



Building Inspections

Detailed Guide to Commercial / Multi-Residential Building Permit Applications

PREFACE:

This guide offers general information regarding the requirements of the Building Inspection Section in the development of property within the City of Nanaimo. The requirements of the Engineering and Planning Sections of the Community Safety & Development Department are not covered in this guide.

In making application for larger projects, a one-stop shopping approach is pursued by City staff. Accordingly, Building Inspection Section staff are the file managers for all City departments and are the designated contacts at the City.

Pre-Application Meeting:

Prior to submitting an application, please arrange for a pre-application meeting by contacting the Commercial Plan Checker at (250) 755-4429. The meeting will include representatives from the Building Inspection Section, Engineering Section and Planning Section of Community Safety & Development Department. The purpose of the meeting is to identify the pertinent information that must be submitted for the particular project for a Building Permit Application.

In order to proceed with your permit, we require a complete application. The following outlines the information typically required for commercial permit application:

Application Fee:

A fee of 10% of estimated Building Permit cost is to be paid at application. The fee is nonrefundable and deducted from the final Building Permit fee.

Appointment of Agent:

If someone other than the registered owner is to apply for and/or pick up your permit, please have the Appointment of Agent form completed (see attached).

Drawings:

We require two (2) complete sets of your building plans, two (2) site plans by a BC Land Surveyor, including parking, plus two (2) landscape working drawings with estimate.

Building Code Review Form:

This form, completed by your designer, provides basic *BC Building Code* information about the project (sample form provided by request).

Works and Services Assessment:

Building Bylaw No. 5693 requires construction of off-site works and services for projects. Submit a key plan and written request for a summary of specific works and services required for your project to the Engineering Section of the Community Safety & Development Department prior to application.

On-Site and Off- Site Works and Services Submission:

Detailed designs and associated information from your Civil Engineer is required for Permit Application. The submission should include off-site and on-site servicing drawings, site drainage drawings, location of accesses, fire flow calculations, the Engineering Requirements Checklist (checklist provided by request) and off-site servicing estimate for determination of the security bond.

For projects with more than four parking stalls, an engineer designed oil / water separator and on-site storm drainage system is required.

Design specifications are reviewed and approved by the Engineering Section of the Community Safety & Development Department. Inspections will be required by your Civil Engineer.

Requirements for Architects / Engineers:

Your project may involve design professionals. Each discipline retained by the owner is to:

1. Supply two complete sets of professionally-certified drawings.
2. Supply the appropriate Letters of Assurance as outlined by the *2006 BC Building Code*.
3. Be registered within the province of BC.

Coordinating Registered Professional Letters of Assurance (Schedule A) are required from an Architect for all projects falling within Part 3 of the *BC Building Code* and for projects involving more than two registered professionals. Projects involving industrial buildings may have a registered Engineer act as the Coordinating Registered Professional.

Architectural drawings and Letters of Assurance (Schedule B) are required for all projects falling within Part 3 of the *BC Building Code*. Drawings by a designer are acceptable for wood-framed buildings that fall under Part 9 of the *BC Building Code*. Parking layout, *BC Building Code* review and landscape working drawings with an estimate for security bonding should form part of the submission.

Building Envelope Professional drawings and Letters of Assurance (Schedule D) are required for all buildings over 600 m² and over four (4) units per building.

Geotechnical report and Letters of Assurance (Schedule B) are required for all projects falling within Part 3 *BC Building Code* and where the building inspector identifies geotechnical concerns.

Structural Engineering drawings and Letters of Assurance (Schedule B) are required for all projects falling within Part 3 of *BC Building Code* and where construction is beyond the requirements of Part 9 of the *BC Building Code*.

Civil Engineering drawings and Letters of Assurance (Schedule B) are required for all projects requiring Works and Services, or where new servicing is being installed or for site drainage where greater than four (4) parking stalls are required. See On-Site and Off- Site Works and Services Submission for more information.

Fire Suppression System (sprinkler) drawings and Letters of Assurance (Schedule B) are required for most commercial / multi-family buildings. See Sprinkler Requirements under Section 28 of Building Bylaw No. 5693.

Mechanical Engineering drawings and Letters of Assurance (Schedule B) are required for all projects falling within Part 3 of the *BC Building Code* for all projects with ventilation / heating / plumbing systems that serve more than one suite or floor.

Electrical / Fire Alarm drawings and Letters of Assurance (Schedule B) are required for most projects falling within Part 3 of the *BC Building Code*.

Homeowner Protection Office (HPO):

All residential builders applying for Building Permits are required to be licensed by the Homeowner Protection Office. In order to obtain a Building Permit, builders must prove that they are licensed and that the proposed new dwelling is covered by a third-party home warranty insurance provider authorized by the Financial Institution Commission (FICOM). The Homeowner Protection Office number is (1-800-407-7757).

Development Cost Charges (DCC's):

DCC's are charges that assist the City with capital cost projects relating to servicing new developments either directly or indirectly. Attached is a summary of DCC's that may apply to your project. Contact the commercial plan checker for further information regarding DCC's.

Total DCC's may be paid at building permit issuance or you may pay 1/3 at permit issuance and defer 2/3 by letter of credit. The second 1/3 is drawn at 12 months and the remaining 1/3 at 24 months from permit issuance date.

Construction Agreement:

You must provide estimates and securities for the cost of any required works and services and landscaping. In the event that the contractor is unable to complete the work, the City will use the securities to complete any outstanding work. The construction agreement refers to the required work and securities.

Letters of Credit:

Any Letter of Credit that is posted as security for construction agreements must be approved by the City's Finance Department. Letters of Credit from the major five banks and members of the Credit Unions of BC, presented in the City's format, are usually acceptable (sample provided by request).

Coal Workings:

In many areas of Nanaimo, abandoned coal workings present unique concerns for buildings.

The City may require a report by a Geotechnical Engineer stating that the land is or can be made safe for the intended use. Recommendations in this report must be followed (see "Restrictive Covenants").

Restrictive Covenants:

When your property is determined to be subject to geotechnical concerns (i.e., subsidence, flood, landslip, erosion), the City will require a restrictive covenant to be registered on the Land Title. Any required geotechnical reports addressing these concerns will form a schedule to the covenant.

Real Estate Section:

The City of Nanaimo Real Estate Section of the Community Safety & Development Department has the correct civic address for your property. This may be verified by contacting the Real Estate Section at (250) 755-4453.

Tree Bylaw:

The City's Tree Removal Bylaw No. 4695 regulates the removal of trees as part of a development. A handout on requirements is available in the Building Department or contact Al Kemp, Urban Forestry Coordinator, at (250) 755 4429.

Ministry of Health:

Restaurants and food preparation areas require approval from the Ministry of Health at (250) 755-6215. Please take your architectural drawings to the Nanaimo Health Department for their approval, prior to application for building permit.

Ministry of Transportation:

Any access or drainage onto or adjacent the Island Highway or the Nanaimo Parkway requires approval by the Ministry of Transportation. Please contact the Ministry at (250) 755-3246.

Lot Consolidation:

Construction over property lines is not permitted. Please check your land title to ensure any required lot consolidation has been completed.

Contact with City Staff:

The normal hours of work for Community Safety & Development are 8:00 am to 4:30 pm Monday - Friday.

The contacts for the various City staff are:

- Building Inspections Section, Commercial Plan Checker: Bruce Lockhart (250) 755-4429
- Engineering Section, Engineering Development Technician: Graham Trimmer (250) 755-4429
- Planning Section, Development Approval Planner: Gary Noble, (250) 755-4429

Attachments: Appointment of Agent Form, Development Cost Charges Table