



COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT
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CHANGE OF USE OR OCCUPANCY CLASSIFICATION

The Community Development Department encompasses several divisions, including Planning and Building, who are responsible for the application of specific codes adopted by the city. The Planning Division primarily deals with the city's zoning and land use codes, while the Building Division manages building, plumbing, mechanical and associated codes. Change of use requirements are determined by the Planning Division, while change of occupancy review is through the Building Division.

Change of Use relates to the zoning of the site and the type of uses allowed by the zoning code. A use may be allowed in a specific zone but still be subject to a review process. If the proposed use will have a greater impact than the existing or previous use due to traffic generation, parking requirements, hours of operation, etc., it may be considered a Change of Use and require a separate land use review process.

A Change of Use analysis is required if the proposed use of a building or tenant space is not included in the same paragraph of the *Federal Way Revised Code* (FWRC) Use Zone Charts as a previous or current use. For multi-tenant sites, if the proposed use exists or has existed anywhere on the site, no analysis will be required. This review is to determine if the existing site and improvements can accommodate the proposed use, for example if adequate on-site parking is available.

To request a Change of Use analysis, complete an application form and submit it to the Permit Center along with a review fee (contact the Permit Center for current fees). The analysis will be performed as expediently as possible; usually within two weeks of submittal.

Change of Occupancy is based on the *International Building Code's* occupancy classifications, which determine the level of fire and life safety requirements for the type of use (such as required exits, accessibility, fire resistive construction, etc.). If the proposed use is subject to more restrictive code requirements than the previous or existing use, it is considered a Change of Occupancy classification. A new Certificate of Occupancy that accurately describes the use and occupancy classification of the tenant area will be required prior to issuance of a Federal Way Business License.

If tenant improvements are being made to accommodate the new occupant, any upgrades necessitated by a change of occupancy can be addressed during the design and plan review process, prior to issuance of a building permit. Upon final inspection and approval of the project, a Certificate of Occupancy will be provided for the new tenant.

To request a Change of Occupancy classification (when no improvements requiring a permit are proposed) submit the information requested on the attached checklist to the Permit Center. The information will be reviewed for compliance with *International Building Code* requirements for the proposed occupancy classification, including accessibility. In complex cases, the city may require the plans to be prepared by a licensed design professional.

If the building or space meets code requirements for the proposed use in its existing condition, a new Certificate of Occupancy will be provided for the proposed use. If modifications are required to bring the space into compliance with appropriate codes, a separate building permit will be required.

CHANGE OF OCCUPANCY SUBMITTAL REQUIREMENTS

(Not required for projects submitting building permit applications for Tenant Improvements)

- Completed permit application form.
- Check, cash, or Visa/MasterCard for applicable fees (based on two hours at current hourly rate). Additional fees may be required if the review process exceeds two hours.
- SITE PLAN** showing:
 - North arrow
 - Property lines
 - Building footprint(s)
 - Location of project (tenant space)
 - Accessible parking and barrier-free access to and from building entrance
 - Minimum plan size of 11" x 17"
- FLOOR PLAN(S)**
 - Must be drawn to scale ($\frac{1}{4}'' = 1'$ minimum), dimensioned, and labeled
 - Minimum plan size of 11" x 17"
 - Provide square footage of building or tenant area. Use the *International Building Code (IBC)* construction type for building and identify all applicable codes by name and edition
 - MUST INCLUDE**
 - ⇒ All rooms shown and labeled with size and intended use
 - ⇒ Accessible path of travel
 - ⇒ Accessible restrooms
 - ⇒ Hallways/corridors
 - ⇒ Location of all exits, indicating where they lead
 - ⇒ Door and hardware schedules

All projects that require plan review must be submitted electronically. Please visit our website at cityoffederalway.com/page/permit-center to request a document upload link and obtain information on how to successfully prepare your application materials for electronic submittal and review.