

## Commercial Alterations Building Permit Application Guideline

**Overview:** A building permit is required for alterations to an existing business or to accommodate a new business (including walls, ceilings, plumbing, etc.), and when the use or occupancy classification is changing from the previous business occupancy.

### Occupancy Classification:

Occupancy classification, or use, is divided into the following categories:

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. Assembly Uses [e.g., restaurant, school (Coordinating Registered Professional required)]</li> <li>B. Detention, Care, Treatment (Coordinating Registered Professional required)</li> <li>C. Residential (e.g., apartments)</li> <li>D. Business &amp; Personal Service (e.g., office, beauty salon)</li> <li>E. Mercantile (e.g., retail, supermarkets)</li> <li>F. Industrial (e.g., warehouse, repair garages)</li> </ul> | } | <p>Coordinating Registered Professional required for Part 3 buildings</p> |
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### Typical Requirements for the Building Permit:

Two fully dimensioned and detailed sets of plans drawn to scale (e.g., 1/4" = 1', 1/8" = 1' or metric equivalent), which includes:

- Site plan or key plan
- Floor plans showing existing and proposed construction including:
  - use of space
  - structural changes
  - exits and means of egress, fire separations
  - washrooms, universal washroom, access for persons with disabilities
  - sprinkler system changes (engineering required for changes to add 8 or more heads, the relocation of more than 20 heads, and if there are changes in the design area)
  - plumbing, including any food preparation areas
  - commercial cooking equipment (exhaust/extinguishing system installation detail)
- Where plumbing changes are proposed, include:
  - Isometric drawing of drainage and water lines with pipe sizing and type and plumbers name and phone number (guideline available on the City web site or at our office)
  - Plumbing Declaration Form (form available on the City web site or at our office)

### Please note:

- Food / drink preparation areas, spas, pools and hot tubs for public use require Vancouver Island Health Authority (VIHA) approval. Health approval should be submitted with the building permit application.
- Change of Occupancy may require structural upgrade of the building, including seismic restraint.
- You may need to supply a parking plan and a landscape plan for the permit application.

### Sprinklers:

In accordance with Building Bylaw 7224, fire sprinklers are required to be installed in buildings where the value of construction exceeds 50% of the current assessed value of the building as determined by the BC Assessment Authority, or the current appraised value of the building as determined by a member of the AIC-BC..

## Commercial Alterations

### Permit Processing Time:

For complete permits received, processing time is approximately three to six weeks. Incomplete applications and/or where revisions are required, or when additional approvals such as Development permits, VIHA approval, etc., are required, will lengthen the processing time.

**Contact our Planning Section directly at 250-755-4429 regarding the requirements for Development permits, setbacks, parking requirements and appropriate zoning for the use proposed.**

### Review and Approval Process:

1. Applicant (owner or authorized representative) and Building Official meet to review application.
2. Building Inspector reviews site.
3. Plan Checker reviews plans and indicates all required upgrading to drawings to ensure the construction meets local bylaws and BC Building Code standards.
  - *The applicant is responsible to have drawings revised to reflect required changes. The permit is issued with the condition that the construction is to be done as per the changes to the drawings.*
  - *The permit holder must call the Building Inspection Section to schedule inspections at the intervals noted on the inspection card enclosed with the permit package. Approved drawings must be on site for inspection.*

### Permit Fees:

**The permit cost is based upon the supplied estimated value of construction and any new fixtures:**

Minimum fee and first \$1000 of Construction Value (CV) .....	\$105.00
Additional fee for CV from \$1,000.01-\$100,000 .....	\$10.00/\$1,000
Additional fee for CV from \$100,000.01 - Greater .....	\$ 7.00/\$1,000
Plumbing fixtures ..... (\$40 minimum fee) .....	\$ 8.00 per fixture
Sprinklers ..... (\$40 minimum fee) .....	\$ 0.50 per m <sup>2</sup>

*On- or off-site service cost and other fees may be applicable, including Development Cost Charges (DCCs) when new or additional floor area is added and when the value of construction exceeds \$50,000.00.*

### Other Permits that may be Required:

Through Building Inspections Section:

- Signage

Through the Provincial Government:

- Electrical 716-5200
- Gas and Propane 716-5206
- VIHA 755-6215

**As this is not an exhaustive list, please contact Building Inspections at 250-755-4429 for more information.**

Documents and forms identified in this guide can be found on the City of Nanaimo web site [www.nanaimo.ca](http://www.nanaimo.ca) under Building Inspections, Publications and Forms or at our office at 411 Dunsmuir Street.

If you have any questions or require clarification, please contact a commercial plans reviewer at our office at 250-755-4429. 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.