

Checklist to Find Your Next Warehouse

Editor's note: most of this checklist is designed to use whether you plan to build a new facility or acquire an existing structure. The final section contains items used only for new construction. KBA

Governmental Restrictions

- Is the property zoned for warehousing and related uses?
- Is the zoning description likely to impede conversion of the building to other uses?
- Are there any variances or special exceptions in the zoning?
- What are the limits or restrictions on employee parking?
- What is the maximum expansion capability of the facility?
- Are there any easements or protective covenants on the property?
- Are there any restrictive load limits on roads leading to this facility?

Geographic Restrictions

- Are there grade problems on the land?
- Are there any problems with drainage?
- Are there streams, lakes, or wetlands near this site?
- If so, what is the 100-year flood plan?
- What is the level of the ground water table?
- Is there any history of earthquakes in the area?
- If so, have you received the US Geodetic Survey of fault lines?
- Does the site have any fill?
- If so, what material was used?
- What is the load bearing capacity of nearby soil?
- Is any part of the site wooded?
- Are there any restrictions on tree removal?

Transportation

- What is best access to the nearest freeway interchange?
- What is the distance from primary motor freight terminals?
- Have you interviewed motor freight managers?
- Is the facility inside the commercial delivery zone of the city?
- If not, what is the extra delivery cost compared to deliveries within the commercial zone?
- Is rail access available?

- If there is no rail siding now, what is the cost of adding one?
- What is the cartage cost to a TOFC (piggyback) terminal?
- What is the cartage cost to nearest marine terminal?
- What is the cartage cost to nearest air freight terminal?
- Will those customers who pick up at your warehouse have any transportation problem with this facility?

Security Considerations

- Does the sprinkler system meet preferred risk standards?
- If not, what is the cost of upgrading the system?
- Is the sprinkler capable of conversion to ESFR?
- If so, what is the conversion cost?
- Is there a secondary water source for the sprinkler system?
- Have you seen available insurance inspection reports?
- Have you interviewed law enforcement officials?
- Have you interviewed neighboring managers?

Utilities

- What is the size of the water main serving the site?
- What is the water pressure and when was it last tested?
- Are there water meters on hydrants and sprinkler systems?
- What is the source of the water supply?
- What is the capacity of electric power at the site?
- Is submetering of electricity permitted?
- Have you received copies of recent utility bills?
- Are incentives available for reducing peak electric demand or installing HID lighting?
- Is submetering of gas permitted?
- Are there limitations on capacity or demand?
- If fuel oil is used for heat, what is the source of supply?

Labor Market

- Are neighboring businesses unionized?
- Have you measured community attitudes toward unions?
- Is there a labor shortage or high unemployment?
- How are nearby schools rated in comparison to other sites?

Community Attitudes

- Do community leaders welcome industrial expansion?
- Is there any discernable opposition to warehouse operations?
- Is there any history of difficulty in rezoning?

Taxation

- What is the date of the most recent property appraisal?
- What is the real estate tax history over the last ten years?
- Have there been any recent tax assessments?
- Are there any tax abatement programs in effect or available?
- Is the facility in a duty free or enterprise zone?
- Are there planned public improvements?
- How do inventory tax levels compare with other sites?
- Is this a free port state?
- What are tax rates for?
 - Corporate income tax
 - Payroll tax
 - Sales tax
 - Franchise tax
 - Other taxes
- What are the costs of workers compensation?
- What are the recent trends in taxation?
- Are industrial revenue bonds available, can you qualify?

New Construction Considerations

- Have test borings been made at all key points on the site?
- Are there landscaping or buffer zone requirements?
- How will roof drainage be discharged?
- What are estimated costs and time requirements for all construction and occupancy permits?

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