



# New Business Guide

Your guide to doing business in Spartanburg, SC

City of Spartanburg

145 W. Broad St. | P.O. Box 1749  
Spartanburg, South Carolina 29304

[www.cityofspartanburg.org](http://www.cityofspartanburg.org) | 864.596.2000



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# Welcome.

Thank you for considering the City of Spartanburg for the location of your business. The following guide is offered as a convenient tool for approaching sequential questions and issues as you take your business from initial planning to the commencement of business activities.

While this guide covers most of the topics relevant to starting your business with us, there are many variables that might require additional attention. We are prepared to answer your questions and to work with you every step of the way.

For those of you already familiar with the City of Spartanburg, this guide serves as a checklist for addressing and completing the steps necessary to properly develop and license your business.

Through the City of Spartanburg's Economic Development Department, a liaison service is offered to assist you through the process of opening a new business in the city – do not hesitate to contact us.

We look forward to speaking with you and are here to help. Thanks again for considering the City.

## **Chris Story**

City Manager

(864) 596-2072

[cstory@cityofspartanburg.org](mailto:cstory@cityofspartanburg.org)



# Important Contacts

Who to know and how to contact them throughout the process.



City offices are housed in various buildings throughout the City of Spartanburg. The following are those you are most likely to visit while starting your new business:

## City Hall

**145 West Broad Street  
Spartanburg, South Carolina 29306**

City Hall includes City Council Chambers and the offices of the Mayor, City Manager, Assistant City Manager, City Attorney, Community Services, Human Resources, Public Safety, Finance, Information Technologies, Communications & Marketing, Purchasing, Procurement, Municipal Court and Public Safety.

## Development Services

**440 South Church Street  
Spartanburg, South Carolina 29306**

This office includes Building Inspections **(864) 596-2111**, Planning and Zoning **(864) 596-2068**, Civil Engineering, Construction Services, Code Enforcement, Economic Development **(864) 596-2972**, and Neighborhood Services.

## Business Names and Trademarks

Prior to publicizing and circulating the name of your business and/or graphics, check the name's availability with the South Carolina Secretary of State to assure it is not already in use within the state. To trademark the name, you must register it with the Secretary of State's Trademarks Division. Call **(803) 734-0629**, or visit [www.scsos.com](http://www.scsos.com).

## Incorporation

To incorporate your business, contact the South Carolina Secretary of State at **(803) 734-2158**, or visit [www.scos.com](http://www.scos.com). State Retail License

If your business sells items at the retail level, it must obtain a retail license and collect and remit sales tax to the South Carolina Department of Revenue. Call **(864) 241-1200** (Greenville) or **(803) 898-5000** (Columbia), or visit [www.sctax.org](http://www.sctax.org).

## City Business License

### **Non-Residential / Retail:**

Any business located within the City of Spartanburg, or any non-resident business that operates within the city limits of Spartanburg, that engages in, causes to be in, and/or represents itself/himself/herself to be engaged in any occupation or activity with the object of gain, benefit, or advantage, either directly or indirectly, is required to purchase an annual business license for the calendar year. Call the City's Finance Division at **(864) 596-2055**.

Prior to being issued a business license, the applicant's place of business must meet all applicable Zoning, Building, Signage, and Fire and Life Safety codes, must have received a final inspection by the City's Building Inspections Department and must have received its Certificate of Occupancy. Call **(864) 596-2041**.

### **Residential, Home-Based, Cottage Industry Businesses:**

If your business operates out of a non-retail or residential property, you are required to obtain a City of Spartanburg Home Occupation Permit prior to applying for a city Business License. For information regarding the Home Occupation Permit, call the City's Building Inspections Department at **(864) 596-2041**.

Businesses that qualify under this category are not required to maintain a Retail License issued by the State of South Carolina. Even so, these businesses are urged to check with the South Carolina Secretary of State Corporations Division **(803) 734-2158** to inquire about use of business names, trademarks, phrases, slogans, etc.

### **Charitable and Nonprofit Organizations:**

All Charitable and Nonprofit Organizations must register with the South Carolina Secretary of State. Call **(803) 734-0629**, or visit [www.scsos.com](http://www.scsos.com).

To apply for exemption from sales and use tax on items sold for charitable purposes, your organization must file Form ST-387 with the South Carolina Department of Revenue. Call **(803) 896-1350**, or visit [www.sctax.org](http://www.sctax.org).

Nonprofits operating within the City of Spartanburg are exempt from obtaining a City Business License for any charitable activities directly covered by their tax-exempt status. For activities that are not within the approved exemption, an organization may be required to obtain a business license. Call the City's Finance Division at **(864) 596-2055**.

## Hotels, Motels, Extended Stays, Bed and Breakfasts

If your business rents accommodations, including vacation homes, for fewer than 90 consecutive days to the same customer, you must collect and remit a 7% sales tax on accommodations and

6% sales tax on additional services to the South Carolina Department of Revenue. Visit [www.sctax.org](http://www.sctax.org).

## Alcohol

Businesses that sell or serve alcohol must obtain a permit from the South Carolina Department of Revenue's Alcohol Beverage Licensing section. Businesses that serve alcohol by the drink must also collect and remit a liquor by the drink tax. Call **(803) 898-5864**, or visit [www.sctax.org](http://www.sctax.org).

## City Hospitality Tax

Restaurants, bars, private clubs, coffee shops, internet cafes, bakeries, bagel shops, confectioners, delicatessens and other businesses that prepare, serve, repackage, or sell food or alcohol within the City limits are required to collect and remit a 2% hospitality tax to the City of Spartanburg's Finance Division. Call **(864) 596-2055** for more info.

## Tobacco

Businesses that sell tobacco products must obtain a license from the South Carolina Department of Revenue. Call **(803) 896-1970**, or visit [www.sctax.org](http://www.sctax.org).

## Restaurants, Grocery Stores, Convenience Stores

Businesses that handle food must first obtain a license from the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control prior to operation. Call the DHEC Region 2 Office at **(864) 596-3327**, or visit [www.scdhec.gov](http://www.scdhec.gov).

## Mobile Businesses, Carts, Street Vendors

Must apply for and receive approval from the City's Planning Department before applying for a City Business License. Call **(864) 596-2068**.

## Contractors

Must possess a South Carolina General Contractor's License or Home Builder's License from

the SC Contractor Licensing Board before applying for a Spartanburg City building permit. Call **(803) 896-4694** (residential), or **(803) 896-4686** (commercial), or visit **www.llronline.com**.

## Construction Permits

Prior to any demolition or construction of real property, permits must be obtained from the City's Building Inspections Department. Call **(864) 596-2041**.

## Certificate of Occupancy

Businesses located within the City limits must be inspected and receive a Certificate of Occupancy from the City's Building Inspections Department before receiving a Business License, or before opening the premises to the general public. Call **(864) 596-2041**.

Home-based businesses must submit a Home Occupancy Application from the Planning Department for approval prior to the commencement of business activities out of the home.

## Fire and Security Alarms

Must be registered with the City's Department of Public Safety. Call **(864) 596-2238**.

## Precious Metals

Businesses that purchase precious metals, or precious/semiprecious stones or gems for profit, must obtain an annual Precious Metal Permit from the City's Public Safety Department. Call **(864) 596-2860**.

## Scrap Metals

### **Ferrous:**

If you transport and sell ferrous scrap metals to a scrap metal recycler you will need a Transport Permit to do so.

### **Non-Ferrous:**

If you transport and sell non-ferrous metals to a scrap metal recycler, you must also obtain a Scrap Metal Permit from the Spartanburg County Sheriff's Department. Call **(864) 503-4553**, or

(864) 503-4554.

## Garbage Collection

Businesses located in the City's Central Business District (CBD) are eligible for curbside pick-up. Call the City's Solid Waste Division at **(864) 596-3690**.

Businesses located outside of the CBD should call the City's Solid Waste Division for service at **(864) 596-3690**. These businesses also have the option of contracting with numerous locally available private waste-hauling contractors.



# New Business Checklist

Tips on setting up your business with The City.



# The Checklist

Following the checklist is a description of offices involved in the process of business development, including contact names, phone numbers and email addresses. Certain information is repeated for the ease of access to the reader.

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## I. Address

Verify address of intended business location.

**Source:**

- Realtor
- Physical inspection of premises

## II. Zoning

Confirm zoning and required parking for the intended business.

**Source:**

**Natalia Rosario, Planning Coordinator**

City Planning & Zoning, 440 South Church St., 29306  
(864) 596-2068  
nrosario@cityofspartanburg.org

If locating to the Central Business District, check to see if special design guidelines and requirements will apply to renovations.

## III. Feasibility Inspection

Prior to the commencement of any plans or modifications to the premises, the City offers

a Feasibility Inspection at no cost to the new business. Feasibility Inspections occur on Wednesday of each week.

**Source:**

**B.A. "Buddy" Bush, Building Official**

Building Inspections Office, 440 South Church Street, 29306  
(864) 596-2111  
bbush@cityofspartanburg.org | V. Building Permit

**Note:** *Contact Patty Bock, Economic Development Director to schedule. [pbock@cityofspartanburg.org](mailto:pbock@cityofspartanburg.org) or 864-596-2972*

- If planning construction or renovations, apply for a Building Permit. Allow 2-3 weeks for plan review and return of comments.
- At the same time of the Building Permit application, apply for the Certificate of Occupancy as this triggers certain review criteria by the City.

## V. Signage

All business signage or banners must be permitted through the City prior to any fabrication or installation of signage. Submittal of plans and application for a Sign Permit (application form attached) should be made a minimum of four weeks prior to the anticipated opening of your business in order to allow for review and the subsequent fabrication and installation of signage.

Allow five working days from the time of submittal of plans to the return of comments. Application for a sign permit together with sign drawings/plans must be submitted to:

**Natalia Rosario, Planner**

City Planner, 440 South Church Street, 29306  
(864) 596-2069  
nrosario@cityofspartanburg.org

## IV. Business License:

All businesses operating within city limits must obtain a Business License from the City of Spartanburg. The application for the license can be made when applying for building permits. The license will not be issued to the applicant until all construction and all inspections are finalized, and the Certificate of Occupancy has been issued. Upon receipt of a Certificate of Occupancy, the Business License can be released and issued within one working day.

### **Information required for the Business License Application:**

- Business Name
- Type of business activity
- Category of legal business organization (LLC, Inc., partnership, etc.)
- Owner's social security number or business Federal Identification Number
- Name, mailing address and phone number of each owner, partner or chief officer
- Physical address and phone number of business
- Legal Notice address
- Estimate of expected gross receipts (for full or partial year) not including sale or hospitality taxes

### **Business Classification and Calculation of Business License Fee**

Due to the number of business classifications utilized by the City of Spartanburg, it is not recommended that a business owner attempt to "self-classify" for the purpose of estimating its first Business License Fee. Please call the Finance Department at **(864) 596-2059** to determine the appropriate classification for your business and the fee that will result. For subsequent years, a Fee Calculation Worksheet is published online.

Typically, the Business License is required by banking institutions before opening a business checking account. Contact:

**Paul Smith, Business License Enforcement Manager**

Finance Office, 145 West Broad St., 29306  
(864) 596-2771  
psmith@cityofspartanburg.org

## **VI. State Registration:**

All businesses operating within the State of South Carolina must register with the South Carolina Department of Revenue.

### **Source:**

**Department of Revenue**  
Greenville: (864) 241-1200  
Columbia: (803) 898-5300  
www.sctax.org

## VII. Contractor's License

All contractors must be licensed by the State of South Carolina Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulations and must have a Business License from the City of Spartanburg.

Construction and/or demolition activities cannot commence until necessary permits have been issued.



# City Departments

Where to go for the right kind of help.



## Economic Development

### **Contacts:**

#### **Patty Bock**

Economic Development Director

P.O. Box 1749

145 West Broad Street  
Spartanburg, S.C. 29306

**(864) 596-2972**

pbock@cityofspartanburg.org

### **Function:**

- Promotes retention of businesses existing within the city limits.
- Identifies business opportunities as prospects for recruitment to City.
- Works with local property owners and brokers to facilitate negotiations with business prospects.
- Provides a multitude of assistance programs to interested developers and business owners.
- Helps to identify, bridge, and create the link between available local, state and federal development incentives and loan programs.
- Provides a liaison to assist new businesses navigating the new business process

## Building Inspections and Permits Department

### **Contacts:**

#### **B.A. "Buddy" Bush, Building Official**

Department of Inspections

P.O. Box 1749

440 S. Church Street  
Spartanburg, S.C. 29306

**(864) 596-2111**

bbush@cityofspartanburg.org

### **Function:**

- Offers a free feasibility inspection of prospective building site to interested new business prospects.
- Inspects all new construction within the City of Spartanburg.
- Issues all construction-related permits for both commercial and residential projects.
- Issues Certificate of Occupancy to commercial businesses.
- Ensures all construction is code and ordinance compliant.

### **Types of Permits**

- Go to [www.cityofspartanburg.org](http://www.cityofspartanburg.org). Under the vertical menu bar on the left, click on "Development Services."
- On the next page in the horizontal gray-shaded area beneath the photo, click on "Building Inspections."
- On the next page, click "For all permits and applications, click here." All forms can be saved if you have Adobe Pro. Otherwise all can be filled out on your computer, printed, scanned and emailed or mailed back to the City.

### **Applicable Code**

- 2015 International Building Code with State Amendments
- 2015 International Residential Code
- 2015 International Fire Code
- 2015 International Mechanical Code
- 2015 International Plumbing Code
- 2015 International Fuel Gas Code
- 2009 International Energy Conservation Code
- 2015 International Property Maintenance Code
- 2014 National Electrical Code
- 2017 American National Standards Institute Accessibility Guidelines
- (ANSI A117.1)

### **NOTES:**

- Contact SC LLR at [www.llr.state.sc.us](http://www.llr.state.sc.us) for state amendments.
- Submittals should include architectural floor plans, floor, wall and ceiling finishes, details, plumbing, mechanical, electrical, structural, and fire protection systems.
- City requires three sets of plans and specifications that have been stamped and signed by a registered Architect or Engineer per South Carolina Licensing Law.
- Plans are typically reviewed within two weeks.
- One set of originals with comments will be returned to submitting party.
- All general, plumbing, mechanical and electrical contractors must be licensed in the State of South Carolina with the Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulations. All contractors (and subs) must possess a City of Spartanburg Business License.

## Planning and Zoning

### Contact:

**Natalia Rosario, Planner**

P.O.Box1749

145 Broad St.  
Spartanburg, S.C. 29306

**(864) 596-2712**

[nrosario@cityofspartanburg.org](mailto:nrosario@cityofspartanburg.org)

### Function:

- Reviews landscaping/site plans, subdivisions, rezoning requests and proposed changes to the City's Comprehensive Plan.
- Provides staff support to Board of Zoning and Appeals, Planning Commission, Design Review Board, assigns legal mailing address to real property. Provides staff support to the Historic Architect Review Board for adherence to Hampton Heights and Beaumont Village historic design criteria.
- Reviews City's Zoning Ordinance and when appropriate advises amendments of same to Planning Commission.
- Works with property owners to conduct initial site feasibility studies.
- Will conduct Site plan reviews.
- Works with property owners on large tract and subdivision development.

### **NOTE:**

The contact person below can provide business owners or their representatives with Site Plan Review Check List: includes site plan requirements (parking, irrigation, lighting, driveway widths, curbs, loading areas); landscape requirements, signage requirements, grading plan requirements, fire plan requirements, and formulas for Site Plan Review Fee and Engineering Review Fee.

### **Contact:**

**Natalia Rosario, Planner**

P.O. Box 1749  
Spartanburg, S.C. 29306

**(864) 596-2069**

[nrosario@cityofspartanburg.org](mailto:nrosario@cityofspartanburg.org)

### **Types of Permits**

- Signs and banners
- Political signs
- Fence permit
- Tree removal permits
- Encroachment

## **Civil Engineering**

### **Contacts:**

**Tim Carter, Engineering Manager**  
Civil Engineering

P.O. Box 1749  
440 S. Church St.  
Spartanburg, S.C. 29306

**(864) 596-2838**

[tcarter@cityofspartanburg.org](mailto:tcarter@cityofspartanburg.org)

**Function:**

- Provides a full range of civil engineering services with primary focus on development, surveying and storm water management.

**Notes:**

- Any/all land development activities that will disturb land surface of 5,000 square feet or more will require a Land Disturbance Permit.
- A Storm Water Utility Fee is assessed to owners of residential and non-residential properties, including non-profit organizations and institutions.

Direct questions regarding the above two matters to:

**Jay Squires, Storm Water Manager**

Civil Engineering

P.O. Box 1749  
Spartanburg, S.C. 29306

**(864) 596-2089**

jsquires@cityofspartanburg.org

**General Notes:**

- Fire alarms and security alarms must be registered with City of Spartanburg Public
- Safety's Alarm Division, **(864) 596-2238**.
- Mobile vendors must receive approval from both the property owner and City Planning. A city Business License and registration with the South Carolina Department of Revenue is likewise required.
- All retail businesses must register with the South Carolina Department of Revenue (Greenville: **(864) 241-1200**; Columbia: **(803) 898-5300**, or **www.sctax.org**)
- Restaurants and other food-related businesses also should contact the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control (DHEC) regarding health safety related requirements (Tom Greene, **(864) 596-3327**).

→ Early-learning centers, day-care centers, or after-school programs should contact:

**Howard Coogler**

South Carolina Department of Education, Office of School Facilities  
**(803) 734-4839**

**Don Wood**

South Carolina Department of Social Services  
**(803) 209-3493**