



## Business Support

Whether you are a start-up or expanding business, our Rural Oxford Economic Development team has expertise to help you on your path to success. At no charge to you, we offer a broad range of services and resources to help you grow in Rural Oxford.

Economic Development Services:

- Confidential site selection
- Assistance with permit and process navigation
- Facilitated pre-consultation with Planning and Building Officials
- Expansion and relocation support
- Marketing and promotion for your business
- Referrals to professional service providers
- Connection to community partners
- Networking opportunities

Learn more at [ruraloxford.ca](http://ruraloxford.ca)

## Have Questions? Need Confidential Assistance?

Connect with us. We're here to help you navigate the way.



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# Rural BUSINESS CHECKLIST

**Building a business can be exciting, but it can be hard to know where to begin. This information guide is intended to help get you thinking, asking questions, and connecting with local supports who can help you navigate the many aspects of starting or growing your business.**





## Location, Location, Location

There are many important considerations when selecting a location for a business. Whether you are thinking about acquiring property or using one you already own, make sure you do your research up front to make sure it is the right fit, and that you understand the requirements you may need to address as well as their implications.

### Things to Consider When Choosing a Business Location

When selecting a location for your business you'll need to have some information on the physical scale and the nature of the business you are proposing, such as:

- How much space you need to operate
- How much additional space you need for related aspects of your business (ex. offices, parking, warehousing, shipping and receiving, dry or cold storage)
- How many employees you will have
- How much traffic, including large trucks, will be coming/going from the business
- How much noise, dust, waste your business will generate
- The type and level of services your business may require (ex. water, sewer, 3-phase hydro, gas, fibre internet, etc.)

There are location specific and technical requirements for larger scale businesses to be aware of (ex. locating in settlement areas, servicing, etc).

Small home occupation businesses that are fully contained within an existing residence are generally permitted on most properties.

### Obtaining Applicable Municipal Permits and Approvals

Depending on the type of use proposed, the size or scale, and the location, local requirements may vary. It is important to understand which and how these requirements will apply in relation to your proposed business use and location to ensure that you obtain all required permits and approvals ahead of time.



## Know Your Zone

Your Area Municipal zoning by-law sets out the rules for all properties in the municipality, including the rules for:

- How a property can be used
- The size of a property
- Where buildings can go on a property
- How tall, what size and how many buildings can be built
- The number of parking spaces and where these spaces can go

Understanding the permissions on the zoning by-law and how they relate to your proposed business use may influence where you choose to locate and how you choose your next steps.



## Application Forms & Fees

It is important to take time upfront to learn about the process, application timelines, fees, and associated development charges. Area Municipality forms and fees can be accessed from your Area Municipal website or through the County of Oxford Planning and Development page under Available Resources by Municipality.



## When to Contact Your Area Municipality's Building Official

### You Need Site Plan Approval

Site plan is a more detailed process that helps ensure the details from the zoning by-law are appropriately designed and landscaped; the development has sufficient services and other on-site facilities; and the design elements are implemented so the development doesn't have negative impacts on neighbouring properties. Not every type of development requires site plan approval so it's best to reach out to see if site plan is required and how to get started.

### You Need a Building Permit

A building permit is required for new construction, additions, alterations, renovations, relocations, demolitions, and repairs or rehabilitation of a building or structure. Some minor repairs do not require a permit.

### You're Unsure if Your Project Meets All Municipal Requirements

If it looks like your project doesn't meet the Municipal zoning requirements, or doesn't meet some of the criteria, you may be able to pursue an application to ask permission from your Area Municipality to vary some of these requirements.



## Other Permits and Approvals

Additional supporting documentation may be required to support your proposal, this could include environmental matters, servicing, and other technical requirements.

### Do You Need a Permit from the Conservation Authority?

If the property you choose to locate your business includes or is close to an area that may be at risk of flooding (ex. streams and wetlands) you may need written permission or a formal permit from the local Conservation Authority. Oxford County is split between four different Conservation Authorities to reflect the four watersheds the County is a part of (Catfish Creek Conservation Authority, Grand River Conservation Authority, Long Point Region Conservation Authority, Upper Thames Region Conservation Authority).

### Does Your Property Have the Right Servicing?

You may need to contact service providers and qualified professionals to confirm if your current service connections can accommodate the increase in service use or to see if you will need to pay to upgrade your services. Common service providers may include:

- Hydro Services – Hydro One, Erie Thames Power
- Natural Gas Services – Enbridge
- Well and Septic Services – Qualified Professionals
- High-speed or Fibre Internet Providers
- Private Engineering Firms

### Will Running a Business Impact My Property Taxes?

Possibly. Property value and taxation changes may occur and will be dependent on the type and extent of the activity on a property as categorized by the Municipal Property Assessment Corporation (MPAC). Adding additional buildings or uses to a property may increase the value of the property. It also depends on what else is on the property and where it is located. Any subsequent increase to property taxes would be phased in through MPAC. More information can be found at [mpac.ca](http://mpac.ca) or by contacting your Area Municipality.