



# PERRY

Where Georgia comes together

## START A NEW BUSINESS GUIDE

Information ?

**A guide to opening your new business smoothly.**

**Featuring:** zoning and permitting, construction, alterations and modifications, inspections, licensing and MORE!



Where Georgia comes together.



Where Georgia Comes Together  
**for Business!**

# Thank you for choosing Perry as a place to do business!



Perry is growing rapidly and has more than 22,000 residents with an estimated 7% population growth rate since 2020.

The City issues, on average, 40 single-family home building permits a month. Perry remains a place where people want to live and represents an increasingly significant consumer base.

The City remains an attractive community to conduct, grow, or locate a business. We are here to serve you. The Perry Council and I pride ourselves on transparency and accessibility.

Our staff is happy to answer any questions you have. Our Employee Directory, located on our website at [perry-ga.gov](http://perry-ga.gov), lists the contact information for our employees. You will also find a wealth of information about our policies and procedures.

Keep up to date with the latest Perry happenings by following us on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn, and Nextdoor.

Businesses, such as yours, are the backbone of our local economy. We look forward to working with you and supporting your business!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "R Walker". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Randall Walker  
Mayor

## Simple Steps To Start A Business In Perry, Ga

Thank you for considering the City of Perry for your new and/or expanding business. Perry has more than 22,000 residents, a strong workforce and is growing! With our excellent infrastructure, prime location off I-75, excellent quality of life, historic downtown, and home to the Georgia National Fairgrounds, the city wants to ensure that your business is successful from the first day of operation and for many years to come.

This guide is a resource to facilitate business development in the City of Perry. It serves as a how-to roadmap to open a new business, whether a new construction project, renovation of existing structure or a new operation in the downtown development overlay district.

### Checklist for Initial Business Startup Activities Include:

- Set up corporate structure (LLC, S-Corp) through your attorney or CPA
- Create a business plan and/or marketing plan (website, social media, etc.)
- Plan your financing (If additional capital is required, commercial lenders require owner investment-have your finances in order)
- Identify your location and determine if its zoned appropriately (see Zoning)
- Sign lease/purchase property
- Obtain necessary permits for building construction/renovation
- Are you ready to open your doors?
- Obtain your sign permit (see Signs)
- Obtain a building inspection for a Certificate of Occupancy
- Obtain city business license (also called Occupational Tax Certificate at the Taxes and Licenses Department at City Hall)



## Zoning

Prior to signing a lease, letter of intent or contract on a property, verify it is zoned appropriately for the intended business use or what steps may be possible to allow for the intended use.

### **Zoning Districts and Examples of Their Permitted Uses:**

- C-1 Highway Commercial District – auto sales, big box retail, gas stations
- C-2 General Commercial District – retail, restaurants, multi-family
- C-3 Central Business District – office uses, retail, service businesses
- M-1 Wholesale and Light Industrial District – light manufacturing, retail
- M-2 Industrial District – heavy manufacturing, warehousing, retail
- OC Office Commercial – offices, professional uses, multi-family
- LC Limited Commercial – small retail, service businesses
- IN Institutional District – medical uses, long term care facilities

A complete list of uses allowed in each zoning district is available in the Table of Uses, Section 4-1 of the Perry Land Management Ordinance. [www.perry-ga.gov/LMO](http://www.perry-ga.gov/LMO)

## Rezoning

If a Rezoning Request for an intended use is needed, there is an application for the rezone process available here: [www.perry-ga.gov/plandocs](http://www.perry-ga.gov/plandocs)

The Community Development staff can assist you in determining if the location and type of business is in compliance with the zoning ordinance. Please contact the Community Development Department at (478) 988-2720 or [comm.development@perry-ga.gov](mailto:comm.development@perry-ga.gov).



## Building Permits: New Construction & Renovations

Architectural plans are required to obtain a building permit for any new structure, addition, accessory building, substantial improvement or alteration for a commercial use in the City of Perry, the following information shall be shown or provided in detail on a plan drawn to scale with dimensions (architectural style drawn to a minimum scale of 1/8" = 1').

### Items that require a building permit include but are not limited to:

- New construction
- Additions or modifications
- Change of use
- Structural repairs or remodeling
- Water heaters, gas, sewer, water and electric systems
- Heating appliance
- Central air conditioning units
- Plumbing and gas
- Electrical wiring

A preapplication is required meeting with the business owner/architect, engineer, general contractor, etc. Plans at a minimum shall include electrical, plumbing, HVAC, and gas riser diagrams and ADA details. A fire and life safety plan laid out on a floor plan drawing to include exit and emergency lighting, egress/ exit requirements, travel distances, fire ratings and fire protection systems. For any alteration or construction a floor plan, wall section, structural details, elevations with exterior materials and colors identified hardware, window and door schedules. Footing and foundation plan to include rebar size and locations and depth and width of footings and slabs. Energy code information (Com-Check) should include insulation details for walls, ceilings and lighting compliance. Electrical, plumbing, HVAC and gas plans need to provide detailed information of fixture type, location and sizing. A building permit may be obtained utilizing the development services portal here: [www.perry-ga.gov/commdev](http://www.perry-ga.gov/commdev)

The typical plan review timeframe for renovations and new construction is approximately four weeks.

The State of Georgia requires all contractors be licensed to perform contracted work. Please contact Community Development at (478) 988-2720 and the Fire Marshal's Office at (478) 988-2759 for additional information regarding specific occupancy requirements and building permits.

# Inspections

After application and/or permitting but prior to being issued a certificate of occupancy or a business license (Occupational Tax Certificate), inspection(s) at the business location must be performed by the Community Development Office and the Fire Marshal's Office. Both offices working together verify commercial locations are safe for occupancy by the business and the public. It is the function of the Inspections Division of the Community Development Department and Fire Marshal's Office to ensure permitted projects are constructed in a manner adhering to the building plans submitted and are constructed in accordance with all building and life safety codes adopted by the State of Georgia and the City of Perry.

## **Some of the typical inspections that are required for construction projects:**

- Sub-slab
- Footing/slab
- Rough-in framing - plumbing, electrical, gas, and mechanical
- Above ceiling /80%
- Commercial cooking hood, duct inspection
- Fire sprinkler or suppression system pressure test, underground and aboveground
- Insulation
- Building water, sewer and storm water
- Permanent electrical service
- Final acceptance of fire sprinkler system
- Final acceptance of fire alarm system
- Final acceptance of commercial cooking hood system
- Final acceptance 100% and issuance of a Certificate of Occupancy or business license

## **Focus areas for inspections include:**

### **Community Development**

- Site layout, footings & slab
- Framing and structure
- Plumbing, electric, gas, HVAC
- Underground utilities
- Access, ingress, egress & ADA
- Temporary & permanent electric
- Landscape/hardscape
- Parking areas

### **Fire Marshal's Office**

- Occupancy classification and requirements
- Egress/exits to include lighting and signage and size
- Features of fire protection, fire walls, smoke barriers, construction
- Fire protection systems, sprinklers, alarms, extinguishers, etc.
- ADA/accessibility requirements and compliance
- Storage, hazardous/non-hazardous
- Water supplies and fire flows
- Fire protection calculations

After all inspections are completed successfully a Certificate of Occupancy will be issued. No building shall be occupied without a Certificate of Occupancy. A business license will be issued if the building and business successfully passes its inspection and is in compliance with the requirements for the type of occupancy classification sought to operate under. Please contact the Community Development at (478) 988-2720 and the Fire Marshal's Office at (478) 988-2759 for additional information regarding inspections and permits.

## Occupational Tax Certificate

An Occupational Tax Certificate, also known as a business license, is required to conduct business in the City of Perry, even if sales tax is not collected. Most businesses will need to complete an application for a general business license. Also, the applicant must complete notarized affidavits (Affidavit Verifying Status and Private Employer Affidavit), as well as the Home-Based Business Acknowledgement form (for businesses operating at a residential location) and provide copies of appropriate identification. License fees are based on the number of employees. Payment can be made by cash, check, or debit/credit. Fee schedule may be found on website <http://www.perry-ga.gov> under Administration Department. Applications and affidavits can be found here: [www.perry-ga.gov/licenses](http://www.perry-ga.gov/licenses)



## Downtown

If your business is located in the Downtown Development District, the zoning for appropriate business uses and building permit requirements in this guide still apply for new construction and renovation projects. Any exterior modifications, including paint, for a property located in the downtown district must be approved via a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) prior to the work being conducted. The COA application form is available here: [www.perry-ga.gov/plandocs](http://www.perry-ga.gov/plandocs)

### **Additional business programs for the Downtown District include:**

- Rural zone tax credits for job creation (a minimum of 2 FTEs)
- Local and state revolving loan funds (gap financing)
- Natural Gas Incentive Program (For new commercial kitchen/restaurants)
- Facade grants (The façade improvements must meet the criteria established by and be approved by the Perry Main Street Advisory Board.)



## Main Street Advisory Board

The mission of the Perry Main Street Advisory Board is to promote and create a thriving central business district in Downtown Perry and along primary entrance corridors into the Downtown Development District, while preserving Perry's historic resources and character.

For more information about the Main St. program, call (478) 988-2730 or visit <https://perry-ga.gov/mainstreet/main-street-board>

## Home Occupation

Home based businesses may be approved by the Community Development Department, if certain conditions are met:

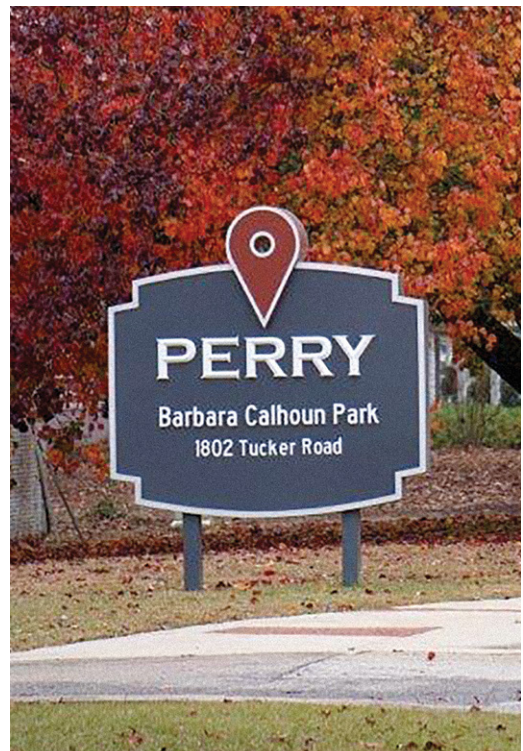
- No customers or clients at the home
- No more than 25% of the home may be used for the business
- No changes or alterations to the home to facilitate the business
- No outside storage or display
- No outside employees working in the home
- No business vehicle larger than a van or pick-up truck at the home
- No more than two deliveries per week
- No business signs

If these conditions cannot be met, a home-based business may still be possible, but it may require City Council approval.

## Signs

A permit is required for most permanent signs in the city of Perry. A colored rendering and dimensions of the proposed sign must be included with the application. The applicant must identify the sign type: freestanding, pole, monument or ground, post and arm, building wall, awning, projecting, hanging, etc. A site plan must accompany all freestanding signs. Sign standards are based on the property zoning and any applicable overlay districts. Guidelines for signage in the downtown overlay district are more restrictive. Please verify the guidelines with the Community Development Department before submitting the application. Permits fees are based on a sliding scale; value should be minus profit and overhead. The sign permit can be obtained through the developmental portal here: [www.perry-ga.gov/commdev](http://www.perry-ga.gov/commdev)

For questions, please contact the Community Development Department at (478) 988-2720 or [comm.development@perry-ga.gov](mailto:comm.development@perry-ga.gov)





## Food Service Business

If your business involves the sale of food, you may require Houston County Health Department approval in addition to meeting all City of Perry requirements. Please contact the Houston County Health Department at (478) 218-2020 for more information.

## Alcohol Sales

If your business involves the sale of alcohol you may have certain restrictions. For example:

- Proper zoning
- Setbacks from schools, churches, etc. may apply
- State license may be required

## Utilities

The following services are provided by the City of Perry:

- Natural gas (in some areas)
- Fire protection
- Water
- Storm water management
- Sewer garbage collection\* and grease trap servicing. These utilities can be activated by contacting the Customer Service Department at (478) 988-2754.

\*The City of Perry has an exclusive contract with Waste Management to provide commercial solid waste services. Businesses should contact Waste Management at (478) 987-1411 for delivery of dumpster(s) and billing rates.

## Contact Numbers

City of Perry Business License Office	(478) 988-2740
City of Perry Community Development Department	(478) 988-2720
City of Perry Customer Service	(478) 988-2754
City of Perry Economic Development	(478) 988-2755
City of Perry Fire Marshal's Office	(478) 988-2759
City of Perry Police Department	(478) 988-2804
Advanced Disposal	(478) 508-5000
Houston County Health Department	(478) 218-2020
Georgia Power	1-(888)-660-5890
Flint EMC	(478) 988-3500 or 1-(800)-342-3616
Windstream Communications (Telephone/Television/Internet)	1-(800)-501-1776
ComSouth / Hargray Communication (Telephone/Television/Internet)	(478) 987-0172

City Hall is located at 1211 Washington St. The Community Development Department is located at 741 Main St. Visit our website <http://www.perry-ga.gov> for more information.

## Additional Resources for Businesses

### Central Georgia Technical College

Workforce assistance and training programs for employers  
<https://www.centralgatech.edu/>  
(478) 476-5145

### Middle Georgia SCORE

Free business mentoring services  
305 Coliseum Drive Macon, GA 31217  
[middlegeorgia@scorevolunteer.org](mailto:middlegeorgia@scorevolunteer.org)  
(478) 621-2000

### Perry Area Chamber of Commerce

Networking, marketing opportunities,  
ribbon cuttings/ground-breaking ceremonies, etc.  
900 Carroll St, Perry, GA 31069  
(478) 987-1234

### Robins Regional Chamber

Networking, marketing opportunities,  
ribbon cuttings/ground-breaking ceremonies, etc.  
1228 Watson Blvd. Warner Robins, GA 31093  
(478) 922-8585

### UGA Small Business Development Center

4875 Riverside Drive, Suite 202 Macon, GA 31210  
(478) 757-3609





Where Georgia comes together.