



TENANT IMPROVEMENT (COMMERCIAL)

1. PERMIT INFORMATION

- ☐ Commercial tenant improvement projects require a building permit, and usually separate mechanical, electrical, and plumbing permits. A demolition permit and a fire protection system permit from the Fire Department may also be required. Tenant improvement projects require plans to describe the work that will be performed.
- ☐ A Building Permit may be issued only to the Building Owner or their Authorized Agent [CBC 105.1].
 - See also [Authorized Agent Sample Letter](#).
 - Where the Contractor is acting as the Owner's Authorized Agent, they must be a State of California Licensed Contractor with the proper license classification.
- ☐ If the work is performed by the Building Owner personally or by his/her workers and an inspection indicates the work cannot be completed satisfactorily, then a licensed contractor must perform the work.
- ☐ If the Building Owner hires workers, State Law requires the Building Owner to obtain Worker's Compensation Insurance. Proof of this insurance is required prior to inspection.
- ☐ Most commercial tenant improvement projects are required to be designed by an architect or engineer.
 - **Exception:** Work which only involves non-structural interior alterations, fixtures, storefronts, cabinetwork, furniture, appliances, or equipment that does not require engineering and does not change or affect any components of the structural system or safety of the building or its occupants.
 - Refer to the handout [Plans Required to be Designed by an Architect or Engineer](#) for more information.

2. PLAN REQUIREMENTS

To expedite issuance of your permit, submit complete sets of plans, including all related disciplines. Incomplete submittals will delay the approval of your project. If you have any questions, contact Office of Building Safety staff at City Hall or at the phone number above.

The following are guidelines for preparation and submittal of your plans. Specific plan requirements will depend largely upon the extent, nature, and complexity of the work to be done. Some items listed below may not be required for your specific project. **BE SURE TO INCLUDE ALL PERTINENT INFORMATION AND DRAWINGS.**

- ☐ **Plan Size:** Prepare plans on paper that is at least ANSI C (22 inches x 17 inches) in size.
- ☐ **Sets of Plans:** Submit one complete set of plans.
- ☐ **Clarity:** All plans shall be prepared to be sufficiently readable and clear for creating a digitized record. Plans shall be quality drawings of blue or black lines on a uniform light (white) background color. Pencil drawings are not acceptable, but copies of pencil drawings can be submitted provided copies are readable with good contrast.
- ☐ **Dimensions:** All drawing shall be fully dimensioned. Plot plans, floor plans and other plan view drawings shall have a north arrow.
- ☐ **Scale:** All drawings shall be drawn to an adequate scale with scale indicated. Recommended scales for drawings are:

Plot Plans:	1/8" = 1', 1" = 10', or 1" = 20'	Floor and Roof Framing:	1/4" = 1'-0" or 1/8" = 1'-0"
Floor Plans:	1/4" = 1'-0"	Exterior Elevations:	1/8" = 1'-0" or 1/4" = 1'-0"

- ☐ **Existing (E) and New (N) Construction:** Throughout the plans, be sure to label all new (N) and existing (E) construction, components, and fixtures to distinguish between new work to be done and the existing work.
- ☐ **Completeness:** Please remember, the more complete and accurate the drawings and submittal documents, the sooner your permits can be issued.
- ☐ **Signature:** The person who prepared the plans must sign each sheet. If any of the plan sheets are prepared by a licensed architect or registered engineer, that individual must stamp and "wet" sign at least two copies of each of the sheet he or she has prepared in accordance with the California Business and Professions Code prior to plan approval. Plans for elements of the structure designed by others must be reviewed and signed by the Engineer or Architect of record. [California Business and Professional Code 5536.1, 6735]

3. PROJECT INFORMATION - On the first sheet of the plans, provide the following information:

- ☐ **Name of Designer:** The printed name, address and telephone number of the person who prepared the plans.
- ☐ **Address and Owner:** List the street address of the property and the name of the legal owner of the property.
- ☐ **An Index of the Drawings:** List each sheet number and a description in an Index of the Drawings.
- ☐ **Scope of Work:** State the complete scope of work to be performed under this permit.
- ☐ **Project Information:** State the area in square feet of the building (or areas of buildings for multiple buildings); the Occupancy Group or Groups; the Type of Construction; the Occupant Load of each floor; and whether the building is or will be equipped with fire sprinklers.
- ☐ **Deferred Submittals:** List all proposed deferred submittals (e.g., storage racks, equipment anchorage, etc.). Deferred submittal documents shall be reviewed by the Architect or Engineer of Record with a notation indicating that the documents have been reviewed and are in general conformance with the design of the building prior to being submitted to the City for approval.
- ☐ **Building Codes:** All work must comply with the 2022 California Building Code (CBC), 2022 California Plumbing Code (CPC), 2022 California Mechanical Code (CMC), 2022 California Electrical Code (CEC), 2022 California Energy Code (CEnC), 2022 California Green Building Standards Code (CalGreen), and 2023 Milpitas Municipal Code (MMC).

4. ARCHITECTURAL PLANS - The following are minimum architectural plan requirements for most projects:

- ☐ **Site (Plot) Plan:** Show location of existing buildings and other structures on the site. Show all parking including regular and accessible parking spaces, especially note van spaces. Show accessible access route or routes of travel from the public way and accessible parking to building entrances and exits, routes of travel between buildings on the same property and all other site accessible features including signage.
- ☐ **Floor Plan:** The Floor Plan must show all existing rooms, new rooms and rooms to be modified or where the proposed work is to take place. Label the use of each room and the occupancy type of each room when there are multiple occupancies or uses.
 - Show all fire resistive systems and their ratings.
 - Provide door and window schedule including hardware.
 - Define and label areas for demolition either on the floor plan or a separate demolition plan. A separate plan is required if applicant desires a demolition permit be issued prior to the building. A recycling plan may also be required.

- Demolition work also requires written verification of notification to BAAQMD (J number) or a declaration that notification is not required, see [Bay Area Air Quality Declaration](#) for more information.
- Refer to the separate handout “[Demolition \(Other Than Total Building\)](#)” for more information.

❑ Floor Plan (Cont.)

- Illuminated exit signs shall be provided at the locations specified in CBC 1013.
 - Tactile exit signs shall be provided at locations listed in CBC 1013.4.
- Separate toilet facilities shall be provided for each sex.
 - Exception: When the occupant load is 10 or less, or 50 or less for business and mercantile occupancies, one toilet facility, designed for use by no more than one person at a time, is permitted for use by both sexes [CPC 422.2].

❑ Exiting Plan: Show the exiting system including rated components and relationship of rated walls to roof structure, ceilings, and floor. Indicate the occupant load of each space or room. Show all paths of travel to exits, their distances and exit width calculations. Provide separation between required exit doors as per CBC 1007.

❑ Reflected Ceiling Plan: Show ceiling framing system, elevations, finishes, exit signs, electrical, and mechanical.

❑ Roof Plan: Show a plan view of existing roof if modifications are being made including installation of new or replacement of equipment. Provide a section through the roof showing the heights of the equipment, ductwork, parapets, and equipment screens.

❑ Elevations: Show exterior elevations or views of all sides of the building that will have new doors, windows, siding, or other new construction.

❑ Accessibility Standards: Indicate in detail how the area of the remodel and the sanitary facilities (new or existing) comply with all required accessibility features and standards. See also Site Plan requirements above. Note the dimensions where minimum standards must be met, such as cabinets, restroom fixtures, etc.

- All primary entrances and exit doors shall be accessible [CBC 11B-202.4, 11B-206.4, 11B-207].
- All toilet and bathing facilities shall be fully accessible [CBC 11B-202.4, 11B-213.2].
- Accessibility and directional signs shall be provided at entrances and major junctions where required by CBC 11B-216.6.
- Accessible parking shall be provided, dispersed, and located closest to the accessible entrances they serve as required by CBC 11B-208.3.
- All swinging doors and gates require kickplates [CBC 11B-404.2.10].
- Stairways shall have handrails on each side [CBC 1011.11]. Handrails shall extend beyond and in the same direction of stair flights and ramp runs to comply with CBC 11B-505.10.
- Tactile floor identification signs shall be provided at the landing of each floor level in enclosed stairways [CBC 11B-504.8, 11B-703].
- Provide the construction valuation of the project.
 - If the construction valuation of the project exceeds the valuation threshold established by the California Division of the State Architect, accessibility features as required in CBC 11B-202.4 shall be provided. If the construction valuation of the project does not exceed the valuation threshold and if the cost of providing an accessible entrance, path of travel, toilet and bathing facilities, public phones, drinking fountains, and signs exceeds 20% of the project cost, then access shall be provided to the extent that 20% of the project cost is used to provide accessibility features according to the priority as shown in CBC 11B-202.4 exception 8.

❑ Details and Notes: Include all construction details for new walls and ceilings, and how they are braced and connected to the existing. Detail new fire assemblies, handrails, guardrails, stairs (including rise and run), etc. Provide all necessary notes to explain the planned construction.

5. STRUCTURAL PLANS:

- ❑ **Structural Details and Calculations:** Provide structural details and calculations for all work required to be engineered, including all equipment (including roof top) weighing more than 400 pounds, or mounted more than 4 feet above the floor, or weighing more than 20 pounds if suspended from the ceiling, floor, or roof. If calculations are required, they must be stamped and signed by a California licensed architect or registered engineer. Calculations must be numbered by page and indexed for complex projects.

6. ELECTRICAL, MECHANICAL and PLUMBING PLANS:

Mechanical, plumbing and electrical plans shall include all information necessary to show how the space is to be heated, cooled and ventilated, how the new plumbing systems, if any, are connected to existing systems, and how the electrical energy is distributed and connected to the existing building power.

Specific mechanical, plumbing and electrical plan requirements will depend largely upon the extent, nature and complexity of the work to be done. The following are general guidelines for preparation and submittal of these plans.

- ❑ **Electrical Plans:** Show on the plans the size and location of the electrical service, any other panels, transformers, all switches, lights, receptacles, and any equipment requiring electrical connections. Note if existing or new. Note if a receptacle is GFCI protected. Provide panel schedules and load calculations to verify service is adequate for new and existing loads, a single-line power distribution plan, and a fixture schedule.
 - Provide one 8 1/2" x 11" copy of the Title 24 California Energy Code calculations for lighting and reproduce full size the appropriate Certificate of Compliance forms on the plans.
 - In multi-tenancy buildings, access to main electrical equipment must be from the exterior of the building or through interior public corridors leading directly to the building exterior [Policy #BDP-EL01].
 - Each tenant shall be provided with one approved disconnecting means for their space which shall be readily accessible by the tenant, and branch circuits shall not be shared between tenants [Policy #BDP-EL02, CEC 230.72(C), CEC 240.24].
 - Provide controls for new or altered lighting as per California Energy Code.
 - Provide GFCI protected outlets where required [CEC 210.8 (B)].
- ❑ **Mechanical Plans:** Show on the plans the location of all mechanical equipment, exhaust fans, locations of supply and return registers with size and material of all ductwork and methods of support and bracing. Show how the system provides the required fresh outside makeup air. Provide an equipment schedule with all specifications noted.
 - Provide one 8 1/2" x 11" copy of the Title 24 California Energy Code calculations for mechanical and reproduce full size the appropriate Certificate of Compliance forms on the plans.
 - Specify and note how new condensate drains are routed and discharged via an indirect waste pipe to an approved location [CMC 310].
 - For roof-mounted equipment, provide a roof plan with the location, size and weight of all equipment, location and size of ductwork, details of equipment anchorage, how equipment is being supported and details of required roof access. Provide a profile section through the roof and parapets or screen enclosure showing how equipment is screened, if any, or show screening on the architectural plans.
 - For attic installed equipment, provide a section through the attic showing the location, size and weight of all equipment, details of equipment anchorage, how equipment is being supported, size and location of access opening, distance from opening to equipment, size and location of platforms and walkways, and required headroom and clearances.
 - All equipment weighing more than 400 pounds, or 20 pounds if suspended from the ceiling, floor or roof, requires structural calculations.
 - Mechanical units in excess of 2000 cfm (5 tons) shall be equipped with an automatic shutoff upon detection of smoke in the main supply air duct. Where fire detection or alarm system is provided, the smoke detector shall be supervised by such a system, and require a permit and inspection from Fire Department [CMC 609].
 - Provide drawing with the location of the existing equipment.
 - Installation of ducts shall be as described by CMC 603.

- Diffusers must be positively connected to the ceiling grid, in accordance with manufacturer's installation instructions where applicable [CMC 313.1].

- ☐ **Plumbing Plans:** Show on the plans the location of all new plumbing fixtures, water heaters, floor drains, etc. Provide a piping layout plan showing the size, length, and material of all water, waste, vent, and gas piping. Include a complete list of fixtures and their gas/water demands. Provide detailed calculations for the sizing of the piping. Show the location, materials and installation requirements of all piping located outside the building.
 - Exposed pipes under sinks in restrooms and break areas must be protected against contact [CBC 11B-606.5]
 - Cleanouts require clearances as described by CPC 707.9.
 - Pipes require support at the intervals described in CPC Table 313.3.
 - Plastic and copper pipes running in stud walls require steel nail plates when within 1" of surface [CPC 312.9].
 - Piping for temperature or pressure relief valves must discharge to an approved location and meet CPC 608.5.
 - Provide an approved Excess Flow Gas Shut-off Device at new appliances and Seismic Gas Shut-off Device at meter where altering or adding to the existing gas system [MMC Chapter 170].

7. OTHER DRAWINGS:

- ☐ **Site Improvement Plans:** If on-site improvements are proposed, they can be included with the construction drawings or submitted separately. Please see the handout, [On-site Improvement Submittal Requirements](#), for more information.
- ☐ **Landscape and Irrigation Plans.** If landscape and irrigation plans are required, all submittals must comply with City of Milpitas Planning Division requirements.

8. TITLE 24 ENERGY STANDARDS FORMS:

- ☐ Required forms may be found through the California Energy Commission's [Online Resource Center](#).

9. OTHER CITY DEPARTMENTS:

All plan submittals for Planning, Engineering, and Fire are made through the Building Department at the Permit Center with the building permit application.

- ☐ **Engineering Department:** If the property is located in the special flood hazard area contact Engineering at (408) 586-3300 prior to beginning plan preparation.
- ☐ **Planning Department:** Prior to submittal of any plans, if change of occupancy or use is proposed, the Planning Department should be contacted at (408) 586-3279 to find out the zoning requirements.
- ☐ **Hazardous Materials:** Provide a general layout of all areas and a detailed inventory of the types and quantities of all hazardous materials to be used or stored on the site with a key location map. On the list, be sure to use the classifications found in CBC Table 307.1(1) and Table 307.1(2).
- ☐ **Sewer Needs:** A [Sewer Needs Inquiry](#) form must be completed for all projects. If "Yes" is answered to any of the questions, a [Sewer Needs Questionnaire](#) must also be completed and submitted with the permit application. The City's Public Works Utility Engineering Department will then determine what connection fees, if any, will be required to be paid prior to permit issuance.

NOTES:

- ☐ If one or more of the required items mentioned above are omitted from the submittal plans, the application may be considered as incomplete and not ready for checking or approving.

- ☐ Large projects are recommended to have a pre-submittal meeting with the various City Departments to review the project. This will help expedite the approval process. Call the Building Department at (408) 586-3240 to schedule a meeting.
- ☐ Plan Check and Fire Department fees must be paid at time of submittal, either by check or credit card (except fees totaling \$5,000 or more must be paid by check).
- ☐ Fire alarm and fire sprinkler drawings will be submitted by the contractor directly to the Fire Department and are not to be included with the building permit submittals.
- ☐ New tenant spaces require new addresses to be assigned by the City. Refer to the [Request for New or Change in Address Numbers](#) handout for the application and additional information.

Revisions: Once the permit has been issued, any changes in the design must be approved by the City. Submittal documents shall be reviewed by the Architect or Engineer of record with a notation indicating that the changes have been reviewed and are in general conformance with the design of the building prior to being submitted to the City for approval. Additional fees will be due for each revision at time of submittal. Projects with more than one revision may require the submittal of a “record set” (as-built) drawings prior to final inspection.