



A Guide for New Business



Welcome to the Neighborhood!!

MISSION STATEMENT

The City of Sycamore strives to provide professional assistance in planning, development, and construction by adopting and enforcing current codes and standards in a uniform and unbiased manner to establish and maintain a safe, healthy, and attractive community for all residents and business owners.

Getting Started: “What do I do first?”

Zoning Compliance

When a business is interested in opening in the City of Sycamore, the first step is to identify a location where the business use is permitted. A list of the permitted uses for each zoning classification can be found in the [Sycamore Unified Development Ordinance \(“UDO”\) Chapter 5, Article 5.3](#) a copy of which is available on the City’s website. You are also invited to call or stop by the Community Development Department where they will assist you in determining the zoning of the property and if the business would be permitted.

Ideally the use would be permitted in the zoning classification. In some cases, the proposed use may require a special use permit, which requires consideration by the Planning & Zoning Commission and approval by the City Council. The timeframe for this process varies and the appearance fee is \$300.00.

Please contact the Community Development Department for additional information.



The process ... “Do I have all the permits?”

Building Permits and Compliance Certificate

If the business owner wishes to remodel the proposed space, building permits may be required. You are invited to contact the Community Development Department staff early in your design process to gain input on the code compliance of your plans.

Once construction is complete, inspections will be scheduled based on the type of work completed. Some businesses may require an inspection by the Health Department. Every Business is required to comply with the Fats, Oils and Grease Discharge Policy as stated in the City’s Municipal Code.

When no remodeling or construction is required the business owner may simply request a Fire-Life Safety Inspection for a new business occupancy with the Community Development Department. The below Inspection Quick List will be a few items we will inspect.

Inspection Quick List

- Electric - Switches and outlets must be properly installed and in good working order. GFCI receptacles must be installed within 6 feet of any tub or basin.
- Plumbing – The number and type of plumbing fixtures shall be adequate for the intended use. Fixtures shall be in good working order, hot/tempered and cold water shall be provided as required.
- Doors- Every door and its hardware shall be maintained in good condition. Door locks must be in good repair and capable of locking the door.
- Sanitation - Interior areas shall be maintained in a safe, clean, and sanitary condition. All areas shall be free from insect and rodent infestations and from any accumulation of refuse including storage of junk, boxes, excessive papers, parts, machinery, or any & all equipment not in an operable condition.
- Windows - Glass must be free of cracks or holes, and each operating window must have screens with no rips or tears.
- Interior Surfaces - Floors, walls, including windows and doors, ceilings, and other interior surfaces shall be maintained in good, clean, and sanitary condition.
- Peeling paint, cracked or missing tiles, decayed wood, and other defective surface conditions shall be eliminated.
- Aisles, exit doors and hallways leading to them must always remain clear from obstruction.

- Exit doors must be marked with an illuminated exit sign.
- Exit lights and Emergency lighting must operate when normal electrical power is shutdown.
- Fire extinguishers must be mounted and certified annually by a licensed and certified company.
- A Knox Box shall be installed for every business with a key inside it to open the business by the Fire Department.

Selecting Signage

Permanent Signage: [A permit](#) is required prior to erecting, installing, painting, or altering a permanent sign. In Sycamore, signs that are permitted for businesses are generally wall signs, window signs, or awning signs, although other types may also be used. The size, type, and other design restrictions such as lighting can be found in the Sycamore [UDO Chapter 6, Article 6.8](#), on the City's website.

Temporary Signage: Temporary on-premises commercial signs that are otherwise prohibited may be permitted under UDO 6.8.6(T) for the purpose of promoting commercial activities, sales events, grand openings, etc. and must be registered for approval with the Community Development Department a minimum of seven (7) days prior to the date of the event. Registration can be made on the city's website at www.cityofsycamore.com "How Do I?" – "Apply For" – "Commercial Promotion-Temporary Sign."

Please contact the Community Development Department for additional information.

Downtown & Gateway Improvement Program

The City of Sycamore aims to create and sustain the vibrant and welcoming appearance of its downtown business district and gateway areas, including the preservation of its historic architecture and charm. The [Downtown & Gateway Improvement Program](#) is a matching grant program administered by the City of Sycamore to encourage the rehabilitation and restoration of the exterior of buildings in these areas. Please visit the Program's page on the City's website for detailed information and to apply or contact the City at (815) 895-6746.

IMPORTANT NUMBERS

City Hall	(815) 895-4853
Community Development Dept.	(815) 895-4434
Police Dept.	(815) 895-3435
Fire Dept.	(815) 895-4514
Public Works Dept.	(815) 895-3545
Chamber of Commerce	(815) 895-3456
DeKalb County Health Dept.	(815) 758-6673