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Guide to Starting a Business in Perry

The City of Perry is a great place to start or expand a business. The City wants to ensure that your business is successful from the first day of operation and for many years to come.

This guide is a resource to facilitate business development in the City of Perry. It is not inclusive of all services and agencies that can assist you and your business, but it does provide basic tools and contacts necessary to successfully operate a business in Perry.

STEP ONE – ZONING

Before you sign a lease or contract you should verify that the property is zoned to allow your business or what steps may be possible to allow your business. Please contact the Community Development Department at (478) 988-2720 or comm.development@perry-ga.gov for zoning information.

Zoning Districts and examples of their permitted uses –

- C-1 Highway Commercial District – Auto Sales, Big Box Retail, Gas Stations
- C-2 General Commercial District – Retail, Restaurants, Multi-Family
- C-3 Central Business District – Office Uses, Retail, Service Businesses
- M-1 Wholesale and Light Industrial District – Light Manufacturing, Retail
- M-2 Industrial District – Heavy Manufacturing, Warehousing, Retail
- OC Office Commercial – Offices, Professional Uses, Multi-Family
- LC Limited Commercial – Small Retail, Service Businesses
- IN Institutional District – Medical Uses, Long Term Care Facilities

A complete list of uses allowed in each zoning district is available in the Table of Uses, Section 4-1 of the Perry Land Management Ordinance.

Home Occupation – Home based businesses may be approved by the Community Development Department, if certain conditions are met:

- No customers or clients at the home
- No more than 25% of the home may be used for the business
- No changes or alterations to the home to facilitate the business
- No outside storage or display
- No outside employees working in the home
- No business vehicle larger than a van or pick-up truck at the home
- No more than two deliveries per week
- No business signs

If these conditions cannot be met, a home based business may still be possible, but it may require City Council approval.

STEP TWO – INSPECTIONS

Business License Inspection – Prior to being issued a business license, an inspection at the business location must be performed by the Fire & Emergency Services Department. Inspections are required to ensure the location is safe occupancy. Examples of items to be inspected are:

- Exit Signs
- Fire Extinguishers
- ADA Compliance
- Sprinkler Systems
- Labeling of Panel Box
- Visible Wiring Deficiencies
- Smoke Detectors
- Egress
- Hazardous Storage
- Security Cameras
- Distance Requirements
- Switch and outlet Covers

Remodeling Activity – If your business requires any structural changes to the building it will require a building permit and inspections from the Community Development and/or Fire & Emergency Service departments. Cosmetic alterations, such as painting, new carpet, etc., do not require a building permit. Please contact Community Development at (478) 988-2720 and Fire & Emergency Services at (478) 988-2759 for additional information regarding building permits and/or inspections.

New Construction – If you are constructing a new building for your business, there are a series of requirements the city has relative to zoning, land use, parking, signs, building codes, soil erosion control, storm water management, etc. which could impact your proposal. The more detail you provide the quicker your application will be processed. Additionally, depending on your business location, Georgia Department of Transportation and/or US Army Corps of Engineers permits may be required. Please contact the Community Development Department at (478) 988-2720 for guidelines to assist you.

The above list is not inclusive and depends on the specifics of your proposal.

STEP THREE – FOOD SERVICE BUSINESS

If your business involves the sale of food, you may require Houston County Health Department approval in addition to meeting all City of Perry requirements. Please contact the Houston County Health Department at (478) 218-2020 for more information.

STEP FOUR – BUSINESS LICENSE

Upon completion and approval as required of steps 1 – 3 above and completion of the occupational tax certificate application a City of Perry occupational tax certificate/business license may be issued. There is a fee based on the number of employees. Fee schedule may be found on website www.perry-ga.gov under Administration Department.

OTHER INFORMATION

Signs – If you intend to display any signs please contact the Community Development Department at (478) 988-2720 or comm.development@perry-ga.gov prior to ordering business signs. Sign standards are based on the zoning of the property and any applicable overlay districts

Alcohol Sales – If your business involves the sale of alcohol you may have certain restrictions. For example:

- Proper zoning
- May require a public hearing process
- Setbacks from schools, churches, etc. may apply

Coin Operated Machines – If your business has coin operated amusement machines operating which give reward tickets, tabs, tokens, etc. a coin operated amusement machine license is required. In addition, coin operated amusement machines giving a reward may have to meet certain setbacks. For example:

- 100 yards from a church and
- 200 yards from a school

Downtown Façade and Matching Media Grants – If your business is located in the Downtown Development District, and funding is available, you may be eligible to receive a façade grant from the City of Perry Main Street Advisory Board. The façade must meet established criteria. For more information regarding these grants, please the Community Development Department at (478) 988-2720 or comm.development@perry-ga.gov.

Utilities – The following services are provided by the City of Perry:

Natural Gas	Fire Protection
Water	Storm Water Management
Sewer	Garbage collection*
Grease trap servicing	

These utilities can be activated by contacting the Customer Service at (478) 988-2754.

*The City of Perry has an exclusive contract with Advanced Disposal Services to provide commercial solid waste services. Businesses should contact Customer Service at (478) 988-2754 for delivery and fees.

Contact Numbers

Business License Office	(478) 988-2740
Community Development Department	(478) 988-2720
Customer Service	(478) 988-2754
Economic Development Department	(478) 988-2757
Fire & Emergency Services	(478) 988-2759
Police Department	(478) 988-2804
Advanced Disposal	(478) 508-5000
Houston County Health Department	(478) 218-2020
Georgia Power	1-888-660-5890
Flint EMC	(478) 988-3500 or 1-800-342-3616
Windstream Communications Telephone/Television/Internet	1-800-501-1776
ComSouth Communication Telephone/Television/Internet	(478) 987-0172
Perry Area Chamber of Commerce	(478) 987-1234

Visit our website www.perry-ga.gov for more detailed information.