Steps for Opening Your Business:

1. STEP ONE - Starting the process:
   - Reach out to the knowledgeable staff at Downtown Lansing Inc. They can provide Market Study data to see if your business fits within the community’s identified needs.
   - Discuss available real estate for lease or purchase: (View available real estate at downtownlansing.org)
   - Identify funding needs and meet with appropriate funding sources (in coordination with the City, MEDC, LEAP Chamber, etc.)
   - Building Permits & Site Review: City of Lansing
   - Research appropriate licensing and permitting needs for your business
   - Zoning/Special Land Use
   - Architectural drawings and layout of facilities

2. STEP TWO – Planning the process:
   - Build out of appropriate spaces
   - Façade/Sign Grants
   - Sign Permits
   - Rental Assistance
   - Zoning
   - Inspections
   - Rental Registrations
   - County licensing and inspection authorities
   - Funding Secured: Business Loans, Budgeting for future investments, etc.
   - Create a Business & Marketing Plan (SBDC)
   - Personnel needs identified, interviewed, and secured
   - Accountant/Bookkeeper
   - Lawyer
   - Manage Your Digital Environment: IT, Hardware, Security, Merchant Services, etc.
   - Policy & Employee Manual
   - Budgeting for Future Investments

3. STEP THREE – Getting ready to open
   - Coordinate a Grand Opening, ribbon cuttings, press release, marketing, anniversaries and other celebrations (DLI, Chamber)
   - Execute marketing strategy
   - Secure licensing (City of Lansing, Ingham County)

4. STEP FOUR – Open for business & ongoing:
   - Yearly ongoing inspections and licensing
   - Marketing your business in the district & participating in downtown events/programs

Note: This is a brief informational tool to help you get started. For detailed information to get your business growing, contact the appropriate departments as listed on the next page.
Main Business Contacts:

Downtown Lansing Inc. is your main contact when starting a business in downtown Lansing!

Small Business Development Center (SBDC):
The Capital Area SBDC provides one-on-one counseling, training and research to assist small businesses, guiding you along the business development process, as well as connecting you with critical resources.
Laurie Lonsdorf
Phone: (517) 483-1921
lonsdorfl@lcc.edu

Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce:
Membership based organization dedicated to helping employers and businesses in the region grow through business education and networking, enhancing member visibility and advocacy.
Christine Zarkovich
Phone: (517) 853-6456
czarkovich@lansingchamber.o

Lansing Area Economic Partnership (LEAP):
An economic development organization that helps businesses of all sizes locate and expand in the Lansing, MI region, working with entrepreneurs, providing funding assistance and advocacy efforts.
Anum Mughal
Phone: (517) 702-3387 ext. 212
anum@purelansing.com

City of Lansing, Planning & Permitting Office:
The Lansing Planning Office manages development through effective planning and zoning practices. Contact their office to discuss any approvals needed before you open.
Brian McGrain
Phone: 517-483-4060
Brian.McGrain@lansingmi.gov

Ingham County Health Dept:
Providing inspections for food-based businesses as you build plan your interior and prepare to open. *All Food/Beverage based-businesses should contact the Ingham County Health Dept. before you start build-out to ensure you have all the proper equipment
Amy Thomas
Phone: (517) 887-4525
Cell: (517) 819-1056
AThomas@ingham.org

Fire Marshall:
Inspections prior to purchasing, leasing, or opening your business – especially when there is a change of use.
Michael Mackey
Phone (517) 483-4560
Mike.Mackey@lansingmi.gov