
Starting Your Business in Beverly



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GREETINGS FROM THE MAYOR:

Beverly welcomes new businesses. They are the lifeblood of progress and often generate the new growth vital to a sound infrastructure, an essential component of a first class community.

We try hard to help businesses locate here. Hopefully this guide will be of help to you by giving you straight answers and by saving you time. In addition, if you are contemplating locating in Beverly, I am ready on short notice to bring all relevant department heads together to discuss permitting and any other considerations. We sponsor TIFs (Tax Increment Financing) in appropriate situations. Feel free to contact my office at 978-921-6000.

A little bit about Beverly. Beverly, the city that thinks it is a town, is doing its best to run counter to the difficult economic times. While others have pulled in their wings, Beverly has boldly proceeded with its major high school renovation project.

Beverly has also recently added significant new office space, the vast majority of which is already occupied. Beverly offers a terrific location with miles of ocean coast line, excellent train service to Boston's North Station and close proximity to Route 128. In recent years, the City has upgraded much of its infrastructure including all its elementary schools and its parks and playgrounds. Beverly has also invested heavily and with great success in five separate projects across the city to minimize storm water flooding during and after rainstorms.

Our Beverly Common is truly beautiful as is Lynch Park on the ocean's edge. We have many fine restaurants and ample free evening parking. We have a vintage, throw-back theatre, the Cabot Cinema and the nation's longest running Magic Show with performances every week. Please come join us.

Bill Scanlon
Mayor



WILLIAM F. SCANLON
MAYOR, CITY OF BEVERLY



248 Cabot Street
Beverly, MA 01915
(978) 922-8558

www.beverlymainstreets.org

BEVERLY MAIN STREETS:

is a non-profit, volunteer-led organization focused on making downtown Beverly a great place to run a business, live, work, shop, dine and visit. Our mission is to promote and enhance Beverly's downtown economic vitality, cultural and historic resources and quality of life.

If you're thinking of opening a business downtown, call us! We can help you get started and then help you succeed!

Downtown 2020 is our planned approach to revitalize downtown with:

- new retail stores, galleries and markets
- entrepreneurial, independent, creative businesses
- gathering spaces and places
- live/work spaces and upper floor housing
- waterfront and gateway improvements

To achieve the Downtown 2020 vision, we are working with the City and with business partners to create the infrastructure that will make it easy for businesses to thrive and for development to proceed. Examples of our recent successes include the City's adoption of our zoning change recommendations to streamline permitting, the design of a new wayfinding system for downtown and the completion of the downtown parking lot renovations.

We have a lot to offer you and your downtown business, including:

- Façade Improvement Program: matching grants of up to \$5,000 for exterior improvements and signage
- Banking on Beverly: below-market rate commercial loans for up to \$100,000 for exterior and interior improvements
- Complimentary design assistance from professional architects and designers for façade improvements and window merchandising
- STAR Program: financial support for purchasing window boxes and flags to decorate your building
- Marketing and promotional opportunities through sponsorships of community events like Arts Fest Beverly which annually draws 2,000 people downtown and sponsorship of light pole banners that advertise your business every day to thousands of drivers

We are also exploring financial incentives such as Tax Increment Financing and tax credits and plan to add those to our Financial Incentives Toolkit in late fall 2011.

You can check us out at www.beverlymainstreets.org or call us at 978-922-8558. We hope to see you downtown!

Gin Wallace
Executive Director



[City of Beverly, Massachusetts](#)

ABOUT BEVERLY:

Beverly is an historic seaside community located on the North Shore of Massachusetts. With miles of coastline, public parks and beaches and an abundance of open space, Beverly is appropriately called “The Garden City.” Made up of diverse neighborhoods, Beverly is also home to a first-class public school system, many private schools as well as Endicott College and Montserrat College of Art. With excellent access to Route 128 and five commuter rail stations, Beverly has a thriving downtown and multiple business/employment centers and facilities including Cherry Hill Business Park and Cummings Center.

Based on the most recent census data, our population remains stable at about 40,000 residents, almost split equally between male and female citizens. We have nearly 16,000 housing units. The average age of residents is 38. 91% of residents have a high school degree and 36% have a bachelor’s degree or higher. The median family income is \$66,846. Our government structure consists of an elected Mayor, City Council and School Committee, and dozens of boards and commissions made up of citizen volunteers. Popular community events include the week-long celebration of Beverly’s Homecoming, Arts Fest Beverly, Beverly’s New Year and the Gran Prix Bike Race.

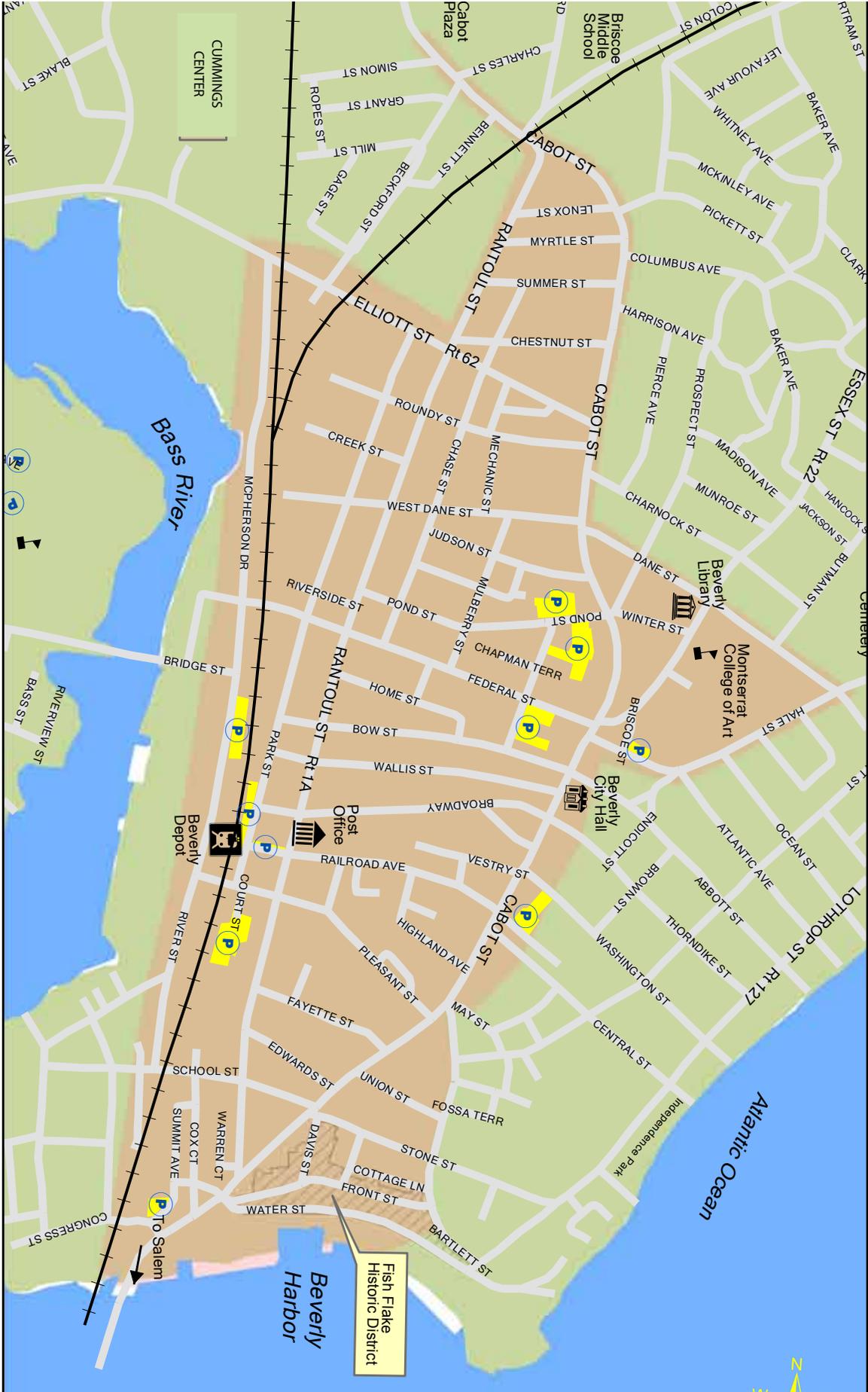
Downtown Beverly has the advantage of a number of significant assets:

- Established, local retailers offering a community-appropriate mix of every day goods and services (including some that are unique within the United States)
- Vibrant nighttime activity revolving around restaurants and music venues (including Chianti Jazz Lounge, named one of the top 150 places in the world to hear jazz)
- 2 major commercial corridors, each with its own distinct personality
- A daytime worker population of 2,000 people
- A cohesive core of historic buildings
- Walkable, pedestrian-scale downtown streets
- Institutional assets, including Montserrat College of Art, the Cabot Street Y and the Cabot Street Cinema
- Easy access to two waterfronts
- A planned (2012) 500-car MBTA parking garage at Beverly Depot, the state’s 2nd busiest commuter rail station

Thank you for giving consideration to Beverly for your business location. We wish you every success!



Beverly Main Streets Downtown District



ME
Faturu
Rohla



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GUIDE OVERVIEW:

This guide is for anyone who would like to start, expand or relocate a business in Beverly, Massachusetts.

The procedures described herein apply to doing business anywhere in Beverly. Should you locate in the immediate downtown area, you will want to get acquainted with [Beverly Main Streets](#), which is focused on creating a vibrant downtown.

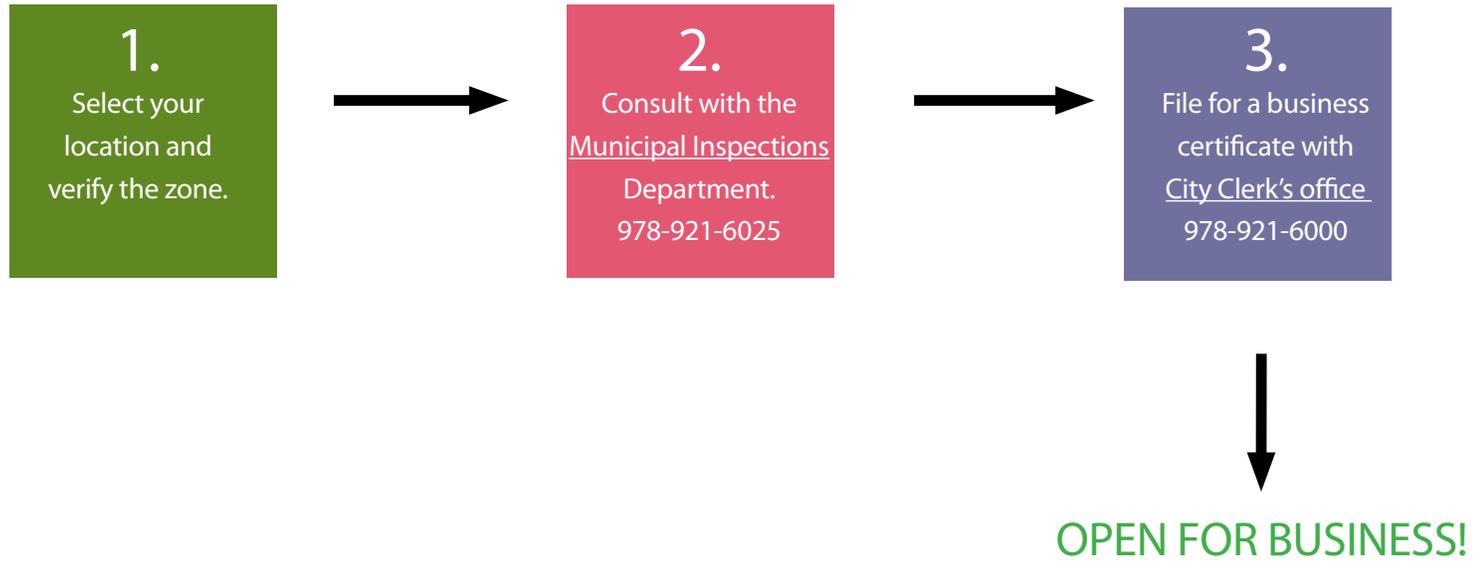
If you are opening your business in a location already zoned for that use and you do not have any major renovations or “change of use” planned (such as retail store to cafe), you may be able to open for business as soon as you are ready. Otherwise, you must have all required permits and approvals in hand before starting operations. Many factors determine what permits a business will need. This Guide provides an overview of the permitting processes and requirements. We encourage you to review all sections that relate to your business plans and then consult with the Municipal Inspections Department for more detailed information and requirements specific to your business and location.

To make the process as time-saving and efficient as possible, please plan ahead and provide any supporting documents, state licenses if appropriate, and as much information about your business needs as possible when you meet or communicate with city departments who are ready to assist you.

This guide contains interactive links to relevant websites and PDF documents related to city zoning ordinances, plus information and forms from city departments. You’ll find many of these files posted on the City of Beverly’s website at www.beverlyma.gov.

The requirements for establishing your business in Beverly are not difficult to follow. If you plan ahead and allow sufficient time for any permits and reviews, we trust you will be rewarded with a successful business in our community.

QUICK START GUIDE TO STARTING A BUSINESS IN BEVERLY



1.

Select your location and verify the zone.

SELECT YOUR LOCATION:

You will need to determine a location for your store, service or facility. It is strongly recommended that you consult with the Municipal Inspections Department before you make final arrangements to occupy the premises to ensure that you can legally operate your business at that location.

Once you find a location of interest, you need to make sure that:

- The premises are suitable for your purpose
- Any special business requirements can be accommodated (deliveries by your suppliers, for example)
- The location is zoned for your type of business or, if not, that you allow sufficient time to obtain your permits.

DETERMINING THE ZONING DESIGNATION:

The location of your intended business determines which rules and regulations you must follow. The owner or leasing agent of the property you are interested in should be able to tell you the property's zoning designation. If not, you can easily determine the zoning designation yourself via the [city's web site](#) or contact the Municipal Inspections Department. You will need to have the specific street address of the property on hand for the inquiry.

It is strongly recommended that you have all permits in place before purchasing or leasing space. Depending on the required permit(s), the process can take a day, a week or two, or in some cases several months. Start your research early and plan accordingly.

Please Note: Most commercial uses are allowed by right in the downtown and in other commercial districts throughout the City. However some uses require a special permit or variance. Variances are obtained from the Zoning Board of Appeals, and special permits are obtained from either the Zoning Board of Appeals or the Planning Board.

Each section of the city's zoning ordinance indicates uses allowed by right within a given zoning district and lists those for which a special permit is required. A use not listed as being allowed by right or by special permit requires a variance.

2.

Consult with the
Municipal Inspections
Department.
978-921-6025

PH: 978-921-6025
FAX: 978-921-8580

OFFICE LOCATION
502 CABOT STREET
BEVERLY, MA 01915

DEPT. OFFICE HOURS:
MON. - WED., 7:00 AM - 3:00 PM
THURS., 7:00 AM - 6:00 PM
FRI., 7:00 AM - 11:30 AM

INSPECTOR'S OFFICE HOURS:
MON. - WED., 7:00 AM - 8:00 AM,
and 2:00 - 3:00 PM
THURS., 7:00 AM - 8:00 AM,
and 5:00 - 6:00 PM
FRI., 7:00 AM-8:00 AM,
and 10:30 AM -11:30 AM

MAILING ADDRESS:
CITY HALL
191 CABOT STREET
BEVERLY, MA 01915

CONSULT MUNICIPAL INSPECTIONS DEPARTMENT

- The Municipal Inspections Department is the central authority for the vast majority of requirements that a new business is likely to encounter. The Department can verify zoning requirements, guide you through any permitting and approval processes that may be needed and will oversee any interior and exterior renovations. An [Permitting Overview](#) is provided in the Appendix.
- To expedite the process of establishing your business, please refer to the forms on the pages that immediately follow. One is intended for home occupations, the second is for all other types of businesses.
- AS A FIRST STEP, complete the appropriate form and submit it to the Municipal Inspections Department. From the basic information provided, the Department will determine:
 - “YES, you can operate your business as planned at that address”
 - “NO, you cannot operate your business as planned at that address”; or
 - “YOU MAY BE ABLE to operate your business at that address if you obtain the following permits, or modify your intended business practices in the following way...”
- The Municipal Inspections Department issues electrical, gas, plumbing, building improvement and signage permits. The property owner typically applies for these permits though tenants are sometimes responsible for leaseholder improvements.
- Permits for exterior signage are granted by the Municipal Inspections Department after review by the City's Design Review Board (DRB). You should discuss proposed signage with the Department before applying to the DRB. No exterior signage can be erected until the Design Review Board has completed its review and the Municipal Inspections Department has issued a permit. If all other permits are in order, you can start to conduct business and file for approval to install signage at a later date. However the practical approach is to obtain approval of your signage simultaneously with other permit applications.
- The City has specific regulations regarding home occupations. Please refer to the Appendix for more information or click here for [Home Occupation Review](#).



City of Beverly
MUNICIPAL INSPECTIONS
BUSINESS CERTIFICATE PRE-APPLICATION
 (for other than home occupations)

In order to inform businesses of local ordinances and regulations, and State construction codes applicants are advised to meet with the Building Commissioner prior to the application to the City Clerk for a Business Certificate. Once the Building Commissioner has signed this form, the applicant should provide this form to the City Clerk's office along with an application for a Business Certificate.

NAME OF APPLICANT (Print): _____ **DATE:** _____

NAME OF BUSINESS: _____

BUSINESS ADDRESS: _____

TELEPHONE NUMBER WHERE YOU CAN BE CONTACTED: _____

DATE OF PROPOSED OCCUPANCY: _____

DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED BUSINESS: _____

DESCRIPTION OF BUSINESS THAT PREVIOUSLY OCCUPIED SPACE (IF ANY):

WILL THERE BE ANY CONSTRUCTION, PLUMBING, GAS OR ELECTRICAL WORK TO PREPARE THE SPACE? Check One YES NO

IF YES, PLEASE DESCRIBE: _____

I herein certify under penalty of perjury that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, all information provided above is true. I understand that a Business Certificate is not permission to violate or set aside any laws, rules, ordinances or regulations and that any change of use, any construction activity (including but not limited to building, electrical, plumbing and/or gas fitting), installation of signage, and other activities may require separate permits from various departments and/or agencies. I understand that it is my responsibility to check with the various departments/agencies prior to conducting a regulated activity:

SIGNATURE OF APPLICANT: _____

Office Use Only

APPROVED: _____ **DATE** _____
 BUILDING COMMISSIONER

IF APPROVED, PLEASE SUBMIT THIS FORM
 TO THE CITY CLER'S OFFICE WHEN YOU
 FILE FOR YOUR BUSINESS CERTIFICATE

Zone: _____, Use permitted by right _____, by special permit _____, other _____



City of Beverly
MUNICIPAL INSPECTIONS
HOME OCCUPATION ZONING REVIEW

APPLICANT'S NAME: DATE:
APPLICANT'S ADDRESS:
COMPANY NAME:
COMPANY ADDRESS:
TELEPHONE:: Home: Business: Cell:

The zoning ordinance for the City of Beverly allows you to use a room in your home for a home occupation. The following questions are intended to aid in determining compliance with the standards set forth in the Beverly Zoning Ordinance for Home Occupations.

- 1. DESCRIPTION OF HOME OCCUPATION:
2. IDENTIFY THE ROOM IN YOUR HOME THAT WILL BE USED FOR THIS OCCUPATION:
3. THE SALE OF GOODS IS NOT THE PRIMARY USE OF THE HOME OCCUPATION
4. THERE WILL BE A MAXIMUM OF ONE EMPLOYEE ON THE PROPERTY AT ANY ONE TIME (WHO DOES NOT RESIDE AT THE PROPERTY)
5. THERE ARE A MAXIMUM OF FOUR PARKING SPACES ON THE SITE, SCREENED FROM ABUTTING PROPERTIES
6. THERE WILL BE A MAXIMUM OF ONE COMMERCIAL VEHICLE PARKED ON THE PROPERTY AT ANY ONE TIME
7. THERE WILL BE NO EXTERIOR DISPLAY OR STORAGE OF MATERIALS
8. THERE WILL BE NO MORE THAN ONE SIGN, A MAXIMUM OF 2.S.F. IN AREA

NOTE: If the answer to any of the above questions is "FALSE", the home occupation is not allowed

- 9. WILL YOU BE DOING ANY REMODELING TO YOUR HOME FOR THE HOME OCCUPATION?
YES, NO

I herein certify that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, all information provided above is true. I understand that approval of my Home Occupation is not permission to violate or set aside any laws, rules, ordinances or regulations and that any change of use, any construction activity (including but not limited to building, electrical, plumbing and/or gas fitting), installation of signage, and other activities may require separate permits from various departments and/or agencies.

SIGNATURE OF APPLICANT:

Office Use Only

APPROVED: DATE:
BUILDING COMMISSIONER

IF APPROVED, PLEASE SUBMIT THIS FORM TO THE CITY CLER'S OFFICE WHEN YOU FILE FOR YOUR BUSINESS CERTIFICATE

MUNICIPAL INSPECTIONS DEPARTMENT: SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS

Once you complete the appropriate form and bring it to the [Municipal Inspections Department](#), your form will be reviewed and you will be guided through any permitting and approval processes that may be necessary. The following summarizes the most common special considerations that may require additional steps in the process.

- HISTORIC DISTRICT - Any exterior changes proposed (including color, signage, etc.) to a structure in the downtown Historic District may require that plans be submitted to the Historic District Commission for review and approvals.
- SPECIAL PERMIT REQUIREMENTS - Depending on the zoning in your desired location, you may be required to submit an application to the Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) or the Planning Board for a Special Permit. This Special Permit process can take approximately two months.

[LINK HERE TO DOWNLOAD GENERAL INFO. AND FILING APPLICATIONS TO THE ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS](#)

The ZBA meets the 4th Tuesday of each month at City Hall. If you want to be on the agenda, you need to file by the 20th of the month preceding. (Ex: Dec. 20 for a Jan. 25 meeting). It is best to file earlier than the deadline, should you need to make an amendment.

[IN THE CC AND WD DISTRICTS, SPECIAL PERMITS ARE APPROVED BY THE PLANNING BOARD.](#)

Filed applications are considered at the next scheduled meeting of the Planning Board — at which time the Board determines the hearing schedule — usually for the month following. The Planning Board usually meets the 3rd Tuesday of each month at Beverly City Hall.

- WETLANDS PROTECTION ACT - Any exterior work that is subject to the Wetlands Protection Act may require approvals from the Conservation Commission.
- BUILDING, GAS, ELECTRICAL AND PLUMBING PERMITS - You will need building permits if you have store buildouts, any work that changes the interior nature of the site (for example counters and partitions), or any exterior work that requires a building permit. The property owner usually obtains these permits, unless you are responsible for tenant improvements.
- CHANGE IN USE - A building permit may be required even if no construction is being performed. A building permit is required for a change in use (for example, retail to restaurant) or for a change in occupant load.
- The Municipal Inspections Department can direct you to other permits that might be needed, such as Health Permits and Inspections and Weights & Measures Inspections.
- Additional [Permitting Overview](#) information is available in the Appendix.

3.

File for a business certificate with the [City Clerk's office](#).

PH: 978-921-6000 x 2325
FAX: 978-921-8511

HOURS:

MON. - WED., 8:30 AM to 4:30 PM
THURS., 8:30 AM to 7:30 PM
FRI., 8:30 AM to 1:00 PM

MAILING ADDRESS:

CITY HALL
191 CABOT STREET
BEVERLY, MA 01915

OBTAIN A BUSINESS CERTIFICATE:

A business certificate protects your business identity within the City and serves public information purposes. A bank will ask for a Business Certificate in order for you to establish a bank account in the company name.

A business certificate is a local registration of business conducted within the City of Beverly. You can obtain a business certificate from the City Clerk's office located on the first floor of Beverly City Hall, 191 Cabot Street in the center of downtown Beverly. Complete the [application form](#) and remit to the Clerk's office along with the required filing fee. The filing fee is a flat \$25.00* regardless of the size or scope of your business. The certificate is valid for four years.

Please note that a business certificate is a registration, not a license to operate. There can be a waiting period before you can obtain a certificate, depending on zoning, the nature of your business and scope of activity, and/or proof of residency for home office use. That is, you may need to obtain approvals from other City departments before the City Clerk can certify your application.

NOTE: If you are in a profession or trade or sell merchandise that requires a state or federal license, please have all your licensing up to date and in good standing before you file for your business certificate.

Once you qualify and pay for a business certificate it becomes a matter of public record. The City of Beverly Assessor's office receives a copy and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts receives an updated file each year of businesses conducted within the City.

*The \$25.00 fee for a business certificate is paid to the City Clerk. When you apply for a business certificate, the Clerk's office will also verify that you are not duplicating an existing business name within the City Of Beverly. Fee rate is subject to change.



Fee: \$25.00 (as of 05-01-2011)

CITY OF BEVERLY, MASSACHUSETTS
BUSINESS CERTIFICATE

In accordance with the provisions of Chapter 110, Section 5 of Massachusetts General Laws, Business Certificates shall be in effect for four years from the date of issue and shall be renewed every four years thereafter. A statement under oath must be filed with the city clerk upon discontinuing, retiring or withdrawing from such business or partnership.

Please check one: _____New Business _____Business Renewal

The undersigned hereby declares that a business is conducted under the title of :

Business Name: (D/B/A)_____

Business Address:_____

NO P.O. BOXES or Mail Boxes Accepted Business Address must be in Beverly.

By the following named person (s):

Full Name

Residence

PHONE NUMBER:

EMAIL:

If a corporation

Corporation Name: _____

Corporate Officer(s) Name & Title (s)

Residence

Signatures:

On _____ the above named person(s) personally appeared before me and made oath that the foregoing statement is true.

Identification Presented: Drivers License _____ Other _____

City Seal

Notary Public

Commission Expiration Date _____ Certificate Expiration: _____

Notary Seal

Copies of such certificates shall be available at the Beverly City Clerk's Office.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

MUNICIPAL INSPECTIONS DEPARTMENT

MEMORIAL BUILDING
502 CABOT STREET
RM. 149

PH: 978-921-6025
FAX: 978-921-8580

DEPT. OFFICE HOURS:

MON. - WED., 7:00 AM - 3:00 PM
THURS., 7:00 AM - 6:00 PM
FRI., 7:00 AM - 11:30 AM

INSPECTOR'S OFFICE HOURS:

MON. - WED., 7:00 AM - 8:00 AM,
and 2:00 - 3:00 PM
THURS., 7:00 AM - 8:00 AM,
and 5:00 - 6:00 PM
FRI., 7:00 AM - 8:00 AM,
and 10:30 AM - 11:30 AM

MAILING ADDRESS:
CITY HALL
191 CABOT STREET
BEVERLY, MA 01915

THE CITY CLERK'S OFFICE

FIRST FLOOR
BEVERLY CITY HALL
191 CABOT STREET

PH: 978-921-6000 x 2325
FAX: 978-921-8511

HOURS:

MON. - WED., 8:30 AM to 4:30 PM
THURS., 8:30 AM to 7:30 PM
FRI., 8:30 AM to 1:00 PM

MAILING ADDRESS:
CITY HALL
191 CABOT STREET
BEVERLY, MA 01915

■ Where do I pay the \$25.00 fee for a business certificate?

The fee can be paid only at the City Clerk's office. An application can be copied from [here](#) or obtained from the City Clerk.

■ Are there any prerequisites or pre-approvals required to obtain a business certificate?

Yes, depending on zoning issues and/or proof of residency for home occupations.

■ Is there any waiting period for approval?

It depends on zoning or permitting rules for the location and use.

■ If I filed and remitted the application and payment, would you verify that I have not duplicated an existing business name in the city?

We verify upon your application for sole proprietors and DBAs.

■ What happens to the certificate and filing information once I've paid the fee? Is there a published registry?

Business certificates are a matter of public record. Copies are on file in the City Clerk's and Assessors offices and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts is sent a yearly update.

■ What is the easiest way for me to determine what permits are needed for the business or the renovation work I intend to do?

Consult with the Municipal Inspections Department once you have selected a location for your business since they oversee many of the building and permitting requirements that would apply.

If you are simply changing the name of a business, but not constructing anything or changing the use of the space, you may only need an occupancy permit. But it is always best to ask first before undertaking any activity.

■ There are multiple PDF links on your department's page on the [City of Beverly](#) web site. Which documents apply to most situations?

Refer to the short description for each PDF to determine which is right for your situation.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

■ Once I file and pay for the appropriate fee for a permit, can I commence work? How does it all work and how much time should I allow?

The time required ranges from less than a day to several months. If there are only minor changes being proposed we can often issue the permit over the counter. If there is a change of use, or extensive alterations are planned, it could take up to a month to get the building permit because several departments might have to review the plans.

If you are making alterations to a large building, you will probably need to get an architect to prepare plans. If you need approval from the Zoning Board of Appeals or the Planning Board you should expect it to take several months, though there may be ways to expedite the process.

The length of time between application and permit depends on many variables, and no work can commence until the required permit(s) is/are in hand.

■ What are the common mistakes that people make when filing for permits? Please provide any helpful tips.

It is not usually a matter of mistakes but rather a lack of information that creates delays and causes confusion. Sometimes it's a matter of not knowing a permit is needed for a particular project. In other cases it's a matter of not understanding that the proposed construction will necessitate the involvement of a registered architect per State Building Code regulations. In fact, sometimes a simple change of use – even if there is no construction associated with it – will require the engagement of an architect to complete a Building Code review.

It's not possible to list in this Guide every permit and approval that's triggered by every type of project, but the Application Summary Table can be of help.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

CITY OF BEVERLY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

PH: 978-921-8591

FAX: 978- 922-5695

HOURS:

MON. - WED., 8:00 AM - 4:00 PM

THURS., 8:00 AM - 6:00 PM

FRI., 8:00 AM - 1:00 PM

MAILING ADDRESS:

90 COLON STREET
BEVERLY, MA 01915

■ What does your office oversee? What permits are required?

The most common business inquiry we receive is for permits to operate a business, restaurant, catering or other business that serves food. Any type of food service needs a license that would be granted after complying with the food code.

Here is a brief checklist of the more obvious businesses and services where Board of Health approvals would be needed:

- food establishment or activity involving the sale of food
- food preparation or manufacturing for resale
- tanning services
- tattoos/body art
- funeral or burial services
- any project requiring a septic system installation
- public/semi-public swimming pool/health club
- storage or transportation of hazardous/offensive substances
- removal of exterior paint
- recreational camps for children

■ Are there online documents I can review?

The Beverly Health Department has its own website at www.beverlypublichealth.org with a pull down menu for codes. Click [food service code](#) for more information.

■ At what point in the process of starting a business should I contact your office?

You should contact us in the planning stages so that you fully understand compliance requirements before making any commitments.

■ Is there a specific fee schedule... and forms to file?

The department has a fee schedule on the department's website at www.beverlypublichealth.org. If not available online, consult directly with the health department.

■ What happens when I apply to your office for a permit in conjunction with a building permit?

No work may commence at an existing or proposed food establishment without approval from the Municipal Inspections and Health Departments prior to work for renovation or new opening.

■ What is the most common reason for delay in applying for permits?

Not contacting our department soon enough beforehand, so that we can make you aware of all permitting requirements and time frames to obtain approvals. If in doubt, always ask our department first.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

OFFICE OF
WEIGHTS
& MEASURES

PH: 978-921-6095

Call for office hours and locations.

- What types of businesses does the Office of Weights and Measures regulate?

Our office is the local enforcer for the Massachusetts Division of Standards. We enforce the Consumer Protection Act and the inspection and certification of all measuring devices used in retail consumer pricing. This also includes inspection of automatic price scanning systems. These include, but are not limited to, all gasoline meters, food scales, pharmacy scales, jewelry scales, cafeteria scales used at point of sale, taxi meters, and fuel oil truck meters, marina pumps, and vehicle scales.

- How would I know if I am selling a product covered by your office's oversight?

Any scale used at the point of sale to calculate the consumer's price must be inspected and sealed. Not only must the scale be accurate, but it must also be correctly used — that is to say the scale/meter is approved for the use (items being measured) to which it will be put. A scale must conform to National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) standards. Scales that do not meet this standard cannot be used.

Example: While accurate, a hanging basket scale can not be used to calculate the price to the consumer. They are for estimating weights only. Only NIST approved computing scales may be used for retail charging.

The Office of Weights and Measures should be contacted well before opening a business so that the correct equipment is approved and installed.

There are State laws and regulations that must be adhered to, including Posting of Consumer Notice and Customer Visual Display under M.G.L. Chapter 98 Section 56C. We recommend you consult with the Office of Weights and Measures to get specific information about what pertains to your business.

- At what point in the process of starting a business would I contact your department?

If you are covered by any of the items listed above you should contact us before you commence business. If you are unsure, it's always best to talk to our office beforehand.

- Are the standards and regulations you oversee available online?

At the time of publication of this guide, there are no PDF links on the City of Beverly website. Use this link to the [State's Division of Standards, overseen by the Office of Consumer Affairs](#).

IMPORTANT CONTACTS

City Clerk	Kathleen Connolly	978-921-6000 x 2326
Fire	Paul Cotter, Chief	978-922-2424
Beverly Public Health	William Burke, Director	978-921-8591
Mayor's Office	William Scanlon, Jr., Mayor	978-921-6000 x 2333
Municipal Inspections/Bldg. Department	Steve Frederickson, Director	978-921-6025
Planning	Tina Cassidy, Director	978-921-6000 x 2344
Police	Mark Ray, Chief	978-921-6040
Public Services	Michael Collins, Director	978-921-6053
Sealer of Weights and Measures	Robert Salvaneli	978-921-6095
For all other City of Beverly departments, call		978-921-6000

Please note that all departments, committee, and review boards can be accessed at www.beverlyma.gov.
The city's website also provides direct email links to city departments.

Contact [Beverly Main Streets](#) at 978-922-8558.





BUSINESS RESOURCES THAT CAN HELP:

Eastern Massachusetts, and the North Shore in particular, benefit from a wealth of public, non-profit, and private resources whose collective efforts promote establishment of new businesses and the growth of existing companies. We mention several, and encourage you to make use of these resources. In terms of securing financing for your business, your bank is likely to be in the best position to guide you and/or provide referral to other financial resources such as the U.S. Small Business Administration. An online search may provide additional resources suitable for you.

- [The Beverly Chamber of Commerce](#) serves and represents the business community of the city of Beverly. Member businesses participate in the many activities, programs and events sponsored by the Chamber. The Chamber utilizes the funds it receives to best possible advantage, doing business for business through local and state legislative advocacy, public relations, and by sponsoring focused business, networking and educational programs. The Chamber is the “Voice of Business” in Beverly and is the #1 referral service in the City. Contact the office of the Beverly Chamber of Commerce at 28 Cabot Street, Beverly, MA 01915. Phone: (978) 232-9559 . Office Hours: 9AM to 2PM Monday - Friday.
- [SCORE Northeast](#) serves the Beverly community and provides a full range of services for developing new business ideas from concept into focused business plans ready for funding and implementation. SCORE Northeast can help existing business owners with free business counseling and advice on specific problems on the next steps in growing your business. Contact the office of People’s United Bank at 100 Cummings Center, Suite 101M (181 Elliott Street, Beverly, MA 01915). Phone (978) 927-2282. Counseling is usually held Wednesdays from 10AM to 2PM.
- [The Enterprise Center at Salem State University](#) offers many free and low cost programs for business owners at every stage of business development. They aim to provide business owners with the knowledge and skills to grow profits and succeed and serve as a voice of the small business community in our region. The Center is located on the campus of Salem State. Phone: (978) 542-7528.

BUSINESS RESOURCES THAT CAN HELP:

- [The Creative Economy of the North Shore](#) is a subset of the Enterprise Center that focuses on those industries that have their origin in individual creativity, skill and talent and which have a potential for success and job creation through generation of ideas, products and/or services. Architecture, advertising, design, performing arts, and music are typical of the fields they concentrate on.
- [The North Shore Workforce Investment Board](#) (WIB) is a collaborative effort among business, education and community leaders to strengthen human resources in a competitive labor market. Their offices are located at the North Shore Career Center of Salem, 70 Washington Street, Salem, MA 01970. (978) 825-7200.
- [The State Office of Minority and Women Business Assistance](#) (SOMWBA) is an agency within the Commonwealth of Massachusetts helping promote the development of business enterprises and non-profit organizations owned and operated by minorities or women. 10 Park Plaza, Suite 3740, Boston, MA 02116. (617) 973-8692.





STARTUP GUIDANCE FROM THE COMMONWEALTH:

When you start a business, you need to do more than decide whether to incorporate or not. You need to choose a name and register with various federal, state and local agencies. You may also need certain licenses and permits. The state has extensive online resources that can help guide you through the beginning steps of establishing a business, including determining how to legally organize your business. The web page at [FORMING A BUSINESS STEP-BY-STEP](#) will start you off in the right direction, with discussions about:

- **CHOOSING THE TYPE OF ENTITY BEST SUITED TO YOU:** There are many ways to own or organize your business, ranging from being a sole proprietor to forming a corporation.
- **CHOOSING A NAME:** Before you select your business name, you should understand trademarks, service marks, corporate names and the importance of selecting a name that is not already in use.
- **OBTAINING NECESSARY LICENSES OR PERMITS:** Many types of businesses need a license to operate. Local governments issue some types of licenses, while state agencies issue others. You may also need building, environmental or other types of permits from state or local government. Link directly to the page for [Occupational and Business Licenses](#). Please note that in addition to the categories of business and occupations there is a special subset for specific professions and trades under [Professional Licenses](#).
- **OBTAINING A TAX ID NUMBER:** Prior to registering your business with the Massachusetts Department of Revenue, you will first need a Federal Employer Identification Number (EIN) for your business issued by the IRS. Learn how to obtaining an EIN by linking [here](#) from the state's website.
- **REGISTERING WITH THE STATE AS A BUSINESS TAXPAYER:** The types of taxes you will be liable for depend on what line of business you're in and other factors. Use [WebFile for Business](#) to register as a new state business taxpayer and file state withholding, unemployment insurance, quarterly wage reports and several other taxes online. You may wish to consult with an attorney and CPA as appropriate.

[GETTING STARTED GUIDE](#): Whether you are just getting started, or you are based out of state and wish to do business here, this guide provides an overview and entry links to obligations your business may have, as well as resources to help you succeed.

■ **MASSACHUSETTS BUSINESS OBLIGATIONS**: Find online information on business income tax requirements, the Massachusetts Unemployment Insurance law administered by the [Massachusetts Division of Unemployment Assistance \(DUA\)](#), the [Federal Unemployment Tax Act \(FUTA\)](#), Worker's Compensation law, payroll taxes, new hire reporting, and employer responsibility under the Massachusetts Health Care Reform law. State trustee taxes you may be responsible for collecting and remitting to the state include sales, meals, employee withholding, and room occupancy taxes.

■ **LICENSES, PERMITS & OTHER REGISTRATIONS**: Some types of businesses and certain professions and trades require a special license, registration or certificate from a state agency and/or the City of Beverly. You may also require building, environmental or other types of permits from state and local government. See 'Licensing, Permitting & Regulation' from this state web page to find out what licenses or permits you may need to get your business started.

■ **STARTUP & SMALL BUSINESS HELP**: Provides links to many government, nonprofit and volunteer organizations that help new businesses get going and help small businesses succeed.

The State has a [SMALL BUSINESS PURCHASING PROGRAM](#) for non-construction goods and services. You can file for eligibility and participate in the SBPP to obtain business with the state, receive access to notification of competitive procurement opportunities targeted to eligible small businesses, to access a host of training programs, and more. Massachusetts defines a small business as a business entity, including all of its affiliates combined, which:

- currently employs combined total of 50 or fewer full-time equivalents (FTEs);
- is independently owned and operated;
- has been in business for at least one year;
- has gross revenues of \$15 million or less based on a three-year average;
- is organized/registered to do business in Massachusetts; and,
- has its principal place of business in Massachusetts.

OTHER STATE WEB PAGES; IRS LINK

[MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE \(DOR\)](http://www.dor.state.ma.us)

<http://www.dor.state.ma.us>

100 Cambridge Street, Boston, MA 02114; 1-800-392-6089

If you will be selling products or services for which sales tax must be collected, you will need to apply for a Massachusetts Sales Tax Vendor Number and a Sales and Use Tax Registration Certificate from DOR. Certain businesses may also be required to pay trustee (sales, meals, employee withholding, and room occupancy) taxes. Also, most businesses are required to pay some amount of corporate income tax.

DOR has a "Guide to Massachusetts Tax and Employer Obligations," which provides help on a variety of state tax issues. DOR also offers a free small business workshop designed to walk you through the tax issues. This workshop is co-sponsored by the IRS and also covers important federal tax issues.

[UNITED STATES INTERNAL REVENUE SERVICE \(IRS\)](http://www.irs.gov)

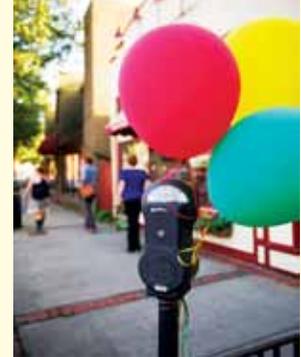
<http://www.irs.gov>

JFK Building, 15 Sudbury Street, Boston MA 02203; (617) 316-2850

Among other duties, the IRS provides Federal Tax or Employee Identification Numbers (EINs) to identify a business. Business owners may not transfer EINs if he or she sells or otherwise transfers their business and the new business owner and operator may not use their EIN. Tax information for starting a business can be found by going to the IRS following [web page](#).

The following IRS tax publications may be useful:

- [Sole Proprietor: #334, "Tax Guide for Small Business"](#)
- Small Business Tax Kit #454, call the IRS at 1-800-829-1040 and ask for the Small Business Tax Kit #454.
- [Partnership: #541, "Partnerships"](#)



APPENDIX



- City of Beverly Zoning Map
- About Zoning; Links to Zoning Codes
- Identifying A Location's Zone Via The Internet
- Zoning Regulations
- Zoning Use Table
- Permitting Overview
- Home Occupation Ordinance
- Sign Regulations



ABOUT ZONING:

Zoning is a tool by which land in a community is divided into distinct districts in order to control which business activities and residential uses can occur and where within the community. Designating the use of property in this manner allows the City of Beverly to create the optimal mix of business and residential uses within the context of pedestrian and vehicular traffic and related activities.

You need to know the zoning for your location so you can determine if your business activity is permitted by the existing regulations. Each zoning district allows for uses by right and uses for which a special permit must be obtained. If your intended business use is not presently allowed by right or special permit in a given district, you will need to file for and obtain a variance from the Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA).

To see what is currently allowed by way of business activity in a given zoning district, you need to refer to the most recent [Beverly Zoning Ordinances](#).

ZONING LEGEND FOR THE CITY OF BEVERLY, MASSACHUSETTS

- Zoning
- Overlay
 - 75 Ft Height District
 - Local Historic District
 - National Historic District
 - Water Protection District
- Zoning

<input type="checkbox"/>	CC	CC - CENTRAL COMMERCIAL DISTRICT
<input type="checkbox"/>	CG	CG - GENERAL COMMERCIAL DISTRICT
<input type="checkbox"/>	CN	CN - NEIGHBORHOOD COMMERCIAL DISTRICT
<input type="checkbox"/>	HD	HD - HOSPITAL DISTRICT
<input type="checkbox"/>	IG	IG - GENERAL INDUSTRIAL DISTRICT
<input type="checkbox"/>	IR	IR AND IR OVERLAY - RESTRICTED INDUSTRIAL, RESEARCH & OFFICE DISTRICT
<input type="checkbox"/>	OSR	OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION - RESTRICTED
<input type="checkbox"/>	R10	R-10 - ONE-FAMILY DISTRICT
<input type="checkbox"/>	R15	R-15 - ONE-FAMILY DISTRICT
<input type="checkbox"/>	R22	R-22 - ONE-FAMILY DISTRICT
<input type="checkbox"/>	R45	R-45 - ONE-FAMILY DISTRICT
<input type="checkbox"/>	R6	R-6 - ONE-FAMILY AND TWO-FAMILY DISTRICT
<input type="checkbox"/>	R90	R-90 - ONE-FAMILY DISTRICT
<input type="checkbox"/>	RHD	RHD - MULTI-FAMILY DISTRICT
<input type="checkbox"/>	RMD	RMD - MULTI-FAMILY DISTRICT
<input type="checkbox"/>	RSD	RSD - SPECIAL RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT
<input type="checkbox"/>	WD	WD - WATERFRONT DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT
<input type="checkbox"/>	WDR	WATERFRONT - RESIDENTIAL

TO DETERMINE THE ZONING FOR A SPECIFIC LOCATION:

The GIS web site that you can link to works equally well with Internet browsers Firefox and Explorer 7.0 or higher. It will not work with Explorer version 6. Users must allow pop-ups (disable pop-up blocker).

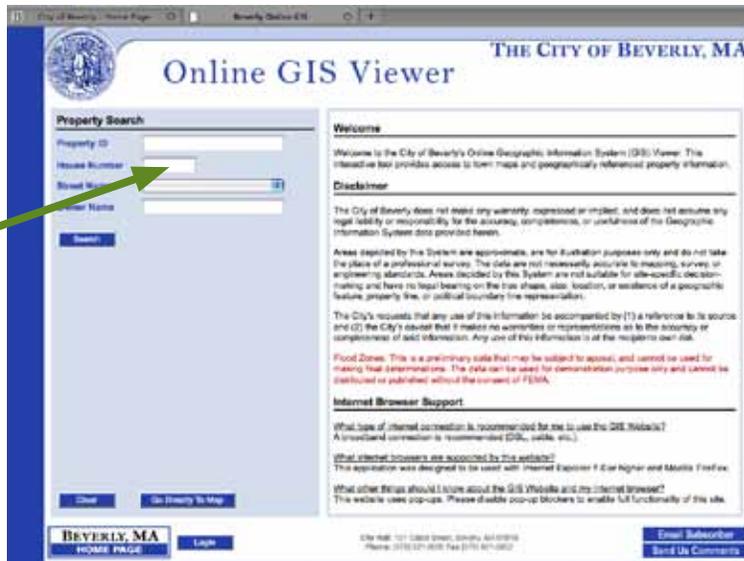
1. Log on to the [City of Beverly web site](#).

2. Click to the [Geographical Interface System](#)

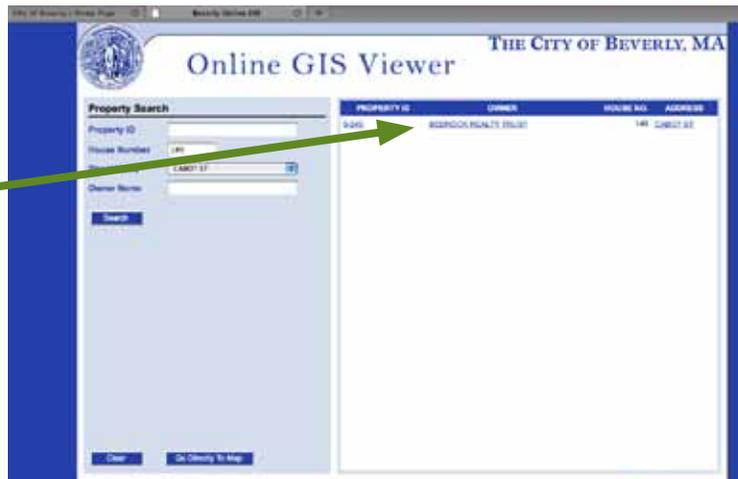


3. Here is what the GIS home page looks like.

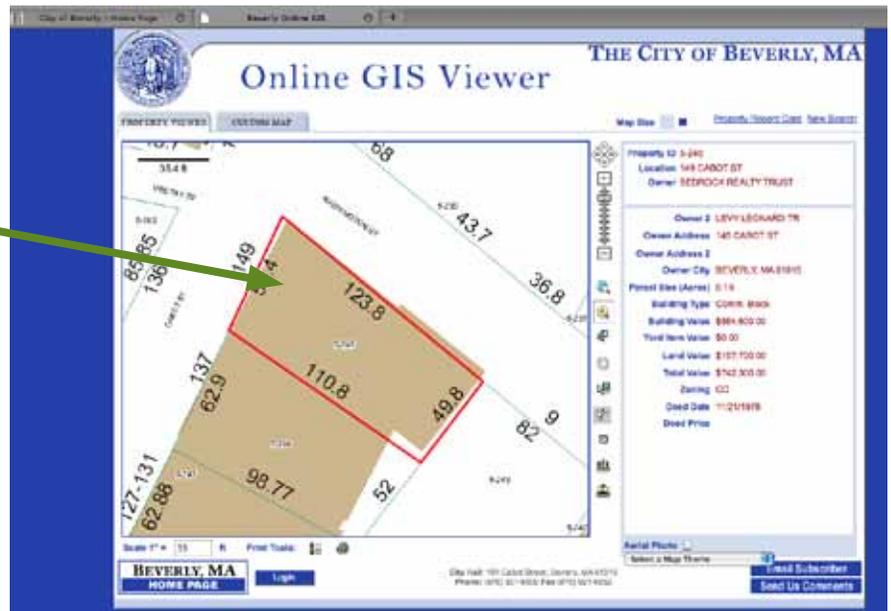
Enter the number, then use the pulldown menu for street name of the location you are looking for. Click the Search button. In this example we are looking for information about the corner building at 149 Cabot Street which is in the downtown area.



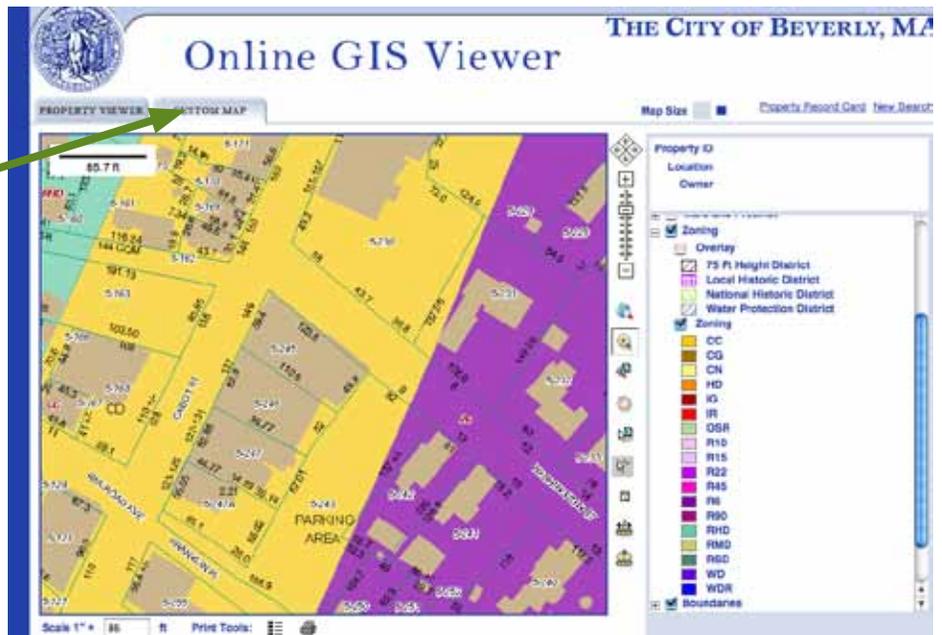
4. The next screen view provides a link to 149 Cabot Street.



5. Allow a moment for the screen to refresh. It will highlight the address on the map with a red border. The zoning designation is on the right. In this example, the corner building at 149 Cabot Street is in the CC zone which is the Central Commercial District.



6. If you want to view the map in relation to surrounding zones, click on the Custom Tab. Next, click on the Zoning box and then click on the adjacent "+" symbol to bring up the color coded chart. All buildings are represented in tan color. The color code around each parcel indicates the zoning district.



There is a zoom in-out function on this screen.

7. Should you find a location that you favor, but determine that the zoning ordinance calls for a special permit or the site is not zoned for your business activity, we highly recommend you consult with The Municipal Inspections Department to determine the appropriate procedures to meet your business needs.

ZONING REGULATIONS:

The City's zoning ordinance lists each zoning district and the rules for each district with respect to:

- Uses allowed by right
- Uses allowed by special permit
- Signage
- Parking
- Building and area requirements
- Special requirements, if any

IF YOUR BUSINESS USE IS ALLOWED BY RIGHT:

You can file for a [business certificate](#) and conduct business once all other required permits have been obtained.

IF THE NATURE OF YOUR BUSINESS IS ALLOWED IN A ZONE BY SPECIAL PERMIT:

You will need to obtain a special permit from the Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) (or from the Planning Board if you are in the Central Commercial [CC] or Waterfront [WD] Districts). (The exception is a special permit for a Bed and Breakfast operation within the CC District...that application goes to the ZBA.) You may not conduct business until the special permit is approved and the appeal period associated with its issuance expires without appeal.

If a special permit from the ZBA is required, contact the Municipal Inspections Department for instructions. If a special permit from the Planning Board is required, contact the Planning Department.

IF YOUR INTENDED BUSINESS USE IS NOT PRESENTLY ALLOWED AS DEFINED BY THE ZONING ORDINANCE:

You need to determine if it's feasible for you to obtain a use variance from the ZBA. Use variances may be granted by the ZBA in a commercial or industrial district but cannot be granted in a residential district (which are those prefaced with the letter "R", such as RHD).

You should consider the time and expense involved and the practicality of your venture and request. Discuss your proposal with the Municipal Inspections Department before filing for a use variance. Do not assume that if a similar business already exists in your intended location you will be granted permission to conduct yours. The existing business may be grandfathered, or subject to conditions of a previously-granted permit which could require that a new Special Permit be issued. The permitting process requires time to complete, so plan ahead.

PLEASE NOTE: If you receive a special permit or variance from the ZBA or Planning Board, there is a 20 day appeal period from the date the decision is filed with the City Clerk. During that time, appeal(s) of the decision by abutters or parties in interest (as defined under Massachusetts General Law Chapter 40A, Section 9) is/are possible.

Thus, even if your variance or special permit is approved you need to allow for the appeal period to expire before your permit or variance is valid. If you receive a special permit or variance and will perform structural work that requires a building permit, also take note that applications for building permits can be accepted only after the expiration of the appeal period — and in the case of a variance, only after proof that the variance has been recorded at the Registry of Deeds.

ZONING USE TABLE, CITY OF BEVERLY

USE	ZONE	→	R-90	R-45	R-22	R-15	R-10	R-6		RHD	RSD	CN	CC	CG	IR	IG	HD	WD		
COMMERCIAL USES																				
Bed and breakfast			SP	SP	SP	SP	SP	SP	SP	SP	SP	SP	SP	SP	SP	SP	SP	SP	SP	
Hotel or motel													SP	P	SP			SP	SP	
Home occupation			P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P			P	P	P	
Local retail establishment > 5,000 sq. ft.											P	P	P	P			P	SP	SP	
Retail establishment													P	P				SP	SP	
Personal and consumer service											P	P	P	P			P	SP	SP	
Business / professional office, medical clinic												P	P	P	P	P	P	SP	SP	
Funeral home												P	P	P						
Restaurant, no take out											P	SP	P	P	SP	SP	P	P	P	
Fast-food establishment														P		SP				
Indoor commercial recreation													SP	P	SP			SP	SP	
Gasoline station														SP						
Car, truck, and RV sales; car wash														P						
*Animal hospital or kennel															SP	SP				
Commercial riding stable			SP	SP																
*Agricultural, horticultural, floricultural			P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	
Commercial fishing, no processing																		P	P	
INDUSTRIAL, UTILITY, WHOLESALE & TRANSPORTATION																				
Manuf., assembly, processing & packaging in a bldg.															P	P				
Research, development, and testing													P	P	P	P				
Printing and publishing													P	P	P	P				
Auto body, paint, or repair shop															SP	SP				
Contractor's or craftsmen's shop															P	P				
Warehouse, mini-storage, bottling plant, frozen food locker, wholesale establishment, ice manufacturing															SP	P				
*Open storage of new building materials															SP	P				
*Open or encl. storage of coke, coal, sand or similar																SP				
* General industrial uses																P				
Motor or rail freight																SP				
Taxi, rail, or bus terminal												SP	P	P	P	P				
Public services (no outdoor storage)			SP	SP	SP	SP	SP	SP	SP	SP	SP	SP	SP	SP	P	P	SP	SP	SP	
Utility company terminal enclosures			P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	
Parking lot or garage as principal use													SP	SP	SP	SP		SP	SP	
Comm. prkg. lot in res. zone when abutting comm. zone										SP										
Comm. mobile radio svcs., facilities, structures, twrs.			SP	SP	SP	SP	SP	SP	SP	SP	SP	SP	SP	SP	SP	SP	SP	SP	SP	
INSTITUTIONAL AND RECREATIONAL																				
Hospital, nursing home, ambulance depot																	P			
Gymnasium, health club, public pool										SP	P		SP	P				SP	SP	
Golf, beach, tennis club			SP	SP							P									
Private, quasi-public, charitable club or community service organization										SP	SP	SP	SP	SP				SP	SP	
Public recreational boating facilities														P						
Commercial marina			SP	SP	SP	SP	SP	SP	SP	SP	SP	SP	SP	SP	SP	SP	SP		P	P
Historic site or non-profit museum			P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P			
Private, non-commercial stable			SP	SP	SP	SP	SP	SP			SP	SP	SP	SP	SP	SP				
City-operated sanitary landfill			P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P			

P = PERMITTED USE SP = SPECIAL PERMIT REQUIRED * Subject to certain requirements.

This schedule of uses is a summary of the Ordinance requirements and is included only for ease of reference.

In the event of inconsistencies between this schedule and the text of the Ordinance, the text shall be controlling.



<http://www.beverlyma.gov/departments/planning/zoning-ordinance>)

<http://www.beverlyma.gov/boards-commissions/zoning-board-of-appeals/hearing-application-and-information>

A PERMITTING OVERVIEW:

The following is a brief summary of various building and permitting issues frequently encountered when opening a new business in Beverly. The outline is not all inclusive and does not address any permits or licenses which may be required by federal, state or county agencies.

1. **Use:** Check the Zoning Ordinance (available at the Municipal Inspections Department or on-line) to determine if your proposed business is allowed at your intended location. The Zoning Ordinance specifies which types of businesses are allowed by right (no further zoning approval is required), which are prohibited and which require a Special Permit. For a quick check of permitted uses refer to the [zoning table](#). For details refer to the [Beverly Zoning Ordinances](#).
2. **Building Permit:** Ask the Municipal Inspections Department if a building permit is required. Even if you do not plan to perform any construction, a building permit is required for a change in use (for example, changing from office to retail). Plumbing, mechanical and electrical permits may also be required. Signs and exterior building changes also require a building permit. Applications for building permits can be obtained at the Municipal Inspections office and online.
3. **Exterior Alterations:** The City has design [guidelines](#) for exterior work to buildings in the downtown area.
4. **Signage:** If you plan on installing a sign, click here for a link to the [sign ordinance](#). Exterior signs will usually require Design Review Board (DRB) approval and a building permit.

Show your sign plans to Municipal Inspections before having the sign manufactured. Review and approval of signage can take a month or two to complete if DRB review is needed, so plan accordingly. Temporary signs are sometimes permitted – check with Municipal Inspections for details.
5. **Historic District Commission:** If your business is in the Beverly Historic District, any exterior changes will require review and approval by the Historic District Commission. This includes any signage. An application for a hearing can be obtained at the Municipal Inspections and Planning Departments.
6. **Food and Beverage.** Any new food service establishment will require a plan review by the Health Department, which also regulates certain other establishments. Click here to visit the [Health Department's website](#) to review the health code PDF file. Note: Liquor license applications are filed with the Mayor's office.



HOME OCCUPATION:

DEFINITION, PERMITTING AND APPLICATION PROCEDURES

■ Definition

Home occupations are allowed in every commercial and residential zoning district in the City of Beverly under certain conditions and with certain restrictions.

Generally speaking, a home occupation is the use of one room in an existing dwelling – by a resident of the dwelling - as an office, studio or workroom. The resident operating the home occupation must actually reside in the dwelling unit and the primary use of the space cannot be for the sale of products from the premises.

There are other limitations on home occupations beyond residency at the address and the sale of products:

- There can be only one employee other than the owner/occupant working on the premises at any one time;
- Parking must be provided as determined by the Building Inspector and screened from abutting properties;
- Only one commercial vehicle can be parked on the premises at any one time; and
- There can be no exterior display or storage of materials.

■ Permitting Requirements

Home occupation businesses require a zoning review by and permit from the [Municipal Inspections Department](#) as well as a business certificate from the City Clerk's Office.

■ Application Procedures

You can print the Municipal Inspections Department forms [BUSINESS CERTIFICATE PRE-APPLICATION](#) or [HOME OCCUPATION ZONING REVIEW](#) to request the required zoning review and permit from the city's website, but you must apply in person at the Municipal Inspections Department at 502 Cabot Street.

Once you have received your "Home Occupation Permit" from the Municipal Inspections Department, apply for a Business Certificate (sometimes referred to as a "DBA Certificate") from the City Clerk. Refer to "[Obtaining a Business Certificate](#)" for further information.



Make sure you review all the requirements that apply to you within the sign ordinance. Exterior signs are approved by the Building Inspector, and also undergo review by the Design Review Board (DRB). You can file your sign plans with the DRB at your option at any time, but you must consult with the Municipal Inspections Department beforehand to make the DRB process more efficient and to ensure your proposed sign meets the zoning requirements before filing with the DRB.

Plan ahead — it may take two meetings (60 days) to secure review at a DRB meeting and non-standard signs may need additional time.

THE DRB MEETS THE FIRST THURSDAY OF EACH MONTH. FILINGS ARE DUE BY WEDNESDAY OF THE PRECEDING WEEK, A meeting and filing deadline calendar is posted at www.beverlyma.gov

[Click here for the Design Review Board Process Overview.](#)

SIGN REGULATIONS:

The City's zoning ordinance regulates both exterior signage and any interior signs that are visible from the outside of the building. Some signs are permitted by right and do not require review by the City's Design Review Board (DRB), but most signs require review by the DRB and a permit from the Municipal Inspections Department before they can be installed.

The size and type of sign allowed at a given address depends upon the zoning district in which the property is located. Click [here](#) for a link to the sign ordinance.

[THE DESIGN REVIEW BOARD \(DRB\)](#) meets the first Thursday evening of each month at City Hall and reviews proposals for signs throughout the City as well as projects undergoing Site Plan Review with the Planning Board.

Sign permits are issued by the Municipal Inspections Department after the DRB recommends approval. The Board consists of seven members: representatives from the Planning Department, the Planning Board, the Board of Appeals, the Historic District Commission, an architect, a landscape architect or graphic designer and a business person and/or property owner from the downtown. The Board focuses on design elements including landscaping, building materials and colors, lighting and windows. Oftentimes, the Board's recommendations are incorporated into the final plans and designs for a project.

Click link to a summary table of Beverly [SIGN ORDINANCES DIMENSIONAL REQUIREMENTS](#) for signs by zone. There are size regulations for window signs, in addition to wall, awning, canopy, freestanding and other signs. Refer to the [Beverly Zoning Ordinance](#) for more information and regulations.



DISCLAIMER: While our objective is to provide accurate and up-to-date information at the time of publication, please note that Beverly Main Streets and its respective committee members and assignees, the City of Beverly, and other resources, individuals, and business entities that have assisted in the compilation of information and production of this guide are not responsible for errors of fact or liable for any consequences, financial or other, that may occur as a result of use of this guide or reliance on the information contained herein. In all business matters, good judgment and qualified assessment of business affairs are recommended.

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