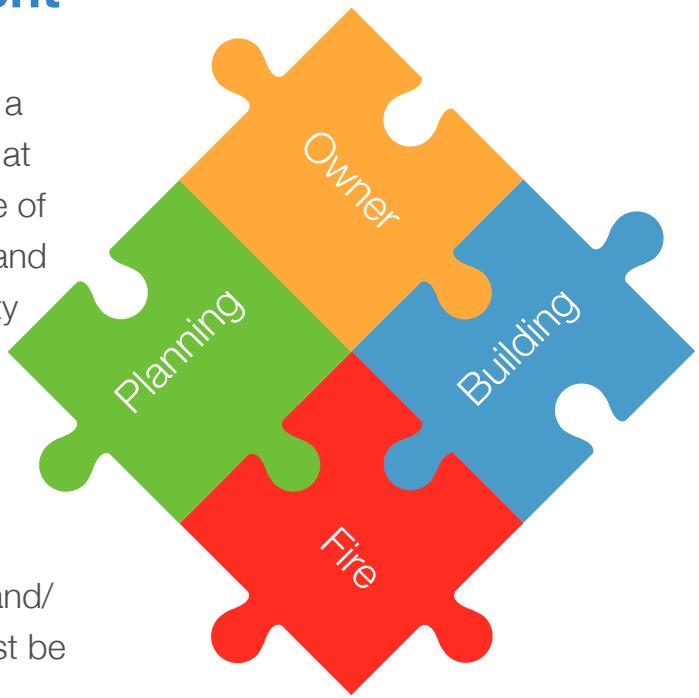
Change of Use Review

Cooperation & Teamwork = Successful Resolution

Planning Department

The Planning or Community Development Department takes a broader overall macro level look at projects when assessing change of use concerns related to zoning and community land use compatibility issues.



Owner & Design Team

The owner and their design team of land use planners, engineers, and contractors all play a crucial role in resolving change of use challenges through project pre-submittal preparation and agency review “pauses” at the plan review stage.

Fire Department

The locally adopted Fire Code contains multiple requirements and/or scenarios when a project must be re-evaluated due to a change in occupancy type or building use intensity. It generally requires a more technical review than the Zoning Code addressing fire and life safety concerns.

Building Department

The International Building Code contains multiple requirements and/or scenarios when a project must be re-evaluated due to a change in occupancy type & building use intensity. It generally requires a more detailed technical review than the Zoning Code and is complimentary to the Fire Code.

Fire Department Plan Review and Inspections

Development Review

Water Supply Needs (Fire Flow) and Fire Hydrants

Fire Lanes, Roads and Emergency Access

Needed Fire Protection Systems

Hazardous Materials Use and Storage Mitigation

Plan Review/Permits

Building Permit Clearance

Fire Protection Systems

Specialty Reviews:

High-pile combustible storage, flammable finishes, hazardous materials. emergency radio systems, clean agent systems, specialty safety systems, saw shops, industrial processes, etc.

Construction

General Field Inspections involving:

General Construction

Fire Sprinkler Systems

Fire Alarm Systems

Specialty Life Safety Systems

Safety During Construction

Final Inspections

Building Inspection/Walk-Thru

Signage, Fire Extinguishers, etc.

Fire Lane & Water Supply

Acceptance Testing of Fire Protection Systems

Elevators, HVAC, Storage Arraignments, HazMat Uses, Flammable Liquids, Emergency Radio, Specialty Safety Systems, etc.

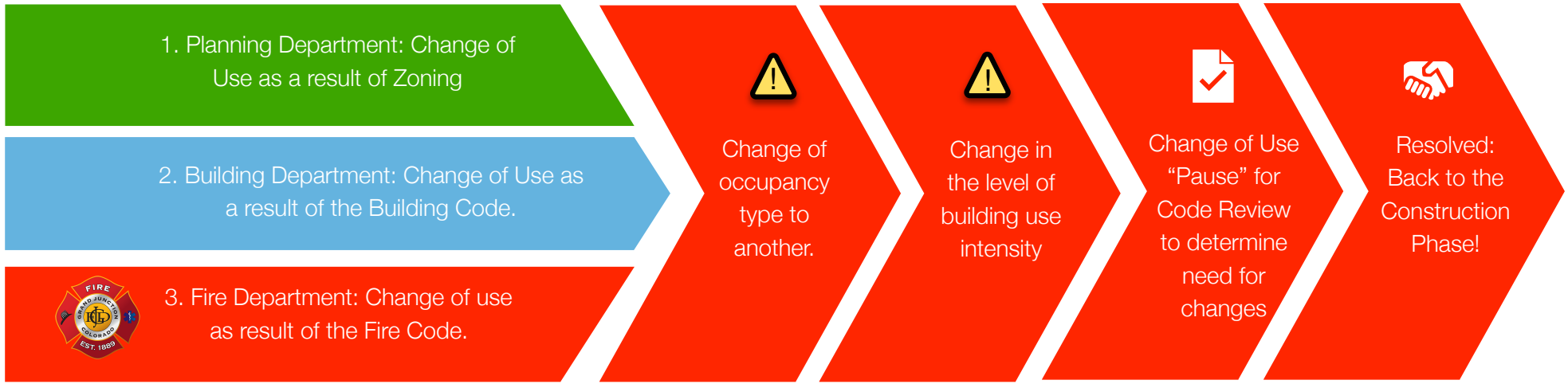
Warning: Change of Use Reviews May Be Necessary and Frequently Do Occur During the "Development Review" and Construction "Plan Review/Permits" Process. *Fire and Building Code "Change of Use" Categories* differ greatly from zoning and are an overlay requirement geared towards technical construction. SEE FIRE CODE *CHANGE OF USE GUIDANCE SHEET. Although every effort is made to notify owners of potential change of use issues as early as possible, it is imperative that all projects be assessed by the owner's design team prior to submittal to lesson impacts and project delays.*

Life Safety Inspections of Existing Buildings Program

The final construction inspection and certificate of occupancy is not the last time building owners will see the Fire Department. The Fire Department is responsible for conducting fire and life safety inspections of all existing buildings in the jurisdiction on a regular schedule. A new review will be required to assess safety risks if "Change of Use" is discovered in the field.

Fire Code "Change of Use" Guidance

There are three main ways a residential, business, commercial or industrial occupancy or building may be subject to a "Change of Use" review. The Land Use/Zoning code, Building Code and the Fire Code all contain provisions that require some form of compliance review. All play an important role in safety. The graphic below contains the primary ways the local Fire Code can initiate a change of use review. ***PROJECT PAUSE*** *- This may cause a minor pause in the development or permit process to evaluate the change, but is a necessary step in order to ensure the appropriate safety measures are incorporated into the design like proper emergency exits, needed fire protection systems, updated storage configurations, hazardous materials reviews, additional specialty safety systems, fire walls, water supply, fire truck access, etc.*



Common Change of Use Examples

T**he Fire Code address both a change of use from one type to another (occupancy) and a change in the level of use of an occupancy (intensity).** **Examples**: An Office Suite (B-Business) is changed into a Restaurant (A2-Assembly) **[Occupancy Change]**, A Retail Store (M-Mercantile) is changed to a Church (A3-Assembly) **[Occupancy Change]**, A storage Warehouse (S1/S2-Storage) is changed into a plant extraction Lab/Facility (F1-Factory) **[Occupancy Change]**; a storage warehouse increases rack heights over 12 feet high for combustible products **[Intensity Change]**, a storage warehouse changes their commodity type (i.e. boxes of paper products to flammable liquids) **[Intensity Change],** A typical restaurant changes to a night club **[Intensity Change]**, A factory adds specialized equipment (laboratory, saw shops equipment, industrial ovens, paint booth finishing, HazMat, etc.) **[Intensity Change].** Consulting your design team pre-submittal will help navigate these complex situations and lesson plan review times and project delays.

International Fire Code, Section 102.3

A change of occupancy shall not be made unless the use or occupancy is made to comply with the requirements of this code and the International Existing Building Code.

Typical Fire Code Review

The Fire Code Official will generally use the following seven basic topics to review the proposed project, facility or business in an effort to determine any safety requirements dictated by the International Fire Code as amended and adopted within the jurisdiction. It is not an all inclusive list.

01

Basic Nature of the Building

What will the building be used for and what material, systems or hazards will be present.

02

Fire Code Applicability (Ch. 1)

What construction work, processes, systems and/or potential hazards exist that will be subject to the Fire Code.

03

Safety Precautions (Ch. 3-10)

Have all potential general hazards been addressed (Fire extinguishers, safety practices, evacuation plans, egress, building & equipment design features, etc.)?

04

Fire Access and Water Supply (Ch.5)

Does the facility have adequate fire truck access and water supply based on building construction, occupancy type, and square footage?

05

Hazardous Material (Ch. 50,51,53-67)

Any requirements regarding handling of hazardous materials (flammables, chemicals, gases, etc.)? These are project specific.

06

Occupancy Processes (Ch.20-39)

Any requirements based on occupancy processes (high-pile combustible storage, welding, painting, lab equipment, proprietary uses, etc.)? These are project specific.

07

Fire Protection Systems (Ch. 9)

Are fire protection systems (fire sprinklers, fire alarm or other) required based on occupancy type, limited water supply, industrial process, hazardous materials, etc.?

Based on the International Fire Code (plus Appendices)