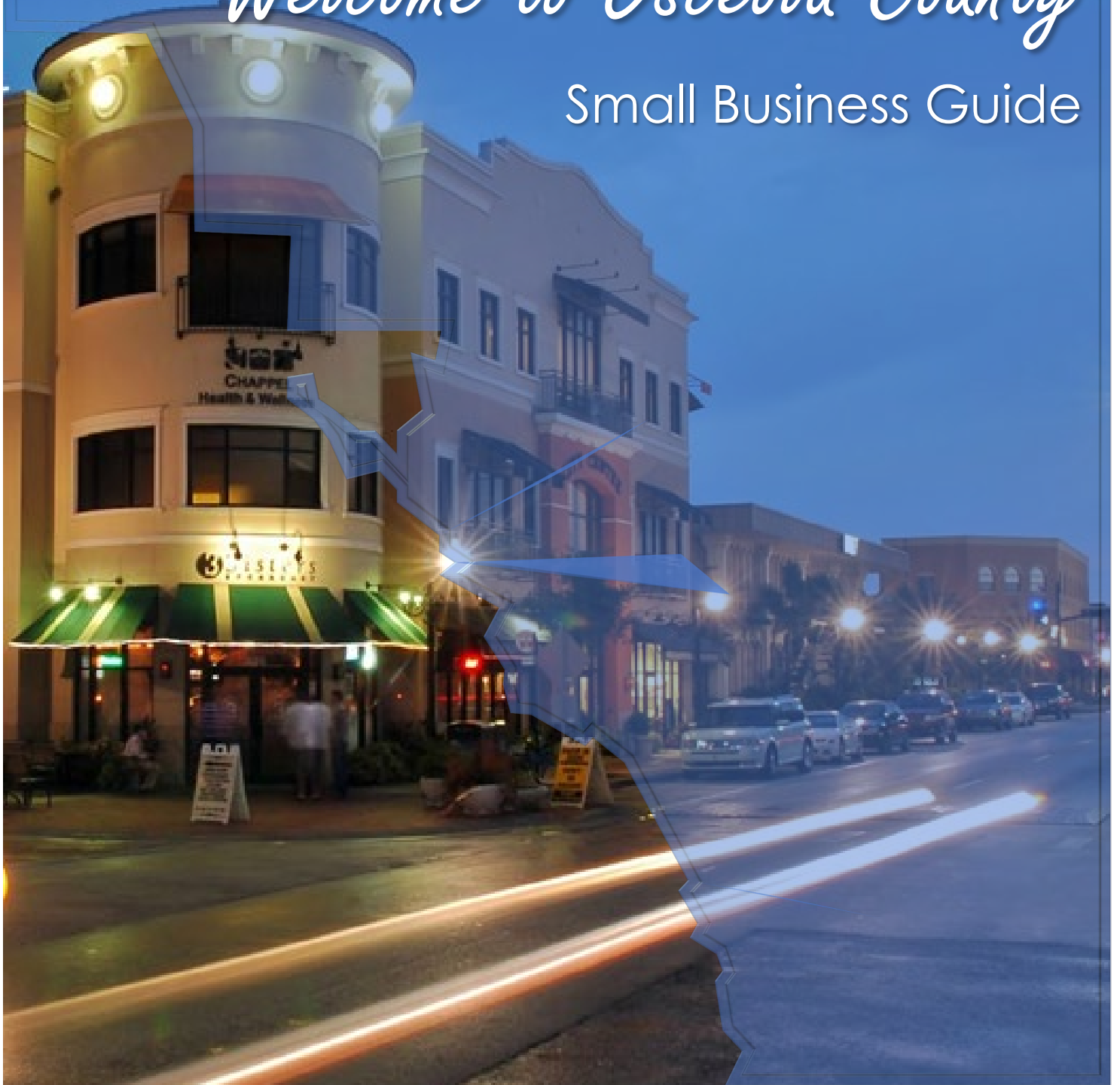


Welcome to Osceola County

Small Business Guide



www.osceola.org



OSCEOLA
COUNTY be first
to what's next.

INTRODUCTION

Congratulations on pursuing your own business. We are excited that you are joining the Osceola County business community. We work tirelessly to create a better place to work, live, and play. The County is currently experiencing rapid growth in population and development. So, to help you navigate through the County's processes for starting a business, and other applicable regulations, we would like to provide you with useful information. This Small Business Guide will provide you with information on starting your business, help choosing a location for your business, what to expect of the County's development process, and lastly, what licenses and/or Permits are needed to operate your business.



Once again, congratulations on your entrepreneurial spirit, and welcome to Osceola County!

STARTING YOUR BUSINESS

PROPERTY SEARCH



Osceola County offers new and expanding companies, site location consultants and commercial and industrial realtors a wide variety of services, including no-cost site selection assistance. Our robust, free database contains real-time real estate information on commercial and industrial properties listed for rent and/or sale in the County.

Customize your search by size requirements, demographics, building type, building size and more. ([LINK TO OEP PROPERTY SEARCH](#))

YOU FOUND THE RIGHT LOCATION. NOW WHAT?

Before committing to a lease or purchase agreement, you need to check with our Community Development Department to get the zoning information of properties within County limits. The Community Development Department will be your main contact to obtain information and handle inquiries about the following areas:



Building Office

Our Building Office protects the health and safety of the public by administrating and enforcing various building codes and technical standards while preparing for the future growth of Osceola County. We strive to provide the best possible building permit service to our citizens and builders.

Planning to build in Osceola County? You are required to apply for a building permit as required by the Florida Building Code. Building permits are issued by the Building Office located on the first floor of our Administration Building. This office will be your contact for the following:

- Apply for a Building Permit
- Applications and Forms
- Building Permit Fees
- References for Builders & Contractors
- How to Electronically Sign Building Plans for Submission
- Certificate of Occupancy Search
- Certifications
- Permit Extensions and Cancellations
- Florida Building Code Information

- Florida Building Code Online
- Requirements and Information
- Rules, Regulations, & Federal Standards
- Impact and Mobility Fees
- Licensing Services

Code Enforcement

Code Enforcement's mission is to protect public health, safety and welfare by ensuring compliance with County Codes, Land Use Regulations, and various Statutes. The standards set by our codes are designed to protect the community from substandard conditions. Enforcing these codes minimizes conditions that can contribute to the degradation of neighborhoods and property values.

Our goal is to achieve voluntary compliance through education whenever possible. Our division works seven days a week to help property owners meet their obligations and responsibilities, and to prevent property values from falling.

Code Enforcement offers many services such as:

- Research Requests
- Code Complaints
- Common Code Violations
- Parking and Civil Citations
- Red Light Camera
- Vehicle for Hire
- Special Detail

Development Review

The Development Review Section is a branch of the Growth Management Community Development Division. We extend assistance to citizens, property owners, developers, and design professionals by providing technical expertise and support throughout the entire process of all development applications, review, and approval, as well as construction of infrastructure improvements within Osceola County unincorporated areas.

The process includes direct interaction with all reviewing staff in a round table forum called the Development Review Committee (DRC), which provides the applicant opportunities to ask and receive clarification on issues of concern associated with the development.

Planning and Design

The Planning and Design Office provides planning and community development services that guide the development of Osceola County. These services ensure the orderly growth and development of the County and that all land development is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan.

Osceola County, located in the high-growth Central Florida region, provides a distinctive blend of rural life and all the benefits of its proximity to a major metropolitan area. It is the sixth largest Florida county in acreage. The county seat of Kissimmee is the largest municipality and the gateway to Disney World. Osceola County's natural attractions include 878 lakes with Lake Kissimmee, consisting of 35,000 acres, being the largest.

Zoning

Our Zoning office manages orderly growth and development through administration of the Osceola County Land Development Code. This ensures compliance with the Osceola County Comprehensive Plan and enforcement of various County codes and ordinances.

What is Zoning in Osceola County?

The division of Osceola County by regulations into zones, which specify permitted and conditional uses for real property, and development standards and which may include standards such as: minimum/maximum setbacks, minimum/maximum floor area ratio (FAR), minimum lot area, minimum lot width, maximum building height, and minimum conditioned floor area.

- The zoning of a property must comply with the future land use. A public hearing may be required to rezone or establish the use and/or development standards for a property.

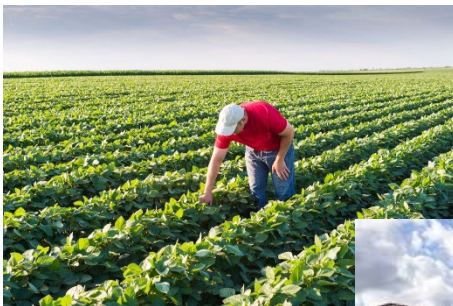
- New development may require a Site Development Plan approval, a subdivision plan and site improvements prior to development and use of property.
- Development, expansion and use of property may require building permits, other Community Development permits and applicable permits from other agencies.

Why do we have Zoning?

Zoning helps protect landowners from the impacts of incompatible land uses on adjacent or nearby properties. Communities can use zoning to provide transition between dissimilar land uses such as commercial, industrial, and residential. This helps provide direction for future development and the extension of public services that must accompany growth.

There are 5 Main Zoning Categories

- Agricultural
- Residential
- Commercial
- Industrial
- Institutional



How Do I Determine My Zoning District and What Uses Are Allowed on My Property?

- First, you will need the parcel identification number for your property. This is an 18-digit number located on your tax bill. If you do not have your tax bill, you may locate it through the Property Appraiser's Office or contact the Current Planning (Zoning) Office (zoning@osceola.org).
- To determine the uses allowable on your property you may contact the Current Planning (Zoning) Office (zoning@osceola.org) or you may look up your zoning district on GIS Maps Online at: <http://maps.osceola.org>

What is a Permitted Use?

A use which may be constructed without the need for a public hearing review.

The Land Development Code will also provide you with the development standards (setbacks, FAR, lot area, lot width, etc.) that must be observed for development and occupancy of a property. Before you move forward with a use on your property, please confirm the Zoning District for the site with Current Planning Staff or by accessing the Land Development Code and using GIS Maps Online.

How do I determine if I need to apply for a Zoning Map Amendment (rezoning)?

You may contact the Current Planning (Zoning) Office to confirm the Zoning District for a site. If a Zoning Map Amendment is required and if a rezoning of a property will be in compliance with the Comprehensive Plan, Current Planning will advise you and guide you through the process. If a Comprehensive Plan Amendment is required, the Planning and Design Office will need to evaluate the site to determine if a land use change is possible.

For more information about the various services provided by the Community Development Department, or if you have any questions, visit:

<https://www.osceola.org/agencies-departments/community-development/>, or can call (407) 742-0200, Planning and Zoning, and more.

PERMITS REQUIRED TO OPERATE

OSCEOLA COUNTY BUSINESS TAX RECEIPTS (BTR)

Our goal is help Osceola County businesses grow and prosper in our community, while creating the conditions to attract businesses to establish here, create jobs and participate in our vibrant economy. When you chose Osceola County as your business destination, you enjoy the diverse and skilled workforce you need, and come along for the ride on our incredible growth.



New businesses must obtain their Local **Business Tax Receipt** prior to engaging in their enterprise. All Osceola County Local Business Tax Receipt are a flat rate fee of \$30.00 (thirty dollars). Businesses seeking new Local Business Tax Receipt

after March 31st, will pay a prorated tax fee.

Per *Osceola Code of #323A28 Chapter 13 Article II Local Business Tax Receipts*:

A Local Business Tax Receipt is issued by the Tax Collector for the privilege of operating any business, profession, or occupation within the county notwithstanding the classification of the business. Anyone providing merchandise or services, including a sole proprietor or home-based business, must obtain the Business Tax Receipt to operate. A Business Tax

Receipt must be obtained for any for profit LLC, Corporation, or Fictitious name registered with the State.

Before an Osceola County Local Business Tax Receipt can be issued, a business must meet all conditions required by city, county, state, or federal agency regulations, which apply to that business or occupation. All businesses are subject to approval by the Zoning, Environmental Health, and Building Departments. Depending on the Business location, fees may apply.

The information needed to obtain a Local Business Tax Receipt includes, but is not limited to the following items:

1. Business name; Owner(s) or President's Name; Mailing Address; Physical Location of Business; Telephone Number(s); Social Security or Federal ID Number; and a copy of the Fictitious Name Registration, where applicable.
2. Businesses regulated by the State of Florida or County Agencies, a copy of the documents provided by the state or county, as proof of your compliance, will be required with your application for an initial Local Business Tax Receipt.

Note: Registered or Certified Contractors, regulated by the Department of Business and Professional Regulation (DBPR), 850-487-2252, whose business location is not located within Osceola County, would not be required to have an Osceola County Local Business Tax Receipt.

3. If the business name used in your business, does not include the full first name, and last name of the business owner, the business name would be considered a Fictitious Name, and must be registered with the Florida Secretary of State's Office, (850) 487-6058.

Note: Corporations are registered with the Florida Secretary of State, for information call, (850) 487-6052. Out of State corporations must register with the Secretary of State if they intend to use their corporate name. For information call (850) 487-6051.

4. Social Security or Federal ID numbers are obtained from the US Internal Revenue Service. Toll Free Number 1-800-829-3676 or 1-800-829-1040.

5. Businesses that sell or serve food products must be inspected by either, the Florida Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services, 1-800-245-5520, or The Florida Division of Hotel & Restaurant Commission, (850) 487-1395. This inspection must be prior to obtaining a county Local Business Tax Receipt. The Division of Hotel & Restaurant Commission is located at 400 West Robinson Street, Suite 509 (North Tower) in Orlando Florida.
6. To obtain a Florida Sales Tax Number, (resale number) contact the Florida Department of Revenue. Their Orlando location is 2301 Maitland Center Pkwy, Suite 160, Maitland, Florida 32751-4191. Call (407) 475-1200 or Tallahassee 1-800-352-3671.
7. State licensing requirements can be obtained by calling the Consumer Services Department 1-800-435-7352.
8. All businesses must file a Tangible Personal Property Tax Return, with the Property Appraiser, (407) 742-5000 before April 1st. Personal Property Taxes are assessed against your business equipment as of January 1st and become payable in November. Taxes become delinquent April 1st. If the Tangible Personal Property Tax is not paid, a Tax Warrant will be issued. Personal Property Taxes follow the equipment, NOT the owner. When purchasing an existing business, make sure a TAX SEARCH has been done.
9. In Osceola County, a business located within a city limit requires both a municipal license and a county Local Business Tax Receipt to operate. The City of Kissimmee and City of St. Cloud can be contacted with the information below:

City of Kissimmee Business Tax

www.kissimmee.org

407-518-2120

101 N. Church St.

Kissimmee, FL 34741

City of St. Cloud Business Tax

www.stcloud.org

407-957-7297
1300 9th St.
St Cloud, FL 34769

IMPORTANT

A fine of \$250.00 will be levied against any Local Business Tax Receipt not renewed within 150 days of expiration.

If you discontinue (close) your business, contact The Tax Collector's Office (407) 742-4000 and The Property Appraiser's Office (407) 742-5000.

If a change of ownership has taken place, a notarized bill of sale must be presented to change ownership of an existing business.

Any changes to an existing business must be reported to the Local Business Tax Receipt Department, in the Tax Collector's Office (407) 742-4000

To apply for a Local Business Tax Receipt, call the Tax Collector's Office at (407) 742-4000, or visit the Tax Collector's Main Office at 2501 E. Irlo Bronson Memorial Hwy, Kissimmee.

You can also visit: <https://www.osceolataxcollector.org/>, for the most updated requirements, and information about documentation and applicable fees.

Source: Osceola County Tax Collector – January 2022

STATE OF FLORIDA BUSINESS REGISTRATION

The State of Florida requires businesses to register through the Florida State Department Division of Corporations. Companies cannot operate in the State without registering their business name, fictitious name, and/or trademark. (This is the first step, as Osceola County will require proof of registration with the State of Florida in order process your Business Tax Receipt.) Therefore, "SunBiz" registration should be one of the first steps towards the creation of your business. To register your business please visit Sunbiz.org.

How to Obtain a Federal Employer Identification Number (EIN)

A Federal Employer Identification Number (EIN) is a nine-digit number used by the IRS to identify the tax accounts of employers and certain others who have no employees.

Do I need an EIN?

If any of the following questions apply to you, you will need an EIN:

- Do you have employees?
- Do you operate your business as a corporation or a partnership?
- Do you file any of these tax returns: employment, Excise, or alcohol, tobacco and firearms?
- Do you withhold taxes on income, other than wages, paid to a non-resident alien?
- Do you have a Keogh plan?
- Are you involved with any of the following types of organizations?
 - Trusts
 - Estates
 - Real estate mortgage investment conduits
 - Non-profit organizations
 - Farmer's cooperatives
 - Plan administrators

To obtain an EIN number, you must fill out and IRS Form SS-4 and file it with the IRS. To apply for an EIN number, please visit the IRS.

STATE PROFESSIONAL LICENSES

In addition to registering your business name with the State of Florida, you may need to apply for a license with the State depending on the type of business you would like to operate.

The Florida Department of Business and Professional Regulation (DBPR) is responsible for the licensing and regulation of businesses throughout the State.

The following are some of the businesses regulated by the DBPR:

- Barbershops

- Cosmetology
- Certified Public Accountants
- Engineers
- Real Estate
- Contractors
- Hotel & Restaurants
- Construction Industry

If you are unsure if your business needs a state license from the Florida Department of Business and Professional Regulations, please visit the DBPR.

The Florida Department of Agriculture Consumer Services Division regulates businesses such as food establishments, pest control, gas stations, and others.

For more information, please visit Consumer Services.

The Florida Department of Health issues State Licenses to businesses and individuals in the health and wellness profession. These licenses include, but not limited to, medical offices, laboratories, tattoo establishments, and massage therapists.

For more information, please visit Florida Health Department.

QUICK GUIDE TO START YOUR BUSINESS IN OSCEOLA COUNTY

Starting a business is a multi-step process which involves applications to various offices.

- Obtain a Business Tax Receipt (BTR) issued by the Tax Collector's Office.
<https://www.osceolataxcollector.org/local-business-tax-receipt.html>
- Contact the Current Planning (Zoning) Office. The zoning specialist will:
 - Review the code and confirm whether your type of business and location are consistent with current regulations. (Zoning@osceola.org)
 - Advise you on a Site Development Plan (SDP), and if one may be required for the business.
 - Recommend that you attend a Pre-Application meeting to discuss your proposed business and to discuss requirements on the business site.
- Contact the Building Office.
 - A permitting technician will advise you on how to obtain a tenant occupancy or tenant alteration permit.
(Buildingmailbox@osceola.org)
- Contact the Health Department's Environmental Health Office.
 - A staff member will advise you on permits which may be required for your type of business or the business site.
(OsceolaEnvironmentalHealth@flhealth.gov)
- Contact the Fire Marshal's Office.
 - A representative will advise you on permits which may be required for your type of business or the business site.
(Firemarshall@osceola.org)

IMPORTANT:

If you plan on using a residential address for your business, please be advised that if you are requesting a business tax receipt to be issued using a residential address within Osceola County jurisdiction, then you must receive approval of a Home Occupation prior to issuance of your business tax receipt. A full list of Home Occupation requirements is available in the Land Development Code, Chapter 3, Article 3.6.1.

The Home Occupation application is reviewed by staff in the Current Planning (Zoning) Office using the criteria listed in the Land Development Code, Chapter 3.

- A Home Occupation shall include, but not be limited to, the following businesses: domestic crafts, such as sewing, tailoring, washing and ironing, real estate services, bookkeeping, tax preparation, computer input or computer consulting services, telemarketing services, short-term rental property management office, medical transcription, beautician, mail order, internet/web based operations, contractor (office only), interior decorator/designer, products of homemade crafts (such as writer, painter, composer, etc.), private tutoring and instruction (limited to three pupils at any one time), and professional services.
- A Home Occupation shall not be interpreted to include activities such as, but not restricted to, auto repair and tune-up, general offices, clinics, physician's, dentists, and offices (except contractors) of the like, welding shops, animal hospitals, or kennels.

For detailed requirements for Home Occupations, Article 3.6.1, E. Home Occupations may be accessed at the following link:

<https://library.municode.com/search?stateId=9&clientId=7166&searchText=home%20occupation&contentTypeId=CODES>

Land Development Code Information

Land Development Code, Chapter 3

https://library.municode.com/fl/osceola_county/codes/land_development_code?nodeId=LAND_DEVELOPMENT_CODE_CH3PESIST

Land Development Code Chapter 4

https://library.municode.com/fl/osceola_county/codes/land_development_code?nodeId=LAND_DEVELOPMENT_CODE_CH4SIDEDEST



SMALL BUSINESS RESOURCES AND ASSISTANCE

THE OSCEOLA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Founded in 1924, the Osceola Chamber represents approximately 900 small, medium and large companies, organizations and governments. The Chamber advocates on behalf of its members for a business climate that enables them to succeed at growing their bottom line. It also takes on issues in regard to enhancing the quality of life in the community. Through Area Councils, the Chamber help its members to connect with key businesses across all geographic regions of the County, as well as focused industry and demographic groups.

For more information, visit: www.theosceolachamber.com

ST. CLOUD CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

The St. Cloud Chamber is dedicated to advancing the general welfare and prosperity of the area, improving the business climate, advocating on behalf of its members, and offering educational support through seminars, publications and business planning and mentoring. The Chamber can offer businesses technical assistance and a variety of services to advance your business. Visit St. Cloud Chamber of Commerce for more information.

For more information, visit: www.stcloudflchamber.com

HISPANIC CHAMBER OF COMMERCE OF METRO ORLANDO

The Hispanic Chamber of Commerce of Metro Orlando (HCCMO) is one of the largest business organizations in Central Florida. HCCMO provides you and your company with programs and events, unique business connections and educational tools to help you grow your business and increase your profits. Our organization is open to Hispanic and non-Hispanic companies and professionals.

For more information go to: www.hispanicchamberorlando.com

KISSIMMEE MAIN STREET

As an essential part of the economic development in Historic Downtown; Kissimmee Main Street plays a critical role in bringing our small businesses and entrepreneurs support and prosperity. From quick help guidelines and tips, tools, on-site and online presence, we can help be your one-stop-shop to provide you with all you need to build, grow, and boost your idea. Visit Kissimmee Main Street for more information or go to: www.kissimmeemainstreet.org.

ST. CLOUD MAIN STREET

The St. Cloud Main Street Program is a comprehensive revitalization program designed to encourage ongoing economic development in conjunction with historic preservation. This is accomplished through the promotion of our Historic Downtown and its businesses, in various media platforms. St. Cloud Main Street provides business services such as grants for marketing and other resources to entities in the Downtown area of the city. Visit St. Cloud Main Street for more information, or go to: www.stcloudmainstreet.org.

UCF BUSINESS INCUBATION PROGRAM – KISSIMMEE

The UCF Business Incubation Program provides business development and operational support to early-stage, innovative businesses throughout Central Florida. Since 1999, this award-winning program has supported hundreds of companies, who have collectively generated more than \$400 million in sales and over \$100 million in outside funding. This non-profit community resource offers three programs: Traction,

Growth and Soft Landing, each designed to help businesses at different stages of the operation.

For more information, visit: <https://incubator.ucf.edu/kissimmee-incubator/>

SMALL BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION (SBA)

The SBA is an independent agency of the federal government to aid, counsel, assist and protect the interests of small business concerns, to preserve free competitive enterprise and to maintain and strengthen the overall economy of our nation. The SBA continues to help small business owners and entrepreneurs pursue the American dream. It is the only cabinet-level federal agency fully dedicated to small business and provides counseling, capital, and contracting expertise as the nation's only go-to resource and voice for small businesses. For more information, visit www.SBA.gov for more information.

SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CENTER (SBDC)

The Florida SBDC Network (SBDC) delivers, through certified professionals, training and information to help businesses succeed and create positive impact for the Florida economy, while providing value for its stakeholders. SBDC offers local workshops on a wide range of business topics, counseling, and business development programs for both start-ups and existing businesses. Call 407-847-2452 for more information, or visit: <https://sbdcorlando.com/osceolacounty/>

PROSPERA

A nonprofit economic development organization designed to offer bilingual business assistance to Hispanic small business owners. Its mission is to help start, sustain, and grow Hispanic-owned businesses to achieve community prosperity. For more information, please visit www.Prosperausa.org.

BLACK BUSINESS INVESTMENT FUND (BBIF)

The BBIF's mission is to develop and promote Black business enterprises through education, training, loans, investments, and other activities and aggressively promote an atmosphere conducive to entrepreneurial development. For more information, please visit www.BBIF.com

ORLANDO ECONOMIC PARTNERSHIP

The City of St. Cloud partners with the Orlando Economic Partnership in business attraction efforts to recruit target industries to the Central Florida Area. For more information, please visit The Orlando Economic Partnership. For more information, visit: www.orlando.org

For more information on Economic Development, please call us at 407-742-4200, or by email at economicdevelopment@osceola.org.