



ACCELERATED RESTAURANT BUILDING PLAN APPROVAL INFORMATIONAL PACKET

QUESTIONS?

Additional information regarding the permit process can be obtained at the Building and Safety Counter at 630 Garden St., call (805) 564-5485, email: CDBuildingCode@SantaBarbaraCA.gov



INTRODUCTION

Effective January 1, 2026, Assembly Bill 671 (Government Code § 66345 et seq.) allows applicants for internal tenant improvements (TIs) in restaurants to use a qualified professional to certify compliance with building, health, and safety codes. Using a qualified professional certifier provides access to a shortened permit review process.

PROJECT ELIGIBILITY

A project may qualify for private plan certification if it meets all the following requirements:

- The project involves changes to the interior of an existing building.
- The project is for a retail food establishment that prepares, serves, and sells food directly to consumers.
- The project is not a fast-food restaurant, as defined in California Labor Code section 1474, (meaning it is not part of a national chain with more than 60 locations, does not provide full table service, and requires customers to pay before consuming their food).
- The project is not subject to plan review requirements under the California Retail Food Code (Health & Safety Code 114380 et seq.).

PROCESSING GUIDELINES

To use this program, applicants must follow these steps:

STEP 1: PRE-SUBMITTAL MEETING

Before applying, meet with a Building & Safety representative to review the project scope and notify the City that you intend to use a qualified professional certifier under AB 671. Schedule a virtual appointment using the [Appointment Scheduler](#) (*Building Counter > AB671 Pre-Submittal Meeting*).

STEP 2: BUILDING PERMIT APPLICATION

Submit a complete Building Permit (BLD) application using the City's standard submittal procedures. These procedures require applicants to upload all plans, forms, and supporting documents through the Accela Citizen Access (ACA) Portal, pay applicable plan review fees, and ensure all required documents meet the City's electronic document standards.

When completing the application in Accela, applicants must do both of the following:

- **Select the correct record type:** *Restaurant Tenant Improvement (AB 671)* under Building-Commercial Permit.
- **Identify the project as an AB 671 submission:** Clearly state in the Scope of Work that the project is seeking accelerated review through AB 671.

Once fees are paid and the City accepts the case, the application is routed according to the City's permit intake process, which includes distributing the plans concurrently to all applicable reviewing divisions such as Building & Safety, Planning, Fire Prevention, Public Works, and other required disciplines.

STEP 3: SUPPLEMENTAL APPLICATION MATERIALS

Provide the following materials with the application:

- Plans certified by the qualified professional certifier, including stamps on each sheet.
- Proof of compliance with all applicable codes: California Building Standards Code and local amendments, Electrical, Mechanical, Plumbing, Fire, Green Building, Energy, and Existing Building Codes.
- Qualified Professional Certifier Affidavit (page 4).
- Indicate whether County Health Department review is required.
- Information about existing and proposed fixtures.
- Proof of certifier's qualifications (license, experience, insurance).
- Indemnification Agreement (page 5).

STEP 4: PROJECT REVIEW

Building & Safety will complete its AB 671-mandated code compliance review within 20 business days of receiving a complete application, including the required affidavits. All other City disciplines—such as Planning, Fire, Public Works—will review the application using their normal review timelines and procedures, which include issuing correction lists if needed.

STEP 5: RESUBMITTAL

If any City division issues comments rather than approving the project, the applicant must submit corrected plans and materials. Under AB 671, the City will review resubmittals within 10 business days of receipt. Building & Safety review will be limited to addressing the specific items identified in the prior correction cycle.

STEP 6: ISSUANCE

After all reviewing divisions approve the plans, the permit will be issued following the City's standard issuance procedures, which include completing all final forms and paying any remaining fees. Approved plans and permit documents are issued electronically.

STEP 7: INSPECTION

All inspections are performed by City Building Inspectors. Use of a qualified professional certifier does not exempt the project from required inspections or from any corrections identified during inspection. Refer to the City's [Building Inspections](#) webpage for scheduling and requirements.

STEP 8: AUDITS

State law requires the City to audit at least 20% of all certified tenant improvement projects submitted under AB 671. Audits begin within five business days of permit issuance and include review of the submitted plans for compliance with all applicable building, health, and safety codes. If an audit finds material noncompliance, the City will issue a plan check correction notice within 10 business days of initiating the audit.

QUALIFIED PROFESSIONAL CERTIFIER ELIGIBILITY

To qualify as a professional certifier under AB 671, an individual must meet all of the following requirements:

- a. **Licensing.** The certifier must hold a valid license under the California Business and Professions Code as either a professional engineer, or an architect.
- b. **Experience.** The certifier must have at least five years of experience in commercial building design or plan review.
- c. **Liability Insurance.** The certifier must maintain professional liability insurance with coverage of not less than \$2,000,000 per occurrence.

AB 671 – QUALIFIED CERTIFIER AFFIDAVIT

PROJECT INFORMATION

Project Address:

BLD #:

QUALIFIED PROFESSIONAL CERTIFIER INFORMATION

Certifier Name:

Type (Architect, Engineer):

Years of Relevant Experience:

License #:

Exp. Date:

Professional Liability Insurance Policy Number:

STATEMENTS OF COMPLIANCE

I declare under penalty of perjury that the foregoing information is true and correct:

- ☐ I hereby certify that I have personally performed the plan check review of the plans and specifications for the above-referenced project.
- ☐ I find that the restaurant for which the tenant improvement is proposed meets the requirements of California Government Code sections 66345.1(b) and (c).
- ☐ I find that the plans comply with all applicable provisions of the California Building Standards Code and local amendments, including the California Building Code, Electrical Code, Mechanical Code, Plumbing Code, Fire Code, Green Building Standards Code, Energy Code, and Existing Building Code.
- ☐ I find that the scope of work for the tenant improvement does not require plan review by the County of Santa Barbara Health Department under the California Retail Food Code.
- ☐ hereby certify that I, as the qualified professional certifier, performed the plan-checking function in full and certified each plan sheet for compliance with all applicable building, health, and safety codes.

Proof of Qualifications

Copies of the following documents are attached to this affidavit:

- ☐ Professional license verification
- ☐ Proof of at least five years of relevant experience in commercial building design or plan review.
- ☐ Proof of professional liability insurance in an amount not less than two million dollars per occurrence.

Qualified Professional Certifier Signature:

Date:

AB 671 – INDEMNIFICATION AGREEMENT

PROJECT INFORMATION

Project Address:

BLD #:

OWNER INFORMATION

Owner Name:

Owner Email:

INDEMNIFICATION AGREEMENT

I have reviewed, understand, and agree to comply with the foregoing indemnification requirement:

The Owner has chosen to utilize the qualified professional certification provisions of AB 671 (Government Code § 66345 et seq.) and acknowledges that this decision may involve certain risks, including but not limited to delays, costs, or inaccuracies arising from third-party certification. Owner knowingly accepts and assumes full responsibility for those risks.

The Owner shall defend, indemnify, and hold harmless the City, its agents, officers, and employees from any and all claims, actions, proceedings, damages, judgments, or costs, including attorney's fees, against the City or its agents, officers, or employees, relating to construction in accordance.

The City may elect to conduct its own defense, participate in its own defense, or obtain independent legal counsel in defense of any claim related to this indemnification. In the event of such election, Owner shall pay all of the costs related thereto, including without limitation reasonable attorney's fees and costs. In the event of a disagreement between the City and Owner regarding litigation issues, the City shall have the authority to control the litigation and make litigation related decisions, including, but not limited to, settlement or other disposition of the matter.

Owner Signature:

Date: