



GUIDE TO  
**STARTING A BUSINESS**  
IN GREENBELT



# GREENBELT IS A COMMUNITY BUILT FOR BUSINESS...



The City is easily accessible by car with access to major roads (MD-193, MD-201, I-95, BW Parkway, I-495), by bus (MetroBus and TheBus), by train (Greenbelt Marc Station and Greenbelt Metrorail), and from BWI Airport.

## LOCATION

## INFRASTRUCTURE

There are a variety of commercial venues throughout the city. From suburban shopping centers, an indoor mall, office parks, to a historic neighborhood commercial center near the City's civic and community core.



We are close to major employers like NASA Goddard, Beltsville Agricultural Research Center, Doctor's Community Hospital and the University of Maryland, College Park.

## INDUSTRY

## AMENITIES

The City has all the amenities of a thriving community – trails, recreation centers, dining – with all the benefits of the DC metro area at an affordable cost.



We are a growing community with active & engaged residents!

## COMMUNITY

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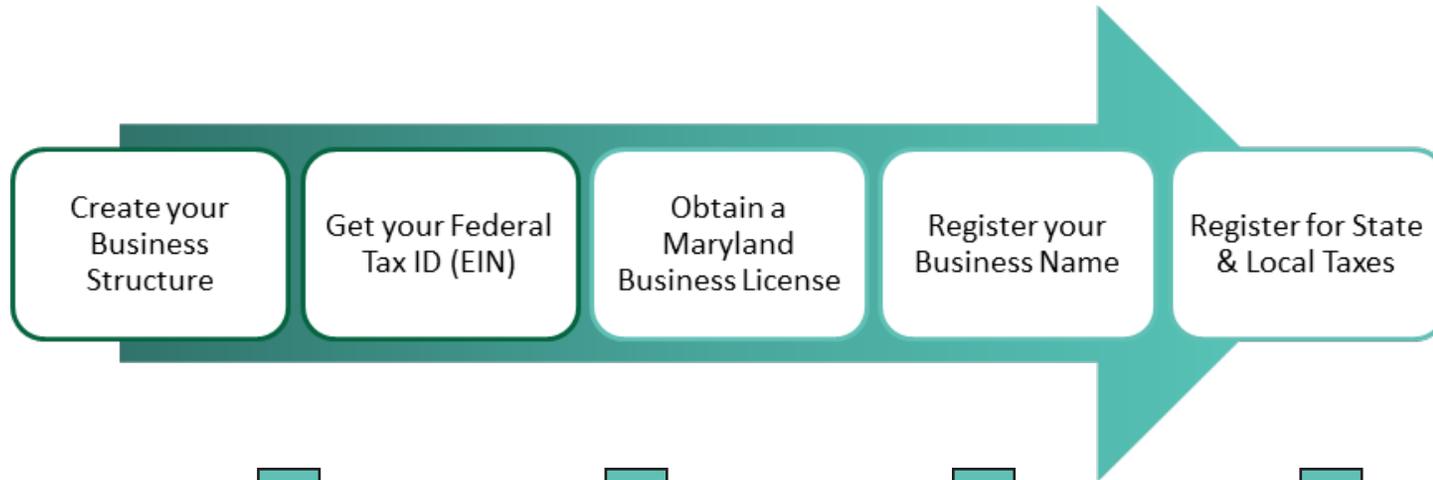
In this guide, you'll find information on how to open and operate a business in the City of Greenbelt, as well as locate financial resources you may be eligible to access.

Please note: Links are embedded into the text. If you are viewing this document online, press CTRL and click on the underlined text to open the link in your web browsers. If you find any broken links, please report them to Ms. Beverly Palau, Public Information and Communications Coordinator at the City of Greenbelt, [bpalau@greenbeltmd.gov](mailto:bpalau@greenbeltmd.gov).

This Guide was last updated: March, 2016.

# BUSINESS 101

If you're a first time business owner, your process starts at the federal level by obtaining your Federal Tax ID, and you must subsequently register for State, Local & Sales Taxes.



1

You must establish your business structure in order to apply for the right registration and license. The four most common forms are [sole proprietorship](#), [partnership](#), [corporation](#), and [limited liability company](#).

2

Your Employer Identification Number (EIN) may be obtained from the IRS. This number is for tax purposes only. You can [apply online](#).

Note: You must have an EIN before you can register your business in the State of Maryland.

3

Applications for a Maryland Business license may be obtained from the Clerk of the Circuit Court in Prince George's County. Any business that sells a product of any kind needs a business license. For more information, visit [Maryland Business Licenses Online](#). For info on different licenses, visit the [Commerce website](#).

4

If you do not already have an established business name, you may wish to register a trade name with the State Department of Assessments and Taxation. To view existing trade names and determine which are still available, use the business data search section of the website.

5

[New business registration](#) can be completed from the Comptroller's website. However, paper versions must be submitted if you are applying for alcohol, tax, motor fuel license, or any sales tax exemption.

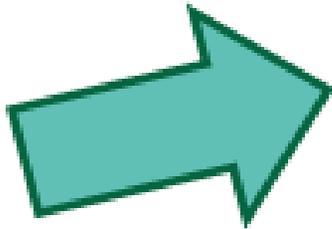
# BUSINESS 101

## **MBE/DBE Certification (Optional)**

To become a certified Minority Business Enterprise or a Disadvantaged Business Enterprise, visit the Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT)'s Office of Minority Business Enterprise (OMBE). [Application forms](#) are located online.

[Prince George's County Supplier Development and Diversity Office](#) has additional information and resources, including procurement and training opportunities.

Want to know more about how to start a business, particularly in the State of Maryland? Please consult the following documents to get acquainted with State rules, regulations, and procedures:



[Small Business Resource Guide, Maryland Edition](#)  
*from the Small Business Administration*

[Small Business & Entrepreneur Resource Guide](#)  
*from the Maryland Department of Commerce*

[Maryland Department of Commerce > Start a Business](#)

# COMMERCIAL CENTERS

## ROOSEVELT CENTER

The original hub of Greenbelt's activity, Roosevelt Center was developed in 1937, as part of the original planned community and is now a treasured part of Historic Greenbelt. This area is home to the newly renovated Greenbelt Theatre and long-standing business such as the New Deal Café and the Greenbelt Co-op supermarket.



## HANOVER OFFICE PARK(S)

With the nearby pond, townhomes, and shade trees, you might not even realize you're in an office park here, but it's a perfect place for a calm work environment.



## BELTWAY PLAZA

Located along MD Route 193, Beltway Plaza includes the main Mall and multiple pad site restaurants and stores, such as Silver Diner, Joe's Crab Shack, and Mission BBQ. This is a very popular area for big box retailers, and currently has anchor institutions Target, Marshall's, and Giant.



## BELLE POINTE DRIVE

Located between the Capital Beltway and MD-193, Belle Pointe Drive hosts townhome style-office space with convenient parking and a neighborhood-scale feel.



## GREENWAY CENTER

This retail center also lies on MD-193, across from Eleanor Roosevelt High School and the BW Parkway interchange. Anchored by Safeway, this plaza contains mainly franchise retailers, including Subway, Starbucks, and Payless.



## EDMONSTON ROAD

Nestled between the Dora Kennedy French Immersion School and Kenilworth Avenue is Edmonston Road, where a collection of office buildings host tenants such as BB&T, Professional Eye Care Center, and Community Clinic Inc.



# COMMERCIAL CENTERS

## GOLDEN TRIANGLE OFFICE PARK

Located on MD-193, this office park and its 3 hotels look out onto the scenic Greenbelt National Park across the street and has nightly traffic from the popular TGI Friday's.



## CAPITAL OFFICE PARK

Accessible by pedestrians and cyclists from the Greenbelt Metro Station – and easily by car from I-495 - Capital Office Park includes major tenants like The Bozzuto Group and is adjacent to the Maryland State Highway Administration the Greenbelt Federal Courthouse.

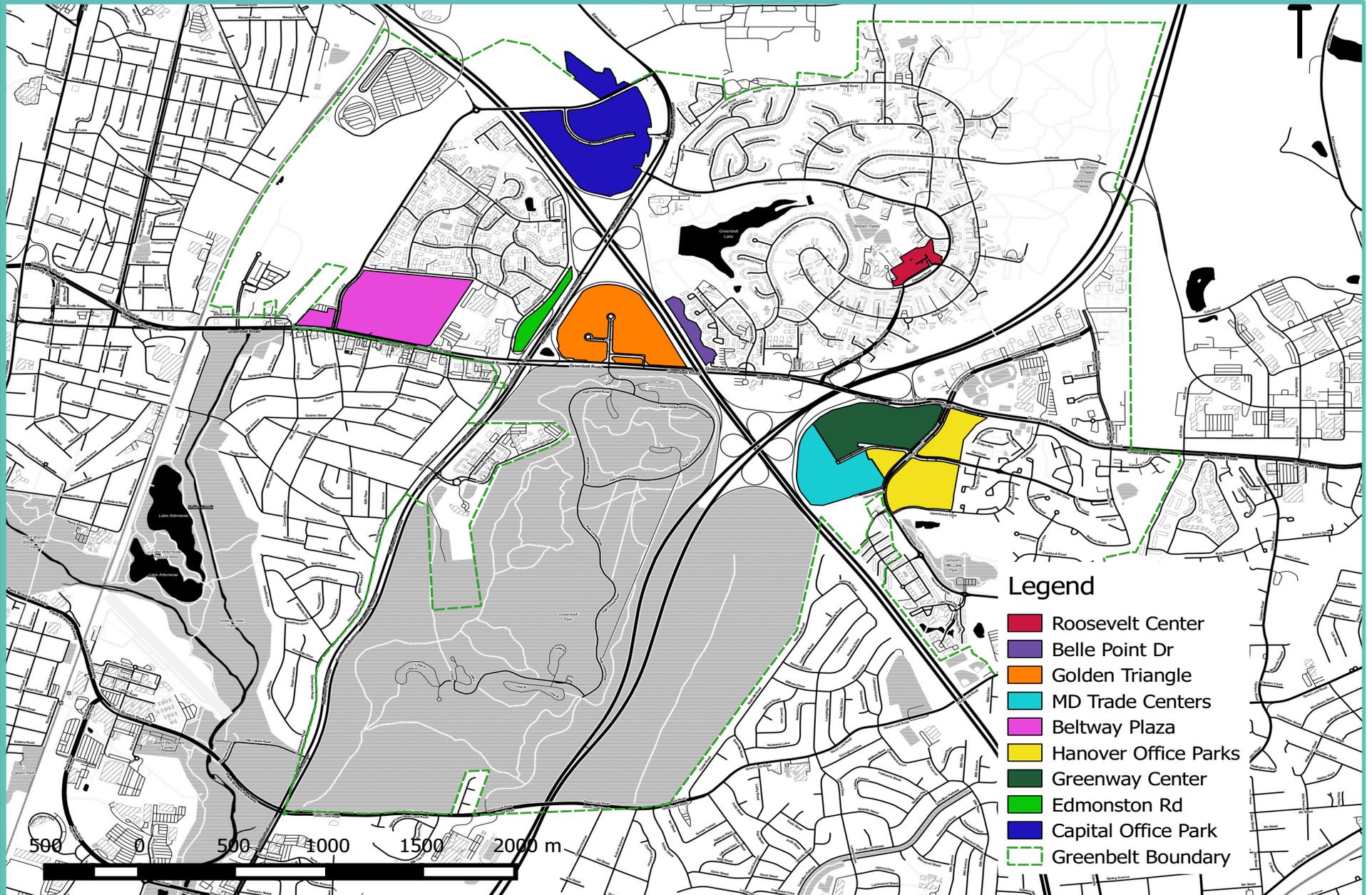


## MARYLAND TRADE CENTER

Three large high rises, located directly adjacent to Greenway Center, are known as Maryland Trade Center I, II, and III. This office space is anchored by major tenants like Lockheed Martin, but also includes smaller clients in the science and medical fields.



# COMMERCIAL CENTERS



# PROPERTY & ZONING

## PROPERTY SEARCH TOOLS

The following are resources you can use to find commercial real estate in the City of Greenbelt:

- [Loopnet.com](https://www.loopnet.com)
- [Showcase.com](https://www.showcase.com)
- [NAI Michael](https://www.naimichael.com)
- [The Restaurant Broker](#) (specifically for restaurant owners)
- City of Greenbelt Commercial Property Database (link coming soon)

## ZONING

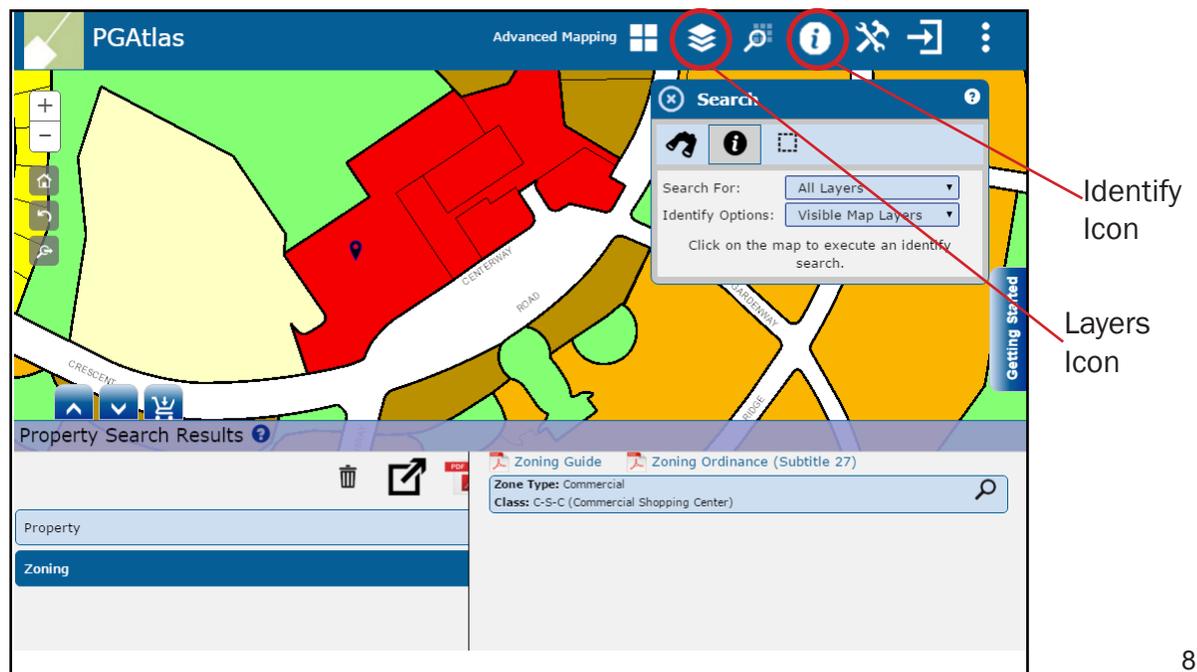
Once you've found a property or space, you must ensure that your type of business can operate within the current zoning. Zoning regulations determine the allowable uses within a designated area, and sometimes include requirements for items like design and parking.

Much of the City of Greenbelt is governed by the [Greenbelt Metro Area and MD 193 Corridor Sector Plan](#). For areas outside of the plan, consult PGAtlas to see the zoning category and the [County's Zoning website](#).

Contact the Prince George's County Planning Department at (301) 952-3208 for questions and more information on how zoning may affect your business. Contact the City of Greenbelt to determine if the property is subject to additional regulations, such as a covenant with the City.

### HOW TO USE PGATLAS

1. Go to [PGAtlas website](#)
2. Click on *Advanced Mapping icon* at the top of the screen and select *Advanced Mapping*
3. Click on the *Layers icon* and select the blue arrow next to *Zoning*
4. Scroll down to select *Zoning* as a sub-category
5. Click on the *Search icon* at the top of the screen (Magnifying Glass)
6. Type your address into the Search Criteria bar and hit *Search* button
7. The map should zoom in to your property, which will be outlined.
8. Select the *Identify icon* and click inside the outlined property.
9. At the lower left hand corner of the screen, under *Property Search Results*, select *Zoning* to see the Zone Type displayed on the right hand side.



# PERMITS & LICENSES: PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY

## USE & OCCUPANCY PERMITS

A Certificate of Occupancy (or [Use and Occupancy Permit](#)) is required for every tenant, change of tenant, or when a change of use occurs at a business property and construction is not required. Every business in Greenbelt is required to obtain a Use & Occupancy (U&O) Permit issued by the County before business operation may begin. Even if you have a U&O from another city, you will need to reapply for Greenbelt. In cases where a County Business License is required, the business must obtain a U&O prior to applying for a business license. U&O's are issued by the Prince George's County [Department of Permits, Inspections and Enforcement \(DPIE\)](#).

### Permit Requirements - No Construction

The following items are required for a U&O permit when no construction is taking place:

- Property Tax ID (EIN)
- 3 site/plot plans showing lot, building, and parking

### Permit Requirements - Temporary

The following items are required for a Temporary U&O:

- Property Tax ID (EIN)
- 3 site/plot plans showing lot, building, and parking
- 1 letter from Property Owner

Site plans may be obtained from the property owner. If your owner does not have one, you may need to hire a draftsman (architect, engineer, interior designer) to create one. In some cases, site plans may need to be certified by an engineer.

After you have submitted your permit through the mail OR used the walk-thru review process (described later), you will schedule an inspection.

### Inspections

Site inspections can be scheduled via phone (301) 883-5390 or [online](#). For your inspection, have your U&O permit package onsite and ensure the following:

- Site is in compliance with the site plan
- All equipment is operational and functions properly
- All doors, life safety items, fire extinguishers etc. are in working order
- Remove all debris/trash

Additional inspections may be required by the Fire/EMS Department's Fire Prevention Office for daycare centers, places of assembly, and special types of events.

## HOW TO FILL OUT A U&O

The [U&O application](#) is available online. Required fields to fill out include, but are not limited to:

property description,  
work description,  
owner information,  
and type of permit  
applied for.

To find site information, you will need to check your property on 2 other sites – SDAT and PGAtlas.

The State Department of Assessments and Taxation (SDAT) has [a Real Property Database Search](#) function.

This will provide you with your Lot, Block, Parcel, Grid, Subdivision, and Plat information.

[PGAtlas](#) is the County's online mapping system.

You can search for your property by address or tax number and find the Liber, Folio, and Zone code (which corresponds to County Use code in SDAT).

# PERMITS & LICENSES: PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY

## LIQUOR LICENSE (IF APPLICABLE)

If your business plans to sell alcohol, you will need to obtain a liquor license through the County Board of License Commissioners and a liquor license from Greenbelt. County licenses are issued by the Board at monthly public hearings; however, depending on the type of license you need, the wait time could be a few months before your application is reviewed at a hearing. Learn more about the process and license types [online](#) or call the License Commissioners Office at (301) 699-2770.

## FOOD SERVICE PERMIT

If your business is serving food in any capacity – whether cooked in-house or pre-prepared – you are required to obtain a Food Service Facility (FSF) Permit from the Prince George's County Health Department. There are different types of permits based on the type of food and service being provided. Please check the [County's website](#) to determine what permit you need or call (301) 883-7690. A permit application will trigger an inspection from a County Health Inspector. A valid Use & Occupancy permit is needed before you apply.

## BUILDING PERMITS

A County-issued Commercial Building Permit is necessary for multiple types of exterior or interior construction. Most work that requires a permit are additions, alterations, or replacements of items that would change an exterior or interior plan, and/or alter interior utility placement. Please refer to the [DPIE website](#) to see if your work will require a permit.

Building Permit Applications and Plans must be submitted online through the County's electronic plan review process ([ePlan](#)) or in person at 9400 Peppercorn Place, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor, Largo, MD 20774. They are NOT accepted by mail. For more questions about the permit process and permit types call (301) 883-5900.

## SIGN PERMITS

The Prince George's County Sign Ordinance regulates the placement of signs on private properties in the County. Businesses / property owners must obtain a sign permit from the County, and subsequently schedule an inspection with DPIE. Download the [Sign Permit Application](#) and check the [DPIE website](#) for more information.

## WALK-THRU PERMIT REVIEW PROCESS AT DPIE

While most permits must be submitted through ePlan or in person at the Department of Permits, Inspections and Enforcement (DPIE), there is a walk-thru permit process available. The Walk-thru permit process is offered for the following types of permits:

- Commercial tenant permits with the accompanying Use & Occupancy permit when required; may be limited to the size and type of construction.
- Applications for Use & Occupancy permits without construction (this procedure does not apply to buildings erected prior to 1971, properties serviced by well or septic, or buildings with changes to the proposed use of the original building.)
- Building Sign Permits.
- Fire sprinkler site releases.

All other Permit applications must be submitted through online ePlan, or in person and go through the regular County review process.

# PERMITS & LICENSES: GREENBELT

## COMMERCIAL LICENSE

Every business in Greenbelt should have a City Commercial License, which renews on an annual basis. Submitting your application triggers an inspection from a City Code Enforcement Officer. [Permit applications can be obtained online](#) or by calling the Department of Planning & Community Development at (301) 345-5417. Your application fee, or annual inspection fee, is calculated using the total gross floor area for your address. *Please Note: Businesses must be in Good Standing with the State of Maryland in order to apply for a City Commercial Permit.*

For more information on City Code & inspections, please consult the City of Greenbelt Commercial Code Brochure, talk to a Community Development staff person, or visit our website at [www.greenbeltmd.gov](http://www.greenbeltmd.gov).

## LIQUOR LICENSE (IF APPLICABLE)

Any business located in the City of Greenbelt that holds a County liquor license must pay an annual fee to be licensed by the City, equal to 20% of the renewal fee charged by the County Board of License Commissioners. The fee is due on or before July 1<sup>st</sup> of each calendar year. A Greenbelt City liquor license will be issued when the fee is received. Contact the Department of Planning & Community Development at (301) 345-5417 for more information.

## BUILDING & SIGN PERMITS

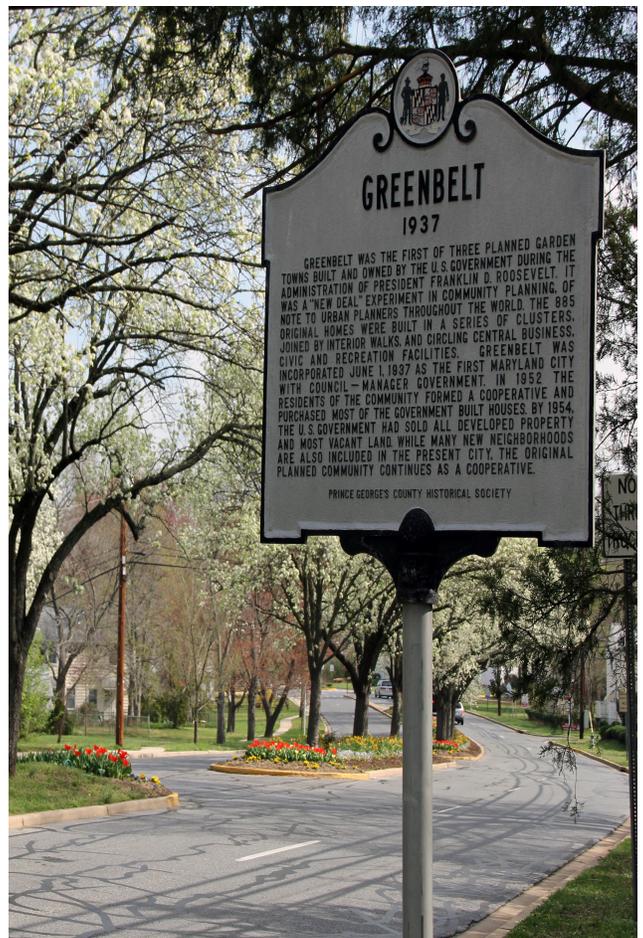
All construction and signage projects that require County permits also require a City permit. Applications are available at the Department of Planning and Community Development by calling (301) 345-5417. Accompanying the application shall be a copy of the approved County permit and one copy of approved County plans. Refer to the City's [General Fees page](#) to determine your fee amount.

*Please note that any construction activities which impact the City right-of-way must be reviewed and permitted by the Dept. of Planning and Community Development.*

## ALARM SYSTEM PERMIT & LICENSING

All non-residential burglar alarm systems and alarm businesses operating in Greenbelt must be licensed by the City. Fines are levied for repeat false alarms for all alarm users. You must also [register your alarm](#) with the city to receive an alarm permit. Permits and annual renewal fees are \$100. One application with accompanying permit fee must be submitted for each alarmed non-residential location in the City of Greenbelt. Please note that Direct Dial Systems are prohibited.

For more information, visit the [City's website](#) or call (301) 345-5417.



## TAX INFORMATION

### MARYLAND SALES AND USE TAX

State sales taxes apply to purchases made in Maryland, while the use tax refers to the tax on goods purchased out of state. Maryland businesses should charge 6% in sales and use tax and/ or 9% on alcoholic beverages. According to the Comptroller, the sale of tangible personal property is generally taxable except as otherwise provided by law; the sale of services is generally not taxable except for certain taxable services provided by law.

Online purchases require sales tax when the purchase will be used and/or shipped to a resident in the State of Maryland. If you have a business that relies on online sales, please check with the Comptroller's Office to ensure you are in compliance.

*For other information on State Tax Requirements, contact the Comptroller's Office at (410) 260-7980.*

### BUSINESS PERSONAL PROPERTY TAX

A Tax is imposed on business-owned personal property, and collected by the State of Maryland on behalf of the County and municipal governments, where applicable. Your assessment of personal property comes from the Department of Assessments and Taxation. [Forms are available online](#). Personal property generally includes furniture, fixtures, office and industrial equipment, machinery, tools, supplies, and inventory.

Check the [SDAT rates](#) to estimate your tax assessment.

*For other information on County Tax Requirements, contact the Office of Finance at (301) 952-5052.*

## TAX INCENTIVES

### REVITALIZATION TAX CREDIT

Revitalization Tax Credits are designed to encourage redevelopment and investment in inner-beltway communities of Prince George's County. The credits are available in all census tracts inside the beltway where the median household income does not exceed the County's median. Eligible improvements include construction, reconstruction, or extension of non-residential structures. Learn more about the Revitalization Tax Credit program on the [Economic Development Corporation website](#) and [contact their staff](#) to determine whether or not you qualify. The application is available [online](#). For questions, contact the Office of Finance, Treasury Division, at (301) 952-4765.

*For more information about business taxes in Prince George's County, [visit the Office of Finance website](#). For more information about business taxes in Maryland, visit the [website of the Comptroller](#).*

### SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES TAX CREDIT\*

Run by the Maryland Historic Trust (MHT), this tax credit is only applicable in designated Sustainable Communities, of which Greenbelt is one. The Small Commercial Tax Credit is applicable to businesses looking to make physical improvements. The building must be a certified historic structure, a contributing resource to a National Historic District, or have National Landmark status.

Projects that do not exceed \$500,000 in qualified rehabilitation expenses may earn a tax credit up to 20%. The credit may also be used simultaneously with federal and local historic tax credits.

*Visit the [MHT website](#) to learn more.*

*\*Applies to properties in Roosevelt Center only.*

# FINANCING & BUSINESS RESOURCES

## FEDERAL

### [Small Business Administration](#)

Loan programs (debt financing) and bonds geared towards small businesses



### [SCORE](#)

Free resources and information for start-ups & existing businesses; covers multiple topics



## STATE OF MARYLAND

### [Maryland Small Business Development Financing Authority](#)

Financing for small businesses that do not otherwise qualify for private lending



### [Maryland Department of Commerce](#)

Specialized financing & incentive resources for small businesses



### [Maryland Capital Enterprises, Inc.](#)

Micro loans for business owners and entrepreneurs



### [Department of Housing & Community Development](#)

Provides gap financing; programs include: [Neighborhood Businessworks](#), [Microenterprise Loan](#), [State Small Business Credit Initiative](#), and [Maryland Capital Access Program](#)



### [TEDCO](#)

Direct investments in technology and life science companies



### [Maryland Small Business Development Center](#)

Small business classes and 1-1 counseling



### [Maryland Women's Business Center](#)

Training, access to funding, and individual assistance



## PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY

### [Economic Development Corporation](#)

Technical assistance, trainings, and bid opportunities



### [FSC First](#)

Certified micro lender for State and SBA programs



### [Prince George's Chamber of Commerce](#)

Networking opportunities with other County-based businesses



# CONTACTS

## STATE OF MARYLAND

### State Dept of Assessments & Taxation

301 W. Preston St Baltimore 21201  
(401) 767-1340 | [dat.state.md.us](http://dat.state.md.us)

### MD Dept. of Labor, Licensing, and Regulation

500 N. Calvert St Baltimore 21201  
(401) 230-6000 | [dllr.state.md.us](http://dllr.state.md.us)

### Comptroller of Maryland

301 W. Preston St Baltimore 21201  
(401) 260-7980 | [www.marylandtaxes.com](http://www.marylandtaxes.com)

### Dept. of Housing & Community Development, Office of Neighborhood Revitalization

100 Community Place Crownsville 21032  
(401) 514-7237 | [dhcd.maryland.gov](http://dhcd.maryland.gov)

### MD Dept. of Transportation Office of Minority Business Enterprise

7201 Corporate Center Dr Hanover 21076  
(410) 865-1269 | [mbe@mdot.state.md.us](mailto:mbe@mdot.state.md.us)  
[website](#)

## PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY

### M-NCPPC Planning Dept.

14741 Governor Oden Bowie Dr  
Upper Marlboro 20772  
(301) 952-3594 | [pgplanning.org](http://pgplanning.org)

### Clerk of the Circuit Court

14701 Governor Oden Bowie Dr  
Upper Marlboro 20772  
(301) 952-3331 | [website](#)

### Dept. of Permitting, Inspections, and Enforcement (DPIE)

9400 Peppercorn Pl, 1st floor Largo 20774  
(301) 636-2000 | [website](#)

### Board of License Commissioners

5012 Rhode Island Ave Hyattsville 20781  
(301) 699-2770 | [website](#)

### Economic Development Corporation

1100 Mercantile Ln, Ste #115A  
Largo 20774  
(301) 583-4650 | [www.pgcedc.com](http://www.pgcedc.com)

### Health Dept.

9201 Basil Court Largo 20774  
(301) 883-7690 | [website](#)

## CITY OF GREENBELT

### Dept. of Planning & Community Development

15 Crescent Rd, Ste 200  
Greenbelt 20770  
(301) 345-5417 | [website](#)

## UTILITIES

### Pepco

8300 Old Marlboro Pike  
Forestville 20772  
(202) 833-7500 | [www.pepco.com](http://www.pepco.com)

### Washington Gas

1100 H St NW Washington DC 20080  
(703) 750-1000 | [www.washgas.com](http://www.washgas.com)

### WSSC

14501 Sweitzer Ln Laurel 20707  
(301) 206-4003 | [www.wsscwater.com](http://www.wsscwater.com)