

Starting a Business in Portland

Before you begin operations, make a quick call to our Planning Department. Whether it is a home-based business, a proposed subdivision, relocating into an existing building, or a ground-up industrial project, we want you to have all the information you need to make good sound business decisions that will lead to your success in our community.

Make your initial call today to better understand your next steps: 615-325-6776 ext. 239



Step One (Before you Buy or Lease, research the site and the requirements)

Is your proposed business allowed in your planned location, and is there enough space for all activities?

Does your planned location already have all the utilities needed onsite to fully conduct your business?

Schedule a Business Partner Development Meeting, and let's discuss your business concept and your requirements.

Contact the Planning Office for next available meeting time: 615-325-6776 ext. 239 or preapp@cityofportlandtn.gov

We look forward to seeing your concept.

Step Two (Once you have your location, obtain permits before starting work)

Do you plan on building or remodeling?

You may need an engineered site plan, building permits, utility approval, a licensed contractor, and a demo permit before any work can begin. Existing structures & infrastructure may require extensive work to meet current building, electrical, and fire codes. Hiring a professional to represent your project will be helpful.

Permitting & Approvals

After your concept meeting stage, you may be ready for the project submission phase to begin the necessary reviews, approvals, and permitting required for your business type.

Step Three (Before you open for business, have all final inspections and approvals)

You are almost there.

Once all inspections have been finalized and the project is complete, or has approved contingencies, your business will be able to officially operate within the community.

Thank you for doing business in Portland.

Please discuss the following with City staff before conducting business.

- ✓ Certificate of Use & Occupancy
- ✓ Portland Business License
- ✓ Sign Permit

What to expect when you meet with City staff during our Business Partner Development meeting:

- Utilities, Public Works, Fire, Building Codes, Planning, and Economic Development will all be there to answer your questions.
- We encourage you to bring your architect, engineer, and/or other project partners to the meeting.
- Meetings can be set in-person, virtual, or hybrid style to best suit your availability.
- These meetings are held each Thursday and must be scheduled in advance through the Planning Department.

*** Examples of Zoning & Parking Requirements for Various Potential Business Models ***

Business Type & Size	Zoning Required	Parking Spaces Required
1200sqft - Clothing Boutique	GCS, CBD, ISD	3
3500sqft - Restaurant w/80 customers	CBD, GCS, ISD, OPS, MPO	23
800sqft - Accounting Office	CBD, GCS, OPS, MPO	2
475,000sqft - Car Part Manufacturer	IG	317
1800sqft - Nail Salon w/25 customers	CBD, GCS, ISD, MPO, OPS	12
660sqft - Drive-Thru Coffee House	GCS, ISD, MPO	7
2800sqft - Medical Office	CBD, GCS, MPO, OPS	19