

## Tenant Improvement Building Permit Application Checklist

**Overview:** A building permit is required for alteration (including, but not limited to, partition walls, ceilings, plumbing, sprinklers, etc.) to an existing business, to accommodate a new business, or when the use or occupancy classification of the suite is changing from the previous business occupancy. This checklist provides the typical requirements for a tenant improvement building permit application. For restaurants and take-outs, see our guide/checklist [Restaurants & Take-Outs – Tenant Improvements](#). For daycares see our guide [Daycares – Conversion to Assembly Occupancy](#). For alterations where the occupancy classification of a suite or building is changing see our guide [Change of Occupancy](#).

### Required Items:

- Current Planning Preliminary Review**  
The Zoning Bylaw regulates what type of business is permitted within the city. The proposed use and available parking should be discussed with Current Planning staff prior to proceeding with a building permit application.
  - Building Permit Administrative Requirements**
    - [Building Permit Application](#) – online application
    - [Appointment of Agent](#) – is required if the permit is to be applied for, revised, or permit issued to other than the registered owner. To be completed and submitted online as part of the building permit application process.
    - Application Fee (if construction value is over \$20,000). The application fee will be requested after your online building permit application has been accepted.
    - BC Building Code analysis – see [BC Building Code Analysis, Design Summary Form](#).
  - Business Details**
    - Business name and type of business
    - Business licence number and status (existing businesses in new locations must contact Business Licensing)
    - Type of business previously located in suite
    - Indicate if proposed use involves flammable material, dust, or chemical emissions
  - Site Plan or Key Plan**
    - Dimensions of site, including a north arrow, street names, and location and width of any lane(s)
    - Building dimensions and location on lot, including vehicle access and parking stalls
    - Building area and number of floors
    - Street address, floor and tenant suite number [current key plan (if applicable) of building with unit numbers]
    - Indicate area to be developed and adjoining tenant occupancies
    - Exiting for the tenant space and all other suites on the floor where the construction/alterations will occur.
- Note: All sealed professional drawings and Letters of Assurance are to be submitted online with an electronic seal and signature as part of the online application*
- Floor Plans** (to scale ¼"=1'0" or 1:50) Note: If the paper size exceeds 2' x 3', using a smaller scale may be acceptable to Building Inspections staff
    - Existing and proposed construction
    - All outside dimensions of tenant space and total area in square meters or feet
    - Dimension and use of all rooms and areas
    - Interior partitions, including height of partitions
    - All door sizes, doors in grilles (in malls), direction of swing, and corridor widths
    - All plumbing fixtures; identify as new or existing
    - Seating, tables, and other millwork

# Tenant Improvement Application Checklist

## Required Items (Continued):

- Construction Details**
    - Wall structure (cross-sections or written description, i.e. 5/8" type x gypsum board, 2"x 4" 16 gauge steel studs, 5/8" type x gypsum board).
    - Wall height (on cross-section), all areas with varying wall heights to be identified with specific heights.
- Please Note:** Over height frame walls will require a Structural Engineer's design and supervision (see below). Maximum height for interior non load-bearing partition walls are as follows:
- Steel stud - 362S125-18 @ 16" o/c maximum height 10'-0"
  - Steel stud - 600S125-18 @ 16" o/c maximum height 12'-0"
  - Wood frame - 2x4 SPF No1/2 maximum height 14'-0"
- Fire-resistance rating and the tested listed assemblies of any required fire separations, new and existing
  - Fire stopping / blocking details for all service penetrations of fire separation
  - Structural changes
  - All exit signs, emergency lighting, and fire alarm pull station location(s)
  - Universal washroom, counter layout, doors and ramps that meet the 'accessibility' requirements (as applicable). *For more information see our guide [Accessibility – Requirements for Persons with Disabilities](#).*
  - Reflected ceiling plan

## Additional Items that may be required:

- Sprinkler layout** indicating existing and proposed installations, and sprinkler contractor's name and business licence number (Mechanical Engineer's design and review may be required where more than eight heads are added, 20 heads relocated, or changes made in the hydraulic calculation area). *For more information, see our guide [Sprinkler Permit Application](#).*  
Note that the City of Nanaimo [Building Bylaw 7224](#) regulates the requirement for fire suppression systems in construction. Exemption for renovations and additions apply to existing buildings. A fire suppression system will not be required when alterations are ≤50% of the value of the building; or an addition is ≤25% of the existing floor area or maximum 200m<sup>2</sup> whichever is lesser; or where construction is non-combustible and ≤25% of existing floor area or maximum 600 m<sup>2</sup> whichever is lesser. Construction done under a building permit issued within the 24 months preceding shall be included in the value and floor area when determining if an exemption applies. See Building Bylaw No. 7224 under Section 28.4 for additional exemptions.
- Isometric Plumbing drawings** for plumbing changes, including name and phone number of plumber  
*For more information, see our guide [Isometric Plumbing Drawing Requirements](#)*
- [Plumbing Declaration Form](#)**
- [Hazardous Materials Form](#)** is required for building permits for demolitions, renovations, and alterations to an existing building. If the form indicates hazardous materials may exist and be disturbed by the construction proposed, a Hazardous Material Assessment Report will be required prior to issuance of a building permit.
- Island Health approval** stamped on floor plan for pools, spas, and tattoo, body piercing, food, and beverage services
- Island Health approval** letter for daycares detailing the number and age of children permitted
- Architectural drawings** and Letter of Assurances (Schedule B) – for assembly occupancies (e.g. restaurants, bars, lounges, gyms, etc.) where defined by the BC Building Code as assembly occupancy
- Structural drawings** and Letter of Assurance (Schedule B) - for structural changes, including over-height walls, structural entry bulkheads, etc. and, where a change of occupancy triggers the requirement for a structural review including seismic restraint and falling hazards.  
*See our guides [Change of Occupancy](#), [Restaurants & Take-Outs – Tenant Improvements](#), [Daycares – Conversion to Assembly Occupancy](#)*

# Tenant Improvement Application Checklist

## Additional Items that may be required: (Continued):

- Construction Fire Safety Plan** – For more information about the plan requirements, see our guide [Fire Safety Planning](#) . For your convenience a [Construction Fire Safety Plan Template](#) can be found on the City website.
- Sign Permit**

## ◆ INCOMPLETE APPLICATIONS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED ◆

### Building Permit Process:

#### Review:

1. A Building Official reviews the online building permit application submission. If the application requires additional information, a request for that information is forwarded to the applicant.
2. Once the application is accepted, a request for the application fee from the City will be forwarded to the applicant. See “Cost” below.
3. Building Inspector reviews the site.
4. Building Official reviews plans and identifies required changes to the drawings to ensure the proposed construction meets local bylaws and BC Building Code standards.
  - The applicant is responsible to have drawings revised to reflect the required changes. The permit is issued with the condition that the construction is to be done as per the approved drawings.
  - The permit holder must schedule inspections at the intervals noted on the inspection list stamped on the approved plans (book online at [www.nanaimo.ca/goto/inspection](http://www.nanaimo.ca/goto/inspection) or call 24-hr inspection line at 250-755-4420)

#### Time:

The time required for a tenant improvement building permit review will depend on revisions required and if additional approvals, such as development permit, Island Health, Fire Department, etc., are required. The processing time may also be effected by the volume of permit applications received by Building Inspections and cannot be guaranteed. [Processing Times](#) can be viewed on the City website.

#### Cost:

1. Application fees apply to building permits with a construction value over \$20,000. The fee is 10% of the estimated building permit fee with a minimum fee of \$175. The non-refundable fee is deducted from the final cost of the building permit. For assistance in estimating the application fee, see our webpage [Building Permit Fee Calculator](#).
2. Permit fees are based on the market value of construction as follows: first \$1,000 is \$105; each additional \$1,000 up to \$100,000 is \$10, each additional \$1,000 greater than \$100,000.01 is \$7. Additional fees including plumbing fixtures, sprinklers, etc. can be found in the [Fees and Charges Bylaw No. 7336](#), available on the City web site.

#### Contact numbers for further information

Current Planning .....	(250) 755-4429	Nanaimo Fire Department ..	(250) 755-4569
Building Inspections .....	(250) 755-4429	Island Health .....	(250) 739-5800
Plumbing Inspection .....	(250) 755-4429	Electrical .....	1(866) 566-7233
Sprinkler System .....	(250) 755-4429	Gas and Propane.....	1(866) 566-7233

If you have any questions or require clarification, please contact a commercial building official at our office. This guideline should not be used as a substitute for existing building codes and other regulations. The building owner is responsible for compliance with all codes, bylaws, and other regulations whether or not described in this guideline.

Forms and guides specific to Building Inspections can be printed from the City of Nanaimo website [www.nanaimo.ca](http://www.nanaimo.ca) by typing your search word in the search bar or visiting the [Building Permits](#) pages under Property & Development, or can be picked up at our office at 411 Dunsmuir Street. Bylaws can be found on our website under [City Bylaws](#) on the main page.