

YOUR GUIDE TO OPENING OR GROWING A BUSINESS...



IN HISTORIC COOPERSBURG, PA



We're glad that you're considering setting up or expanding your business in the Borough of Coopersburg!

Here are some of the benefits of doing business in our historic downtown:

Location, Location, Location... we have something for everyone!

- Home to a 1-mile stretch of Rt. 309, traveled by an estimated 35,000 cars daily
- 0.3 miles off Rt. 309
- 5 minutes from Quakertown, and PA Turnpike access
- 7 minutes from DeSales University
- 20 minutes from Allentown
- 5 minutes from Center Valley's Professional Corporate Centers and the Promenade Shops
- 3.5 miles from Interstate 78
- 10 minutes from Penn State Lehigh Valley campus
- 45 minutes from Philadelphia
- Highway commercial space is available

Coopersburg Business Revitalization Program

Creating an environment conducive to business (revitalizecoopersburg.org)

- Established in 2005 as part of the regional "Lehigh Valley Main Street" program, which is intended to strengthen local economies and the community structure of small boroughs in the region, by promoting the physical, economic, and historical assets of each municipality.
- Partnership of the Chamber, the Chamber Foundation, Lehigh & Northampton Counties, the PA Dept. of Community & Economic Development, and the 7 participating communities

Streetscape Planning in Progress

- The primary focus is to create linkages between the downtown and both Rt. 309, and the proposed Saucon Rail Trail access point.

Comprehensive Plan—adopted in 2010 (available upon request)

- Progress is planned and measured by a volunteer committee that meets regularly to oversee implementation.
- Planning outlines the borough's vision and strategy for community development and land use.

Step One is to Always Have a Business Plan

Contact the Small Business Development Center (SBDC) at Lehigh University: 610-758-3980. They provide consulting services which will provide you with the proper resources to help you draft a business plan, find financing, secure insurance, and keep proper records.

The SBDC is funded in part by a grant from the PA Dept. of Community & Economic Development, as well as the U.S. Small Business Administration. Initial services are therefore free.

A business plan outlines your product, proposed market, legal business structure, SWOT analysis (strengths/weaknesses & opportunities/threats), market analysis, and a financial plan.

A business plan is critical, and often required, to obtain public or private financing.

The SBDC may also refer you to SCORE – a non-profit organization dedicated to educating entrepreneurs and helping businesses to start, grow, and succeed. SCORE is a partner of the U.S. Small Business Administration.

There are several websites that can provide you with small business information:

Lehigh Valley Small Business Development Center

www.lehigh.edu/~insbdc

Lehigh Valley SCORE

www.lehighvalleyscore.org

U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA)

www.sba.gov





Steps to Working with the Borough of Coopersburg

While each business type has more clearly-defined processes, here are the basics on opening a business in the borough:

- 1. Contact Coopersburg's Borough Manager (610-282-3307) to share your ideas on (a) location and (b) business category.** If the manager determines that your plans are feasible, you will be asked to fill out a Zoning Permit Application (\$30 fee), which can be picked up at borough hall.
- 2. This application will be shared with the zoning officer.** The Borough contracts with an engineering company to oversee compliance of zoning and codes. They will evaluate:
 - *Permissible Use* – To determine if your proposed location for operation is an allowable property to use for your intended business.
 - *Parking Requirements* – A minimal number of parking spots is required for each designated business use. The engineering consultant will determine if your use meets the established criteria.
 - *Permits* – You will need to reference any additions or renovations that have to be made to the property in order to operate. A summary of permit requirements are mentioned later in this guide.
- 3. Zoning Review** – If your intended use, parking, or sign requirements do not conform to the current zoning ordinances, you have the option to “appeal” to the Zoning Hearing Review Board. There is a cost associated with this to cover expenses.

Trash / Recycling

As a commercial property, you are required to pay the borough quarterly for use of their contracted trash removal and recycling services. You are permitted to contract with an alternate trash and recycling company; however, you will still be billed quarterly by the borough as well.

Zoning Districts / Property Uses

Classification of Districts

The borough has a zoning map which defines residential, commercial, and industrial district boundaries. Each defined district contains an outline of its purpose, potential property uses/prohibitions, and regulations on the physical attributes of the lot itself (i.e. lot size, building usage of lot, yard definitions, and setbacks).

These districts exist so that the uses within are not a hazard or a nuisance to its surrounding properties; for example, the noise and exhaust of a nearby industrial operation would negatively affect residential properties nearby.

Nonconforming Building & Uses

The Zoning Hearing Review Board can allow a nonconforming use with a “special exception” – whereby it is determined that a proposed new use “will be no more detrimental to its neighborhood and surroundings than the use it is to replace.” They will consider things like traffic, parking, emissions, emergency hazards, and operational hours. If a nonconforming building use is discontinued for a year, its use will return to the original regulatory use outlined in the zoning.

Additional Prohibitive Uses & Regulations in Zoning

Further details are available concerning “right of way” intrusions, obstruction of a driver’s vision, and the prohibition of junkyards, dump sites, and BYOB establishments.

Other requirements and regulations are outlined concerning loading/unloading space, as well as communication antennas, towers, and equipment storage buildings.

Many property uses have specific additional regulations and requirements referenced in the zoning because of their purpose and/or potential effect on others, including, but not limited to, day care centers, gas stations, home businesses, etc.





Permit / Inspection Requirements

Permits and corresponding inspections (upon completion) may be required for upgrades/alterations. Permit fees vary based on the scope of work.

Applicants are advised to check with the borough first, prior to completing work. Some work may not require permits, but if you pursue alterations without permits, when required, the borough is entitled to require you to pay the permit fee, after the fact, as well as an additional fine per permit. Permit types include...

- Building (constructions, additions, plumbing, etc.)
- Roofing
- Electrical
- Signage (new or replacement)

If your business requires a health inspection, please contact borough hall to be put in contact with the borough's health inspector. Health inspections are required for businesses that serve food.

Parking Requirements

Every property use designates the number of off-street parking spaces required to operate. These spaces must be accessible from a street or alley and must be located within close proximity to the business property.

All new development requires a minimum of 2 off-street parking spaces. Below is a brief summary of parking requirements per building use:

- Accommodations – 1 space per unit/guest
- Food Establishments – 1 space per every 50 sq. ft. of floor used by customers
- Public Gathering Places (not churches) – 1 space per every 50 sq. ft. of floor + 1 space per employee

Continued on next page...

- Other Commercial Buildings (professional office space, recreational, etc.) – 1 off-street space for every 200 sq. ft. of gross floor area + 1 off-street space per employee
- Industrial – 1 space per employee
- Daycare Centers – 1 space per employee + 1 off-street parking space

Sign Regulations

ALL SIGNS (on-premise, off-premise, and temporary) REQUIRE A ZONING PERMIT. This requirement is needed, because, as briefly listed below, there are strict regulations/prohibitions outlined in the zoning code for which a zoning officer can offer the best input on compliance requirements.

Control of signs is intended to protect the safety of pedestrian/vehicular traffic, preserve property values, prevent a blighting influence, keep excessive signage from obscuring other signs, and maintain consistent design elements.

Location, Purpose, Size, and Lighting are several of the elements that must comply to zoning regulations, and are different for signs on and off premises.

“Off-premise” signs

- Limited to one per use.
- More detailed regulations apply to temporary signage. Each purpose of the sign – advertising, announcement, charitable, or political – has different size and duration restrictions.
- Billboards (off-premise advertising) have strict setback, size, and location requirements.

“On-Premise” Signs

- Include freestanding, parallel, window, or projecting – all have their own requirements and measurements.

Only 1 business sign should be able to be seen from each street adjacent to the lot. Freestanding signs cannot be higher than 44 inches above the curb.

Special/temporary portable signs (including sandwich board signs) are permitted only 6 times per year, for no more than 15 days at a time.

Prohibited Signs

Prohibited signs include those that imitate governmental signage, are located in the “right of way,” that move or are animated, or falsely/unlawfully advertise. Illumination is generally allowed if not interfering with nearby properties or pedestrian/vehicular traffic. Flashing/moving signs are prohibited.





State Government Business Operation Requirements, Certifications, & Licenses

Registration Process with the Government

In addition to registering with the municipality, you must also register your business with the Pennsylvania Departments of Labor & Industry, Revenue, and State, which may be done online at www.paopenforbusiness.com.

This website also offers links to valuable handbooks and resources beneficial to starting or expanding a business within the state of Pennsylvania. While this site is a good tool for acquiring information, it does not replace the importance of seeking professional guidance throughout the process.

Perhaps the best place to start is with the following reading material: "Entrepreneur's Guide: Starting & Growing a Business in PA." This handbook (found on "resources") is a beginner's guide which offers checklists, a great deal of "how to" content, and a glimpse into what is required in order to operate a business in Pennsylvania.

Businesses that Require State Licenses to Operate

Several types of business operations require State licenses and permits to legally operate; disregarding these requirements - overseen by State departments and their bureaus - can result in severe penalties.

Regulations are monitored in several categories including business professional (accountants, realtors, barbers, etc.), the health field (nursing, massage therapy, pharmacy, etc.), and public welfare facilities (adoption services, daycare centers, etc.). Reference the aforementioned handbook for more specific lists.

The Pennsylvania Dept. of Community & Economic Development (DCED) also offers great insight into opportunities available to prospective and expanding businesses at www.newpa.com.



Contact Us with Questions:

Borough Office
610-282-3307
www.coopersburgborough.org

Mayor: Gary Hovis

Council Members:
Dennis Balascak John E. Felch, Jr.
Harvey Greenland Steve Lundy
Jonathan Mack Timothy Pica
Jon Walters

Business Revitalization Program
610-739-1520
www.revitalizecoopersburg.org

Greater Lehigh Valley Chamber of Commerce
610-739-1520
www.lehighvalleychamber.org

Borough Manager: Timothy Paashaus
Health Officer: Lee Lilley

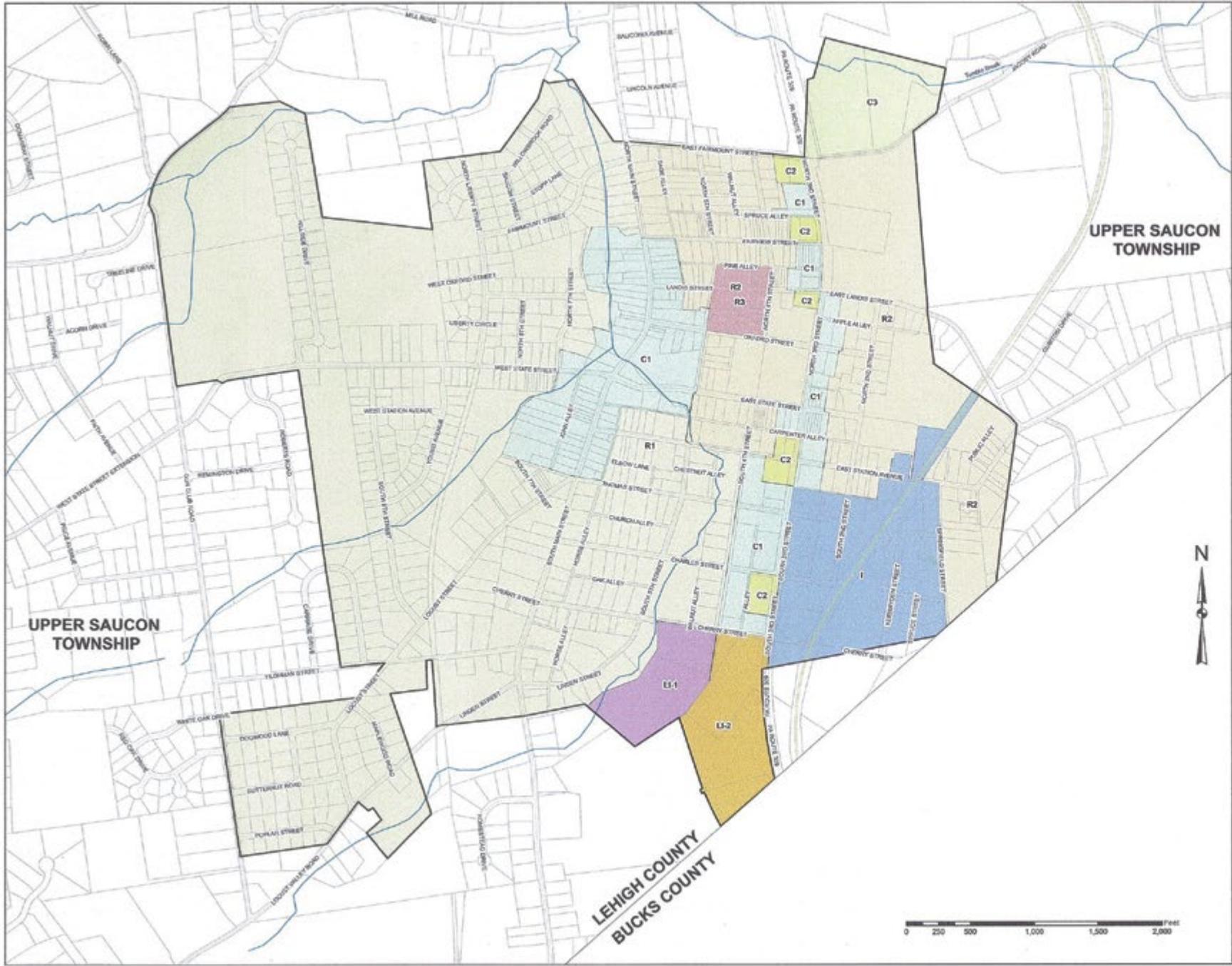
Zoning Inquiries: Barry Isett & Associates

Police Department
610-282-1444

Fire Department
610-282-8438

Lehigh County
www.lehighcounty.org





ZONING MAP

Coopersburg Borough
Lehigh County, Pennsylvania

MAP # 4

LEGEND

Municipal Districts

- C1 - Light Commercial
- C2 - Heavy Commercial
- C3 - Commercial
- I - Industrial
- I-1 Light Industrial & Office Research
- I-2 Light Industrial & Office Research
- R1 - Residential
- R2 - Residential
- R3 - Residential
- Streams

Prepared April 2010 by:



Map Source: 1. Zoning Districts - Zoning Map of the Borough of Coopersburg prepared by Keyframe Consulting Engineers Inc., adopted 12/1995

