




Trailers - Temporary and Permanent Placement for Commercial Use

Overview: This guide covers the building permit application requirements for temporary and permanent trailers for commercial uses, such as an office.

All temporary and permanent trailers must meet the requirements of the BC Building Code, with the exception of a construction crew trailer. A construction crew trailer is exempt from the BC Building Code and does not require a building permit. However, all temporary trailers must meet the requirements and restrictions set out in the Zoning Bylaw Section 6.7.


Application Requirements for both Temporary and Permanent:

- [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.
- Site plan** – to scale, showing dimensions from trailer to property lines and to existing buildings
- Drawings** – to scale, including floor plans, elevation views, and applicable sections, including ramps, stairs, guards, and anchorage and support
- Structural Design of anchorage and support** – sealed design from a Structural Engineer registered in BC, including Letters of Assurance (Schedule B)
- Structural Design or confirmation of 100 psf floor loading for Office use**
- CSA Stamp** – the trailer must be built to the current CSA standard and bear this identification (supply the details or a photograph of the stamp); *or* certification that the building is structurally safe for use – supply Letters of Assurance (Schedule B) from a Structural Engineer
- Ramps, stairs, handrails and guards conforming to the BC Building Code**, including handrail detail, tactile warning, slip-resistant surface and contrasting nosing
- A ramp for persons with disabilities** is required for office, retail and assembly use. See our guide [“Accessibility” Requirements for Persons with Disabilities](#) 
- Spatial separation** from existing buildings and property lines must be considered; supply the exterior construction wall details and fire-resistance rating

Temporary Trailer Placement Additional Requirements (≤ 12 months):

- Application requirements, as noted above**
- A written statement of intended use and the duration of use**
- Washrooms for persons with disabilities** may be required if unavailable on site
- Water and sanitary location/connection plan** is required if a washroom is provided
- Current Planning approval is required**; temporary uses are subject to Section 6.7 of the Zoning Bylaw; sales offices are limited to an area not exceeding 70m²
- A bond of \$1,000.00 to ensure the trailer is removed and the site is left clean** (required at permit issuance)

Permanent Trailer Placement Additional Requirements:

- Application requirements, as noted above**
- Washrooms for persons with disabilities** will be required if unavailable on site
- A development permit must be applied for through Current Planning**
- On-site servicing drawings and Engineers’ Letters of Assurance (Schedule B)** may be required depending on the servicing situation
- Coordinating Registered Professional’s Schedules A and B from an Architect or Engineer** is required for assembly use buildings
- The fire sprinklers system requirement in the City of Nanaimo’s [Building Bylaw](#)  Section 28** applies to detached building(s) having a total gross floor area exceeding 100m².

Trailers - Building Permit Application Checklist

Zoning Bylaw – Temporary Uses – Buildings and Structures 6.7:

6.7 TEMPORARY USES - BUILDINGS AND STRUCTURES

- 6.7.1. The following uses, buildings or structures are permitted to the extent specifically stated:
- 6.7.1.1. Temporary structures or buildings erected for the purpose of:
- temporary office space in a zone permitting the office use, subject to other requirements of this Bylaw; or
 - shelter for construction or maintenance crews; or
 - temporary buildings or structures for the housing of a security guard or night watchman; or
 - a sales office for subdivision, provided the office does not exceed a Gross Floor Area of 70m²; or
 - the storage of materials for the construction or maintenance of any utility, or a building or structure for which a required building permit has been obtained; provided the temporary structure or building is removed within 30 days of completion of the permanent utility, building or structure or 12 months after the temporary building is erected or installed, whichever is the lesser period.
- 6.7.2. Temporary buildings or structures for classrooms on property zoned for academic schools and subject to the parking requirements for the facility.
- 6.7.3. Temporary buildings or structures for the purpose of seasonal vending on properties included within the Parks, Recreation and Culture, Downtown and Commercial Centre zones provided that:
- the use is permitted in the zone; and
 - the temporary building or structure meets the requirements of the Building Bylaw; and
 - the temporary building or structure is connected to the City of Nanaimo water and sewer systems if food is served; and
 - the use meets the parking requirements of this Bylaw; and
 - the temporary building is not located on space required for parking, setback, or open space within the site.
- 6.7.4. The temporary use of a building, or part thereof, as a polling station for any election, referendum or census.
- 6.7.5. The temporary use of a building, or part thereof, as a campaign headquarters for a political candidate.
- 6.7.6. A maximum of one fabric-covered structure is permitted as an accessory use on each lot for a maximum of 120 days in a calendar year.
- 6.7.7. Temporary accommodation within a recreational vehicle is permitted during the construction of a single residential dwelling provided a building permit has been issued for the lot and is in good standing. This accommodation shall not include the renting or letting of recreational vehicles.
- 6.7.8. Temporary accommodation within a recreational vehicle is also permitted for non-paying guests of the owner or occupant of a single residential dwelling on the lot, provided such use does not exceed 42 days in the calendar year. This accommodation shall not include the renting or letting of recreational vehicles.

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.

Forms and guides specific to Building Inspections can be printed from the City of Nanaimo website 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.