



Checklist for Opening a Gym/Studio/ Fitness Center



Produced by the Santa Monica Alliance

	City of Santa Monica	State of California	USA (Federal)	More Information
Planning and Zoning	X			Zoning and Plan Check (City of Santa Monica Planning Department)
Building and Safety	X	X		Building and Construction Permits (City of Santa Monica Building and Safety Department)
Business License Information	X			Business and Other Licenses (City of Santa Monica Finance Department)
Public Works—Refuse Collection, Recycling, Industrial Waste etc.	X			City of Santa Monica Public Works (Resource Recovery + Recycling, industrial waste, C&D deposit, etc)
California Building Code + Title 24 Energy Efficiency	X			CA Building Code (City of Santa Monica oversees, per state law.)
City Taxes	X			Taxes (City of Santa Monica Finance Department)
Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Compliance	X		X	ADA Regulations (US Department of Justice Civil Rights Division & CA Title 24) (City of Santa Monica requirements, per federal law)
Parking Regulations	X			City of Santa Monica Municipal Code (9.04.10.08.040)
Transportation Impact Fee	X			Transportation Impact Fee (City of Santa Monica)

Questions to Consider For Your New Business:

- ◆ Will I need to apply for a change of use for the property? Was the previous tenant a health club/indoor athletic facility/exercise or dance studio/gym?
- ◆ Will the property require physical alterations to the building or interior, including signage? If so, Planning Approval will be required. Check on permits and timing.
- ◆ Will the existing restrooms and parking meet current ADA and Building & Safety code requirements?
- ◆ How much parking comes with the property? Will I need to provide more parking? Be sure to consider your future customer and employee needs including public transit and bike options. In effort to reduce congestion and improve air quality, businesses with 10+ employees must have a Transportation Management Plan. Will I need to pay a Transportation Impact Fee (TIF)?
- ◆ How many people will I be anticipating? What is the maximum occupancy allowed by the Fire Department?
- ◆ Does my architect/engineer/designer have experience with the City of SM ePlans online submittal

Remember to check the following:

- ◆ Speak to City Planning staff before you sign a lease to confirm that your proposed business use is permitted at the desired property and to confirm what permits are required.
- ◆ When submitting building/tenant improvement plans to the City, remember to pay the Plan Check fee in order to trigger the review process. You will receive an email confirmation once plans have been successfully loaded into ProjectDox.
- ◆ Timing. Building permits can take up to several weeks. For information on permits for major tenant improvements, please refer to the [Plan Check Processing timeline](#). In some cases, multiple plan check review rounds may be required to adequately address the permitting and safety requirements. Also be aware that the review process involves several City departments, including Planning, Recycling and Recovery, and Public Works. Make sure you plan accordingly.
- ◆ Check with the landlord to see if the building has been seismically retrofitted and is up to code. It is the building owner's legal responsibility to update the building to meet the City's Seismic Code Requirements (Santa Monica Municipal Code —SMMC 8.60.030.) .
- ◆ Prior to selecting an architect and building contractor, inquire about their experience in doing similar projects in the City of Santa Monica. Confirm that they are familiar with the City's ePlan submittal process and that your contractor has a City of Santa Monica business license.
- ◆ If the project scope is complex, request a pre-design review meeting with City staff (and be sure to bring your architect/engineer) before submitting the Plan Check, Building Permit applications, and construction documents (please note: there is a fee for this service). For non-complex projects, visit City Hall Public Counter to meet with planning and permit staff prior to submitting plans to ensure you have everything ready to go!
- ◆ Be aware of time limitations. City of SM plan check approvals are good for up to one year. After receiving your building permits, you have 180 days to call for an inspection. Refer to the SMMC 8.08.60 and 8.08.70 for the timelines.

Other Departments and Regulations to Check:

In addition to the checklist on the front page, here are some additional links and resources:

- ◆ [Occupancy Permit](#) (City of Santa Monica)
- ◆ [Signage Guidance](#) (City of Santa Monica)
- ◆ [Transportation Management Plan Ordinance 1604 \(TMP 1604\)](#) - For businesses with 10+ employees (City of Santa Monica)
- ◆ [City of Santa Monica ePlans](#) (Building and Safety electronic plan check)
- ◆ City of [Santa Monica Fire Department](#)
- ◆ City of [Santa Monica Municipal Code](#) (Article 8, Building Requirements)
- ◆ [City of Santa Monica Office of Sustainability and the Environment](#) (Green Building Code)
- ◆ [CA Board of Equalization](#)
- ◆ [California Building Code](#)
- ◆ [California Coastal Commission](#)
- ◆ [CAL-OSHA \(California - Occupational Safety and Health\)](#)
- ◆ [California Mechanical Code](#)
- ◆ [California Plumbing Code](#)
- ◆ [CA Department of Business Oversight](#)
- ◆ [CA Public Utilities Commission](#)
- ◆ [South Coast Air Quality Management District](#)
- ◆ [Title 24—California Building Energy Efficiency Program](#)
- ◆ [US Department of Small Business Administration](#)

THANK YOU FOR CONSIDERING SANTA MONICA FOR YOUR NEW BUSINESS VENTURE! WE ARE AT YOUR SERVICE:

[City of Santa Monica Economic Development Department](#) (Opening a Business [Flowchart](#) + Guide, Local Business [Assistance + Incentives](#))

Santa Monica Alliance: [Passport to Santa Monica](#)

[Santa Monica Chamber of Commerce](#)

[Buy Local Santa Monica Campaign](#) (A free program for all SM businesses)

Santa Monica's [Business Improvement Districts](#) (Downtown SM, Main St, Montana Ave, Pico Blvd)

[Santa Monica Farmers Markets](#)

[Santa Monica's Green Business Programs](#)

Any questions? Please don't hesitate to contact us at (310) 458-8906 (City of SM Economic Development staff) or for the City Hall switchboard to connect to any department listed above, call (310)458-2201.