



# Tenant Buildout Checklist

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Opening a new retail space is exciting — but the buildout process can feel overwhelming if you're not familiar with how construction, permitting, and landlord requirements work in Northeast Florida. As a commercial general contractor based in St. Augustine, I've seen the same challenges come up again and again. **The good news is that with the right preparation, you can avoid delays, unexpected costs, and unnecessary stress.**

Here's a checklist you can follow to ease the process:

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## ✓ PRE-LEASE PLANNING

- Review the landlord's **Work Letter** and construction responsibilities
- Request **as-built drawings**, site plans, and utility/electric-gas-water information
- Confirm **HVAC capacity**, electrical service, and plumbing availability
- Identify any **use-specific requirements** (e.g., grease trap, hood, fire alarm tie-in)
- Discuss realistic **timeline expectations** with your GC before signing the lease

## ✓ DESIGN & PRE-CONSTRUCTION

- Hire a licensed **architect** and **MEP engineers** (*Marvel Construction can help with the design process*)
- Provide your GC with:
  - Space plan
  - Equipment list
  - Finish selections
  - IT/security needs

**A permit-ready architectural and MEP design is optimal.**

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- Submit drawings to landlord for **formal approval**
- Obtain preliminary **budget pricing** from your GC
- Plan for:
  - Architectural/engineering fees
  - Permitting fees (your contractor should include these in the quote)
  - Utility & impact fees (owner responsibility - restaurants especially)
  - Contingency (10–15%); *necessary without 100% permit-ready set of drawings*

## ✓ PERMITTING

- Submit full construction documents to the local jurisdiction
- Expect **6–12 weeks** for review depending on municipality
- Prepare for possible reviews by:
  - Fire Marshal
  - Zoning
  - Health Department
  - Air Quality/Asbestos
- Respond quickly to any revision requests to avoid delays

## ✓ CONSTRUCTION PREP

- Finalize all selections and equipment specs
- Approve the GC's **final budget and schedule**
- Coordinate with landlord on:
  - Access requirements
  - After-hours work rules
  - Dumpster placement

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- Staging areas
- Business hour potential noise levels
- Order long-lead items early (HVAC units, electrical gear, storefront glass)

## ✓ DURING CONSTRUCTION

- Attend scheduled **walkthroughs** with your GC
- Keep communication open between:
  - Tenant
  - GC
  - Architect
  - Landlord
- Avoid mid-project design changes when possible
- Prepare for multiple inspections throughout the project
- Coordinate with GC on Move-in protocols

## ✓ PROJECT CLOSEOUT

- Final inspection and Certificate of Completion/Occupancy
- Receive:
  - Warranty information
  - Closeout documents
  - As-built drawings (if applicable)
- Tenant to schedule installation of:
  - FF&E
  - IT and security systems
  - Signage

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- Coordinate with landlord for final approvals and opening requirements

## ✓ READY TO OPEN

- Complete punch list items
- Install POS, shelving, and merchandise
- Train staff and prepare for soft opening
- Celebrate your new space

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## Marvel Construction Group, LLC

**Your Partner in Retail & Commercial Tenant Buildouts Across Northeast Florida** If you're planning a new space or preparing for a tenant improvement project, our team is here to guide you from concept to completion.

[www.marvelconstructiongroup.com](http://www.marvelconstructiongroup.com) | Call Adam Leo 904.599.8950

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