



Planning Services Division

3675 Mt. Diablo Boulevard, Suite 210

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<http://www.ci.lafayette.ca.us>

New Business Process

For new businesses...welcome to Lafayette! For those relocating, we're so glad that you stayed! The Planning Services Division looks forward to working with you to establish your business here.

How is my use defined?

The first step to establish a business in Lafayette is to determine how your use is defined. The City has broken down common uses into [Activity Classifications](#), which are defined in Section 6-401 of the Lafayette Municipal Code ("LMC"). The [Planning Services Division](#) will verify which activity classification is the best fit for your use. You may need to provide a description of your use and information about its operation for this verification.

Is my use a permitted land use?

The next step is to see whether your use is allowed in the [zoning district](#). You can find your zoning district by searching the property address through the City's [Community View map](#) or you may check with the Planning Services Division to determine the property's zoning designation and if your intended use is allowed. Each zoning designation lists uses that are permitted by right, and uses that are permitted through approval of a [Land Use Permit](#). The Planning Commission will review and approve all Land Use Permits.

Is there adequate parking?

Once the activity classification has been determined (and confirmed with the Planning Services Division), you need to determine whether the site (parcel) has adequate parking for your proposed use and all existing uses. The Lafayette [Parking Ordinance](#) provides a breakdown of required parking for each Activity Classification ([Section 6-604c LMC](#)).

Properties in multifamily and commercial zoning districts can reduce the number of parking spaces required through mitigations, sharing parking during off-peak hours, or payment of in-lieu fees, as described in the Parking Ordinance ([Section 6-606 LMC](#)). Limited reductions may be granted by the Zoning Administrator, but for larger reductions, you may need to request a [Variance](#) for review and approval by the Planning Commission.

You will need to provide the Planning Services Division a parking calculation table (see example below) to show whether the site has adequate parking. The property owner or landlord may be able to assist you with this information.

Address	Business Name	Use Classification	Gross sq. ft.	Parking Ratio (Sec.6-604c) Spaces per 1,000 sq. ft.	Parking Required
1234 Mt. Diablo Blvd.	Italian restaurant	Full Service Restaurant	1,488	10	14.88
1234 Mt. Diablo Blvd.	Catering	General food sales activity	607	3.3	2.00
1234 Mt. Diablo Blvd.	Book Store	General retail sales activity	623	3.3	2.06
1234 Mt. Diablo Blvd.	Beauty Salon	General personal service	580	3.3	1.91
1234 Mt. Diablo Blvd.	Offices	General commercial sales	1,059	3.3	3.49
Total Spaces Required					24.34
Previous Site Reduction due to PDP or other Exception (Please provide documentation)					0
Adjusted Spaces Required					24 Spaces
Parking Provided On-Site					25 Spaces

Note: Additional reductions to the parking requirement may be made through mitigations and exceptions as described in [Section 6-606 LMC](#). A more detailed parking table template with these options is available through the Planning Services Division. If more parking is required than can be provided on-site, you can work with the property owner or landlord to identify and implement appropriate mitigations.

Will there be exterior / signage modifications?

Any exterior modification in commercial and multifamily zoning districts requires [Design Review](#). Depending on the scope and scale, this can be reviewed and approved by planning staff, by the Zoning Administrator, or by the Design Review Commission. This includes exterior colors (e.g. re-painting a building), materials, lighting, landscaping, etc. Our goal is to have the lowest level of review necessary to obtain compliance with local codes and design guidelines.

Any new or modified signage requires a [Sign Permit](#). Again, depending on the scope and scale, this can be reviewed and approved by the Planning Services Manager, or by the Design Review Commission. Sign Permits require submittal of an application, processing [fee](#), and generally take between 4-20 weeks to process depending on the scope of the signage. Feel free to contact the Planning Services Division for preliminary review and to get a sense as to what your timing and process might be based on your proposal.

For your reference; here are some helpful tips on signage from our [Sign Ordinance](#):

- A temporary sign is allowed for a new business without a sign permit, with the following provisions:
 - maximum total area of 30 sq. ft.
 - maximum of 90 days

- maximum of 1 sign on each principal frontage
- A portable, mobile or A-board sign is prohibited.
- A banner sign requires design review approval from the Design Review Commission.

Is a business license required?

No. The City of Lafayette does not have a requirement for a Business License at this time. For many years, the City had a Business Registration Program, which was discontinued July 1, 2006. Please check with the [City of Lafayette](#) to ensure that this has not changed.

Are there other agencies to contact for more information?

This handout is intended to provide the City of Lafayette's zoning regulations for establishing a business. Listed below are other agencies that may have additional regulations or information to help you establish your business.

- ◇ California Business Portal: www.calbusiness.ca.gov
- ◇ California Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control: <http://www.abc.ca.gov/>
- ◇ Contra Costa County Environmental Health: <http://cchealth.org/groups/eh/>
- ◇ Contra Costa County Small Business Development Center: <http://contracostasbdc.com/>
- ◇ Lamorinda Building Inspection Department: <http://ccccounty.us/index.aspx?nid=185>
- ◇ Lafayette Chamber of Commerce: <http://www.lafayettechamber.org/>



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New Business Parking Calculation Table

Location: _____

Activity Classification: _____

Zoning Designation: _____

Permitted Use: by right. by land use permit. not permitted.

Address	Business Name	Use Classification	Gross sq. ft.	Parking Ratio (Sec.6-604c) Spaces per 1,000 sq. ft.	Parking Required
Total Spaces Required					
Previous Site Reduction due to PDP or other Exception (Please provide documentation)					
Adjusted Spaces Required					
Parking Provided On-Site					

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