**Helpful Tips when starting a new business in Harrison County:**

1. Is the location preapproved? **Before you buy or lease** - verify with Staff that the business you desire is allowed at the location you want- often a different use may require a conditional use permit  (public hearing), or additional parking, or worse - not allowed for the zoning of the selected site.
2. Is the business a change of use? **Changing the use of a site -** if your business is a different use than the previous tenant - a building permit is required - even if you do not plan to build anything within the tenant space.   This is required to ensure the building meets State Building and Electrical codes for the specific use.
3. My Business serves food. **Food or drink provided** - any business that provides food/drink services - even prepared off site - requires a separate review by the health department and by the sewer department and a grease trap is generally always required - even if the prior use served food and did not have a grease trap.
4. Location is Downtown. **Historic Downtown** - Downtown is a great location for businesses, but ensure your lease or purchase clearly defines who maintains the exterior - Downtown locations have unique requirements on maintenance unlike other areas of the City.
5. What is my occupancy load? **Occupancy Load -** during the application review, the Fire department reviews the site and will establish the maximum occupancy load.  Tenants with 100 or more occupancy require state building department review for all permits.
6. Site needs electric work. **Electric service upgrades/renovations -** often tenants will need to add electrical service, circuits, new plugs or lighting - these all require a separate electrical permit issued from the Office to a licensed electrician - please discuss your needs with staff prior to doing any of the electrical work.
7. Need to expand? **Expanding concerns** - always discuss with staff prior to purchase or lease – in many cases a development plan is required for building additions which means: you will need to contract with an engineer, submit plans and possibly provide easements.
8. Signs and Advertising. **My Business needs to be seen** - Signs are an important part of any business.  Signs also require a separate sign permit from the Office prior to them being installed.  (Electrical permits are also often needed.)   Any temporary signs installed in the right-of-way are not allowed.  If found, they will be removed.
9. ADA Restrooms? **American Disability Act (ADA)** Restrooms are required for any business that provides public restrooms (certain uses require public restrooms) - the best thing you can do is call our building inspector for a courtesy visit to review your tenant space and needs relating to both building codes and ADA requirements.
10. Business from your home. **Home Business** - Several home business uses can be administratively approved.  Please contact planning staff to discuss your proposed business.  There are several home businesses that require a conditional use permit (public hearing) or are specifically not allowed.