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## Building Division Informational Handout

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### Express Plan Check Requirements - Commercial Projects Building Review

Handout No. 2-5  
Published: 8/21/00  
Revised 7-27-15  
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Express Plan Check is by appointment for projects that can be thoroughly reviewed, approved, and processed in 1-hr to 1.5 hours at a rate 1.5 times current regular review fees.

#### Regular Commercial Express Plan Check Criteria

To facilitate efficient and complete review processing, concurrent review of building and sub-trade plans is greatly encouraged. 2 complete plan sets are required for Building, 1 additional set for Plumbing & Mechanical and 1 additional set for Electrical, (4 sets total). The following projects may qualify:

- Tenant improvements involving retail use where the total floor area is less than 1,500 square feet.
- Tenant improvements involving office space where the total tenant floor area is less than 10,000 square feet.
- Tenant improvements involving restaurant use where the total dining area is less than 750 square feet. Restaurants trying to use Express services may not include any work in kitchen areas. Projects with work proposed in the food prep, kitchen area, cooler area, and/or food storage **do not qualify** for Express review services.

#### Enhanced Commercial Express Plan Check Criteria

- Tenant Improvements of existing retail use that include minor structural calculations and have a tenant floor area less than 10,000 square feet.
- Tenant Improvements of general office or R&D office type space, that do not have labs involved in project scope. Can have structural calculations and a floor area no more than 20,000 square feet.
- Tenant Improvements to existing permitted restaurant use's with no increase in occupancy designation, or addition of square feet to the existing space area, and the project is only taking place in the customer service area. All restaurant TI's require prior approval from Santa Clara County Health Dept and San Jose Water Pollution Control.
- Cell Site Installation including battery systems with a quantity of electrolyte less than 50 gallons. Battery system must be located outside and no hazardous materials or specialized installation of additional equipment. For example no backup generator systems,
- Rooftop mechanical equipment with a maximum installed weight of 2,500lbs, and a CFM rating not greater than 2000 cubic feet of air flow. System refrigerant size must be below threshold that requires a permit from Hazardous material team. If not sure of this requirement please call 408-535-3555 and ask to speak to one of the fire dept staff for assistance with this determination.

Express Plan Review Services are all performed by appointment only. An Appointment can be obtained by phoning 408-535-3555 during business hours Monday through Friday.

#### The following must be completed prior to your appointment:

- Permit Application form completed by the expected applicant. See our [Forms Page](#)
- Completion of the Construction Cost Documentation. See [Commercial Construction Cost Document](#)

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**Other Approvals and Clearances**

Prior to submitting for *Express Plan Check*, approvals and/or clearances from other public agencies or City Departments may be required. Clearances may be required as follows:

- A Public Works clearance is often required. Public Works can be reached at 408-535-3555
- Changes to the building exterior require review and approval by the Planning Division. The Planning Division is located at City Hall. They can be reached at 408-535-3555
- Projects containing fire sprinkler or alarm alterations will require review and approval from the Fire Department. They can be reached at 408-535-3555
- Some projects, such as food handling facilities and public swimming pools require approval from the Health Department. For Health Department requirements, call 408-918-3400
- Some projects may require approval from the Water Pollution Control District. They can be reached at 408-945-3000

**Tenant improvement plan submittal requirements should include the following:**

Three sets of plans must be submitted for building plan check review.

It is recommended you use a minimum of 18" x 24" and maximum of 24" x 36" and weighing no more than 25 pounds. Plans must be drawn to scale (1/4" per foot is the minimum scale). Plans shall be wet stamped and wet signed by the architect and engineer of record. Two sets of structural calculations are required when structural alterations are proposed and both sets shall be wet stamped and wet signed by the design professional.

**Two sets of energy calculations are required when alterations are made to:**

- The HVAC system (except for equipment replacement) or
- For Lighting changes (except for replacement of fixtures) or
- For Building envelope changes

The submittal set should contain a scope of work declaration; a site map that includes parking; plans showing the alteration location; existing and proposed floor plans; an analysis of occupancy groups; type of construction; an exiting analysis and disabled access details. Submittals should also include roof plan, sections, elevations, accessibility features and other applicable details.

If the project meets the criteria outlined, the Building Division staff will perform the plan check while the applicant waits. The Express Plan Check process will result in issuance of a permit or a list of required plan revisions.

If **minor changes** are needed, they can be revised at the time of express plan check. The registered engineer, architect, or a representative who is authorized to make red-marks and changes to the plans must be present during the Express Plan Check to expedite approval of plans with minor revisions.

If **major changes** are needed to the plans, the plans will have to be re-drawn. In some instances, due to special circumstances and/or complexity of a project, it may be necessary to take the plans in for a regular plan check.

Examples of projects that **do not qualify** for *Express Plan Check* are:

- New buildings
- Additions

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Examples of projects that **do not qualify** for *Express Plan Check* continued:

- Alterations to A-3 occupancies, such as a church or restaurant with an occupant load greater than 50
- Buildings damaged by fire, wind, earthquake or vehicle collision
- Work in basements and mezzanines
- Re-roofing or any roof/mansard work
- Retaining wall or sound wall more than 9' high
- Roof equipment units more than 800 lbs.
- Change of occupancy/character to a higher hazard where the building has no fire sprinklers
- Where hazardous materials exceed the amount allowed by the UBC
- Buildings with change of use from an R-3 occupancy to a B occupancy
- Buildings with atriums
- Tenant improvements on buildings qualified as Historical buildings or structures under National, State or Local Historical registers
- Code Enforcement work - For example: Legalizing work that was done without permits
- Projects with Alternate Materials and Methods of Construction

Additional information can be obtained by visiting our website at [www.sanjoseca.gov/building](http://www.sanjoseca.gov/building), or by calling our call center at 408-535-3555 and asking to speak with our Engineer on call for questions. You will be transferred to the person assigned for this service and may need to leave a voicemail for them. In addition you may visit the Building Division in City Hall at 200 East Santa Clara Street. Our hours are 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. with limited service between 12:00 p.m. and 1:00 p.m.