

**Sierra College/Western Nevada County Campus** at 250 Sierra College Drive in Grass Valley offers a full range of courses in business, management and computer education. Call 274-5300 for more information. Sierra College also offers customized workshop programs for business groups or employees where instructors will provide instruction at the business site for such programs as management, business operations, personnel management and computer skills. Please contact Sierra College Office of Contract Education at (916) 781-0590.

**Nevada Union Adult Education** at 140 Park Ave in Grass Valley offers a number of courses that relate to small business improvement and personal management. Please contact the Nevada Union Adult Education Office at 272-2643.

**California State University Sacramento** at 6000 J Street in Sacramento offers a variety of business courses. Please contact the university at (916) 278-6011 for more information.

**NOTES**

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**GRASS VALLEY**

**WELCOME TO  
GRASS VALLEY  
NEW BUSINESS  
INFORMATION  
BOOKLET**

**CITY OF GRASS  
VALLEY**

**An informational and resource booklet developed  
by the City of Grass Valley as a guide to businesses  
opening in Grass Valley**

**Revised: Sept. 2013**

**City of Grass Valley  
125 East Main Street  
Grass Valley, CA 95945**

**A Message to new businesses....**

Welcome to the City of Grass Valley! We are pleased to assist new businesses looking to locate and operate in our City. We strive to maintain a friendly atmosphere that is conducive to business. We recognize that your success is also our's. This New Business Information Booklet has been prepared with one purpose in mind: to make your business opening in Grass Valley as simple and fast as possible.

The New Business Information Booklet is a helpful guide to City business licensing, an information overview of the City's permit process and a reference to business organizations. Considering this criterion in planning your business program will assure a smooth transition.

In Grass Valley, we are continually looking for ways to help our businesses thrive. This Booklet, one aspect of our commitment, should allow you to open your doors more rapidly, simply, and without surprises. But remember, the best way to ensure a smooth permitting process is to come in and talk to us before you make any commitments. This will allow us to work hand-in-hand with you to expedite the process.

Sincerely,

*Jan Arbuckle, Past Mayor*

GRASS VALLEY

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**Chamber of Commerce:** Please contact the Grass Valley/Nevada County Chamber of Commerce at 273-4667. The Chamber can help you establish business contacts by giving referrals for member businesses. Members can also share information and opportunities at monthly Chamber mixers. The Chamber is located at 128 E. Main Street, Grass Valley, CA 95945.

**Downtown Business Association:** If your business is located in the Grass Valley Downtown Area, you may be in the Grass Valley Downtown Assessment District. Yearly assessment fees are collected by the City of Grass Valley. You may benefit from, and participate in, many of the events made available for businesses in the assessment district. The association is also available to assist new businesses in coordinating their opening and other regulatory processes with the City. For information call 272-8315.

**California Chamber of Commerce:** The California Chamber of Commerce works in Sacramento to represent California businesses on issues such as taxes, workers compensation benefits, business liability and insurance reform. The California Chamber also publishes books and conducts seminars to advise businesses. Please call (800) 331-8877 for more information; or [www.calchamber.com](http://www.calchamber.com).

**Business Education:** There are several community colleges, universities, and adult schools offering business related classes as follows:

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A T & T  
New or Change Existing Service  
(800) 288-2020

Solid Waste Collection  
And Recycling  
Waste Management  
of Grass Valley  
P.O. Box 1007  
Grass Valley, CA 95945  
(530) 274-3090

Cable Television  
A T & T Comcast  
840 East Main Streets  
Grass Valley, CA 95945  
(800) 266-2278

## Business Assistance & Education:

**Community Loan Program:** Low interest loans of between \$5,000 and \$50,000 are available to assist local business with the goal of stimulating economic growth by creating and/or retaining jobs. Larger loans are considered on a case-by-case basis. Please contact Jeri Amendola in the CDD Division for more information on this program at 274-4714.

**Small Business Assistance:** Sierra College provides one on one counseling for small businesses. Please call (916)781-6245 for further information; email: [training@sierra.college.edu](mailto:training@sierra.college.edu)

**Permit Assistance:** If your business needs to obtain a state permit, such as for construction, encroachments, hazardous waste disposal, etc., there is a Permit Assistance office that can help you. Call 1 (888) 648-1444.



## NEW BUSINESS ASSISTANCE BOOKLET OVERVIEW

The New Business Booklet has been designed to assist you, the future business owner or operator, through Grass Valley's business license/permit process and other related processes that may apply to your particular business. Forms and other useful information needed may be obtained from the various departments listed in this booklet.



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*Working with City staff, use this checklist as a guide for which application(s) you need to initially fill out. All of these applications are provided upon request.*

## Permit Checklist

- **USE PERMIT APPLICATIONS**  
*(Visit the Planning Division)*
- **DEVELOPMENT REVIEW APPLICATIONS**  
*(Visit the Planning Division)*
- **SIGN PERMIT APPLICATION**  
*(Visit the Planning or Building Divisions)*
- **BUILDING CODE COMPLIANCE INSPECTIONS**  
*(Visit the Building Division)*
- **FIRE SAFETY INSPECTIONS**  
*(Visit the Fire Department)*
- **BUSINESS LICENSE APPLICATIONS**  
*(Visit the Finance Department or Website: [www.cityofgrassvalley.com](http://www.cityofgrassvalley.com))*
- **TREE REMOVAL PERMITS**  
*(Visit the Public Works Department)*

**Alcohol Sales:** If your business involves sales of beer, wine or hard liquor, a permit or special licensing will be needed. Contact the Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control at 1-(916)263-6882 or [www.abc.ca.gov](http://www.abc.ca.gov).

**Weights & Measures:** If your business involves equipment for weighing or measuring items, certification may be needed. Contact Nevada County Weights and Measures at 273-2648.

**Change of Address:** If you are planning to change your business address, contact the United States Postal Service at 1-800-275-8777. Also, be sure to notify the Finance Department of the location change at 274-4300.

## Utilities and Other Public Services:

Contact the following utilities for establishing or reestablishing service:

Gas and Electricity  
Pacific Gas & Electric  
127 East Main Street  
Grass Valley, CA 95945  
1-(800) 743-5000

Water and Sewer Service  
Global Water  
1-866-306-4009

Water Service  
Nevada Irrigation District  
PO Box 1017  
Grass Valley, CA 95945  
273-6185

## Other Clearances:

**Fictitious Business Name:** If you wish to clear a fictitious business name, contact the Nevada County Recorder's Office at 265-1221 or [www.mynevadacounty.com](http://www.mynevadacounty.com).

**Workers' Compensation:** Many businesses need to obtain workers' compensation insurance. When obtaining a business license from the City of Grass Valley, proof of valid current workers' compensation, a Certificate of Self Insurance or a Certificate of Exemption will be needed. Contact the Office of workers Compensation at 1-800-736-7401.

**Payroll Taxes:** If your business has employees for whom payroll taxes are withheld, you will need to obtain federal and state employer's identification numbers. Contact the Internal Revenue Service at 1-800-829-4933 and the California Employment Development Department Payroll Tax Assistance at 1-888-745-3886.

**State Sales Tax:** If your business will collect state sales tax you will need to obtain a resale license from the State Board of Equalization at 1-916-227-6700 or [www.boe.ca.gov](http://www.boe.ca.gov).

**Food/Health Permits:** If your business will involve selling or handling food, a permit from the health Department may be needed. Improvements and/or inspections of the building and facilities may also be needed. Improvements may be required prior to beginning the business. Contact the Nevada County Environmental Health Department at 530-265-1452.

*To better acquaint you with the business review process, the following list contains the names and titles of those key staff members you will most likely be working with.*

## City Contacts ☺

**SANDY KESSELRING OR  
Tish Buti**  
Business License Clerks  
274-4300 or  
274-4313

**SUE COLBERT**  
Planning Division Clerk  
274-4330

**Veronica Bringolf**  
Public Works Clerk  
274-4350

## Standard

### Business Review Process

*The actual review process  
may be different for each*

*application depending on the  
nature of the business and  
where it is to be located. So  
consider the following pages  
as a general overview.*

**DEBBIE KELL**  
Engineering Division Clerk  
274-4373

**BETH OWENS**  
Building Division Clerk  
274-4340

**Shawna Cresswell**  
**FIRE DEPARTMENT CLERK**  
274-4370

*Before Making Any  
Commitment, Please Come  
in and Talk With Us.*

Please Consider the  
**Following Steps to  
Success:**

## 1 Check With Us First.

Before making any commitments to do business in Grass Valley, be sure to come talk with us. Together, we'll determine if your

proposed business is consistent with the zoning regulations affecting the property where you want to conduct your business. Other factors should also be considered including provision of sufficient off-street parking, disabled persons access, fire safety facilities, proper building exiting and other public health and safety needs. By talking with us first, you'll have a much clearer picture of what lies ahead.

## **2 Zoning Consistency**

Depending on the location of the business and according to the Zoning Ordinance, the activity may or may not be allowed. The Planning Division provides pertinent zoning information.

*Please check with the Planning Division at 274-4330 on the zoning of your business location prior to establishing your business.*

**Use Permits.** In some instances, a particular activity

or business may require a Use Permit. A use permit requires consideration by the Planning Commission. Planning Commission public hearings are held at least once a month. During the hearing, the commission may ask questions about your business and hear public testimony. If a use permit is needed a separate application and fees must be filed with the Planning Division.

### **Off-Street Parking.**

Sufficient off-street parking must be provided for the particular business. Please be prepared to provide information on the gross square feet of floor area within the facility to be occupied by the business. The number of parking spaces required by the Zoning Ordinance is dependent on the type of business. Also be sure that parking spaces are clearly marked, maintained free and clear of obstructions and designed according to City Zoning Standards.

**HANDBILLS AND CIRCULARS – Contact the City Clerk at 274-4310.**

**JUNK DEALERS, SECONDHAND DEALERS, PAWNBROKERS Contact the Police Department at 477-4600.**

**TAXICABS AND OTHER VEHICLES FOR HIRE. Contact the Police Department at 477-4600.**

**GARAGE SALES – Contact the Police Department at 477-4600.**

**FIREARMS DEALERS - Contact the Police Department at 477-4600.**

**SECURITY ALARM BUSINESSES – Contact the Police Department at 477-4600.**

**TREE REMOVAL PERMITS – Contact the Public Works Department at 274-4373.**

**SOLICITORS' PERMIT – Contact the Finance Department at 274-4300.**

**ENCROACHMENT PERMITS - For work or improvements within the public Right-of-Way contact the Engineering Department at 274-4373.**

**ADA (AMERICAN DISABILITIES ACT) COMPLIANCE - Contact the Building Division at 274-4340.**

Department including: ❶ Retail, Wholesale, Service, Contractors located in the City Limits, and Manufacturing; ❷ Contractors conducting business within the City Limits; but whose address is Outside the City Limits; ❸ Owners of rental property – Commercial, and Residential (3 or more units); ❹ Solicitors; ❺ Itinerant merchants, Special Events; ❻ Special License; and ❼ Non-Profit.

**Please contact the Finance Department at 274-4300 or 274-4313 for more information.**

Any person who by the use of signs, circulars, cards, the telephone book, newspapers or other means of communication, advertises or represents that he/she is engaged in business in the City of Grass Valley or is entering Grass Valley to conduct business is responsible for payment of a business license tax.

**Finance Dept. Hours:  
8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. M-Th**

## Other Permits

*In certain cases, special permits may be needed. Most of these permits have different application requirements, fees and processing times. Therefore, it is best to speak directly to the department in charge of the permit in order to receive more specific information. The City's Regulatory Permits Include:*

### LIMITED TERM PERMIT.

Allows temporary operation of certain types of businesses for a limited number of days. Contact the Planning Division at 274-4330.

### AUCTIONS AND AUCTIONEERS

Contact the City Clerk at 274-4310.

### BINGO GAMES -

Contact the Finance Dept. at 274-4300.

**Home Occupations.** If you are planning a home business, please check with the Planning Division. Although home occupations are typically allowed, certain restrictions do apply.

**Signage.** Depending on the activity, signs may be an essential element to identify the business. Please plan ahead and design the signs to fit the needs of the business. Signage should identify the business, but not advertise products or services. Signage also should be designed to be compatible with the building and to be designed in accordance with the City's Sign Regulations.

You will also need an encroachment permit from the Engineering Department.

**Installation** of new signs or any alteration to existing signs, including relocation, requires a sign permit. To obtain a sign permit, plans showing sign details should be submitted to the Community Development Department, Planning and Building Divisions for approval. In some instances,

signage may involve review by the City's Development Review Committee.

New businesses often desire to establish their identity and location with the help of temporary signs such as banners. Such signage may be permitted on a limited basis through approval of a Temporary Sign Permit from the Planning Division. There is no charge for issuing temporary sign permits. New businesses that wish to establish their identity are allowed an extended period to display their temporary signs. It is one of the City's ways to say thanks for doing business in Grass Valley.

**Building Painting.** Any proposed building painting or alteration to the exterior of a building located within the *Historical District*, in Downtown Grass Valley is subject to City Development Review Approval. Refer to Step 3 of this booklet.

### **Waste/Recycling Facilities.**

Arrangement should be made for solid waste and recyclables containment. A separate trash/recycling enclosure located outside the building should be provided for efficient business operations. In the Grass Valley Downtown area a community recycling enclosure is provided within the City's South Auburn Street parking lot. This facility may be used for a nominal fee. Please contact Waste Management of Grass Valley at 274-3090 for further information on related waste and recycling services offered.

**Planning Division Hours**  
8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. M-Th

### **3 Development Review**

Most new building development and exterior building remodeling in the City, except for construction of single family homes, requires development review approval. Development review involves

Project review by the Planning Division and often by the Development Review Committee and sometimes the Planning Commission. A separate brochure discussing the details of Development Review is available upon request. Items scheduled for review by the Development Review Committee require a two to four week turn around time to allow for proper Review. The Committee meets twice a month. Contact the Planning Division for more information. Please allow sufficient time in your business Plan for this process.

### **4 Building Permit Application**

If you are making any structural, electrical, plumbing, or mechanical changes to the building where you will be conducting the business, you will need to secure a building permit from the Building Division. Prior to beginning work please secure a Building Permit.

### **5 Fire Safety Inspection**

Before occupying the building please contact the Fire Department to schedule an inspection of the building for review of proper compliance with applicable fire safety regulations. In some cases a fire safety system may be required depending on the particular use and occupancy rating of the building. Please check with the Fire Department to schedule an inspection at 274-4370.

**Fire Department Hours:**  
8:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.  
1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

### **6 Disabled Accessibility (ADA Compliance)**

Before occupying the building please contact the Building Division for review of proper compliance with applicable federal, state, county, and city regulations regarding the public health, safety, and

accessibility by those disabled. Additional improvements to the building may be necessary for safe business operations within the building. Please contact the Building Division at 274-4340.

**Building Division Hours**  
8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. M-Th

### **7 Business Licensing.**

Upon final inspection by the Fire Department, and upon verification of compliance with the Zoning Ordinance by the Planning Division, you should be ready to secure

a Business License. The final step is to file a completed Business License Application along with appropriate fees. Applications are available from the Finance