



Vehicle Sales Startup Roadmap



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✓ Plan Your Business

Create your car sales business plan.

The business plan is a written, viable plan of action to guide your success. [Economic Development Partnership of North Carolina has great resources to help with your business plan.](#)

Determine your business legal structure.

Before selecting a business structure, consult your attorney and/or accountant [as each structure carries with it unique legal and tax consequences.](#)

Register your business.

Your business must be registered. It's a good idea to [perform a name search online](#) or in office to determine if the proposed business name has already been filed. If you've [organized as an LLC register with the N.C. Secretary of State.](#) [Corporations also register with North Carolina](#) as well.

If you're organized as a sole proprietorship or general partnership, [file with the Durham County Register of Deeds](#) and pay the \$26 file fee.

Apply for an Employer Identification Number (EIN) from the IRS.

Also known as a Federal Tax ID Number, you'll need an EIN if you will be hiring employees, forming a partnership, or corporation. [Read more about EINs and apply online for yours with the IRS.](#)

Sign up for a State Tax ID.

To collect sales and use taxes, [you'll need to register the N.C. Department of Revenue.](#) You will receive information from the Department of Revenue on sales and use tax reporting and remittance requirements.

Learn about financial resources available.

Small business owners in North Carolina have [financial resources available at the federal level and right here in North Carolina.](#)

Business Resources

Business Planning

<https://edpnc.com/start-or-grow-a-business/start-a-business/small-business-resources/>

Legal Structure

<https://www.sba.gov/business-guide/launch/choose-business-structure-types-chart>

EIN Info & Application

<https://www.irs.gov/businesses/small-businesses-self-employed/apply-for-an-employer-identification-number-ein-online>

Business Name Search

<http://www.sosnc.gov/search/index/corp>

LLC State Registration

<https://edpnc.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/Limited-Liability-Company-Articles-of-Organization.pdf>

Corporation State Registration

<https://edpnc.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/Instructions-for-Filing-Corporation-Articles-of-Incorporation.pdf>

County Register of Deeds

<https://www.dconnc.gov/county-departments/departments-f-z/register-of-deeds>

NC Department of Revenue

<https://eservices.dor.nc.gov/ncbusreg/>

Financial Resources (Federal)

<https://www.sba.gov/funding-programs>

Financial Resources (State)

<https://edpnc.com/start-or-grow-a-business/start-a-business/small-business-resources/#sec2>

Plan Your Location

Find a location zoned for your convenience store.

The [Unified Development Ordinance \(UDO\) designates zoning of properties in Durham](#). Use the [Zoning Atlas](#) to find properties with the zoning you need.

Confirm zoning for the location you want.

Send a “[Business Zoning Verification Form](#)” to the City of Durham/Durham County Planning Department. You can also visit the Development Services Center at Durham City Hall. A copy of the letter will be sent to the DMV office.

Choose your design professionals.

Depending on the type of construction required, you may need to hire a licensed professional. Contact City of Durham/Durham County Planning Department to determine if you will need to do so.

Check if your location will require historic review.

Some locations and buildings need to have [renovations reviewed by the Historic Preservation Commission](#) (HPC).

Complete and sign your lease.

To avoid common pitfalls, it is best to review the lease with your attorney.

Location Resources

UDO Uses & Zones

<http://www.codepublishing.com/NC/Durham/#/5.1.html>

Zoning Atlas

<http://durhamnc.gov/423/Zoning-Atlas>

Zoning Form

<http://durhamnc.gov/DocumentCenter/View/2674/Business-Verification-Letters-PDF>

Historic Locations

<http://durhamnc.gov/DocumentCenter/View/1347/Work-Requiring-a-Certificate-of-Appropriateness-with-Classification-Chart-PDF>

Develop Your Space

Learn about the City's Development Review Process.

Development Review Section of the Durham [City-County Planning Department](#) reviews plans and serves as case managers for projects.

Obtain a building permit.

Have your general contractor [start the building permit process with City/County inspections](#). Your general contractor can [expedite the plan review process by submitting plan documents digitally](#).

Monitor your progress.

Stay current with the [progress of your building plan review status, permits, and Certificates of Compliance online](#).

Apply for a sign permit.

Prior to installation, [a sign permit must be issued per Unified Development Ordinance \(UDO\)](#). Both permanent and temporary signs require permits.

Contact the fire department.

To ensure your building meets the N.C. Fire Code, you should [contact the Durham Fire Department](#). Note: A Change of Use will require a full inspection.

Space Resources

City-County Planning

<http://durhamnc.gov/388/Development-Review-Process-Overview>

Building Permit

<http://durhamnc.gov/DocumentCenter/View/983/Building-Application-Form-PDF>

Submit & Monitor Digital Plans

<http://durhamnc.gov/467/Dplans>

Monitor Permit Progress

<https://ldo4.durhamnc.gov/DurhamWeb/>

Sign Permits

<http://durhamnc.gov/DocumentCenter/View/10717/Sign-Permit-Application-and-Checklist>

Fire Department

<http://durhamnc.gov/620/Fire-Department>

Outdoor Seating Permit

<https://dsc.durhamnc.gov/245/2544/Outdoor-Seating-Permit?activeLiveTab=widgets>

NC Motor Vehicle Regulations

Complete the New Dealer License Application.

Fill out [Form VS-400](#) and submit it to the [North Carolina Department of Motor Vehicles](#).

Complete the Motor Vehicles Dealer Surety Bond.

The surety bond is [Form VS-409](#) and should also be submitted to the [North Carolina Department of Motor Vehicles](#).

Complete the Safety Equipment/OBD Inspection Station Application.

You'll need to fill out and [submit North Carolina Department of Motor Vehicles's Form SI-3](#).

Read the Motor Vehicles Minimum Dealer License Requirements.

[Form VS-415](#) from the North Carolina Department of Motor Vehicles is a checklist for the steps needed to get your vehicle dealer license.

Continue your learning.

Take a [DMV-approved Dealer Education Course](#).

NC Motor Vehicle Resources

New Dealer License Application

<https://connect.ncdot.gov/business/DMV/DMV%20Documents/VS-400%20New%20Dealer%20License%20or%20Changes%20to%20Existing%20License%20-%20June%202021.pdf>

Motor Vehicles Dealer Surety Bond

<https://connect.ncdot.gov/business/DMV/DMV%20Documents/VS-409%20Motor%20Vehicle%20Dealer%20Surety%20Bond%20-%20June%202021.pdf>

Safety Equipment OBD Inspection Station Application

[https://connect.ncdot.gov/business/DMV/DMV%20Documents/LT-300%20Station%20Application%20\(7-7-20%20Revision\).pdf](https://connect.ncdot.gov/business/DMV/DMV%20Documents/LT-300%20Station%20Application%20(7-7-20%20Revision).pdf)

Motor Vehicle Minimum Dealer License Requirements

<https://connect.ncdot.gov/business/DMV/DMV%20Documents/VS-415%20Minimum%20Dealer%20Licensing%20Requirements%20-%20June%202021.pdf>

DMV-Approved Dealer Education Courses

<https://www.ncdot.gov/dmv/offices-services/dealer-resources/Pages/default.aspx>

Employer Requirements

Hire employees.

The [Durham NCWorks Career Center](#) can help you find the talented workers you need for your convenience store.

Check if you need unemployment insurance.

Use the [Division of Employment Security's site](#) to see if you need to comply.

Obtain Workers' Compensation Insurance.

For 3 or more employees, you'll likely need workers' compensation insurance. [Learn more at N.C. Industrial Commission](#).

Complete Federal Form I-9.

[Form I-9](#) is used for verifying the identity and employment authorization of individuals hired for employment in the United States.

Employer Resources

Find Workers

<https://durhamnc.gov/572/NCWorks-Career-Center>

Unemployment Insurance

<https://des.nc.gov/DES>

Worker's Comp

<http://www.ic.nc.gov/>

Form I-9

<https://www.uscis.gov/i-9>

Plan Your Opening

Open a Business Bank Account.

Business banking offers limited personal liability protection by keeping your business funds separate from your personal funds.

Create a Marketing Plan

The Small Business Administration can help you with a [sample marketing plan](#).

Place Your Business on Google

[Listing your business with Google](#) is an important step today.

Contact Durham County Environmental Health Division.

Call (919) 560-7800 at least 5 but not more than 30 business days prior to projected opening date to schedule the permitting evaluation.

Opening Resources

Banking

<https://www.sba.gov/business-guide/launch/open-business-bank-account-fees-benefits>

Sample Marketing Plan

<https://www.sba.gov/business-guide/manage-your-business/marketing-sales>

Google Business

<https://www.gybo.com>

Staying Successful + Resources

Post Required State and Federal posters and permits.

You can [print required posters for free](#) from the N.C. Dept. of Labor.

Prepare for Inspections.

Once permitted the establishment is inspected on a regular basis. Regular inspections and visits are not announced or scheduled. Ensure food service workers are following required laws and have good hygiene.

Learn more about business recordkeeping.

As a new business owner, you need to know your [federal tax responsibilities](#).

Prepare for taxes.

The N.C. Dept of Revenue holds [regular Tax Seminars](#) throughout the year.

Other Durham Resource Partners

- [Small Business Center at Durham Tech](#)
- [Small Business Technology & Development Center](#)
- [The Institute](#)
- [Durham Small Business Advisory Committee](#)
- [Durham E3](#)

General Resources

Required Posters

<https://www.labor.nc.gov/safety-and-health/publications/state-and-federal-workplace-poster-requirements/free-ncdol-labor-law-poster-order-form>

Federal Tax

<https://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/p583.pdf>

N.C. Tax Seminars

<https://www.ncdor.gov/business-and-income-tax-seminars>

Durham Tech

<https://www.durhamtech.edu/sbc/>

Tech & Development Center

<http://www.sbtcd.org/offices/nccu/>

The Institute

<http://www.theinstitutenc.org/>

Small Business Advisory

<http://durhamnc.gov/462/Small-Business-Advisory-Committee>

Durham E3

<https://forwardcities.org/ecosystems/e3durham/>

Connect for Additional Assistance



**ECONOMIC & WORKFORCE
DEVELOPMENT**

CITY OF DURHAM

Office of Economic & Workforce Development
801 E. Main Street, Suite 5-100
Durham, NC 27701

[Visit us online](#) or call **(919) 560-4965**



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