

Getting Started

A guide to opening
your new business in
Uptown Shelby

Resources
Programs
Tips



Uptown Shelby Association, Inc.
211 South Trade Street
Shelby, North Carolina 28150
Phone: 704.484.3100
Web: www.uptownshelby.org and on facebook.



Notes

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Resources for Business

Uptown Shelby Association
211 South Trade Street, Shelby, NC 28150
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Web: www.uptownshelby.org and on facebook

Small Business Center of Cleveland Community College
Phone: 704.484.4146
Web: www.clevelandcommunitycollege.edu

Cleveland County Economic Development Partnership
Phone: 704.487.8521 Web: www.ccedp.com

City of Shelby – Planning Services
(Building Inspections & Permits)
315 South Lafayette Street, Shelby, NC 28150
Phone: 704..484.6805

City of Shelby – Shelby Utilities
Phone: 704.484.6840 Web: www.cityofshelby.com

Cleveland County Chamber of Commerce
Phone: 704.487.8521 Web: www.clevelandchamber.org

Cleveland County Cooperative Extension Service
Phone: 704.482.4365

North Carolina Secretary of State
Phone: 919.807.2225 Web: www.secstate.state.nc.us

North Carolina Department of Commerce
– Starting Your Business
Phone: 1.800.228.8443
Web: www.nccommerce.com/en/BusinessServices/

NC Business License Information Center
Phone: 1.800.228.8443 or 919.715.2864

Getting Started Your New Business in Uptown Shelby

Whether you are planning your first business or looking to expand an existing operation, Uptown Shelby is a great place to do business.

The Uptown Shelby Association, Inc. is a strong resource for local businesses in the historic Uptown commercial district at the heart of Shelby, a vibrant and attractive city of 20,000 located just 40 miles west of Uptown Charlotte. We're also about an hour away from Asheville and Greenville/Spartanburg, SC a great market for retail, restaurants, professional firms and personal service businesses.

A check-list to get started:

- Write the business plan
- Check on business type with attorney or financial advisor
- File with the NC Secretary of State (if necessary)
- Arrange financing
- Contact Uptown Shelby Association
- Secure location in Uptown
- Arrange permits with City of Shelby
- Get connected with Shelby Utilities

The Market

Uptown Shelby is an historic business district that is at the center of the city of Shelby, and is roughly at the heart of the population of Cleveland County. Attractive live oak trees provide shade for wide sidewalks that accommodate sidewalk dining in a National Register Historic District.

The district is recognized by The City of Shelby and centers on the historic Court Square, extending about three blocks in each direction. A map of the district and its boundaries is available upon request.

Within or immediately adjacent to Uptown Shelby businesses will find that there is a concentration of government offices, banks and financial services firms, architects, law firms, marketing agencies, day care centers, churches, retailers and restaurants. At the end of 2010 we estimate that approximately 1,000 employees come to work in Uptown Shelby each day.

The population of Shelby itself is roughly 20,000 residents, judging from new census reports available at the conclusion of 2010. Cleveland County has a population of nearly 99,000 citizens. According to the Comprehensive Economic Development Study updated in 2010, the primary economic drivers for Cleveland County are:

- Local government (including education)
- Warehousing and distribution
- Healthcare
- Advanced manufacturing
- Agriculture and farming

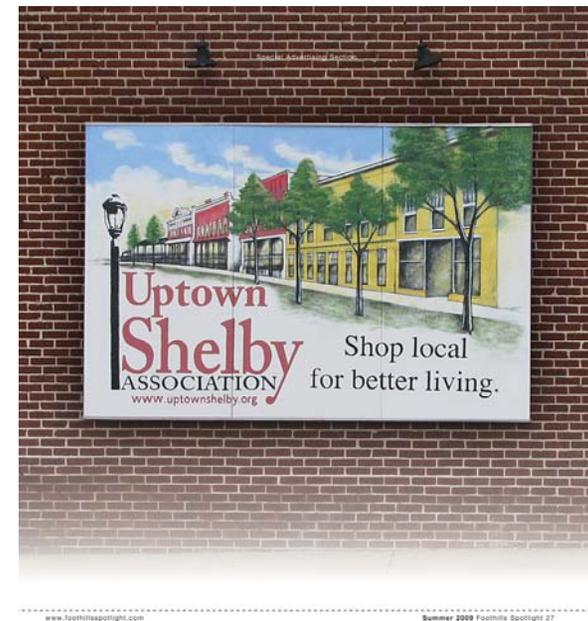
Emerging sectors include tourism and data center enterprises, with important implications for all businesses operating within Uptown Shelby.

Within a 50 mile radius buffer zone around Shelby is a broader market of 3,421,010 citizens, and some of our businesses are successful in developing customers from this area. We encourage retailers and hospitality businesses to become regional destinations as part of our efforts to differentiate Uptown Shelby and its advantages.

Special Events and Festivals

The Uptown Shelby Association stages special events, concerts, festivals and other gatherings that attract attention and draw visitors to our district. Live outdoor concerts, the annual Christmas Parade, horse-drawn carriage rides, and children's events are just some of the events that we operate to bring people into Uptown Shelby. Some of these events are sponsored by area businesses and organizations.

Uptown Shelby Association also works with a small number of other organizations and events that share our emphasis on the Uptown district. We partner with Tour Cleveland County and the Cleveland County Arts Council to stage a sizeable arts, food and family festival in October, with Fall Festival, Livermush Expo and The Art of Sound. In the springtime we work with Arts on The Square, staged by Buffalo Creek Gallery. We have been a co-sponsor of the Foothills Famers Market for the past four years with markets on Court Square every Wednesday and Saturday morning.



Uptown Shelby Association Support for Local Business

Uptown Shelby Association, Inc. is a private non-profit that has been working to maintain and strengthen the Uptown business district since 1980. We are an accredited member of the national Main Street network that works to boost the vitality of historic downtowns and local business.

Promotion & Marketing

A major part of our work is the active promotion of Uptown Shelby as the heart of our community and the economic engine at its center.

Branding & Advertising the District

Uptown Shelby Association, working with key partners, developed its graphic identity and branding guidelines for marketing in 2007. The historic lamp post evokes the historic appearance of our streetscape and the red type is part of a family of logos in the City Center Master Plan.

The updated logo is part of our effort to define the Uptown Shelby district as historic but vibrant, with entertainment, food, retail, professional services, and a community gathering spot. We use local and regional outlets, in several media, to spread the image of Uptown Shelby and generally promote the district as a destination.

Cooperative Advertising

In addition to advertising the district as a destination, Uptown Shelby Association also works to leverage the combined buying power of our businesses with advertising and promotional activities that unite messages from several enterprises.

Open Banners

Uptown Shelby Association provides attractive banners to shops and restaurants to establish that each business is open and ready to do business.

Business Planning

Everyone talks about business plans, but too few businesses have a working plan to fall back on to help answer questions and guide them through change. We are big believers in writing a good business plan that needs to be updated once a year as part of an annual review of progress. Existing businesses can gain new direction and energy by working on a business plan to respond to a changing marketplace.

If you understand why, but may have questions about how to develop your business plan, there are some important resources to use. The Small Business Center at Cleveland Community College can be your best place to learn how to write your own plan. Low-cost seminars are available for one evening or several days, and it is an excellent way to develop a network of people who share your commitment to building a new business.

The Service Corps of Retired Executives (or SCORE) is a volunteer effort by some of the best executive talent in the nation, working under sponsorship by the U.S. Small Business Administration. There is a very good web site at www.score.org with a variety of resources for business owners, and a full suite of business plan and financial report templates that can get you started quickly at www.score.org/template_gallery.html#TOP.

Uptown Shelby Association is also prepared to help with business planning and to help you find other resources to answer questions and provide guidance. We have an informal network of people active in business and we work hard to keep information flowing to help independent business in our community.

Choosing Your Business Location

A famous business man once said that business success depended upon three factors: Location, Location, Location! It is still true, but every type of business has a different requirement.

Retail stores need foot traffic and convenient access in visible locations. Restaurants might need secure, lighted parking nearby as well as proximity to major employers. Professional firms need top grade offices and locations that are convenient, while personal service firms may need all of the above along with storage and work spaces. Whatever type of business you are looking to establish in Uptown Shelby, we can help you find the best location.

Uptown Shelby Association does not represent property owners as brokers, but we do maintain a database of properties that are available, as well as a listing on our internet site. This information is only as complete as provided to us by either property owners or their agents. We will provide information that you or your broker can use to find the right space to lease or purchase.

agreement with the owner. Uptown Shelby Association is not involved in parking management, but we do encourage business owners and their staff to park in areas that do not use parking spaces in front of their own or other businesses that can be used by customers and clients.

Businesses operating in the Central Business District will have different requirements for dedicated parking from other zoning districts. The underlying idea is that on-street and city-owned parking lots are available to absorb the additional parking that a new business brings to the district. That said, it is always a good point to ask in advance if the business you plan to locate in Uptown Shelby will face any requirements with regard to parking.

Garbage Services

When a new business is registered with Shelby Utilities for electrical, gas, water and waste disposal services, they will receive information on the pick up schedule and location where garbage should be placed. Wheeled bins are provided.

Fire Inspection

All businesses are subject to an initial Fire Inspection to ensure safe conditions are in place, as well as periodic inspections to maintain standards of safety. The Shelby Fire Department maintains an inspection office and can be contacted at 704.484.6418. Many of the safety issues will be covered in the building inspection process, but the fire inspection is required before a business may open to the public.

Sign Permits

Zoning ordinances do influence the types and sizes of business signs that can be used. The rules strive to make signs readable to both drivers and pedestrians, but ensure safety. In recent years rules have changed to permit hanging signs that allow more creativity and visual excitement. Check with the Community Development & Planning office for details.

Health Codes

Food service establishments may fall under regulation of either the local officers of the US Department of Agriculture or the Cleveland County Health Department for approval.

Alcohol Sales

North Carolina maintains strong control of licenses for the sale of alcoholic beverages through the Alcoholic Beverage Control commission in Raleigh. Local officers of the ABC and Alcoholic Law Enforcement agency will be involved in the process.

There are local ordinances that restrict the location of alcohol sales and the type of businesses that may serve alcohol. The best starting point is to describe the business and potential location to a staff member at the Community Development & Planning office first to be certain that a local permit is possible before going through the considerable time and effort of a state ABC license.

Parking

Most businesses in Uptown Shelby will offer customer parking on-street or in city owned lots located around the district. Some privately owned parking lots are available by rental or

Financial Resources

New business ideas are tested in many ways, but the single most important factor is the amount of financial capital that is available to start the business. The second point is the ability to generate profits. Here are a few resources to consider as you plan your new business in Uptown Shelby.

USA New Business Incentive

The New Business Incentive (also known as the Rental Assistance Grant) from Uptown Shelby Association provides a monthly payment that ranges from \$50 to \$200 a month. The level of payment is based upon the rent, location of the business, and is paid directly to the business owner.

The program requires a written business plan, along with a copy of the lease, to be submitted along with the application form. The Economic Development Committee of the USA board reviews the applications and determines the grant amount. The New Business Incentive application packet is available at the office of Uptown Shelby Association or by e-mail.

USA Façade Improvement Grant Program

Businesses often find that an outdated store front hinders growth. Uptown Shelby Association has had a program that makes modest grants to help finance improvements to windows, doors, exterior walls and lighting. The Design Committee of our board of directors works with property and business owners to enhance the historic character where possible and boost the attractiveness of the district. USA will reimburse the owner for 50% of their costs, up to an amount of \$2,500. Ask for a copy of the Façade Improvement Grant application packet.

State & Federal Programs

There are grant and loan programs available for small business that are ready to expand their operations. Programs exist under the North Carolina Rural Center, The Golden LEAF Foundation, The US Department of Agriculture—Rural Development, and the Small Business Technology Development Centers.

Each specializes in working with different types of enterprises and their programs can be very competitive. In general these funders would want to see business plans and draft program descriptions before inviting an entrepreneur to seek funds through a competitive proposal process. Ask Uptown Shelby Association for referral to information or contacts if you believe these programs might offer potential for your business.

SBA Lending Resources

Many banks have a dedicated SBA desk or team within their larger organization. Most banks can and do frequently participate in SBA guaranteed loans. The SBA specialist may have responsibilities for several localized markets, so it is important to ask for your bank's specialist and make an appointment to discuss how the bank handles SBA loans.

Financial Institutions

Banks, credit unions and other financial institutions can be very important sources for funding of your new business. Several of the major banks serving the area are located in Uptown Shelby. If you are new to the area Uptown Shelby Association can provide listings of business banking officers at all of the local institutions to help you get started.

Tax Credits

Property owners are encouraged to investigate whether improvements to their properties might qualify for significant tax credits to help reduce the ultimate cost of projects. As many buildings within Uptown Shelby are listed as contributing structures in the Central Shelby Historic District by the National Register of Historic Places, such properties are eligible for state and/or federal tax credits that can range from 20% to 40% of the project costs.

Each project must be cleared for participation by the State Historic Preservation Office for North Carolina, and preservation and construction measures must fall within the Standards of the Secretary of the Interior (Federal). While Uptown Shelby Association is not part of the approval process, we will help property owners begin the process.

Permits, Inspections & Codes

There are many good reasons to be sure that your business is legally sanctioned, inspected for the safety of your operations and promoting the safety and confidence of your customers. The general aim of government inspections and permits is to keep sound records for public safety, but they often help businesses avoid costly mistakes.

License

There are no requirements for a business license by the City of Shelby, but permits may apply in some cases. Contact the Office of Community Development and Planning for the City of Shelby with your questions.

If a formal license is required by state law, please initiate the licensing process early to avoid costly changes. The legal form of your business may have some impact on the need for licensing or registration, so legal advice could be valuable.

Change of Tenancy Zoning Permit

All new tenants or the landlord must secure a change of tenancy permit from the City of Shelby to ensure that new businesses meet the requirements of the zoning designation for the property. The brief review process will indicate if zoning variances are required for the business to operate. A permit fee applies.

Building Inspection

Changes to the internal and exterior features of a building will need to be approved by a Building Inspector from the City of Shelby. The inspection will cover a range of issues, but is primarily to ensure that the structure is sound and that basic systems comply to code. Contact Community Development & Planning at the City of Shelby. An inspection fee applies.