

# City of South Milwaukee Checklist for Opening a Businesses



Prospective businesses meet with the economic development manager to review the process for opening a business.

- Confirm proposed business is allowed in the respective zoning district.
- Review eligibility of City business Bucyrus Grants
- Submit a **Business Occupancy Permit** application and floor plan to scale.
- BUILDING IMPROVEMENTS.** All required electrical, HVAC, and plumbing permits for proposed building improvements must be procured by licensed contractors. Changing walls/adding an ADA restroom and other improvements require WIS DSPS state approved plans. The City does not do plan exams for commercial/industrial buildings. Permits must pass all required inspections prior to a business opening. Confirm if your business type requires ADA improvements.
- BUILDING ADDITIONS/ SITE IMPROVEMENTS.** For additions and site improvements, submit a **Community Development Application** for a zoning review for building setbacks, heights, lot coverage and other site standards. A change in use may require site improvements. Refer to Zoning Code Article 4 for site standards.
- INSPECTIONS.** The Business schedules inspections with the building and fire inspectors and the health sanitarian for certain food-related businesses. Occupancy inspections are completed when the business is set to open to the public, having all fixtures and equipment in place. Upon successful completion of inspections, a **Certificate of Occupancy** is issued and emailed to the applicant.

## OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

- VERIFY REQUIRED LICENSES.** Alcohol, tobacco, massage establishments, second hand article shops, pet and grooming shops, and others require an annual license through the City Clerk's office and approved by the Common Council.
- Food & Beverage businesses require a license through the Health Department.

## SIGNAGE

- Exterior signs require a Sign Permit.
- Permanent window and temporary window signage may not exceed 40% of the window area. A Sign Permit is not required.
- Sandwich boards are allowed in front of business. Max 12 SqFt. Max height 4-feet.

## OUTDOOR SEATING

- Outdoor seating is allowed in the public right-of-way as long as continuous pedestrian access is maintained. Check with the Clerks office to confirm licenses for sale or consumption of beer/liquor outside.
- Parklets and Pedlets are allowed, requiring a Parklet/Pedlet Application and a Class B combination license approved by the Common Council.

*Let us help you celebrate your new business with a **Ribbon Cutting Ceremony!**  
Coordinate your grand opening with the economic development manager.*

## CONTACTS

Economic Development Manager Ericka Lang 414.762.2222 Ext 135 [ELang@smwi.org](mailto:ELang@smwi.org)

City Clerk Steven Braatz 414.762.2222 [x127 SBraatz@smwi.org](mailto:SBraatz@smwi.org)

Building Inspector Steve Petery 414.768.8054 [Petery@smwi.org](mailto:Petery@smwi.org)

Health Sanitarian Jacklyn Morales 414.768.8055 [JM Morales@ smwi.org](mailto:JM Morales@ smwi.org)

Fire Department 414.768.819 [Fire@smwi.org](mailto:Fire@smwi.org)