Ashtabula Downtown Development Association

The ADDA's vision is to lead, assist, and support activities to enhance the appearance and economic growth of the downtown Ashtabula area. Working closely with the City of Ashtabula, the Ashtabula Area Chamber of Commerce, area schools and other civic organizations, the ADDA is dedicated to improving the quality of life in the city of Ashtabula and surrounding areas.

Visit their website at www.downtownashtabula.com

Ashtabula County District Library

The county's only full-service, professionally-managed library offers online and in-person reference and grant-writing services to area businesses and non-profit organizations. Its service-outlets include the Ashtabula Public Library, the Geneva Public Library, and the County Bookmobile. Phone them at 440-997-9341.

Visit their website at www.acdl.info

Ashtabula Area Chamber of Commerce.

This group of area businesses works to create a supportive environment to encourage entrepreneurship, economic development, and business advocacy. Call 440-998-6998.

Visit their website at www.ashtabulachamber.net

Lift Bridge Community Association / Harbor Business District

The Lift Bridge Community Association is a merchant association for businesses in the Harbor Historical Business District. Its mission is to promote and develop the historic Ashtabula Harbor as a major regional destination for tourism, recreation, and entertainment. (As a designated historical district, some extra limitations and considerations apply to businesses in this area. Call the City Manager's Office for details.)

P.O. Box 3111, Ashtabula, OH 44005-3111

shelly@liftbridgecommunityassociation.com

City of Ashtabula

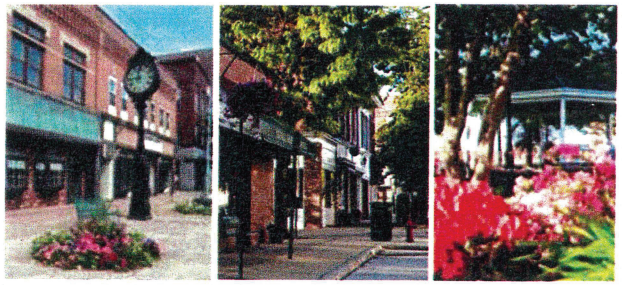
The City of Ashtabula has many departments and utilities available to assist residents and businesses. Most offices are in the Municipal Building, 4717 Main Avenue, Ashtabula, Ohio, 44004. Some offices that can benefit businesses are:

- Sanitation: 440-993-8101
- Engineering Department: 440-992-7118
- Economic Development: 440-992-7154
- City Manager's Office: 440-992-7103
- Income Tax: 440-992-7104
- Visit their website at www.cityofashtabula.com

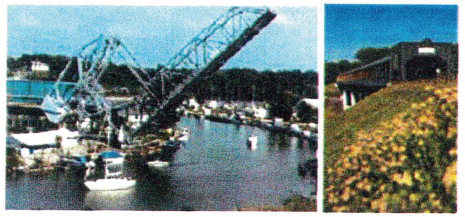
This information is subject to change.
Please contact the appropriate department or organization to obtain the most up-to-date instructions or advice.

Updated and Designed by ADDA and ACDL 02/13/2013

Start Growing Your Business In Our Community



The City of Ashtabula Small Business Start-up Guide



Brought to you by:
Ashtabula Downtown Development Association
Ashtabula County District Library

GETTING YOUR BUSINESS STARTED

The purpose of this brochure is to provide a guide to entrepreneurs who are opening a new business, expanding an established business, or relocating an existing business in the City of Ashtabula! The Ashtabula Downtown Development Association and other local associations are committed to retaining businesses and to attracting new businesses to our community. To make your transition as smooth as possible, this information will assist you in the process of developing your business and of getting approval to operate in our city.

OPENING A NEW BUSINESS

Getting started with a small business can be a challenge filled with many obstacles. Resources from these governmental, non-profit, and commercial services can help you get organized and to stay focused:

Small Business Development Center (SBDC) (www.ohiosbdc.org). Local office (with limited hours) is at 4536 Main Avenue, Ashtabula, Ohio 44004, 440-992-6162.
Small Business Administration (www.sba.gov)
SCORE (www.score.org) - Mentorship by other entrepreneurs and retired executives.
Start-up Nation (www.startupnation.com)
Occupational Outlook Handbook (www.bls.gov/ooh)

Call the Ashtabula County District Library at (440) 997-9341 for books & resources to help small businesses get started. Or visit at 335 West 44th Street, Ashtabula, Ohio, 44004. Available 24-hours at www.acdl.info.

LICENSING & TAXES

Many businesses operating in Ashtabula County are required to have a vendor's license, in addition to other possible licensing. Contact the Ashtabula County Auditor at 440-576-3783 in Jefferson, Ohio, or visit their website at (www.ashtabulacountyauditor.org/licensing.html).

The City Income Tax Department (440-992-7104) is responsible for collecting income tax on individuals and businesses, and can provide information about employee payroll tax deductions.

Call the City Manager's Office for more details about the following programs:

- **Commercial Tax Abatement Program:** Provides up to 75% tax abatement on improvements made to a building or land for a period of 10 years. Approval must be obtained before any improvement is started. Other limitations/restrictions apply—approx. 6-months to process.
- **Revolving Loan Fund (RLF)**: When a bank finances part of your project, but not the complete amount, the RLF could provide a low-interest loan as gap financing for the project. Other limitations/restrictions apply.

For information on State taxation, visit the Ohio Department of Taxation online at www.tax.ohio.gov.

PERMITS & CERTIFICATES

Before starting any business in the city, you need to contact the City's Engineering Department regarding rules for zoning, signage, and other issues. Prior to sale or lease, it is important to learn if your type of business is a permitted-use for the property's zoning. It may be possible to obtain a conditional-use permit or to look into rezoning. Either will require a review by the Planning Commission with a $100 non-refundable fee.

If your project involves work on any type of physical structure, you should contact a commercial architect and a registered builder prior to commencing work. A list of approved contractors is available at the City's Engineering office.

Typical fees associated with a construction or renovation project revolve around permits, plan/blueprint review, and inspections. Permits are required for work projects such as:

DEMOLITION OF A STRUCTURE
NEW CONSTRUCTION
STRUCTURAL CHANGES
REMODELING WORK
ELECTRICAL CHANGES
PLUMBING OR SEWER WORK
CHANGE OF USE
SIGNAGE INSTALLATION OR CHANGES
AWNING OR CANOPY INSTALLATION
PARKING LOT RESURFACING
EXCAVATION WORK
HVAC INSTALLATION
WATER HEATER REPLACEMENTS

Blueprints may need to be submitted to both the County's and the City's Engineering Departments.

Contact the Ashtabula County Engineer's Office in Jefferson at 440-576-3707. The Ashtabula City Engineering Department may be reached by phone at 440-992-7118.

UTILITIES & SERVICES

The following utilities and companies provide commercial service to the Ashtabula area. Most utilities will require the business name, owner's name, service address, telephone number, and a Tax ID Number (TIN).

- **Electric:** The Illuminating Company, 800-589-3101, M-F 8:00 AM – 6:00 PM. If there was prior service at the address, provide the meter number. A deposit is based on the applicant's information.
- **Natural Gas:** Dominion East Ohio Gas, 800-362-7557. Commercial accounts pay a three-installment deposit based on the service location. After 24 months of no missed payments, the deposit is returned via an account credit or refund check.
- **Water:** Aqua America, 1-877-987-2782.
- **Telephone / Internet:** Windstream, 800-843-9214. Technician runs the telephone line to the outside of the building. Inside service is an additional cost based on the work provided.
- **Sewer/Trash Service:** City of Ashtabula Sanitation Department, 440-993- 8101. Provides commercial trash container service and pick up.
- **Cable Television / Internet:** Time Warner Cable/Commercial Service, 877-772-2253.
- **Sewer tap-in fee:** A tap-in fee is charged for new construction or building change of use and is based on the type of business. Contact the City Engineering Department at 440-992-7118.