



Planning Services Division

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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](#). 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. Check with the Planning Services Division to determine the property's zoning designation.

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 6-641 LMC). Now it's up to you to apply these parking ratios. 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. If you have a parking shortage, you may request a [Variance](#) for review and approval by the Planning Commission.

Address	Business Name	Use Classification	sq. ft.	Parking Ratio (Sec.6-641) 1 space per...Sq.ft.	Parking Required
# Mt. Diablo Blvd	Sandwich shop	Specialty food sales activity - Deli	1,015	100	10.15
		Dining area	225	45	5.00
# Mt. Diablo Blvd.	Italian restaurant	Full Service Restaurant	1,488	500	3.00
		Dining area	522	45	11.60
# Mt. Diablo Blvd.	Catering	General food sales activity	607	250	2.43
# Mt. Diablo Blvd.	Book Store	General retail sales activity	623	250	2.49
# Mt. Diablo Blvd.	Beauty Salon	General personal service - Beauty parlor	580	200	2.90
# Mt. Diablo Blvd.	Offices	General commercial sales	1,059	250	4.24
Total					41.81
Parking Provided					45 Stalls

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 stop by the Planning Services Division during counter hours (Monday–Friday from 12–5 pm) for preliminary review and to get a sense as to what your timing and process might be based on your proposal.

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://ca-contracostacounty.civicplus.com/index.aspx?nid=185>
- ◇ Lafayette Chamber of Commerce: <http://www.lafayettechamber.org/>

You can use this section to fill-in information about your business:

Location: _____

Activity Classification: _____

Zoning Designation: _____

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

Address	Business Name	Use Classification	sq. ft.	Parking Ratio (Sec.6-641) 1 space per...Sq.ft.	Parking Required
				Total	
				Parking Provided	