

Construction Permitting Guidelines for Businesses Moving into Existing Buildings in Culver City

If you are moving into an existing building and no construction is anticipated:

Businesses must have a valid City business tax certificate. Please contact the City **Treasurers Office**, Business Tax, at 310-253-5870.



The new business use must be approved *for the proposed location* by the City **Planning Division**, please contact them at 310-253-5710. A change in use may require a site plan review, a conditional use permit, or an administrative use permit. Note: existing parking lots may not be re-stripped or reconfigured without Planning review. Planning will also inform you whether your proposed location must be reviewed by the Committee on Permits and Licensing.

If the building does not currently have fire sprinklers, they may be required by a change in use. Please contact the **Fire Prevention Division** at 310-253-5925.

Your business may be subject to additional sewer facility impact fees, please contact the City Public Works, **Engineering Division**, at 310-253-5600.

► *Please note; these fees may be substantial, please contact the Public Works Engineering Division for further information.*

If your new business is a change of use, a seismic upgrade of the building may be required, if it has not already been completed. Please contact the **Building Safety Division** at 310-253-5800.

Do not schedule any "limited opening" or "grand opening" until verifying with City staff. A Temporary Certificate of Occupancy (TCO) or Certificate of Occupancy (CO) will be required prior to opening for business. Forms are available in the City Hall 2nd floor handout bins.

A City-complying dumpster enclosure will be required if the site does not already have one. Please contact the City Public Works, **Sanitation Division**, at 310-253-6400

Please consult Culver City **Economic Development** at 310-253-5765 for additional information. Also please refer to www.ci.culver-city.ca.us/ "Find Available Commercial Real Estate/ Culver City Connection"

Additional requirements for businesses moving into an existing building and changes are anticipated to the building and/ or the exterior site.

(please also review all the above noted requirements)

Planning Division

Incidental improvements improvements that do not qualify as minor or major improvements (less than \$40k value and less than 10% of the replacement cost of the structure, as *determined by the Building Safety Division*)

- All new construction must meet current regulations, but all other existing non-conforming configurations may remain.
- If any work is done to any of the five following categories, all items within that category must be brought up to meet current regulations.
 1. Signage. (all signage must be approved by the Planning Division)
 2. Rooftop equipment screening.
 3. Trash enclosures.
 4. Parking lot striping, landscaping, or paving.
 5. Fences or walls.

Minor Improvements (at least \$40k value or more than 10% of the replacement value of the structure)

- All new construction must meet current regulations.
- All items within all of the following five categories must be upgraded to current regulations:
 1. Signage (all signage must be approved by the Planning Division)
 2. Rooftop equipment screening.
 3. Trash enclosures.
 4. Parking lot striping, landscaping, and paving.
 5. Fences or walls.

Major Improvements (any addition which adds 10% or greater to the overall area of the building, or an addition of over 1,500 s.f.)

- The entire building and site, including each of the above noted five categories, must be upgraded to current regulations.

Please note: any addition of over 5,000 s.f. of interior floor area requires the project to complete a Planning Site Plan Review Process, prior to applying for any construction permits. Also; all signs, banners, special events and other temporary events require separate permits, please consult the Planning Division for further information.

Fire Prevention Division

(the Fire Prevention Division issues its own permits for fire alarms and fire sprinklers)

- All new construction must meet current codes.
- All exit signs, emergency egress lighting, exit doors, and fire extinguishers meeting current codes must be provided.
- Fire sprinklers are required for all occupancy classification changes*, any building height increase, and if the area of the building is increased by 50% or greater.

* (an example of an occupancy classification change might be a change from a former office (B) to restaurant (A))

Public Works/ Engineering Division

(the Public Works Engineering Division issues its own permits for all right of way work)

- All new parking configurations, drives, paving, driveways, etc. must meet current codes.
- Upgrades to the public right of way may be triggered by renovation work.

- Sewer facility charges
 - ▶ *Please note: these fees may be substantial, please consult the Public Works Engineering Division for further information.*

Building Safety Division

- California licensed design professionals (architects or engineers) are required by state law to design all new commercial construction. Building Safety may accept drawings prepared by unlicensed individuals for a very small scope of work.
- If the new business is a change of occupancy classification (per the California Building Code) the building will be required to be seismically upgraded if not previously completed.
- All new construction must meet current building codes. If the new business is a change of occupancy classification per the California Building Code (for example, an assembly occupancy such as a restaurant is moving into a former mercantile occupancy such as a clothing store), all current emergency egress requirements must be met, including:
 1. Exit doors, exit corridors, exit stairways, etc. must meet current regulations.
 2. All exit signs and emergency egress lighting must meet current regulations.
 3. Seismic requirements.
- Handicap regulations; California Title 24
 1. If the total cost of all the proposed alterations exceeds \$100,000, all of the following must be made 100% accessible:
 - (a) the area of alterations itself (if alterations alter the h/c accessible route, they must be upgraded)
 - (b) an accessible path of travel from the primary method of arrival to the primary entrance.
 - (c) the primary entrance
 - (d) an accessible path of travel from the primary entrance to the area of alteration
 - (e) restrooms serving the area of alteration (at least one male restroom and one female restroom or at least one unisex restroom)
 - (f) drinking fountains and public telephones (if provided)
 2. If the total cost of the proposed alterations is less than \$100,000, you may claim an unreasonable hardship. In that case, you are only required to spend an additional 20% for accessible alterations; above the total cost of the non-handicap alterations. The handicap alterations must be done in the following order, (as the 20% funds allow):
 - (a) the parking area or primary method of arrival to the site
 - (b) an accessible path of travel from the primary method of arrival to the primary entrance
 - (c) an accessible entrance
 - (d) an accessible route from the primary entrance to the area of alteration
 - (e) at least one accessible restroom for each gender
 - (f) accessible telephones and drinking fountains, if provided
 - (g) additional accessible elements as possible within the 20% funds limit
- Separate permits are required for **any** electrical, plumbing, and mechanical work. Plan check (engineered drawings) is/ are required for any work above the following thresholds:
 1. Electrical plan check (engineered drawings) are required if any of the following thresholds are met: (please note: elect. contractors may design work they will install themselves)
 - (a) new area of work is over 5000 s.f.
 - (b) new service or panel of over 600 amps
 - (c) commercial kitchen renovation
 - (d) increased total lighting wattage (change of hardwired fixtures, not bulbs)

- (e) relocating or replacing over 50% of the fixtures
- 2. Mechanical plan check (engineered drawings) are required if any of the following thresholds are met: (please note: mech. contractors may design work they will install themselves)
 - (a) installing a new smoke evacuation system
 - (b) installing a new commercial kitchen hood
 - (c) installing a new environmental exhaust system (ex.; garage ventilation)
 - (d) installing or replacing a 3 ton or larger hvac system
 - (e) modifying an existing system in a work area of over 5000 s.f.
 (note: new Title 24 energy calculations will be required for any of the above)
- 3. Plumbing plan check (engineered drawings) are required if any of the following thresholds are met: (please note: mech. contractors may design work they will install themselves)
 - (a) work area is over 5000 s.f.
 - (b) installation of a medical gas system
 - (c) installing a rain water/ storm drain system
 - (d) installing a sump pump or sewage ejector
 - (e) installing more than 7 fixtures
 - (f) installing a gas system over 2" in pipe size
 - (g) installing a grease trap or interceptor for grease, sand, oil, or flammable liquids

Redevelopment Division

- Facade design guidelines or other requirements may apply to your building, please consult with the Redevelopment Division for further information.

Cultural Affairs/ Public Art and Historic Preservation 310-253-5776

- Public Art Requirement
 1. If the total cost of a tenant improvement/ commercial renovation project exceeds \$250,000; fulfilling the City Public Art Requirement is required prior to occupying the commercial space. There are two options, please see below.
 2. If the total cost of a new commercial building exceeds \$500,000, fulfilling the City Public Art Requirement is required prior to occupying the commercial space. There are two options:
 - (a) Pay 1% of the total project valuation into the City Art Fund.
 - (b) Commission original, site-specific artwork with a minimum valuation of 1% of the total project valuation. This option requires approval by the City Cultural Affairs Commission, and will also require input and approval from City Planning and Cultural Affairs staff. Please consult the Cultural Affairs staff for procedures.
 3. Please note: total project valuation includes the cost of all work within the property lines or tenant separation walls, including all site work, utilities, mechanical, electrical, and plumbing work. Project valuation will be reviewed by City staff and detailed supporting documentation from the permit applicant may be required.
- Historic Preservation

There are many buildings and structures in Culver City that have local or national historic designations. If this is the case involving your project, there are detailed restrictions as to what types of alterations or improvements may be made to the building. All work will require review by Culver City Cultural Affairs and may require review by the Cultural Affairs Commission. Extra review time should be anticipated. You may also be required to hire your own qualified historic consultant to prepare a comprehensive review of all proposed alterations.