

Tenant improvements cover a wide range of non-residential modifications to existing buildings. They include anything from a small café remodel to a major factory build-out. While the scope and complexity of tenant improvements vary widely, the process for obtaining a permit is basically the same. This checklist is designed to help the owner and designer stay on track as they navigate the application process. This is in a step-by-step format, but some of the steps can happen concurrently.

CHECKLIST

STEP 1: PRELIMINARY REVIEW

Before preparing detailed plans for a tenant improvement, it is necessary to discuss the project with City of Hayward staff to determine if there are any issues with the proposal. Staff from the Planning Division, Building Division and the Fire Department are available to help customers at the Permit Center front counter during business hours. It is good to bring in as much information as possible to these meetings. This includes: address, current use of the property, fire sprinkler status and any rough sketches of what you would like to build. If possible, the designer for the project should be at this initial counter meeting.

- MEET WITH A CITY OF HAYWARD PLANNER:** Planning staff will determine if the proposed project will meet Zoning Ordinance requirements if a use permit is required. Making this determination early will minimize permit processing time.

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- MEET WITH STAFF FROM THE FIRE PREVENTION OFFICE:** Fire Department staff will notify you of any initial concerns. These may include: fire truck access, firefighter access, sprinkler requirements and other fire protection systems. Staff may require a separate **Code Assistance Meeting** if the scope of work involves hazardous materials or is highly complex.

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- MEET WITH A BUILDING DIVISION PERMIT TECHNICIAN:** Building Division staff will go over basic requirements for the submittal and can explain some of the fees for the project. The Permit Technicians will put you in touch with a Plan Checker for specific code questions.

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STEP 2: ESTABLISH THE DESIGN TEAM

Tenant improvement projects require a professionally prepared set of plans that documents both the condition of the existing space and the proposed changes. Because tenant improvements involve State of California mandated disabled access upgrades and multiple life safety codes, in most cases the City of Hayward requires that the plans are prepared by an architect or engineer licensed in California. Depending on the scope

of work, some projects require multiple design professionals to complete the drawings. Plan checkers can help you determine which of the following consultants will be required for your project:

- ARCHITECT:** An architect will focus on coordinating the overall project and will have technical strengths in disabled access (ADA), fire safety, emergency exiting and building design. Architects typically hire consultants to help with structural issues, site work and landscaping. Make sure that the design professional that you hire is experienced with the type of project that you are planning to build.
- CIVIL ENGINEER - Structural:** Engineers are required when structural changes are made to a building. This includes the installation of equipment weighing 400 pounds or more. Some engineers can handle a complete tenant improvement, but usually they do not have the expertise to address the non-structural codes. Most projects include both an architect and an engineer.
- CIVIL ENGINEER – Site Work:** Projects that involve grading or extensive sitework outside of the building may require a civil engineer to design the “site improvement plans”. This can also involve storm water management plans in some cases.
- PLUMBING, MECHANICAL and ELECTRICAL ENGINEERS:** Depending on the scope of work, certain projects will require engineers that specialize in these disciplines. For example, projects that involve substantial changes to the electrical system of a large building will benefit from the services of an Electrical Engineer.
- T-24 ENERGY CONSULTANT:** California has very restrictive energy codes. Any project that involves changes to the lighting, mechanical systems or exterior walls will require the services of an energy consultant.

- LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT:** Depending on the criteria from the Planning Division, a landscape architect may be required for the project.
- FIRE PROTECTION ENGINEER:** Projects that involve hazardous materials or unique fire safety issues may require the services of an FPE.

STEP 3: DETERMINE MAJOR COST IMPACTS

Certain changes to existing buildings can have major cost impacts. In addition to the basic permit fees and taxes that our Permit Technicians can help you calculate, it is important to understand design related costs early in the process. Some of the most common project issues with cost impacts are listed below:

- PLUMBING FIXTURE COUNT:** Chapter 4 of the California Plumbing Code will require a minimum number of fixtures for men and women, depending on the use of the building. For tenant improvement projects, if there is an increase in the number of occupants or if the use of the building is changing, additional plumbing fixtures *may* be required. Carefully review the plumbing code as you design the project to make sure that any required fixture increase is considered in the construction budget.
- WATER AND SEWER FEES:** Service charges and connection fees are based on increased discharge into the sanitary sewer system or increased water use. An example would be a retail store that is being converted to a restaurant. The change of use to a restaurant will result in more water use and discharge. Because of these impacts, there are associated one-time fees for water and sewer. To get an estimate of these fees for your project, contact the City of Hayward Utilities and Environmental Services Department. They will need to know the address and the scope of the proposed changes: **510-583-4700**
- SPRINKLERS:** In some cases, sprinklers are required by the Building Code. But in other cases, they are required by a local Fire Code ordinance. If the building is not sprinklered, make sure that you know early in the process if

sprinklers will be required. To find out if your project will need to have sprinklers added, contact the Hayward Fire Prevention Office: **510-583-4900**

- **DISABLED ACCESS UPGRADES:** All tenant improvements will trigger disabled access upgrades mandated by State and Federal laws. Even if the building is fully compliant, the access features still need to be documented on the plans. Have the architect do an initial survey of the space to identify features that do not comply. These typically include: exterior walkways, ramps, accessible parking, entryways and restrooms that serve the area of alteration.

STEP 4: PREPARE DETAILED DRAWINGS

A complete and accurate set of plans is required to obtain a building permit. Projects with high quality plans are more likely to be approved quickly. Projects with poorly prepared plans will result in multiple correction lists and this will delay the start of construction.

- **DESIGNATE THE ARCHITECT OR ENGINEER OF RECORD:** The architect or engineer of record is the main design professional responsible for coordinating the project. This is also referred to as the *design professional in responsible charge*. This individual is going to be the main point of contact with the City during the review process and will be stamping and signing the primary drawings in the set of plans.
- **PREPARE A COMPLETE SET OF PLANS:** The City of Hayward requires a complete set of plans prepared to professional standards before we will begin the review process. This means a cover sheet with project data and a sheet index, a site plan, existing and new floor plans, egress diagrams, path of travel information, accessibility details, plumbing fixture analysis, wall details, sections, elevations, single line diagrams, gas piping diagrams, T-24 Energy reports and structural calculations. **The plans must fully and accurately describe the scope of work.** If key information is missing, **it will delay the project.**

- DEFERRED SUBMITTALS ARE LIMITED TO THE FOLLOWING:** Trusses, solar PV/Thermal, sprinkler and fire alarm drawings. Other items can be deferred on a case-by-case basis.
- CAREFULLY REVIEW THE APPLICABLE CODES FOR THE PROJECT:** The City of Hayward, like all jurisdictions in California, must review plans for minimum code compliance.

TIP! Disabled access requirements tend to cause the most significant correction list items for tenant improvement projects. If this aspect of the code is ignored in a submittal, it will delay permit issuance. **Please pay special attention to disabled access upgrades** if you want your project to be approved quickly.

STEP 5: SUBMIT THE PLANS FOR REVIEW

Once the drawings are complete, the plans must be submitted to the Permit Center for review. Most projects will have 2 or 3 review cycles. Upon review of the plans, the City will return correction lists with comments from all departments. The applicant must re-submit the plans until all reviewers have approved the drawings.

- DETERMINE THE NUMBER OF SETS:** Most tenant improvement projects will require 6 sets of plans. Some smaller projects will require fewer sets and some major projects will require up to 9 sets. To confirm the exact number of sets, please contact a Permit Technician prior to submittal.
- STANDARD REVIEW TIMELINE:** Depending on the scope of work, plan review will be completed in 15 or 25 business days for the first submittal and 10 business days for each resubmittal thereafter.
- MAKE AN APPOINTMENT:** We encourage our customers to make appointments to submit plans. This can be done by contacting a Permit Technician to schedule a submittal time.