

Space and Capital Planning Guidelines

FAQ

Introduction

We are providing an FAQ as a quick guide to space and capital planning to provide a broad overview of principles and processes for getting space and capital requests approved. The FAQ is not a replacement for understanding the Space and Capital Planning Guidelines as they are only intended to provide a brief orientation to a necessarily long and detailed process. Unlike the majority of expenditure systems (payroll, purchasing, etc.), space acquisition and capital expenditures are relatively episodic transactions. The FAQ's are therefore a brief starting point to explain a typically unfamiliar process.

Why is space and capital planning such an involved process with multiple level of reviews and approvals?

- Space and capital funding are key constraints at NYU.
- Adding to existing inventory is costly, especially through leases.
- The timeline for purchasing real estate is generally longer than the timeline needed to meet near term space needs.
- Increased capital and operating costs resulting from additional space reduces financial flexibility to support programming.

How can I ensure a smooth approval process?

Priority will be given to projects that:

- are in line with University academic priorities and/or facility needs including sustainability and affordability goals;
- are justified after alternatives to adding space have been fully explored, and;
- are well anticipated by citing space needs in annual Strategic Planning Reports (Fall semester), capital needs in annual budget submissions ("Principals meetings," Spring semester), and detailed justifications for each project documented in a Space Planning Working Group (SPWG) request.
- have a clear financial plan in which incremental capital and operating costs can be funded within a unit's Financial Plan without the need for short or long term financing.

What offices typically review space and capital requests?

All capital and space requests need to be approved by the Office of Budget & Financial Planning regardless of expenditure level, for inclusion in the University Capital Plan.

In addition to the Office of Budget Office & Financial Planning, all space requests and/or capital requests >\$500K are reviewed by the

- Office of Provost;
- Office of Capital Projects & Facilities including:
 - Strategic Assessment Planning and Design;

- Office of Construction Management;
- Office of the Treasurer (if financing is required);
- Office of Real Estate (if new space needs to be acquired).

What is the Space Planning Working Group’s role? (SPWG)

SPWG is a joint committee of the Office of Provost, Office of Budget & Financial Planning, and the Office of Capital Projects & Facilities including Strategic Assessment Planning and Design. The committee is organized to vet space and capital requests at a detailed level on behalf of the Chief Financial Officer, Executive Vice President, and Provost. SPWG’s purview extends to any aspect or implication of a space request and a capital funding request. Among the most typical issues, SPWG takes into account the following:

- space usage with reference to University guidelines;
- compliance with University goals for sustainability and affordability;
- the potential short-, near-, and long-term space impacts (such as dominoes) of programmatic initiatives;
- input from other University offices such as Sustainability, NYU IT and Public Safety, etc., when necessary.

If I have Budget Office Approval and the project is included in the Capital Plan, does SPWG still review the project?

Yes. The annual budget submission (Principals meeting) can result in a project being included in the University Consolidated Capital Plan that is approved by the Board of Trustees. This means that the use of capital funding has been approved but details about space use still need to be reviewed.

The graphic below outlines at a very high level the ideal pathway for a Proposal working its way through the review and approval system.

