



## INFORMATION BULLETIN / PUBLIC - BUILDING CODE

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# GUIDELINES FOR THE ISSUANCE OF CORE AND SHELL CERTIFICATES OF OCCUPANCY, TEMPORARY CERTIFICATES OF OCCUPANCY, AND PHASED OCCUPANCY FOR COMMERCIAL AND RESIDENTIAL BUILDINGS

The purpose of this bulletin is to establish consistency in issuing a Certificate of Occupancy- (C of O), Temporary Certificates of Occupancy - (TCO), for Leasing Offices and Phased Occupancy for Core and Shell Buildings.

### “CORE and SHELL”

A “Core and Shell” building is defined as a **completed** structure, with required parking provided, where individual commercial and/or residential tenant units may remain undeveloped. This provides the flexibility to complete and occupy a portion of the building, compartmentalized vertically with fire rated walls, without requiring complete build out of the entire structure.

When a Core and Shell permit has been issued, and upon completion of work specified on the approved plans, a C of O, or TCO identifying the approved use may be issued for “Core and Shell” occupancy. The C of O or TCO will include all areas detailed on the Core and Shell plans and permit. Any space or occupancy that is part of the Core and Shell plan and permit must be completed prior to issuance of the C of O.

A “Core and Shell” Certificate of Occupancy, will describe the entire structure, all occupancies and uses to be housed within the structure.

### TENANT IMPROVEMENTS (TI)

Tenant Improvement (TI) permits are required for all areas and occupancies not built out as a part of the Core and Shell. The Core and Shell approved Occupancy for TI's are deemed approved once final inspections and approvals have been granted. The uses and/or occupancy groups for tenant spaces that are not identified by the Core and Shell C of O will require a separate Change of Use permit and TCO or C of O.

## **SALES AND LEASING OFFICES**

Sales and leasing offices may be included in a Core and Shell C of O or TCO if detailed on the approved plans for the Core and Shell.

A sales or leasing office may be approved and a TCO issued prior to Core and Shell approval provided the following minimum requirements are met:

1. All additional required permits for the sales or leasing office shall be obtained, when not a part of the approved plans for the Core and Shell.
2. The sales or leasing office shall be limited to a maximum of 1500 square feet or maximum occupant load of 49.
3. All construction equipment shall be removed from the side of the building to be occupied, including cranes and exterior lifts.
4. The structural framework, exterior elements, cladding and glazing on the sides of the portion of the building to be occupied shall be completed and approved.
5. Access to the sales or leasing space shall be directly adjacent to the public way on ground floor level only.
6. Ingress and egress shall be directed to the public way without interruption or requiring passage through intervening rooms, space or passageways.
7. An approved and fully accessible path of travel for disabled persons including sanitary facilities within the area to be occupied, shall be provided.
8. The required number of parking spaces for the sales or leasing area, including accessible spaces based on code requirements, shall be provided.
9. The sales or leasing office shall be separated from the structure in which it is housed by a complete 2 hour Fire Barrier.
10. A temporary independent fire sprinkler system charged with the domestic water supply shall be provided and approved for the sales and leasing occupancy, as defined by the building permit.
11. An approved, local emergency lighting system shall be provided.
12. Electrical wiring, conduit, energized equipment and appliances shall be permitted and approved.
13. No fuel piping shall be installed or pass through the sales and leasing area.

14. All mechanical and alarm systems within the sales and leasing area shall be connected as required to the main structure prior to any additional phased occupancy approvals.
15. Inspection approval from the Los Angeles Fire Department (LAFD) shall be obtained.

## STOCK AND TRAINING

A request for modification for an approval to stock and train may be considered provided it can be demonstrated, to the satisfaction of the Department, that the activities can be performed in a protected environment exclusive of construction activities. Each situation is to be addressed on a case by case basis.

A request for modification requires approval from all involved LADBS Inspection disciplines and concurrence of LAFD.

## TCO REQUIREMENTS

TCO's for "Core and Shell" Buildings and Non-"Core and Shell" Buildings may be approved for a portion of a building provided the criteria in this policy identified in parts **A**, **B** and **C** are met in the areas to be occupied, and a complete **vertical fire separation** is maintained between the proposed occupied space and incomplete areas **when a phased occupancy is proposed**.

It should be noted that testing of all required mechanical and fire-life safety components and systems will be required to be tested and retested when additional areas are added to a TCO, through completion of the project.

### A. DESIGN AND PLAN CHECK REQUIREMENTS FOR CORE AND SHELL BUILDINGS

1. Applicant shall follow the plan submittal procedure and requirements as listed on LADBS. Information Bulletin P/GI 2023-007 for residential projects or P/GI 2023-10 for commercial projects, as posted on the LADBS website: [www.LADBS.org](http://www.LADBS.org).
2. Applicant shall include the following wording in the work description of the permit application: "Core and Shell for a new (*describe the building here*)."
3. The architectural plans must be completed with the following requirements:
  - a. Note on the cover sheet of the architectural set of plans, "This building is designed as a Core and Shell Building; separate building, electrical and mechanical permits are required for all future residential unit build-outs or commercial tenant space build-outs not detailed on this plan."
  - b. Provide fully dimensioned floor plans with complete architectural details for all public areas including all required exits and public use restrooms located outside the individual commercial tenant spaces or residential units.

- c. Provide the following items on the plans:
  - i. The total number of dwelling units shall be shown (for residential occupancies) on plans and permits.
  - ii. Location of the plumbing fixture outlets for a future bathroom(s).
  - iii. Location of gas fuel system including piping or connectors to fuel burning kitchen appliances.
  - iv. All heating, ventilation and air conditioning systems.
  - v. All smoke/fire dampers as required.
  - vi. All locations for smoke detectors and fire sprinklers.
  - vii. Any methane ventilation systems where applicable.
  - viii. Location of all electrical outlets and lighting, especially when natural lighting is not adequately provided.
  - ix. Any emergency electrical systems when applicable.
  - x. Fire alarm and warning systems where applicable.
  - xi. All Disabled Access requirements.
  - xii. All Sound Rating requirements.
  - xiii. All Title 24, Energy requirements.
  - xiv. All applicable Green Code requirements.
  
- d. Incorporate the following special design considerations in the plans:
  - i. Parking spaces shall be based on the maximum number of habitable rooms for an incomplete, future dwelling unit as approved by the Planning Department.
  - ii. Exiting requirements shall be based on the maximum possible occupant load for all dwelling units or commercial tenant spaces.
  - iii. Number of plumbing fixtures inside a public restroom for a commercial building shall be based on the maximum possible occupant load within commercial tenant spaces.
  - iv. The sizing requirements for the loading of Electrical, Fire Sprinklers, Mechanical and Plumbing Systems shall be based on the maximum square footage or occupant loading for the building and must comply with each applicable Code (Plumbing, Mechanical, Electrical and so forth).

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**B. CONSTRUCTION AND INSPECTION REQUIREMENTS FOR CORE AND SHELL BUILDINGS**

In order for the Department to issue a Core and Shell C of O or TCO, the following items must be complete:

1. **Zoning Requirements** - All Zoning requirements shall be completed and verified. Any determinations issued by the Department of City Planning, or Conditional Use requirements shall be verified and approved.
2. **Building Requirements**
  - a. The structural framework and all elements included on the approved plans i.e. demising walls, roof, floors, stairwells, etc. shall be completed throughout the entire permitted structure.
  - b. Prior to approval and issuance of any Core and Shell C of O or TCO all temporary equipment or apparatus used in the construction process, i.e. cranes, lifts, scaffolding, and temporary utilities shall be removed from the construction site.
  - c. Disabled access requirements, including path of travel from the public way, shall be completed and approved.
  - d. Exiting requirements shall be completed and approved.
  - e. Fire resistive construction shall be completed and approved.
  - f. Floor and Wall assemblies shall be completed with all sound transmission and fire separation requirements in place.
  - g. Methane detection and mitigation systems shall be completed and approved.
  - h. Security requirements shall be completed and approved (on residential occupancies).
  - i. Weatherproofing shall be completed and approved.
  - j. Green code compliance and approvals are required.
  - k. The required public improvements shall be completed and approved by the City Engineer.
3. **Parking Requirements** - All required parking spaces shall be provided, striped and /or identified as prescribed by the approved plans.

**4. Grading**

- a. Final soils compaction report(s) shall be completed and approved (where required).
- b. All site drainage shall be installed and approved.

**5. Electrical**

- a. Areas to be occupied shall have completed and approved feeders, branch circuits, outlets and lighting.
- b. Electrical distribution systems shall be completed and approved.
- c. Emergency electrical systems shall be completed, tested and approved.
- d. Methane detection and mitigation systems shall be completed and approved (where applicable).
- e. Fire alarm and warning systems shall be completed and approved. It should be noted that as tenant improvements occur and the fire alarm and warning system is altered in any way, testing of new areas and retesting of the system as a whole system is required.

**6. Fire Sprinkler**

- a. Fire sprinklers and sprinkler piping systems shall be installed throughout the entire structure. System is to be in service, completed and approved. As new space areas or occupancies are built out as tenant improvements, additional testing for the entire structure shall be required.
- b. Seismic bracing shall be installed and approved.
- c. The portion of the fire alarm system that monitors the fire sprinkler system shall be tested and approved by the Los Angeles Fire Department (LAFD).
- d. Fire Department Connection (FDC) shall be completed and approved.
- e. Fire pump(s) shall be completed, tested and approved as required.
- f. Fire water storage tank(s) (where required), including tank overflow, shall be installed and approved.
- g. Stand pipes shall be flushed, tested and approved.
- h. Pressure regulating fire sprinkler control valves (where required) shall be tested for the required residual flows and approved.

**Note:** A Core and Shell C of O shall not be issued unless the entire structure is fully protected by an approved automatic fire sprinkler system (where required). Approvals from LADBS and LAFD shall be required.

**7. Mechanical**

- a. Heating, Ventilation and Air-Conditioning (HVAC) fan shutdown shall be completed and approved.
- b. Fire alarm panels shall be tested and approved.
- c. Smoke/fire dampers shall be tested and approved.
- d. Stairway pressurization systems shall be tested and approved.
- e. Smoke control systems shall be tested and approved. It should be noted that when new areas are built out any alteration to the approved smoke control system requires testing.
- f. Smoke detectors shall be tested and approved.
- g. Ventilation systems shall be completed, tested and approved (e.g., garage and cooking hood-exhaust systems).
- h. Fuel gas systems shall be completed and approved.
- i. Gas connectors to fuel burning appliances shall be completed and approved.
- j. Methane Ventilation Systems shall be completed and approved (where applicable).

**8. Plumbing**

- a. The maximum fixture unit value shall be calculated for pipe sizing per Code.
- b. Minimum fixtures for occupied or common use spaces shall be installed and approved.
- c. Future residential unit build-outs or commercial tenant space build-outs not detailed on the Core and Shell plans shall have access to Water supply, waste and vent lines.
- d. Site utilities shall be installed and approved, including but not limited to the domestic water distribution system, fuel gas distribution system, sanitary sewer system, rainwater/storm water system and methane system.
- e. Seismic Gas Shut-Off Valves (SGSOV) on the fuel gas system shall be completed

and approved.

9. **Elevators**

- a. Passenger Elevator(s) serving all landings of the building or a combination of two or more elevators that serve all landings of the building shall be installed and approved.
- b. One completed and approved "Construction Use Only" elevator, or one completed and approved elevator, designated for "Construction Use Only" shall be installed.

**Exemption:**

Elevators, under a **Temporary Experimental or Testing Variance** issued by the State of California, Department of Occupational Safety and Health, **shall not be considered compliant** with the requirements of the LAMC for providing a passenger elevator to meet the requirements for a TCO or CO, until such elevator has completed the experimental or testing variance period, and has either been made compliant with the current California Code of Regulations or been granted a Permanent Variance by the State of California, Department of Occupational Safety and Health, Standards Board.

10. **Pressure Vessels**

- a. New boiler or pressure vessel equipment shall be completed and approved.

**C. OTHER AGENCIES WHOSE APPROVALS MAY BE REQUIRED PRIOR TO THE ISSUANCE OF CORE AND SHELL CERTIFICATE OF OCCUPANCY OR NON CORE AND SHELL TCO INCLUDING, BUT NOT LIMITED TO THE FOLLOWING:**

1. Los Angeles City Fire Department (LAFD).
2. Los Angeles County Health Department, Food Service Establishments and Swimming Pool Division.
3. Department of Public Works (DPW):
  - a. Standard Urban Stormwater Mitigation Plan (SUSMP).
  - b. Bureau of Sanitation (BOS) / LID Section of Stormwater.
  - c. Bureau of Engineering (BOE).
  - d. Bureau of Street Services (BSS).
4. Department of Water and Power (DWP).



5. Department of City Planning (DCP).
6. Department of Transportation (DOT).
7. Southern California Gas Company (SCGC).
8. Department of Recreation and Parks (DRP)

**NOTE:** LADBS has the authority to REVOKE a C of O, or TCO when any improvements or construction compromises the basic building life safety systems or devices in such a way that it creates a potential hazard to occupants.