



SHAKER HEIGHTS

NEW BUSINESS CHECKLIST

Thank you for considering Shaker Heights for your business. The City of Shaker Heights will work hard to ensure that you have a positive experience from finding the right location to celebrating your presence and community contributions. To help you with the process of opening your business, we've put together this New Business Checklist, which can serve as a resource guide to get you started.

- **Location, Location, Location:** Finding the right location for your business is essential. Consult the City's available commercial properties [here](#) or review our [Home Based Business](#) information. The Economic Development Department can also assist you with your location search. The staff has an in-depth knowledge of each district and can point you in the right direction.
- **Zoning:** Confirm the property's zoning classification to make sure that your business use is appropriate for your new location. You may need a Conditional Use Permit or Variance, so it is best to find out this information early in your location search. Call the Planning Department at 216.491.1435.
- **Commercial Project Review:** This Review is a courtesy to help business owners effectively plan their project, receive next step instructions and feedback in an effort to save all parties time, energy and money. The Review process includes an application that, when complete, is shared with the Building, Planning and Fire Departments before an in-person or virtual meeting is scheduled. Contact the Economic Development Department to schedule a Commercial Project Review. Keep in mind that eventually, you will most likely need to hire an architect to secure permits.
- **Business License:** Every business must have a fully executed Business License (also called a Commercial Occupancy Permit) before moving into a commercial building. Apply [here](#) online; if you have any problems using the online system (CitizenServe), contact the Building Department at 216.491.1470. The Building Department will proactively work with you to ensure compliance with the Ohio Building Code.
- **Interior or Exterior Renovations:** Most likely, renovations will require permits, contact the Building Department at 216.491.1470 BEFORE starting any demolition, construction or system upgrades to discuss your plans and determine next steps.
- **Food Sales:** If your business includes any food or beverage sales or preparation, contact the [Cuyahoga County Department of Health](#) at 216.201.2000 to determine which permits and/or inspections are required as soon as possible.

- **Signage:** You need it! Contact the Planning Department at 216.491.1435 for zoning and design guidelines. Also, be aware that signage must be presented to the Architectural Board of Review (ABR) before a permit is issued to install a sign. Do not have a sign fabricated before presenting the design to ABR.

Once you are settled in, here is some helpful information...

- **Business Communications:** Stay informed! We added your email address to our monthly Business Newsletter for Shaker business owners and our quarterly Economic Development Community Update sent to the broader Shaker community. Please let us know if you have news to share or ideas to improve these newsletters.
- **Business Associations:** Meet your fellow Shaker business owners! Join one of our active business associations, including: Larchmere, Chagrin+Lee and Van Aken District. We have already passed along your contact information to the [Shaker Heights Development Corporation](#) who convenes the meetings. You will receive an email from either [Nick Fedor](#) or Tuba Baloglu with information about the next meeting.
- **Shaker Life Magazine:** Hyperlocal marketing opportunity! Here is the link to the quarterly [Shaker Life magazine](#), including the [advertising information](#). Shaker Life is both print and digital media. To place an ad, reach out to John Moore at 216.721.4300 or jmoore@livepub.com.
- **Shop Shaker:** Shop local campaign here! We have both a [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#) page. Please reach out to me either via phone or email if you would like me to share any specific information at any time.
- **Heights-Hillcrest Regional Chamber of Commerce (HRCC):** Network and learn new things or spruce up your skills! HRCC serves a six-city region - check out their [website](#) or reach out to Executive Director, Karen Schaefer, via [email](#) or phone at 216.397.7322.

Please contact the Department of Economic Development at any time with questions, concerns and suggestions (216.491.1335 or economicdevelopment@shakeronline.com).

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