



Speculative Buildings and Shell Buildings

BP-79

Department of Building and Planning

What is a speculative building?

Generally assumes a code compliant single or multi-tenant structure with tenant/interior spaces established by associated demising walls and other improvements. Restroom facilities are typically constructed and rough plumbed with wall and floor finishes applied and may, or may not have the associated plumbing fixtures installed. HVAC/ductwork and area lighting generally roughed in for each space, suspended ceilings may or may not be complete. Fire sprinkler systems/alarms are installed (if required), and required exits are established. Essentially, the space or spaces are ready to occupy with only minor tenant improvements necessary for occupancy. A Certificate of Occupancy will be issued upon completion and approval of the primary structure, with **separate permits** (generally Minor Alteration or Safety Inspection) and Certificates of Occupancy required for each tenant space (see BP-47 *Tenant Improvements*, BP-32 *Safety Inspections*).

What is a shell building?

This category contemplates the exterior structure (shell) with code compliant exterior finishes installed. A portion of the interior may be finished for a tenant under a separate permit during the original construction. The structure is self-supporting and capable of withstanding weather/seismic/wind elements as required with only those interior load bearing or bracing elements necessary for this purpose. The outer shell elements may contain insulation materials and an interior concrete slab may be present. Interior spaces typically lack improvements such as; tenant demising walls, restroom facilities, lighting, HVAC systems, or a completely defined exiting plan. Tenant improvements necessary for occupancy approval are of a nature that would require an Alteration/TI permit along with ancillary plumbing, mechanical, or fire permits. Minor Alteration permits are *not applicable* for these structures *unless* an alteration is taking place in a previously occupied and approved tenant space. A Certificate of Occupancy is not issued for this type of structure, but rather a "letter of completion". Improved *tenant* spaces are issued Certificates of Occupancy under *separate permits* authorizing the specific work for that space. (see BP-47 *Tenant Improvements*)

When are permits required?

- A building permit is required for all speculative or shell buildings.
- Separate permits are required for each tenant space. A permit is necessary for the initial tenant occupying the space and for subsequent tenants for improvements, alterations, and/or changes in tenancy. (see BP-47 *Tenant Improvements*)
- Permits for plumbing, mechanical, fire suppression and/or alarm systems are issued separately for the building as a whole, and individually for each tenant space as necessary.

All permits are required prior to commencement of work.

How do I apply for a permit?

To submit an application for a speculative building or a shell building, substantial information and detailed drawings are required which are not discussed in this brochure. For detailed application requirements please refer to informational brochure BP-33 *Commercial Site Plans and Construction Drawings*.

What steps will be taken to process the building permit?

Initially the vast majority of commercial projects are reviewed at a *Preapplication* meeting (see BP-26 *PreApplication Conference Information and Guidelines*). The intent of these meetings is to identify the information necessary to submit an application for your specific proposal, provide information relative to any conditions of approval from a land use decision and provide preliminary code information. Usually the meetings are held prior to the submittal of a formal application, but we can schedule one upon receipt of an application if one was not conducted previously. At the time of application, Department staff will be assigned to help coordinate processing and issuance of the permit. Documents, site/landscape/drainage plans and other information will be circulated by the project coordinator for review and comment by the appropriate reviewing department/agencies. The department/agencies will provide you with their individual comments. Substantial changes may require re-submittal of revised plans.

How long will the application process take?

Proposals will be reviewed for compliance with applicable codes and routed to agencies with interest. Allow from one to three weeks minimum for review and response time or permit issuance.

Some items that LEAD TO DELAYS in the process are:

- Incomplete or illegible drawings, plans, or documents that do not illustrate compliance with minimum code requirements. (Providing complete and detailed site plans and construction drawings will greatly assist the review process).
- Accessibility requirements that are not addressed.
- Changes to space conditioning or lighting – NREC Special Plan Examiner/Special Inspector (SPE/SI) contracts are required.
- Critical materials lists where applicable.

How much will the permit cost?

Fees for all permits are based on Spokane County Building and Planning's "Cost Recovery Fee Methodology". The adopted fee schedules reflect the costs to the Department for: *processing the permit, providing land use review, plan review, and inspections* of the project. Please refer to the current fee schedule (BP-4), or consult with Department staff.

Other Brochures that may be helpful

- BP-1 Commercial Permits
- BP-2 Demolition Permits
- BP-4 Permit Fee Schedule
- BP-8 Sign Permits
- BP-19 Erosion and Sediment Control
- BP-19a Erosion and Sediment Control Techniques
- BP-19b Erosion and Sediment Control Plan Requirements
- BP-26 Preapplication Conference Information and Guidelines
- BP-27 Critical and Hazardous Materials
- BP-29 Public Assemblies
- BP-31 Rules, Regulations, and Red Tape
- BP-33 Site Plans and Construction Drawings
- BP-39 Addressing
- BP-40 Information Directory
- BP-41 Commercial Change of Use
- BP-45 Slopes and Setbacks
- BP-46 Grading and Parking Lot Permits
- BP-46a Typical Grading Permits
- BP-47 Tennant Improvements
- BP-48 Non-Residential Energy Code
- BP-51 Application Submittal Requirements
- BP-52 Permit Processing Time Savers
- BP-53 Project Planning Checklist
- BP-55 Certificate of Occupancy

For more information or an appointment contact:

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