

New Businesses

The purpose of this brochure is to provide owners or operators of new businesses with information on permits and approvals required by the Planning and Building Department prior to operating a business.

"This information is provided for convenience only and is not in substitution of applicable City Bylaws or Provincial or Federal Codes or laws. You must satisfy yourself that any existing or proposed construction or other works complies with such Bylaws, Codes or other laws."

Preliminary Plan Approval

New businesses often need Preliminary Plan Approval from Burnaby's Planning Department before a City Business Licence or a Building Permit can be obtained. Preliminary Plan Approval is generally required when the use of a business space is changed, a property is developed, or building additions are undertaken. Some examples requiring preliminary plan approval include:

- changing the use of a business from warehousing to manufacturing;
- adding additional seats to a restaurant;
- increasing the number of tables in a pool hall;
- opening a new car dealership;
- changing landscaping or parking; and
- exterior and interior modifications to the building.

Preliminary Plan Approval is not required for improvements or alterations to a building within the property lines, provided they do not materially affect the external appearance, increase the density of occupancy, or change the use of the building. The maintenance of an existing building, structure or use also does not require Preliminary Plan Approval. For more information, contact the Planning Department at 604-294-7400.

Permits

Interior or exterior construction, or changing the occupancy of a business may require a building, electrical, plumbing or gas permit. For information regarding these permits, please call the Building Department at 604-294-7130.

Pre-Inspection

The Building Department provides a pre-inspection service for business operators, building owners and property managers who are considering opening a business in Burnaby. For a fee, a building inspector will inspect any commercial premise(s) and identify potential problems that may affect their ability to obtain approval to operate a business. For more information about this service, please call 604-294-7130.

Sign Approval

Signs advertising a place of business require City approval and may also require building and electrical permits. Structural or electrical alterations to an existing sign will require approval and permits.

Please note that the following signs are prohibited in Burnaby:

- portable signs (which include inflatable and balloon signs)
- flashing signs
- any sign that obstructs any part of a doorway or fire escape
- balcony signs and signs mounted or supported on a balcony
- animated signs
- billboard signs
- revolving signs

Portable signs, including sandwich board signs placed on any public sidewalk or highway, are not permitted by bylaw and can be impounded at the owner's expense.

For more information about signs and the sign approval process, please contact our Bylaw Technician at 604-294-7524.

Other Approvals

The permits and approvals mentioned in this brochure are requirements of the Planning and Building Department only. Other City, Provincial and Federal Government Departments may have additional requirements that must be met before a business can legally operate.

| It is suggested that all requirements be confirmed prior to signing a lease.

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