



BOROUGH OF POTTSTOWN

Borough Hall, 100 East High Street
Pottstown, Pennsylvania 19464-9525
(610) 970-6520 (610) 970-6599 fax

Starting A Business/Zoning Review Application: Commercial/Mixed-Use

This application is necessary whether relocating, considering a new business venture, or expanding into the Borough. It is also necessary prior to converting commercial uses to residential uses and vice versa, merging uses, etc.

The more precise and accurate the information provided, the better the Zoning Officer can assist you through this process. The questions on this form may not be all inclusive due to the diverse nature of properties within the Borough.

- A \$50 zoning review fee, in the form of a check, must be submitted along with this form. Fees are non-refundable.
- This fee and determination are specifically limited to 909.1(a)(2) of the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code.
- Public Property Records can be found on-line @ propertyrecords.montcopa.org
- The Zoning Ordinance and maps are available online @ www.pottstown.org

THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION IS REQUIRED:

1. **Property Address** _____ **Unit#** _____
Parcel #1600- _____ **Zoning District** _____

2. **Sketch:**

Provide an informal sketch on 8 1/2 x 11" paper (or larger) of:

- A. A sketch showing the lay out of each floor of the entire building. This sketch must include
1. square footage of every existing unit
 2. labeled uses for each unit (commercial or residential)
 3. location of doors and windows

B. Show all on-site parking spaces to include the dimensions of each space

3. **Property information – EXISTING:**

Historic Zone: Yes No Is the proposed unit vacant? Yes No

Residential: # of Units _____ Commercial: # of Total Units in Building _____

Number of parking spaces on-site: _____

RELOCATING, CONSIDERING A NEW BUSINESS VENTURE, OR EXPANDING:

4. Your Proposed use:

Name of proposed new business: _____

Website address if applicable: _____

Provide detailed information to include specific type of proposed business/use to include products to be sold, equipment and/or processes to be used:

Number of employees _____ Days of operation _____

Hours of operation _____ How many deliveries per week _____

Number of clients _____

What type of advertising/signage will be associated with this use: _____

Will there be any noise, lighting, odors, etc. Explain: _____

What are the proposed hours for deliveries or pick-up; if any _____

Where is the location of trash pick-up disposal; is there screening? _____

Will there be any outside storage? If yes, provide details _____

5. In the chart below, list all existing uses CURRENTLY in the building and on the property, i.e. doctor office, restaurant, grocery store, retail, warehouse/storage, residential units, etc.

<u>Unit Number and Use (Specify if Commercial [C] or Residential [R])</u>	<u>Total Square Footage of Unit</u>	<u>Type of Business (if occupied: list current business type– if vacant: list past business type)</u>

6. If child-care/adult care/other living:

Number of clients/residents _____

Sketch to include drop off locations, playground information, and any other “conditional” requirements.

CONVERSION OF COMMERCIAL TO RESIDENTIAL OR VICE VERSA:

7. Change from Commercial to Residential Change from Residential to Commercial

Other, explain _____

What is square footage of the ground floor of the principal building? _____

How many stories does this building have? _____

Along with a sketch showing the current lay out of the building (item #2), provide a secondary sketch showing the PROPOSED changes to include **NEW square footage, parking areas, etc.**

8. Owner Name _____ Phone Number _____

Owner Address _____

Owner Email _____

Owner Signature _____ Date _____

9. Applicant Name _____ Phone Number _____

Applicant Address _____

Applicant Email _____

Applicant Signature _____ Date _____

Applicant is: Business owner Other _____

- **Your proposed use must meet all state & federal requirements and licenses.**
- **After zoning approval, inspections are required for all commercial spaces.**
- **Permits are required for Signage.**
- **After successful inspection, a Business License must be obtained from our office.**

Office Use

Zoning Officer _____ Date _____

Inspection/Site Visit Yes , Date _____ No

Notes: _____



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Questions Before You Start a Business in Pottstown

When you are touring different spaces in the Borough of Pottstown, please take a few moments to think about how your business will work in town. Take this sheet with you as you tour locations and use it to think about the different issues that arise when opening a business.

As a new/potential investor in Pottstown, we encourage you to visit PAID's website (paidinc.org) to learn more about the redevelopment of Pottstown and how PAID may be able to assist you! PAID also provides information on Local Economic Revitalization Tax Assistance Program (LERTA). For more information, please reach out to Peggy Lee-Clark at pleeclark@paidinc.org, or by phone at 610-326-2900.

This form has been created to assist you prior to purchasing or leasing a site for your proposed business. This worksheet is not all encompassing, you may need to gather other additional information as all businesses and uses are unique! Before you purchase or lease your building you will need to gather information to complete the [Starting A Business/Zoning Review Application- Commercial/Mixed Use Form](#). Review this Step by Step Guide for more information about the process of starting a business in Pottstown.

Questions About Your Business:

What type of business do you want to open? _____

What activities are expected in your building? Are there any production processes taking place? _____

What products and equipment will be used by your business? _____

How many employees will you have? _____

What are the days and hours of operation for your proposed business? _____

Will there be deliveries, if so what size of vehicles will be used? _____

Questions About Your Building:

What is the total square footage of the building and of the unit you wish to lease/buy? _____

What changes to the building will be needed to operate your business? _____

Is the building currently vacant? _____

How many units exist in the building and what are their uses? (office, deli, retail, residential, etc.) _____

If the space is not currently being used what was the previous use of the building? _____

*The Borough Code of Ordinances can be found on the main page of our webpage at www.pottstown.org.
If you have any questions, please contact the Zoning Officer at 610-970-6500 ext. 6414.*

A Step by Step Guide for Starting a Business in Pottstown

Step 1. Submit a Starting a Business Form

Use the information you have gathered about your business idea and the property from the front of this worksheet to submit a *Starting a Business/Zoning Review Application* along with the required fee to the Borough of Pottstown's Licensing and Inspections Department.

Request on Site Visit (*Optional*)

After submitting a *Starting a Business/Zoning Review Application*, as a courtesy to you and upon request, our Licensing and Inspection team will meet with you on site to do a walkthrough. This will **NOT** be an official inspection; rather, it gives us a chance to hear about your vision, see the space, and discuss your concerns. While your design professional will be responsible for preparing your plan, we can discuss what you might expect should the space need renovations, fire alarms, sprinkler requirements, accessibility concerns, etc.

Step 2. Zoning Review

Your form will be reviewed by the zoning officer and a zoning determination letter will be sent to you. The goal is to issue the determination letter in less than two weeks. If more information is needed to issue a determination, you will be notified with instructions on how to remedy the issue. After the determination is made, a new business owner can be comfortable buying or leasing their business space.

After a favorable zoning review, this is the time you should be making your decision about signing a lease or purchasing the property.

Step 3. Apply for Permits (*This step can be done in conjunction with Step 4 listed below*)

Any renovations and physical changes will require you to engage with a registered design professional to prepare signed and sealed engineering drawings of the project. Please refer to the *Borough of Pottstown Permitting Checklist* to aid you through this process. Signs will require a permit and are regulated/limited by the number of signs and their size depending upon type. Applicants may request a pre-plan submittal meeting. A vast majority of commercial projects will require that you hire a design professional. If no renovations are required for your space, proceed to Step 4.

Step 4. Schedule Commercial Occupancy Inspection and Pay Fees

Once zoning is approved, you must schedule a commercial occupancy inspection with the Borough of Pottstown's Licensing and Inspection Department to ensure the building meets all health and safety regulations. You must complete and submit a *Commercial Occupancy Inspection Application* along with the required fee, before an inspection can be scheduled.

Step 5. Open for Business

Once the commercial occupancy inspection and all other permit inspections have passed you must obtain an annual Borough Business License; then you may open for business! The Borough of Pottstown and its residents are grateful that you decided to pick Pottstown for your new business. Contact the TriCounty Area Chamber of Commerce at 610-326-2900 to schedule a ribbon cutting ceremony, to celebrate your opening.

Because each project is different depending on the plans and the zoning district, no two projects will have the same requirements. This worksheet is meant to serve as a general guideline to help you better understand the process.