



## OPENING A BUSINESS IN BRIDGETON

*The following information will guide you through the step-wise process of obtaining the necessary approvals and permits required to operate a business, or improve a commercial property, in Bridgeton. City Officials want to assist you as much as possible, and we welcome your questions and comments. Thank you for your interest in Bridgeton.*

### **1. CONTACT THE DEVELOPMENT & PLANNING DEPARTMENT**

This department is the central point of contact for business within the city. Incentives packages are offered to new and existing businesses in Bridgeton including those of the Urban Enterprise Zone. Assistance may include marketing information, design guidance, and grant/loan programs. Call 856-451-3407 to see if any of these incentives might be available to you.

### **2. MEET WITH ZONING OFFICER**

Make an appointment with the City Zoning Officer at the start of any project. They will give you the necessary forms to obtain the permits needed to open or renovate your building. You may contact the Zoning Officer by calling 856-455-3230, ext. 218.

### **3. APPLY FOR A ZONING PERMIT**

This application allows the Zoning Officer to determine if your business will comply with the city's zoning ordinance. It takes a maximum of 10 days for this permit and the fee is \$10 (if approved). If you have questions, you may contact this office at 856-451-3407, ext. 2

### **4. APPLY FOR HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION APPROVAL**

Since much of Bridgeton is in a Historic District you should also consider that your project (building modifications, fences, etc.) may require you to apply for Historic District Commission approval. This application can also be obtained from the Construction/Zoning office. It is free and the staff will assist with any questions. For more information you may call 856-451-3407, ext. 1

### **5. APPLY FOR BUILDING PERMITS**

Building permit fees vary with the type of permit, cost of construction, and size of addition or alteration. The waiting period for permits varies from 3 to 20 days, depending on the extent of plan review required. Make an appointment early in the planning process to speak directly to the Construction Official about your building plans and to determine exactly which types of permits will be required for your project by calling 856-455-3230, ext. 218 (or 223).

### **6. APPLY FOR SIGN OR AWNING PERMITS**

If your business will require any sign or awning, permits and Historic District Commission approval may be required. A Sign/Awning Permit application may be picked up at the Zoning Office. It must be completed in conjunction with any Zoning Permit application. A sketch of the sign or awning, color samples, building photos, and installation details will be required. The permit fee varies based on the size & type of sign. Typically, approvals can be granted by the Zoning Officer in 3 to 7 days. If you would like further information about permitted signs & awnings, or a copy of the applicable zoning ordinance, please contact the Zoning Officer at 856-455-3230, ext. 218 (or 223).

#### **7. ARRANGE FOR A HEALTH INSPECTION**

If your business deals with food, such as grocery stores, restaurants, etc., after contacting the Construction and Zoning office, you must apply to the Cumberland County Health Department for inspections and permits. If you are unsure whether a health inspection is required for your business, you should contact the County Health Inspector at 856-453-2150 early in the planning process.

#### **8. ARRANGE FOR A FIRE CODE COMPLIANCE INSPECTION**

A Fire Code Compliance Inspection, including Smoke Detector Inspection, must be performed prior to building occupancy. Fees vary according to business type. More information can be obtained by calling the Fire Inspector at 856-455-3230, ext. 269.

#### **9. ARRANGE FOR A CERTIFICATE OF OCCUPANCY (CO) INSPECTION**

*Commercial buildings without residential units:*

Any time a new commercial building addition is constructed, or a change of tenancy occurs, a Certificate of Occupancy Inspection is required. The fee for this inspection is \$80, and it is arranged through the Code Enforcement office. Call 856-455-3230, ext. 219 to schedule an inspection.

*Commercial buildings with residential units:*

If a commercial building has residential units, a Certificate of Occupancy Inspection is required when there is a change in residential tenancy. This inspection is free if the unit has been registered with the City's Housing office. Registration is \$45 and is required yearly. Call 856-455-3230, ext. 220 for more details.