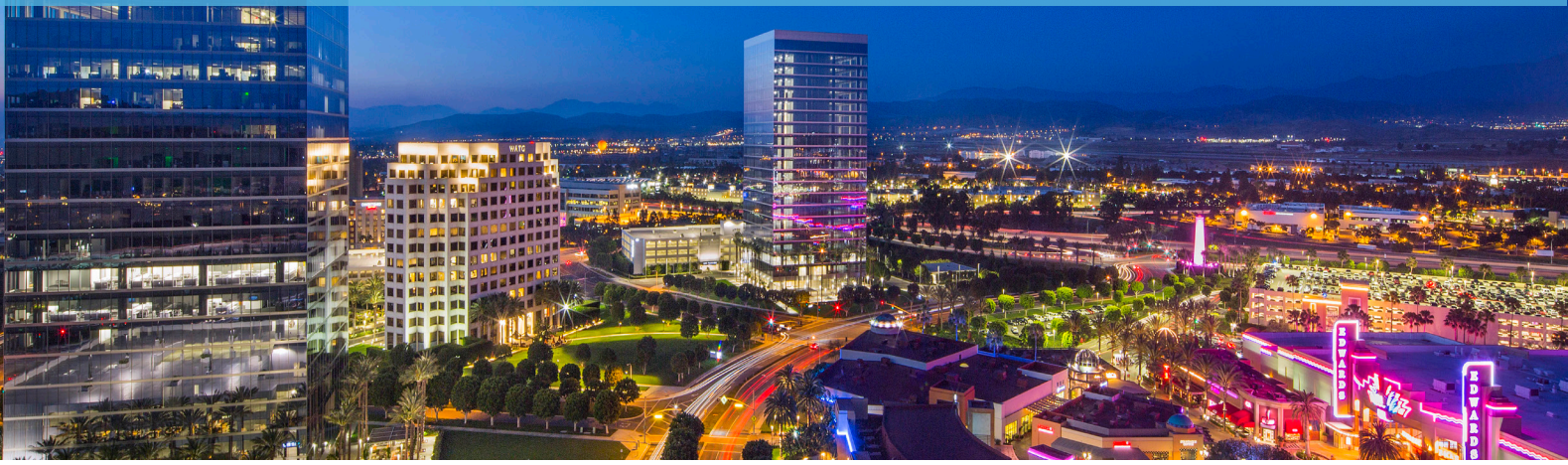




CITY OF IRVINE

CALIFORNIA



A Guide to Tenant Improvements

A tenant improvement involves an alteration to the interior or exterior of an existing building. This can consist of adding new electrical, plumbing, or fixtures; moving or adding walls; or an extensive construction remodel. Whether the alterations are big or small, the Development Assistance Center (DAC) is here to help you navigate the process!

Note: This should be used as a general tool to help you broadly assess how to navigate tenant improvements in Irvine, not as a direct step-by-step guide.

Select an Appropriate Site

Three criteria must be met in order for a business to operate at a particular site:

- Zoning: The business or “use” must be in a location (zoning district) for which it is properly zoned.
- Land Use Entitlement: The business or “use” must generate the right amount of traffic.
- Parking: The site must have sufficient parking (per the [City’s Parking Standards](#)).

You can look up zoning district by address using our [Online Parcel Search](#) or refer to the [Zoning Map](#). However, we recommend contacting the DAC Planning Team to confirm a site is compatible with your business or “use” because many properties have their own unique requirements.

Learn more about locating a business [here](#).

Determine Whether You Need a Permit

In general, permits are required for most construction or repair activities regulated by code. Before starting your project, [review the list of activities that do not require a building permit](#). Although these activities do not require a permit, many are still subject to other standards that you should be aware of before proceeding.

For projects requiring a permit, the City offers a streamlined, all-electronic plan review process. With [Irvine READY!](#), planning, building, and engineering reviews, and fees are all managed through the web. Permit applications for office, industrial, and retail tenant improvements must be submitted via [Irvine READY!](#)

Identify the Correct Application and Required Documentation

Visit our [***Building Permits and Inspections***](#) webpage for guidance on choosing the correct permit application type. Some types of applications will require more details and documentation, where others may be less complex. Moreover, some applications also require concurrent review and approval from outside agencies (e.g., the Irvine Ranch Water District, Orange County Health Care Agency, etc.).

Exhaustive guidance for obtaining a permit for commercial/industrial tenant improvement projects can be found [***here***](#). Refer to this [***E-Submittal Checklist and Questionnaire***](#) to view the documents that will (at a minimum) need to be submitted, alongside plans and drawings, for these projects.

If you have questions about the requirements for your specific use, contact the DAC Permitting Team.

Submit Your Application

Submit your completed application via [***Irvine READY!***](#)

Plans submitted in connection with a permit application will be reviewed by the City Plan Check staff for compliance with the provisions of all City adopted codes and regulations, and for compliance with the State mandated energy conservation standards and handicapped accessibility regulations.

Receive Approval or a Correction Report

The permit application may be approved after the first review, or the permit applicant will receive a plan check correction report indicating all issues that need to be clarified or corrected before the plan can be processed for permit issuance. There are different timelines for different permits, depending on the complexity of the review process. For general timeframes, [***click here***](#).

Most fees are paid in advance. Review the [***City's Fee Schedule***](#) to identify the types of fees that may apply to your project.

Resources

If you need additional assistance creating and submitting your project, the Community Development Department offers in-person appointments. Schedule yours [***here***](#).

You can also utilize the contact information below to make inquiries.

Code Enforcement

949-724-6326 | [*codeenforcement@cityofirvine.org*](mailto:codeenforcement@cityofirvine.org)

Inspections

949-724-6396

Permits

949-724-6313 | [*cdac@cityofirvine.org*](mailto:cdac@cityofirvine.org)

Planning and Zoning

949-724-6308 | [*planning@cityofirvine.org*](mailto:planning@cityofirvine.org)