



# YORK COUNTY SMALL BUSINESS DIGITAL TOOLKIT







# CONGRATULATIONS!

*Congratulations* on taking this important step toward bringing your business vision to life! We're grateful you've chosen York County as the home for your venture.

We are **FOCUSED** on moving our region **FORWARD** with innovative ideas towards a **FUTURE** where business can prosper. This digital toolkit is crafted to guide you each step of the way, equipping you with valuable insights, and resources essential for your business's growth.

Whether you need help with start-up guidance or strategies for expansion in this area, consider us your trusted partner and advocate. As you prepare to open doors, we're eager to join you on your journey.

## HOW TO USE THIS DIGITAL TOOLKIT

- Click on any underlined text to access links with further information.
- Watch for these icons throughout the toolkit that point out key tips to save you time and costs.



*Help!*

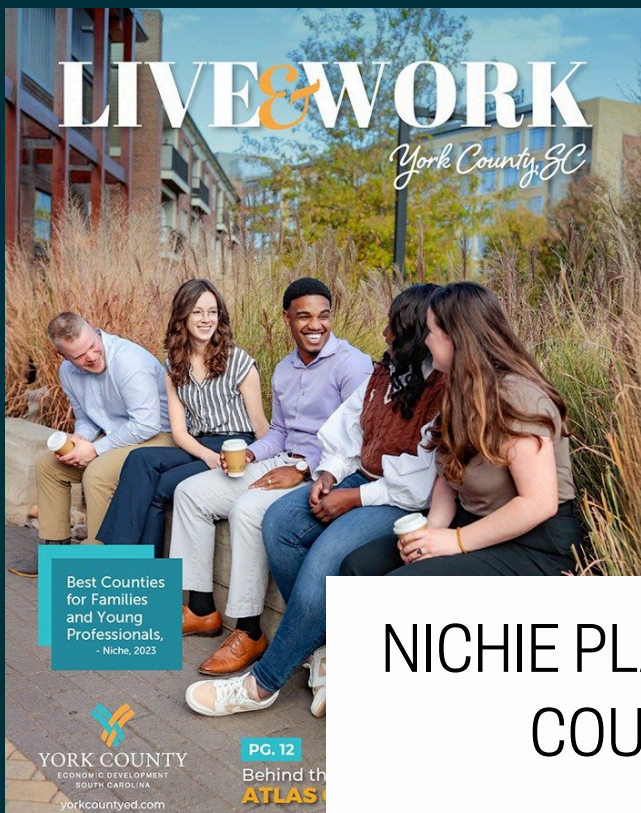
- This digital guide also functions as a checklist if you choose to print it.

# WHY OPEN A BUSINESS IN YORK COUNTY?



## South Carolina Ranks No.3 Nationwide as America's Best State for Growing Businesses, with a Strong Expanding Economy

[Continue reading here](#)

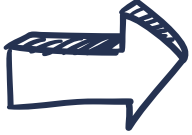


## NICHIE PLACES YORK COUNTY 3RD BEST COUNTY IN SOUTH CAROLINA

[Continue reading here.](#)



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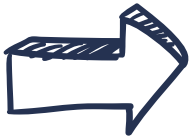
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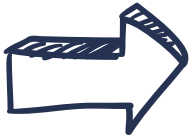
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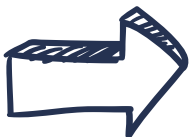
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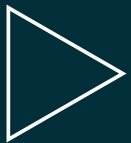
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# I WANT TO START A BUSINESS



## Business Startup Checklist

A step-by-step list that helps entrepreneurs organize and complete essential tasks when starting a business.



## Step By Step To Creating A Business

An in-depth guide for starting a business that provides a clear roadmap detailed for the beginning phases.



## Location & Zoning

A careful selection process for your business's physical location that ensures compliance with local zoning laws and regulations.



## Small Business Tools & Tips

The establishment of key relationships with suppliers, clients, and partners, along with the strategic selection of utilities for your business.

# Business Startup Checklist

- ☐ **Plan Your Business**
- ☐ **Register Your Business**
- ☐ **Obtain Required Licenses and Permits**
- ☐ **Set Up Financial and Tax Accounts**
- ☐ **Secure Funding**
- ☐ **Market and Launch Your Business**



# Steps to Starting Your Business

## 1 Create Your Business Plan

- ☐ **Choose a Business Structure:** Decide on the structure of your business that best suits you and the businesses operations. See all structure options [here](#).
- ☐ **Research the Market:** Research market trends, industry competitors, customer needs, and your target audience. View research gathering methods [here](#).
- ☐ **Create a Business Plan:** Outline your business idea, target market, financial plan, marketing strategy, and operational structure. You can find the planning [here](#).

### QUICK TIPS

York County does not require a DBA filing but some banks or institutions do.

As a courtesy, York County's Clerk of Court will help meet this requirement by filing an [Assumed Name Certificate](#).

## 2 Register Your Business

- ☐ **Select a Business Name:** Make sure your business name is unique and not already registered. Check availability on [South Carolina's business database](#).
- ☐ **Register with the South Carolina Secretary of State:** For LLCs, corporations, and partnerships, register your business entity through [here](#).
- ☐ **File for a Federal EIN:** Obtain an Employer Identification Number (EIN) from the IRS for tax purposes to federally identify your business [here](#).

## 3 Obtain Required Licenses and Permits

- ☐ **Business License:** York County does not require a business license. If located or planning to provide services within a city or town, you will need to obtain a business license from each municipality.  
[Fort Mill](#)   [Rock Hill](#)   [Tega Cay](#)   [York](#)   [Clover](#)
- ☐ **Local Zoning Compliance:** Ensure your business location complies with York County zoning regulations. Map out your zoning location [here](#).

## 4

# Set Up Financial and Tax Accounts

- ☐ **Open a Business Bank Account (if needed):** How do you open a Business Checking Account? Contact any of our [local financial institutions](#) for help.
- ☐ **Register for South Carolina Taxes:** Register with the South Carolina Department of Revenue for applicable state taxes towards your business [here](#).

## 5

# Secure Funding

- ☐ **Explore Funding Options:** such as personal savings, bank loans, SBA loans, or willing investors. Learn more to clearly understand the total amount of funds needed.
- ☐ **Research Local and State Grants/Programs:** Be sure to explore available incentive-based grants for more opportunities [here](#).

## 6

# Market and Launch Your Business

- ☐ Host a launch event (ribbon cutting or grand opening) to establish your brand locally.
- ☐ Build an online presence with consistent branding on website, social media, and all digital assets.
- ☐ Advertise with local media, social media, or online advertising to promote your business. Learn Budget-Friendly Marketing Tips [here](#).
- ☐ Network locally by joining the Chamber to access resources, build partnerships, and enhance your business visibility. Explore the event calendar [here](#).
- ☐ Connect with York County's network of businesses using the [Chamber's directory](#).

### QUICK TIPS

Partnering with the York County Regional Chamber ensures access to key resources for long-term success and economic growth.



# Location & Zoning



To prevent redundant expenses and save time, follow these steps when purchasing/leasing property, contacting certified contractors, and acquiring equipment.

## Select your designated zoning jurisdiction (County or City)

- ☐ Ensure your business location complies with county or city/town zoning regulations. Map out your zoning location [here](#).
- ☐ Further your research on the property by conducting a Parcel Search [here](#).



Do not confuse York County with the City of York. Similarly, each jurisdiction has its own zoning regulations so be sure you know where you are before you call.



## Contact the Planning & Zoning Department for your appropriate zoning jurisdiction

We recommend that you provide the planning staff with thorough and transparent plans. Their expert guidance depends on your clear vision, as they will ask specific questions to help you navigate the necessary steps to achieve your ground breaking as swiftly as possible.

- [York County](#) ..... [\(803\)-909-7200](tel:(803)909-7200)
- [City of York](#) ..... [\(803\)-684-2341](tel:(803)684-2341)
- [City of Rock Hill](#) ..... [\(803\)-329-5590](tel:(803)329-5590)
- [City of Tega Cay](#) ..... [\(803\)-548-3153](tel:(803)548-3153)
- [Town of Fort Mill](#) ..... [\(803\)-547-2034](tel:(803)547-2034)
- [Town of Clover](#) ..... [\(803\)-222-9495](tel:(803)222-9495)

*Help!*

If you need assistance please contact the appropriate municipality for zoning and development questions.

# Small Business Tools & Tips

## The Small Business Development Center

- ☐ Sign up for strategic business counseling [here](#) to receive guidance on your current decisions and plan your business's next steps.

- ☐ Sign up for informational webinars on a variety of small business topics, the list and signup can be found [here](#).

*Help!*

### Downloadable Tools:

[Business Plan Template](#)

[Marketing Research Tools](#)

## York County Regional Chamber of Commerce

- ☐ Gain a voice in local and state policy decisions that impact your business, plus access to resources, training, and expert guidance to help you grow.
- ☐ Increase your brand's exposure through Chamber promotions, sponsorships, and referrals while positioning your business as a trusted part of the community.
- ☐ Build valuable relationships with local business leaders, potential customers, and community partners through networking events, ribbon cuttings, and member-exclusive opportunities.



The York County Regional Chamber has over 600+ businesses within their member directory, perfect for marketing your business!



# I WANT TO GROW MY BUSINESS



## Growing Your Small Business

Growing your small business involves expanding your customer base, increasing sales, and improving operational efficiency.



## Entities For Growth

Accelerate your business growth through these entities, partnerships, and networks.

# Steps to Growing Your Business

**Use these checkboxes to streamline your business growth and avoid wasting time and unnecessary expenses**

- ☐ Determine the target demographic of your consumer audience based on your industry.
- ☐ Take advantage of digital marketing opportunities for your business, especially Search Engine Optimization (SEO) - get started [here](#).
- ☐ Continue networking locally within York County to expand your business identity. The York County Regional Chamber is a great place to connect with other businesses.
- ☐ Use [SizeUp SC](#) to connect with potential customers and suppliers, helping you grow your business and expand into new geographic areas.

## Utilize Local Resources

- ☐ To gather the necessary funding for your businesses growth, take advantage of local funding. Find out more on [US Grant](#).
- ☐ Gain knowledgeable insight on how to further grow your business from professional consultations and strategic planners. Visit a consultant [here](#).
- ☐ Access a wide range of businesses available throughout York County. Find a directory of businesses on [YCRC's website](#).



# Organizations to Help You Grow

## York County Economic Development

- ☐ Research the local commercial real estate market for your business's next home.

[YCED Property Search \(best for large industrial/office properties\)](#)

[RHED Property Search \(includes links to smaller office, retail, commercial.\)](#)

- ☐ [Book a consultation](#) with EDC staff for general business assistance and insight on the economy.

- ☐ **Learn about potential programs** available through the EDC to support your business growth and future goals.

- ☐ **Join an industry e-newsletter** for helpful resources & modern insight.



QUICK  
TIPS

Ensure that your outside research is gathered from a validated and trusted source for your information.

Ask the service company of choice if they fully understand your goals.

## Department of Commerce: SizeUpSC

- ☐ Evaluate your business performance against industry competitors using [performance indicators for competitive benchmarking](#).

- ☐ [Determine the most effective geographic locations](#) for advertising based on your industry and the demographic profile of your target audience.

- ☐ [Identify and uncover potential customers, suppliers, and competitors](#) to expand your business into new geographic areas.

## South Carolina Small Business Development Center

- ☐ **Access free one-on-one mentoring** with experienced professionals who provide personalized guidance on business strategy, growth, and overcoming challenges.
- ☐ **Business planning support** mentors help develop your business plans, offering insights on structure, financial projections, and market analysis—key elements for securing funding or expanding operations.
- ☐ **Workshops and seminars** offer educational sessions on a variety of topics, such as marketing, finance, and legal considerations, providing you with the tools and knowledge needed to succeed.
- ☐ **Access to resources**, including tools and templates for business management, to help streamline operations, track performance, and manage finances effectively.
- ☐ **Networking opportunities** through events and workshops create chances for your business to connect with other entrepreneurs, potential partners, and local resources to foster growth.

## South Carolina SC.GOV

- ☐ Learn about state tax obligations (e.g., sales tax, income tax, employee withholdings) and how to register with the South Carolina Department of Revenue (SCDOR).
- ☐ Explore state-funded grants, loans, and tax incentives designed to help businesses expand or start up.
- ☐ Browse workforce development initiatives that offer training grants, subsidies, or tax credits for businesses that hire or train workers.
- ☐ Discover resources for small businesses seeking to do business with state agencies, including procurement opportunities and compliance information.

# I WANT TO RELOCATE MY BUSINESS



## Before You Buy

Evaluating key factors like the property's condition, location, market trends, and legal requirements ensures a smart purchase that aligns with your business goals.



## Buying Developed Property

Buying developed property for your small business involves selecting a location that meets your needs, ensuring it complies with zoning laws, and evaluating its potential for growth and profitability.



## Buying Undeveloped Property

Buying undeveloped property involves purchasing land that is not yet improved and requires planning and development to meet your business needs.



# Before You Buy Property



**WAIT!** Before signing a lease or purchasing a property, ensure that you've found a location that meets the appropriate zoning and land use requirements for your business that have been provided in this toolkit ([page 9](#)), and follow these steps.

- ☐ Before finalizing payments submit a Safety Permit application to have the property & land inspected before the purchase. Contact York County Planning and Development [permit services here](#).

- If the zoning and land use of your preferred location do not permit your type of business, ask about alternative options for the property or consider selecting another suitable location that fits your requirements.
- ☐

## Confirm that your business aligns with the correct zoning designation regulations

- ☐ A representative from the Planning and Zoning Department of your business location will help you identify areas within your preferred jurisdiction that are suitable for the type of business you wish to start.
- ☐ For help finding property- view a list of real estate [brokers here](#) or a list of commercial [brokerage/development firms](#).

*Help!*

Click on the name of where your business is located for zoning information



- [York County](#) (803)-909-7200
- [City of York](#) (803)-684-2341
- [City of Rock Hill](#) (803)-329-5590
- [City of Tega Cay](#) (803)-548-3153
- [Town of Fort Mill](#) (803)-547-2034
- [Town of Clover](#) (803)-222-9495

# Buying Developed Property



## Ensure that the property is zoned for your businesses intended use

- If the previous use differs from your new intended use for the space, you will need to apply for a “change of use” which will require a safety inspection from [York County Building Services](#) - Permit center and the jurisdiction’s Fire Marshall.
- After approval, the inspector assigned to your property will reach out via phone to plan a first inspection. Be prepared to accept any changes or recommendations to your property.



## Assess whether any alterations/modifications are required to the existing space

- During inspection your Safety Inspector will advise and recommend licensed general contractors, architects, or engineers if involvement is needed within your property.
- Alterations can include electrical, mechanical, plumbing, HVAC, alarm systems, and/or exterior additions.



## Should you involve [YC Environmental Health](#) or [SC Department of Environmental Services](#) ?

- Yes - if you are considering reliance of a well or septic tank on property.
- Yes - if you plan to operate food service, mobile food unit, childcare, nursing home, tattoo provider, or public swimming pool.



If your plans align with those listed above, you **must** contact [York County Environmental Health](#). Avoidance of this step can result in lengthy delays to project completion.

# Buying Undeveloped Property

## 1. Conduct a preliminary assessment of the property with a civil engineer

- ☐ Is the site flat or hilly?
- ☐ Are there streams or wetlands?
- ☐ Is there adequate site access?
- ☐ Can my operations fit on the site?



Be sure to prepare a preliminary sketch or have a design professional do so.

## 2. Site work can dramatically affect the cost to develop a piece of property

- ☐ A preliminary grading plan by a contractor or design professional may be needed to estimate the amount of earthwork needed.
- ☐ Will retaining walls be needed?
- ☐ If a storm water control measure (i.e. pond) is required, what is the estimated size and cost to construct and maintain?

## 3. Confirm what will be required for design and permitting

- ☐ It's advisable to have a pre-application meeting with **the Planning and Development Department** for your desired zoning jurisdiction prior to developing construction drawings.
- ☐ If the project includes a commercial building, [the site must meet commercial building code.](#)
- ☐ Consult with a professional surveyor for a design level survey. A full set of construction drawings prepared by design professionals will be required.

## 4. Be aware of the possible permitting requirements

- ☐ [Zoning permits in your desired jurisdiction.](#)
- ☐ [Storm Water permit in your desired jurisdiction.](#)
- ☐ [Water and Sewer Extension permits.](#)
- ☐ [SCDOT Driveway permit.](#)



# YORK COUNTY RESOURCE GUIDE



## **Educational & Academic Resources**

Academic organizations that can help start, grow, and maintain your business, while also providing and teaching the future talent pool for your workforce.



## **Entity & Organization Resources**

Organizations that promote the wellbeing and growth of York County's business climate, dedicated to helping your small business thrive at every step of the entrepreneurial process.

# EDUCATIONAL/ACADEMIC RESOURCES

## Clinton College

Clinton College offers undergraduate programs in business, liberal arts, and social sciences, equipping students with practical skills in areas like management and marketing. The College supports small businesses in York County by providing a skilled workforce of students while also fostering entrepreneurship through community partnerships and service-learning projects.



[\(803\) 327-7402](tel:(803)327-7402)



[1029 Crawford Rd, Rock Hill](#)

## York Technical College

York Technical College offers a diverse talent pool across a wide range of academic and trade disciplines. Through specialized programs and hands-on training, York Tech meets local business needs and supports small businesses with workforce development, apprenticeships, and entrepreneurial training. Its focus on practical skills makes it a unique resource for business growth in York County.



[\(803\)-327-8000](tel:(803)327-8000)



[452 Anderson Rd S, Rock Hill](#)

## Winthrop University

Winthrop University supports small businesses in York County through resources, expertise, and networking. With advanced academic programs, research, and community partnerships, Winthrop fosters entrepreneurship and workforce development. Small business owners have the opportunity to collaborate with a strategic academic institution York County has to offer.



[\(803\)-323-2211](tel:(803)323-2211)



[701 Oakland Avenue Rock Hill](#)

# ENTITY/ORGANIZATION RESOURCES

## York County Regional Chamber

YCRC is the connection between your business and our diverse, growing community. The Chamber supports businesses through Advocacy, Leadership Development, Member Engagement, and Workforce & Talent Development –providing resources, connections, and opportunities to help you capitalize on our region’s strengths.



[\(803\)-324-7500](tel:(803)-324-7500)



[info@yorkcountychamber.com](mailto:info@yorkcountychamber.com)



[116 E Main St, Rock Hill, SC 29730](#)

## York County Economic Development

York County Economic Development (YCED) is the lead organization responsible for recruiting businesses, retaining and growing existing firms, and promoting and marketing York County. YCED also assists in strategic initiatives across York County that are focused on product development, workforce development, infrastructure improvements and quality of life.



[\(803\)-802-4300](tel:(803)-802-4300)



[info@yorkcountyed.com](mailto:info@yorkcountyed.com)



[1830 2nd Baxter Xing, Fort Mill, SC 29708](#)

## Small Business Development Center

The SC SBDC advances South Carolina’s economic development by providing entrepreneurs throughout the state with no-fee consulting, affordable training programs and access to an array of resources that can help them expand or create a thriving business.



[\(803\)-323-2283](tel:(803)-323-2283)



[scsbdc@sc.edu](mailto:scsbdc@sc.edu)



[118 Thurmond Building - Winthrop University](#)

## York County Planning and Development

The South Carolina York County Planning and Development Center supports community growth by providing resources for zoning, land use, and economic development. They assist businesses and developers with planning, permitting, and navigating local regulations. As a key local resource, they offer guidance, services, and programs to promote sustainable development and business success in York County.



[\(803\) 909-7200](tel:(803)909-7200)



[jonathan.buono@yorkcounty.gov](mailto:jonathan.buono@yorkcounty.gov)



[18 W Liberty St, York, SC 29745](#)

## Rock Hill Economic Development

The Rock Hill Economic Development Corporation (RHEDC) is a non-profit organization committed to representing the business, educational, and community interests of the city while promoting jobs and supporting growth. The principal objective of the Corporation is to benefit the City economically by fostering increased employment opportunities and by expansion of business and industry.



[803-329-7090](tel:803-329-7090)



[rhedc@cityofrockhill.com](mailto:rhedc@cityofrockhill.com)



[155 Johnston St, Rock Hill, SC 29730](#)

## South Carolina SC.GOV

SC.GOV supports small businesses in South Carolina by providing essential resources, information, and tools to navigate state regulations. Through their website, businesses can access licensing, tax, and permit information, along with resources for starting, growing, and managing a business.



[\(803\)-771-0131](tel:(803)-771-0131)



[sc.gov](http://sc.gov)



[1100 Gervais St, Columbia, SC 29201](#)



## Black Economic Leadership League (B.E.L.L.)

BELL focuses on business development & innovation, promoting economic independence, and creating opportunities for Black professionals. Their initiatives aim to increase access to economic resources, and ensure the success of Black-owned businesses in the region.



(276)-318-3660



info@bellofrochhill



572 John Ross Parkway, Ste. 107

## York County Gravity Center

The goal of the Gravity Center is to bring entrepreneurial resources together under one roof. The Center's primary focus is to support mentorship, entrepreneurship, and business startups by offering business incubation.



(805)-320-9342



Contact Gracity Center



153 S Oakland Ave

# Frequently Asked Questions



When considering hiring a professional, make sure to do your own independent research and exercise due diligence prior to enlisting their services.

- ☐ **What type of insurance do I need?**  
Access a list of local agencies [here](#).
- ☐ **Will you hire employees or independent contractors?**  
Access a list of local accountants [here](#) to provide you with guidance.
- ☐ **How do I find employees to hire?**  
Look into [the Chamber's Talent & Workforce Development programs](#).
- ☐ **How do I set up for Business Personal Property Tax?**  
Find out [here](#).
- ☐ **How do I obtain a Beer & Wine License - Alcohol Beverage Control Permit?**  
Information can be found [here](#).
- ☐ **How do I open a Business Checking Account?** Contact any of our [local financial institutions](#) for help.
- ☐ **How do I obtain funding?**  
There are local grants or incentives available for you.
  - [South Carolina Councils of Governments \(SC COGs\)](#)

## QUICK TIPS

Whenever possible, consider supporting other local businesses.

Your patronage strengthens the communities economy and business climate as a whole.



*Make It*  
**YORK COUNTY**

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