



Kent County Department of Planning Services

Things to consider before opening or expanding a business:

1. ***What is the property zoned?*** Check the online map here:

<http://www.co.kent.de.us/gis-division/public-mapping-web.aspx>

2. ***Is the use permitted?*** Check the County Zoning Ordinance here:
<https://www.ecode360.com/KE1751?#KE1751>

- a. Some uses are permitted “by-right” & can be approved administratively.
- b. Some uses are “by-right” but require site plan approval by the Planning Commission
- c. Other uses are permitted with conditional use approval meaning public hearings with the Regional Planning Commission and Levy Court.

3. ***If the business I want to start is not permitted in the zoning district, can I rezone it?***

Rezoning is a request to reclassify a property from one zoning district to another. It typically requires review by the Office of State Planning and includes public hearings with the Regional Planning Commission and Levy Court. The County’s Comprehensive Plan Land Use Strategies Map also shows areas targeted for potential rezoning:
<http://www.co.kent.de.us/media/913828/2018-Comprehensive-Plan-Adopted-9-11-18-Full-Documents-without-Appendices.pdf>. Call our office to discuss.

4. ***Is the property the right size?*** Check setback, impervious cover, parking, and landscaping requirements. Call the Planning Office with any questions.

5. ***Is a site plan required?***

- a. Yes for any improvements (all impervious cover) totaling 5,000 square feet or more.
- b. Yes, if the Zoning Ordinance requires conditional use with site plan.



6. Will I need a building permit?

- a. If you are constructing a new building or doing interior renovations you will need to submit plans sealed by a DE licensed design professional in order to get a permit. Depending on the complexity of the plan, review can take from a few days to several weeks.
 - b. If you are using an existing building, contact our Inspection & Enforcement office to determine what will be required for a certificate of occupancy.
7. **Are there other agencies I'll need to contact?** Depending on the proposed use and application type various state agencies will also have to review the plans. For site plans and new construction especially, review by other agencies should be anticipated.
- a. Delaware Department of Transportation
 - b. Kent Conservation District
 - c. Delaware State Fire Marshal
 - d. Delaware Division of Public Health
 - e. Kent County Public Works and/or DNREC
8. **How long will this take?** The length of time will depend on the type of use and required applications. Depending on the proposal the review and approval process can take from a few weeks to 18-24 months. Be realistic about what to expect.
9. **Who do I contact with questions?** Never hesitate to contact our office with questions. Discussing your plans with our office early can prevent pitfalls in the future.

Planning Office

302-744-2471

Planning@co.kent.de.us

<http://www.co.kent.de.us/planning-dept/planning.aspx>

Inspection & Enforcement

302-744-2451

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<http://www.co.kent.de.us/inspections-enforcement/permit-information.aspx>

