

# APPLYING FOR A COMMERCIAL REMODEL BUILDING PERMIT – TIPS FOR SUCCESS



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## ENGAGE WITH THE CITY BEFORE SIGNING A LEASE OR PURCHASE AGREEMENT

- Check with the City to ensure that your property meets all regulatory requirements. Failing to do so can result in unexpected costs and potential delays in opening your business.
- Contact the **Zoning Department at [zoning@capecoral.gov](mailto:zoning@capecoral.gov) or by phone at 239-574-0553** to verify that the property's zoning classification aligns with your intended use.
- Contact the **Fire Department at 239-242-3264** for a courtesy inspection by a fire inspector. A preliminary inspection will help determine if your property complies with fire code requirements and ensure your space meets all necessary safety standards.
- Contact **Economic Development at [apetersen@capecoral.gov](mailto:apetersen@capecoral.gov) and 239-574-0443** for business assistance and ombudsman services.

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## CONSIDER YOUR LEASE TERMS

- Failing to review and negotiate terms such as code required upgrades and construction deficiencies can lead to unfavorable outcomes and costly improvements at your expense.
- For more info on **Cape Coral Economic incentive opportunities, scan QR code** or visit [capecoral.gov](http://capecoral.gov) and go to Departments – Office of Economic Development – Business Assistance – Incentives
- Confirm Existing Plans - It's essential to verify that the plans on file with the City match the current layout of the space. If you're unsure, you can submit a public records request to obtain existing building documents.



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## KNOWING YOUR NEIGHBORING UNITS

- A change of occupancy refers to a change in the intended use/occupancy or function of a building/unit from the existing permitted occupancy type, where current building and fire codes may mandate higher standards for safety, accessibility, structural integrity, fire protection, means of egress, or ventilation compared to the existing conditions, as outlined in Chapter 10 of the Existing Florida Building Code (FBC-2023), the Florida Building Code (FBC-2023), the 2023 Accessibility Code, and the 2023 Florida Fire Prevention Code, 8th edition.
- Past usage and the nature of neighboring businesses might impact your operations and building and fire code compliance requirements.
- If zoning requires you to have a **Change of Occupancy, scan the QR code and search "Change of Occupancy."**



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## APPLY FOR A BUSINESS TAX RECEIPT (BTR)

- When opening, relocating, or expanding a business, a City of Cape Coral Business Tax Receipt is required.
- **Scan the QR code for more information and to apply for a BTR** or visit [capecoral.gov](http://capecoral.gov) and go to Departments - City clerk – Business Tax Receipts - EnerGov Citizen Self-Service (CSS) – Apply



For additional business resources and assistance please call or email City of Cape Coral Economic & Business Development Office at [apetersen@capecoral.gov](mailto:apetersen@capecoral.gov) or 239-574-0443.

Visit our website at [capecoral.gov](http://capecoral.gov)



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## HIRE A QUALIFIED COMMERCIAL CONTRACTOR

- Residential and Commercial building Fire Codes are not the same. An experienced commercial contractor will be familiar with local codes and regulations, helping you avoid costly mistakes.

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## REMODEL PERMITS: WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

- If you're planning a remodel, here are the key steps and considerations to ensure a smooth permitting process:
  - Any of the following changes typically require a remodel permit:
    - Adding or removing interior walls
    - Installing partition walls
    - Modifying plumbing, electrical, or HVAC systems
    - Structural changes
  - Special Flood Hazard Areas
    - If the property is located within a Special Flood Hazard Area (SFHA), any work—including painting, flooring, cabinetry, or non-structural updates—requires a permit, regardless of scope.
  - Change of Occupancy
    - If the remodel involves a change in occupancy type (e.g., from retail to office, or from storage to restaurant), this must be part of the remodel permit process.
- For guidance or help submitting your permit, contact the City's permitting department.

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## VERIFY THAT YOU ARE APPLYING FOR THE CORRECT PERMIT

- Applying for an incorrect permit is a common mistake that can lead to delays and complications.
- Thoroughly review the permit requirements for your specific project type. The Permit Document Center and Building & Common Permits page offer helpful resources for applying for permits.
- The Permit Document Center can be found by visiting [capecoral.gov](http://capecoral.gov) and navigating to Departments - Development services - Permitting services division - Permit document center. You may also scan the QR code.
- The Building & Common Permits can be found by visiting [capecoral.gov](http://capecoral.gov) and navigating to Departments - Development services - Permitting services division - Building & Common Permits building & common permits. You may also scan the QR code.

Permit Document Center



Building & Common Permits

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## ALLOW FOR ADEQUATE LEAD TIME TO OBTAIN PERMITS

- To aid with your planning, we recommend reviewing the Development Services Monthly Report found at Building and Permit Reports. This report provides a detailed account of the average number of days it takes for reviews at different stages of the permitting process.
- To verify permitting requirements, contact the **City's Permitting Division at [permits@capecoral.gov](mailto:permits@capecoral.gov) or by phone at (239) 574-0546.**

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