).

Although all modified spaces must meet the current access regulations for new buildings, small projects may qualify for a hardship exception. Where the cost of the alterations necessary for strict compliance disproportionately increases the cost of the project, an unreasonable hardship exception may be granted. A disproportionate increase (unreasonable hardship) occurs when the cost of compliance exceeds 20% of the cost of the project.

When a hardship exception is granted, those features which can be made to comply within the 20% cap, must be done as a part of the tenant improvement. Only those features which increase the cost of the project by more than 20% are exempt. Plans must show the accessibility features to be included in the project.

PLAN CHECK PROCESS

The tenant improvement plan check process in Carlsbad is performed by EsGil Corporation. All initial applications must be submitted to the City Building Division for distribution to all City Divisions and to EsGil. Re-submittals of corrected plans may be made directly to EsGil, but it is important to note that those plans will not be reviewed by the City Divisions again until after EsGil completes their review.

The City strongly recommends that all plans be processed in one of two ways:

1. Submit all corrected plans through the City (three sets each time) so the City can route them to all related divisions; or
2. Process directly with all City divisions and EsGil concurrently. Deliver the sets directly to EsGil, the Planning/Engineering divisions, and the Fire Department. This may save some transit time.

When the plans are approved and the permits are ready to issue, the contact person will be notified by telephone and a tabulation of the fees will be given.

ADDITIONAL PLANS AND PERMITS FROM OTHER DEPARTMENTS

The Fire Department requires separate submittals of plans for automatic fire sprinklers, commercial exhaust hoods and ducts, spray booths, and other hazardous installations. Submit three sets of these plans directly to the Fire Department. Separate fees may be charged for these permits.

If County Health Department requires a separate permit, please provide the City proof of this permit prior to issuance of the City Building Permit. The Hazardous Material sign off sheet must be approved by AQMD as well.

PERMIT ISSUANCE

All fees associated with the building permit must be paid at the time the permit is issued. Fees may be paid in cash, check, or credit card (VISA or Mastercard). When the permit is issued, the applicant will receive a copy of the Building Permit, a copy of the approved plans for use during inspections, and a large, yellow job record card for the field inspector to sign when inspections are cleared.

INSPECTIONS

Inspections may be scheduled after the permit is issued. The City Building Division and Fire Department do not make "courtesy inspections" for projects in plan check. It is not legal to begin construction prior to permit issuance. When it comes to the City's attention that work has begun prior to issuance of the permits, a STOP WORK NOTICE will be posted on the site, and the building permit fee may be doubled.

Building Inspections must be scheduled via the inspection request voice mail telephone by calling (760)602-2725. This call may be made anytime of the day. Inspection requests received before 3:30 p.m. will be made the next working day. Please note this during holidays or extended weekends. Please do not schedule inspections by calling the inspectors directly. If you leave requests on an inspector's personal voice mail box, the request will not be picked up if the inspector is not at work. Always request building inspections by calling (760)602-2725.

When requesting inspections, leave the permit number, job address (including the suite number), your name and telephone number, and the type of inspection needed. If there is a preference as to a morning or afternoon inspection, or there is a special circumstance (access to the tenant space) please leave that information also. The City will try to accommodate the particular circumstances. The inspector for the project may be reached in the morning between 7 a.m. and 8 a.m. or between 3:30 p.m. and 5:00 p.m. by calling (760)602-2700 or the inspector's direct telephone number.

The approved plans and the job record card must be available for the inspector on the job site. When the work is approved to cover, the inspector will sign the job record card. This is the owner's record of inspections; make sure the inspector signs the card and protect the card from theft, weather, or misplacement.

Fire Department inspections may be scheduled after the permit is issued. Inspections must be scheduled by calling (760)602-4660. Do not call inspectors directly to request an inspection. If you leave a message on a personal voice mail box, and the inspector is not at work, the request will not be answered. Call for Fire Inspections 48 hours in advance.

FINAL INSPECTION

Tenant improvements usually only require a final inspection by the Building and Fire inspectors. Some improvements may also require the County Health Department, or Planning Division approvals. The Building Inspector is the coordinator of this process. The Building Inspector will ensure that the appropriate divisions are notified of your request for a final inspection or meter release. After those divisions are notified, the project superintendent must schedule walk through with those divisions by calling the telephone numbers at the bottom of the job record card. Make sure all inspectors sign the job record card. With the exception of restaurants, the Building Inspector is the last person to sign the job off as final. Contractors can facilitate the final inspection process by ensuring all the inspectors have signed the job record card before the building inspector signs off a final approval for occupancy.

DISABILITY ACCESS REQUIREMENTS AND RESOURCES

NOTICE TO APPLICANTS FOR BUSINESS LICENSES AND COMMERCIAL BUILDING PERMITS:

Under federal and state law, compliance with disability access laws is a serious and significant responsibility that applies to all California building owners and tenants with buildings open to the public. You may obtain information about your legal obligations and how to comply with disability access laws at the following agencies:

DEPARTMENT OF
GENERALSERVICES,
Division of the State
Architect, CASp Program

www.dgs.ca.gov/dsa

www.dgs.ca.gov/casp

DEPARTMENT OF
REHABILITATION
Disability Access Services

www.dor.ca.gov

www.rehab.cahwnet.gov/

disabilityaccessinfo

DEPARTMENT OF
GENERALSERVICES,
California Commission on
Disability Access

www.cdda.ca.gov

www.cdda.ca.gov/resources-menu/

CERTIFIED ACCESS SPECIALIST INSPECTION SERVICES

Compliance with state and federal construction-related accessibility standards ensures that public places are accessible and available to individuals with disabilities. Whether your business is moving into a newly constructed facility or you are planning an alteration to your current facility, by engaging the services of a Certified Access Specialist (CASp) early in this process you will benefit from the advantages of compliance and under the Construction-Related Accessibility Standards Compliance Act (CRASCA, Civil Code 55.51-55.545), also benefit from legal protections.

Although your new facility may have already been permitted and approved by the building department, it is important to obtain CASp inspection services after your move-in because unintended access barriers and violations can be created, for example, placing your furniture and equipment in areas required to be maintained clear of obstructions. For planned alterations, a CASp can provide plan review of your improvement plans and an access compliance evaluation of the public accommodation areas of your facility that may not be part of the alteration.

A CASp is a professional who has been certified by the State of California to have specialized knowledge regarding the applicability of accessibility standards. CASp inspection reports prepared according to CRASCA entitle business and facility owners to specific legal benefits, in the event that a construction-related accessibility claim is filed against them.

To find a CASp, visit www.apps2.dgs.ca.gov/DSA/casp/casp_certified_list.aspx.

DISABILITY ACCESS REQUIREMENTS AND RESOURCES

GOVERNMENT TAX CREDITS, TAX DEDUCTIONS AND FINANCING

State and federal programs to assist businesses with access compliance and access expenditures are available:

Disabled Access Credit for Eligible Small Businesses

FEDERAL TAX CREDIT—Internal Revenue Code Section 44 provides a federal tax credit for small businesses that incur expenditures for the purpose of providing access to persons with disabilities. For more information, refer to Internal Revenue Service (IRS) Form 8826: Disabled Access Credit at www.irs.gov.

STATE TAX CREDIT—Revenue and Taxation Code Sections 17053.42 and 23642 provide a state tax credit similar to the federal Disabled Access Credit, with exceptions. For more information, refer to Franchise Tax Board (FTB) Form 3548: Disabled Access Credit for Eligible Small Businesses at www.ftb.ca.gov.

Architectural and Transportation Barrier Removal Deduction

FEDERAL TAX DEDUCTION—Internal Revenue Code Section 190 allows businesses of all sizes to claim an annual deduction for qualified expenses incurred to remove physical, structural and transportation barriers for persons with disabilities. For more information, refer to IRS Publication 535: Business Expenses at www.irs.gov.

California Capital Access Financing Program

STATE FINANCE OPTION—The California Capital Access Program (CalCAP) Americans with Disabilities Act (CalCAP/ADA) financing program assists small businesses with financing the costs to alter or retrofit existing small business facilities to comply with the requirements of the federal ADA. Learn more at www.treasurer.ca.gov/cpcfca/calcap/.

FEDERAL AND STATE LEGAL REQUIREMENTS ON ACCESSIBILITY FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES

AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT OF 1990 (ADA) —The ADA is a federal civil rights law that prohibits discrimination against individuals with disabilities, and requires all public accommodations and commercial facilities to be accessible to individuals with disabilities. Learn more at www.ada.gov.

CALIFORNIA BUILDING CODE (CBC)—The CBC contains the construction-related accessibility provisions that are the standards for compliant construction. A facility's compliance is based on the version of the CBC in place at the time of construction or alteration. Learn more at www.bsc.ca.gov.