

A Guide to
Starting a Business
in
Auburn, GA



Welcome to Auburn!



We are glad you are considering the City of Auburn as the location for your business. We strive to make the experience of starting your business as simple as possible while upholding our commitment to protect the aesthetic and economic well-being of Auburn. This packet is designed to help you organize and streamline the important tasks and decisions required to start and run your own business. From “What is a business plan and why do I need one?” to “I am ready, now how do I get my business license?” we hope you find the resources you need here.

Starting a business in Auburn is as easy as “1-2-3.”

This guide is a resource for business owners and entrepreneurs in the City of Auburn. While it certainly does not answer all of the questions you are sure to have, it does provide information on who can answer those questions.

By following our step by step start up method, we hope you will find the process simple and straight-forward.

If we can assist you in any other matters regarding locating and operating your business, please contact the Economic Development Coordinator/Main Street Director at 770-963-4002 ext 206.

Auburn—We’re Right on Track!



Appropriate Zoning

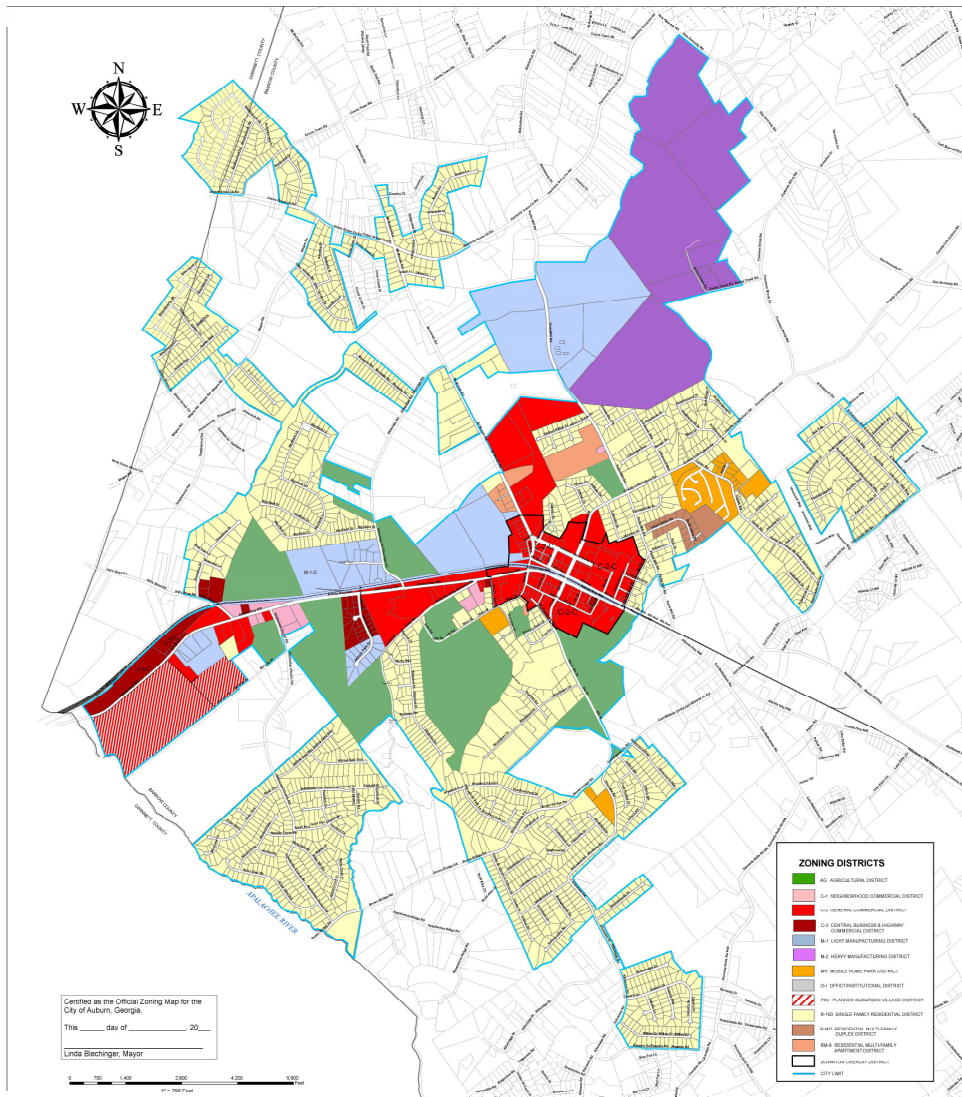
1



1. Appropriate Zoning

Once you identify a tentative location for your business, contact the Planning and Zoning office to determine the permitted uses of that location. *Do not invest any money in a location until you know the location is properly zoned for your proposed use.*

The City Planner can help you determine if your location and type of business are in compliance with our Zoning ordinance. The City Planner can also answer any questions you may have regarding signage.



If you have questions regarding the permitted use of a specific site or building, please contact the City Planner at 770-963-4002 ext 202. Be sure to provide your location's address or tax map & parcel number.



Building Permits & Inspections

2



2.

Building Permits & Inspections

Any structural changes to the exterior or interior of an existing building may require a permit. *Permits are required before any work begins.* Fees are based on the type and extent of work. The Downtown Overlay District has specific color palettes that are suggested for exterior paint, trim and roofing.

New construction or exterior modifications in the Downtown Overlay District must have a preliminary review prior to building permit issuance.

Items that require a permit include:

New Construction Plan
Interior
Additions
Structural Repairs

Roofs
Plumbing Plan
HVAC Plan
Electrical Plan

Plans must be sealed by a licensed architect or engineer. The State of Georgia requires that all contractors be licensed in order to perform contracted work. An affidavit is required from the contractor in order for work to proceed.

Land Disturbance

If you are constructing a site from the ground up, you will need to submit Land Disturbance Site and/or construction plans. You need to submit six (6) sets of plans no larger than 36" x 42". All application fees are paid at the time of submittal. Your plans must include the following:

- ◆ Plan Index
- ◆ Site Plan
- ◆ Grading and Drainage
- ◆ Erosion and Sedimentation plan (per current Georgia Stormwater Manual)
- ◆ Landscape Plan
- ◆ Tree Protection Plan
- ◆ Storm Drain Plan and Profiles
- ◆ Water Distribution Plan and Profiles
- ◆ Hydrology Study
- ◆ Depending on your work, other plans may also be required

Once you have a fully approved set of plans, you should obtain a Land Disturbance permit from the Planning Department prior to starting work. If you have any questions regarding Site Plans, building permits and inspections or the Overlay District color palette, please contact our City Planner at 770-963-4002 ext 202.



Occupational Tax Certificate

3



3.

Occupational Tax Certificate (Business License)

An Occupational Tax Certificate, more commonly referred to as a business license, is required to conduct business in Auburn. A business operating without an Occupational Tax Certificate is subject to a legal penalty.

The minimum charge for an Occupational Tax Certificate is \$50.00 and varies depending on the number of employees. All Occupational Tax Certificates must be paid and renewed by January 1st of each year. Occupational Tax Certificates are obtained and renewed at City Hall.

If you have more than one location, you will need a separate Occupational Tax Certificate for each business location. If you are operating under various firm or trade names, you will need a separate Occupational Tax Certificate for each trade name issued.

We require businesses to obtain an Occupational Tax Certificate before opening. If you have a City Occupational Tax Certificate, you will not need to obtain a County Occupational Tax Certificate.

Occupational Tax Certificates are transferable only if the certificate holder moves to a new location within Auburn city limits. Please make the permits office aware of your location change.

If you have questions regarding the business licensing process, please contact the License Clerk at 770-963-4002 ext 206

Matters to Consider Prior to Opening

- ◆ How is circulation and traffic flow in the area?
- ◆ Are there similar businesses in the area?
- ◆ Are there any tax incentives that you can take advantage of?
- ◆ How is waste disposal handled?
- ◆ When, where and how will you market and advertise?
- ◆ Can any of your supplies be purchased from a local vendor or producer?
- ◆ Tax types and payments required by the Georgia Department of Revenue.



Start Up Basics

Small Business Development Center

The Small Business Administration (SBA) and the University of Georgia (UGA) have teamed up to form the Small Business Development Center (SBDC). The SBDC program is designed to provide quality business and economic development assistance to businesses and prospective businesses in order to promote growth, expansion, innovation, increased productivity and improved management.

The SBDC offers classes, great step by step information, assistance with business plans, and insight into financing. *Start Up Basics* is a “must have” manual for anyone trying to start a business. Please visit <https://www.georgiasbdc.org> and download your copy today. There is also a great tool on the “how to” of business financing. “Why you should seek financing?” and “What kind of financing is available?” are answered in a packet available from the SBDC.

Georgia Secretary of State

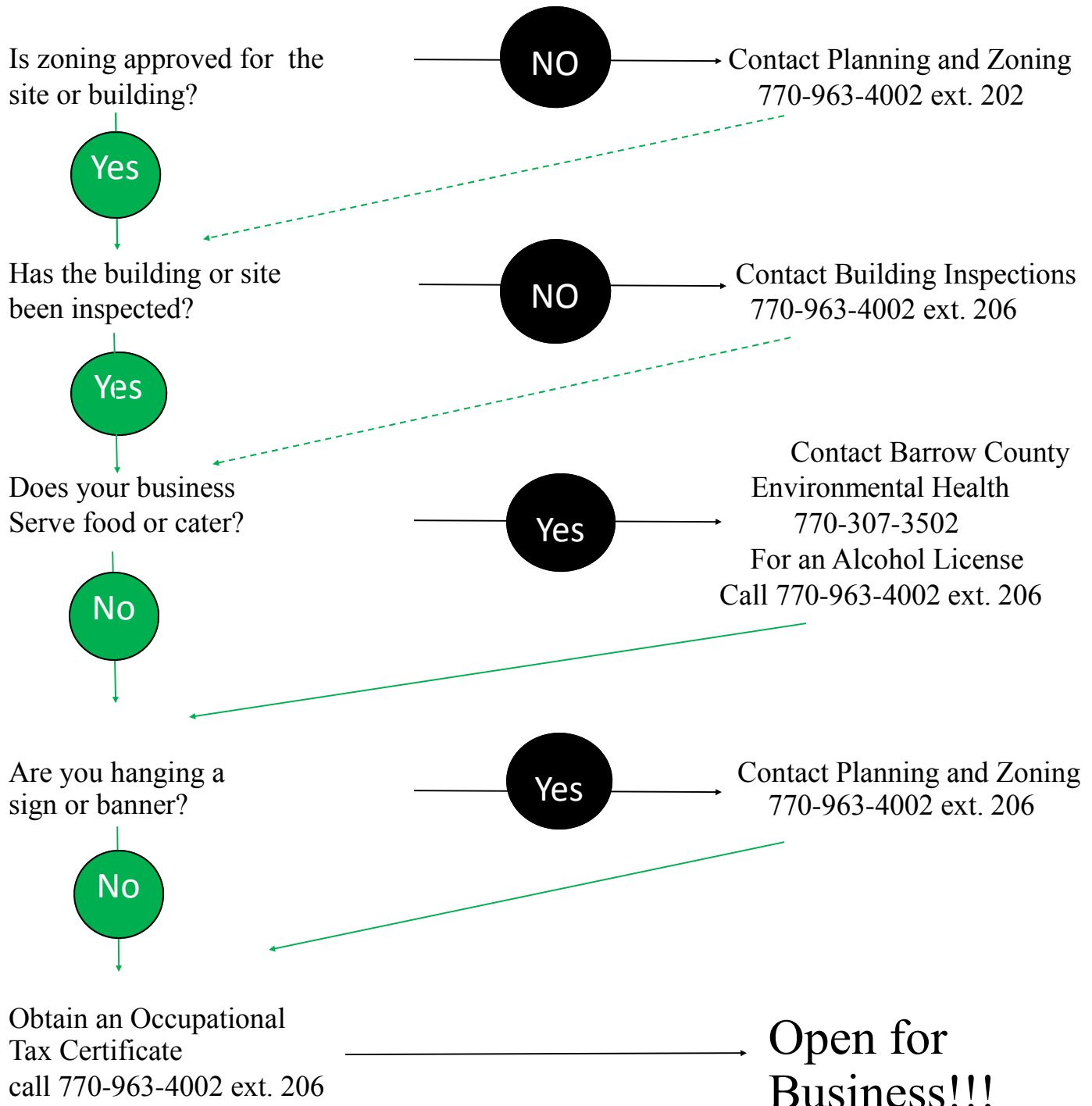
The *First Stop Business Guide* is provided by the Georgia Secretary of State. This guide includes frequently asked questions of small business entrepreneurs, financing information, information on the business licensing required in the State of Georgia as well as a helpful directory of business related organizations that you will need. The directory includes information on obtaining Employer Identification numbers, sales tax, and other taxes you should know about. Please visit <http://sos.ga.gov/> for more information.

Barrow County Chamber of Commerce/Gwinnett County Chamber of Commerce

Both Barrow and Gwinnett counties have active Chambers of Commerce. The Chamber’s mission is to help businesses grow and advocate for businesses at the local, state, and federal level. Chambers offer wonderful business to business networking opportunities, marketing opportunities, and access in many cases to your elected officials. Please visit www.barrowchamber.com or www.gwinnettchamber.org for more information on benefits and membership.



Business Licensing Procedure





Important Phone Numbers

City of Auburn Main Line
770-963-4002

Auburn Planning and Zoning
770-963-4002 ext 206

Auburn City Planner
770-963-4002 ext 202

Auburn City Clerk
770-963-4002 ext 205

**Auburn Downtown Development/
Main Street Program**
770-963-4002 ext 206

Auburn Water
770-963-4002 ext 200

Auburn Police Department
770-513-8657

Barrow County Fire Marshal
770-307-2987

Barrow County Environmental Health
770-307-3502

Barrow County Economic Development
770-867-0662

Barrow County Board of Commissioners
770-307-3005

Barrow County Chamber of Commerce
770-867-9444

Gwinnett County Chamber of Commerce
770-232-3000

Georgia Power Company
800-660-5890

Jackson EMC
706-367-5281

