



## **Change of Use/Occupancy Information**

### **When will I need a change of use/occupancy permit?**

You are required to apply for a change of use/occupancy permit anytime you plan on changing the use of a property, the occupancy classification or occupying a vacant tenant space/building. For example, if a retail store becomes a restaurant this is a change in occupancy. This would be looked at as going from a Mercantile M to an Assembly A-2. A change of use would not include a property going from a restaurant use to another restaurant use or from a grocery store to another grocery store. It could however result in a change of use that increases an occupant load which then may or may not trigger other code requirements. When in doubt, contact the Zoning Administrator or Commercial Building Inspector for any questions.

### **Why is a permit required?**

The permit is required in order for the zoning administrator to review to ensure the proposed use is permitted in the zoning district. Additionally, the building inspector checks to determine whether or not the change of use or occupancy would require any changes in order to meet building code requirements. There are in some cases when alterations are required when changing a building from one use to another and also specific life, safety and health requirements specific to each occupancy that may need to be addressed. This permit requirements are intended to avoid issues with zoning and building codes early on in the project, rather than retroactively fixing any issues. In the past, businesses have moved into a building and have invested money into a building or project only to find out that they are violating the zoning code or building code.

### **What happens if my permit application is denied?**

The zoning administrator and/or building inspector will reach out to you to discuss their concerns or issues with the proposed use. Some requests may require a rezoning or conditional use request in order to comply with zoning regulations. Some requests may require additional requirements in order to comply with the building code. There may be some requested uses that are not permitted in the zoning district and cannot be approved. In either case the goal is to alleviate and discuss any issues prior to occupying versus after occupying.