

# A Guide to Start Your Business in Wilmington





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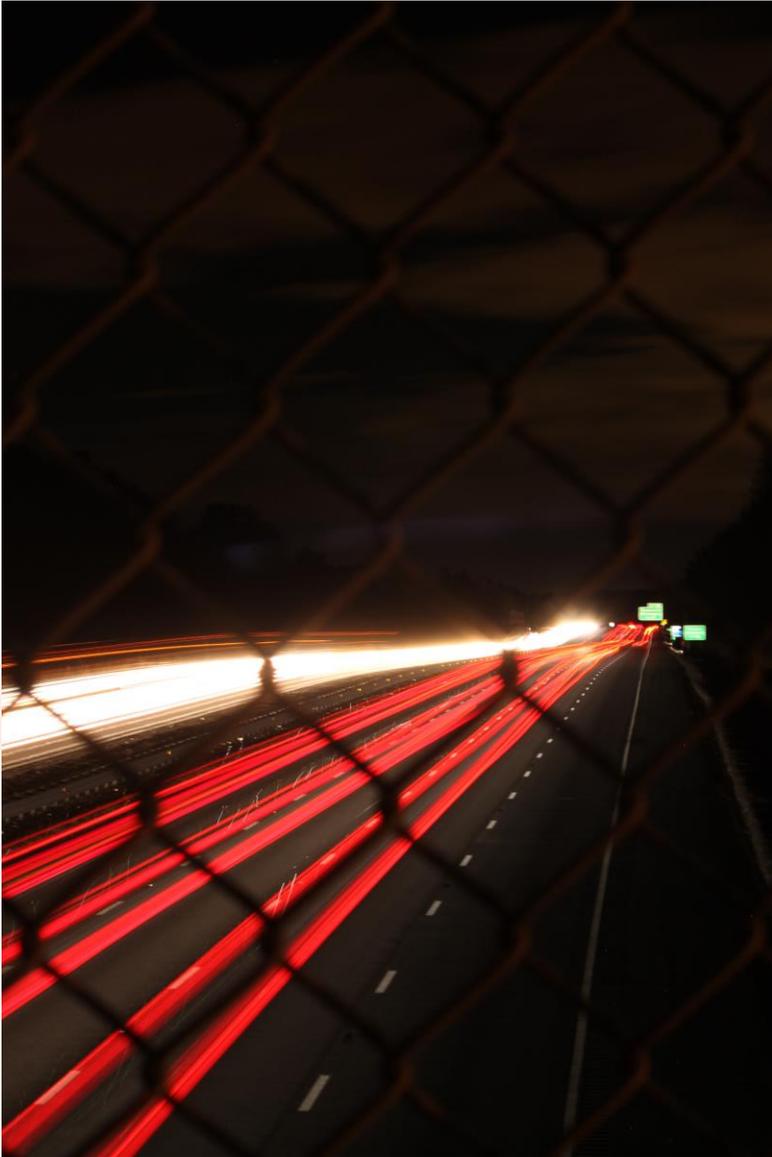
**community  
starts here.**  
Wilmington, MA

Wilmington residents have a strong sense of community and strive to keep their town a beautiful place to live, work, and explore. Wilmington has a number of public trails and parks for residents to visit – with 8 different trail systems, which can be found [here](#). A few of the most popular parks being Town Park (including a dog park), Silver Lake, Rotary Park, and Yentile Farm, which includes walking paths, a turf field, a playground, and basketball courts. Wilmington also has wetlands to admire and be aware of, covering 19% of the Town’s total area.

The Ipswich River has its headwaters in Wilmington, and most of the Town is located within the Ipswich River Watershed. Portions of town are located within the Shawsheen River Watershed, and a small section of the southeast corner is located within the Boston Harbor Watershed.



- Wilmington, Massachusetts is in Middlesex County
- A suburban community with a population of approximately 23,000 people
- The average household income is \$166,442 (2021 ACS 5-Year Estimates)
- Wilmington is located about 16 miles north of Boston, with 4 exits off Interstate 93, a short drive to both routes 128 and 495, and 2 commuter rail stops – Lowell and Haverhill lines
- Main Street (Rt. 38) runs through Wilmington from Tewksbury to Woburn
- Middlesex Avenue (Rt. 62) runs from North Reading to Burlington

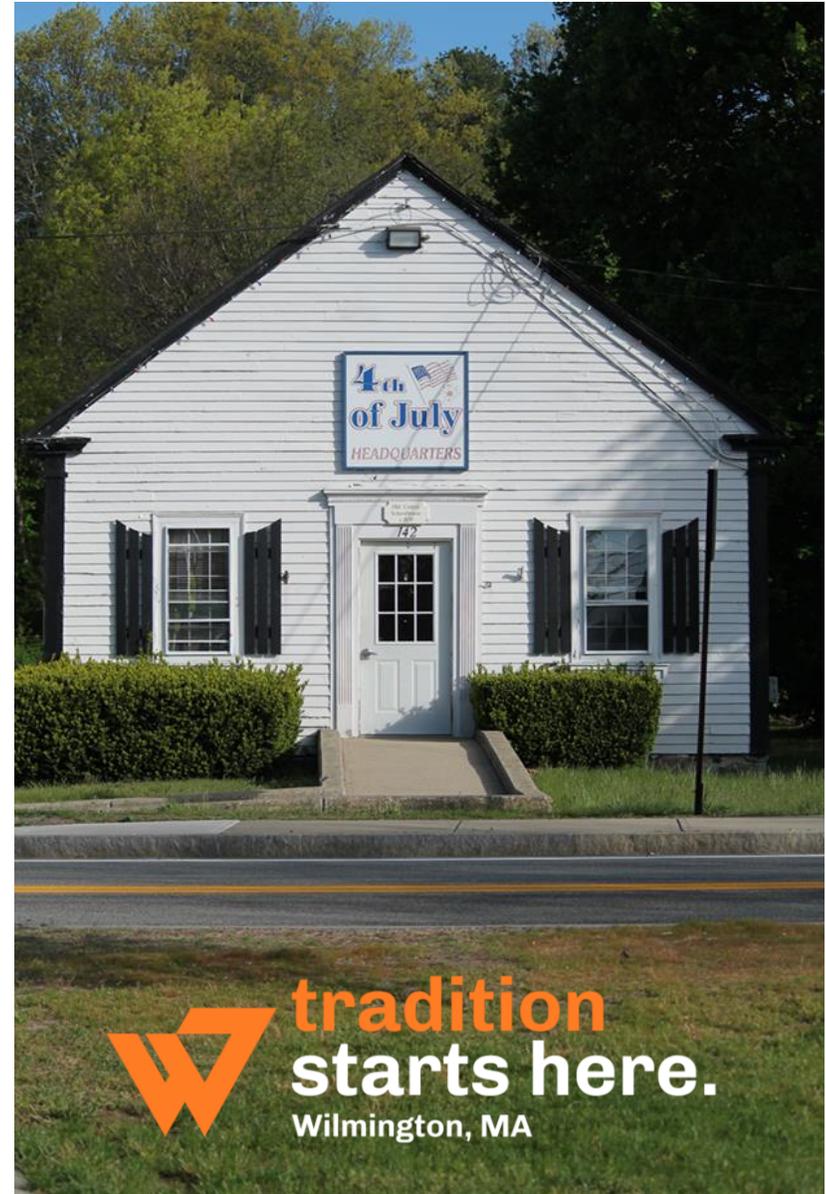


# WILMINGTON'S HISTORIC DISTRICTS

Wilmington has a total of five historic districts:

- Bucks Corner
- Church Street
- High Street
- Wilmington Centre Village
- Gowing-Sheldon

Visit the Town Museum, the Harnden Tavern, in person or [online](#) to find out more about the history of the Town of Wilmington.





## WITH WILMINGTON'S BUSINESS COMMUNITY

Innovation starts right here in Wilmington, from small start-ups to global headquarters. With multiple commercial and industrial districts in town, you'll be able to find the perfect space for your business.

[Click here](#) to see the business directory run by the Wilmington & Tewksbury Chamber of Commerce.

The directory will take you to various types of businesses within and outside of Wilmington. Find out the many types of local businesses you can invest in today.

**Wilmington & Tewksbury  
Chamber of Commerce  
226 Lowell Street  
Wilmington, MA  
978-657-7211**

# Pre-Permitting

## 1. TOWN GIS MAPS

Wilmington has several business zones, with different uses allowed in each. You can find out which zone your future business would be in by searching by address or parcel id (map-parcel). You can find the maps [here](#).

Using the layers tab, check off “Zoning” and use the legend to identify which zone your future business is in.

## 2. ZONING & GIS

The Zoning Bylaw can be found [here](#), which can be helpful to look at with the GIS maps. After finding which zone your future business would be in, refer to the zoning bylaws to confirm that your proposed use is allowed. For any further questions, contact the Building Inspector, who is also the Zoning Enforcement Officer.

## 3. WETLANDS & GIS

The GIS maps also show the general area of wetlands. This can be a good indicator if you will need to go through the Conservation Commission. But keep in mind; this is only if you will be doing exterior changes within 100’ of wetlands. It is best to call the Planning & Conservation Department for guidance.

## 4. BUSINESS CERTIFICATE FORM

This form is for record keeping and administrative purposes. If something goes wrong at your business, people could contact the Clerk’s office to notify you. This is a requirement from the State. Once complete, mail or bring the form to the Town Clerk’s office, Room 12, in the Town Hall.

Town Clerk: 978-658-2030

[Website](#)

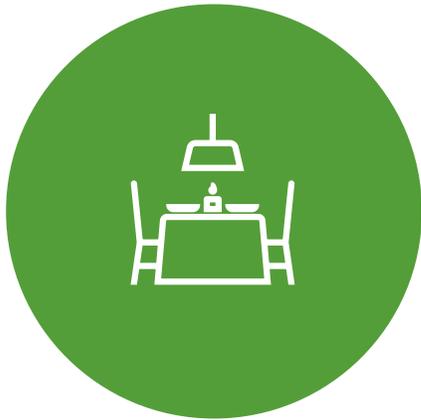
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**NOT SURE WHERE TO START?  
OR  
DON'T HAVE A BUSINESS LOCATION YET?**

- Call the Department of Planning & Conservation or email the Economic Development Coordinator. The Department deals with issuing different types of permits and typically has information on open storefronts and empty parcels for potential development.
- The Department also has a general understanding of the overall permitting process, which can be beneficial for beginners who are seeking guidance. If you are looking for something they don't typically deal with, they will help lead you in the right direction and get in touch with the proper individuals.

<https://www.wilmingtonma.gov/planning-conservation>

# WHERE TO START WITH PERMITTING



BUILDING/  
HEALTH DEPARTMENT



SELECT BOARD



PLANNING & CONSERVATION  
DEPARTMENT



Don't forget to fill out a [Business Certificate](#)



## HEALTH DEPARTMENT

The Health Department issues various permits, as well as important notices and announcements regarding public health. Visit the Health Department's [website](#) for more information.

Or call 978-658-4298



## BUILDING INSPECTOR

The Building Inspector (also the Zoning Enforcement Officer) issues building permits for interior and exterior work including the installation of signs. A Building Permit should be filled out and signed by the Treasurer prior to the start of review from other departments. The Building Department is also the home of the Board of Appeals which issues special permits & variances.

[Building Department Website](#)

[Building Permit Routing Guide](#)

[Board of Appeals Website](#)

Building/Zoning Board:

978-658-4531



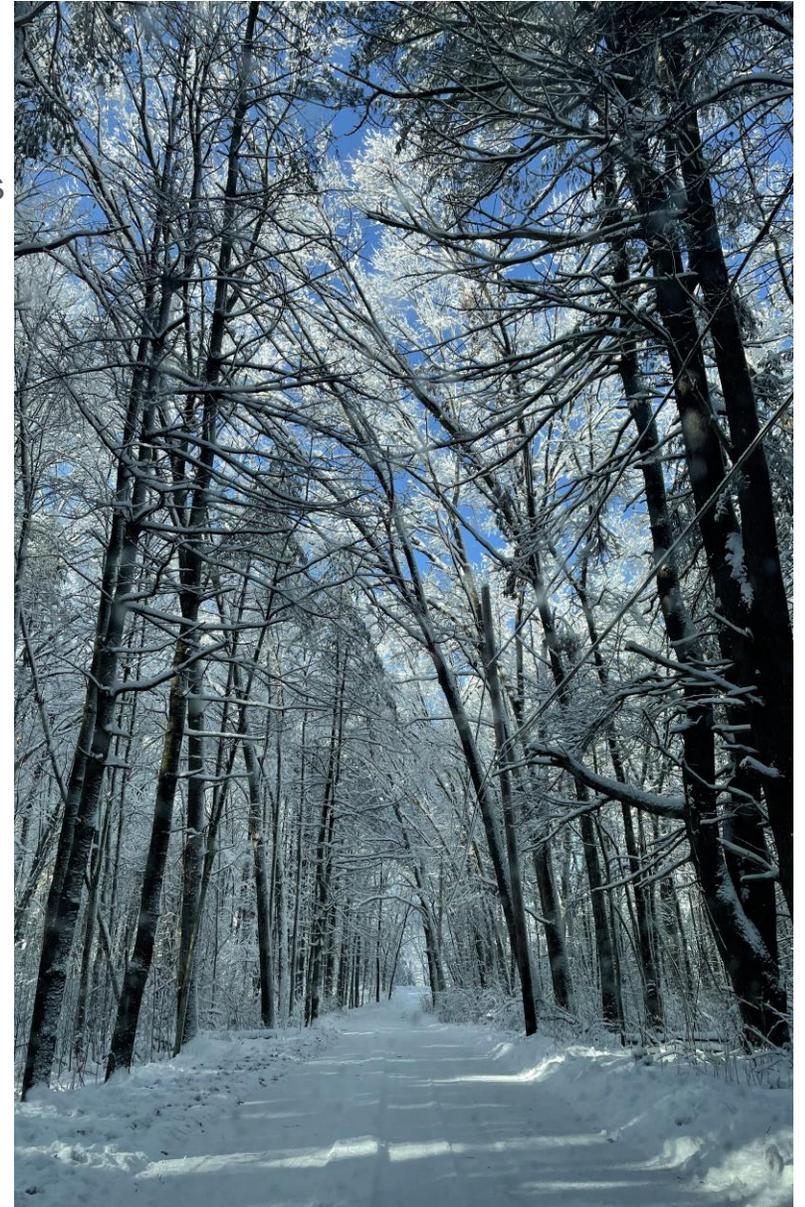
## PERMITS THROUGH THE BOARD OF HEALTH

- Body Art
- Food Establishments
- Temporary Food Permit
- Recreational Camps
- Public Swimming Pools
- Tanning
- Tobacco Sales
- Potable and Nonpotable wells
- Keeping of Animals (other than dogs & cats)
- Septic Systems

## LICENSES THROUGH THE SELECT BOARD

Contact the Town Manager's office regarding applications and appointments for any of the licenses listed.

- Alcohol Licenses
- Common Victualer Licenses
- Licenses to operate new Car Dealerships
- Licenses used vehicle sales to automotive/autobody
- Automatic Amusement Devices
- Flammable (Licenses through Select Board, permits through WFD)
- Entertainment
- Taxicab
- Hawk & Peddle
- Secondhand dealer / Junk dealer
- Christmas tree sales
- Earth Removal Permits
- Operation of a Billiard Room
- Appointment of Public Weighers
- Appointment of Constable



# THE DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING & CONSERVATION

## SIGNS

- Signs must be reviewed by both the Building Department and the Planning & Conservation Department. Sign allowances and requirements are included in the Zoning Bylaw under Section 6.3. Special Permits may be granted by the Planning Board for certain signs that do not comply with the Zoning Bylaw.

## WETLAND RESOURCE AREAS

- Changes to the project site may also require review and approval from the Conservation Commission, depending on how far the proposed work is from a wetland resource area. Contact the Planning & Conservation Department for more information.

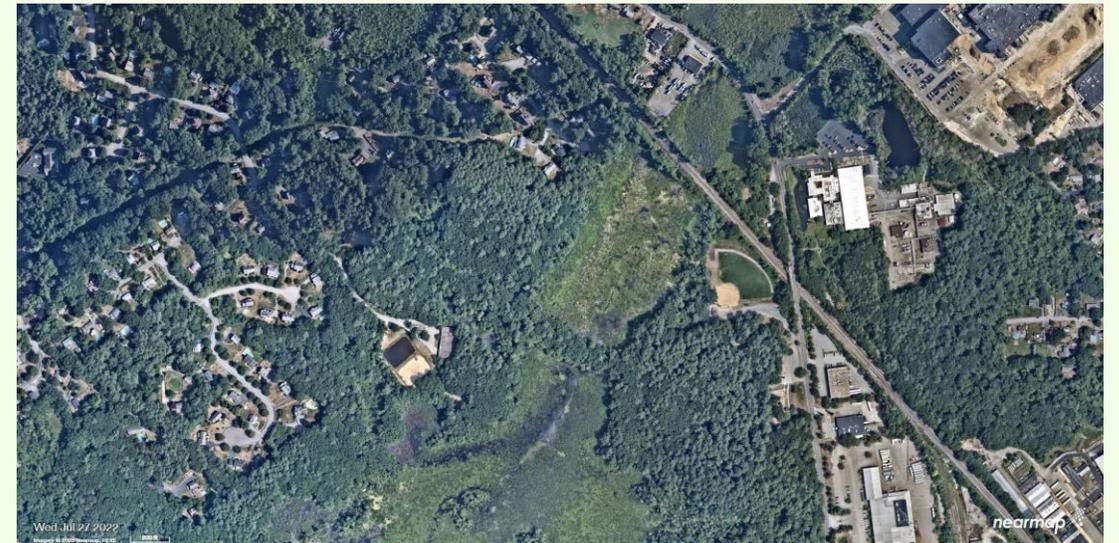
## EXTERIOR CHANGES

- If you are changing the use of the building or proposing exterior changes to the building or the site (parking, landscaping, etc.), the site plan must be reviewed and approved by the Wilmington Planning Board. Planning Board applications may be downloaded [here](#).

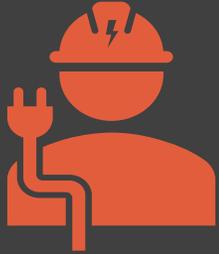
When you reach this part of the process, call the Department of Planning & Conservation to get a better understanding on the review process and if a filing is needed.

978-658-8238 or visit the website [here](#).

**Fees are typically included in filing processes.**



## OTHER DEPARTMENTS THAT MAY BE INVOLVED ARE...



### DPW/Engineering

The Department of Public Works (DPW) issues Street Opening Permits for any work within a Right of Way, including utility work in streets. DPW also reviews all utility connections (drainage, water, and sewer).

Street Opening Permits for non-emergency purposes are only issued between April 15 and November 15. The Engineering Division will inspect any site work associated with your project.



### Fire Department

The Wilmington Fire Department will also take part in the review process if your business requires any physical changes to the building.

The Fire Department will review your plans and building permits for code compliance.

The Fire Department also reviews the following: changes in hazards, change in occupancy/use classifications, and changes in storage or other conditions that may affect fire protection.

For more information or to contact the WFD, visit their [webpage](#).

# THINGS TO CONSIDER

ADDITIONAL THINGS THAT MAY APPLY TO YOU AND YOUR  
BUSINESS



- Each type of use has specific parking requirements for the site. The parking requirement is listed in the Wilmington Zoning Bylaw under section 6.4. If you need to request a change in use, the parking requirement may change. Contact the Building Inspector regarding the parking requirement for your specific use (even if you are a tenant in a building). The Planning & Conservation Department is available to discuss the site plan with you during the planning process if needed.
- Boards and Commissions meet once or twice a month to review and approve permits and license applications. Permitting could take a few months depending on the scope of the project and the type of approvals needed, so be sure to start the process as early as feasible. A [full schedule](#) of the Town Board and Commission meetings can be accessed on the Town's website.
- Most of Wilmington is not connected to a sewer system and instead utilizes on-site septic systems for wastewater. Requirements for system size and design will vary with business type. Contact the Board of Health to review plans early on in your planning process.
- There are various uses that require a Special Permit from the Planning Board, a list of applications can be found [here](#). Other uses in certain zoning districts may require a Special Permit from the Board of Appeals. Call the Building Department if you are unsure of your use.

## RESOURCES FOR BUSINESSES



- Massachusetts Office of Business Development ([MOBD](#)) assists in the relocation of businesses to Massachusetts as well as business expansion.
- Massachusetts Growth Capital Corporation's (MGCC) purpose is to create and preserve jobs at small businesses, inclusive of those owned by women, minorities, immigrants and veterans. They offer a "[Small Business Resource Guide](#)" on their website dedicated to resources for different types of businesses.
- The Wilmington/Tewksbury Chamber of Commerce is a non-profit, non-partisan organization of businesses and professionals. They support local businesses by providing corporate visibility via networking events, partnerships, advertising & marketing programs, and sponsorship opportunities. Find out more on their [website](#).
- It Starts Here [website](#)
- Updates on opportunities for local businesses can be found on the Wilmington Economic Development Committee [website](#).



Wilmington’s branding & marketing campaign was launched in March of 2023 with our tagline “it starts here” and the new [website](#), created for businesses to come together for a shared marketing campaign between the town and the business community.

The website includes links to download the logo, incorporate your business logo into the campaign assets, and a training video and pdf file to help generally guide businesses who may be interested.

Any business who is interested is encouraged to either visit the website or contact the Department of Planning & Conservation directly for more information.



# DIRECTORY

A list of all the department phone numbers that you may need to contact...

- Board of Health: 978-658-4298
- Building Inspector/Zoning Board: 978-658-4531
- Planning & Conservation: 978-658-8238
- Engineering Division: 978-658-4499
- Fire Department: 978-658-3346
- Department of Public Works (DPW): 978-658-4481
- Police Department: 978-658-5071
- Town Manager – Select Board: 978-658-3311
- Town Clerk: 978-658-2030



**Wilmington Town Hall**

121 Glen Road

Wilmington, MA 01887

978-658-3311