

2024

Opening a Business in West Bridgewater



What Business Owners Need
to Know to Successfully
Open or Expand a Business
in West Bridgewater

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Welcome Letter from the Town Administrator

Town of West Bridgewater
Office of the Town Administrator
David L. Gagne
65 North Main St
West Bridgewater, MA 02379

Welcome to the Town of West Bridgewater!

Dear Prospective Business Owner,

The Town of West Bridgewater has prepared this guide to assist folks interested in doing business in West Bridgewater.

Included in this guide you will find information on each department and from which department you might require a license or permit. While it is not an exhaustive instruction manual for all West Bridgewater permits and licenses, it does include the most commonly required ones.

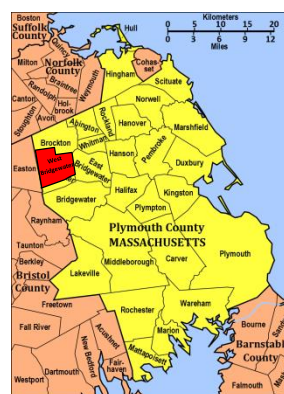
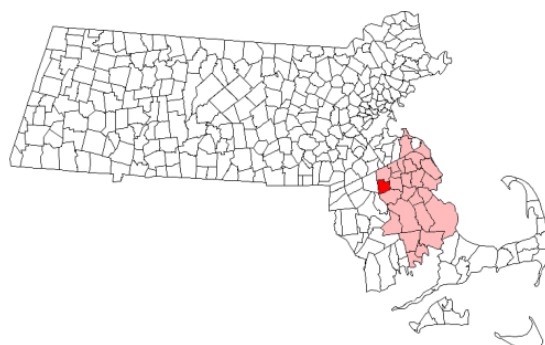
Thank you for your interest in West Bridgewater. We wish you success in your business endeavors.

Sincerely,

David L. Gagne
David L. Gagne
Town Administrator

About West Bridgewater

West Bridgewater, Massachusetts is located in Plymouth County and is approximately 25 miles south of Boston. First settled in 1651 as part of Olde Bridgewater, West Bridgewater was incorporated as its own community in 1822. West Bridgewater's location along Route 24 has resulted in an increase in the amount of commercial and industrial activity in recent years. This activity is balanced by a number of working farms throughout the community, which harkens back to West Bridgewater's roots as an agricultural community and contributes to the scenic character of the town. In addition to Route 24, West Bridgewater is also accessible via the well-traveled Routes 28 and 106, which run north-south and east-west, respectively, through Town. MBTA Commuter Rail Stations are located in both nearby Bridgewater and Brockton.



West Bridgewater Demographic Snapshot

Population	7,707*
Households	2,726*
Median Age	43.9 Years**
Median Household Income	\$111,964**
Per Capita Income	\$45,627**
Labor Force (16+)	5,325**

Sources:

*2022 U.S. Census

**2017-2021 American Community Survey

Guide Overview

The Town of West Bridgewater welcomes you to a prosperous Town that would love to help your business be as successful as possible! This guide has been created to help existing and prospective business owners in the Town of West Bridgewater. We hope to make the process of opening your own business in our Town easier and less stressful with the use of this guide. Please know that the many contacts listed in this guide are more than happy to help you during any part of this process.

It is important to note that this guide is not meant to serve as instruction for every possible type of business that could possibly open in West Bridgewater. Though there is a lot of useful and valuable information in this guide, it is important to read the guide in its entirety and choose the information in it that pertains to your particular type of business. There are several parts to this guide that do pertain to every business type, while other parts are more specific to a particular business type. Potential business owners should realize they may need to look elsewhere to find more specific information on their certain type of business.

This guide's purpose is to be a tool for success. By following it you will be sure to cover many of the requirements necessary to begin your new business in West Bridgewater.

****Please note that information is subject to change and the most up to date information can be found on the Town of West Bridgewater's website at:**

[Welcome to Town of West Bridgewater, MA \(westbridgewaterma.org\)](http://westbridgewaterma.org)

*****Also, your first step should be to seek a Zoning Determination from the Building Inspector/Zoning Enforcement Officer to confirm that the zoning for your proposed business location allows your proposed use.**



Step-by-Step Guide to Starting a Business



Before this guide goes into the specifics of West Bridgewater, here is a very basic summary of the steps any potential business owner must understand everywhere. You should seek additional guidance from legal and tax experts.

Step 1:

Plan Ahead. Are you on the right track to starting your business? Are you healthy enough to put in long hours or will the addition of too much stress put you over the edge? Do you have good credit/ are you financially stable enough to put your money into a new business? Are you able to take responsibility for your own actions? Are you informed on business techniques/do you have business owning skills? If you answered no to any of these questions, you may want to rethink opening your business at this point in time. Wait a little longer so you can answer “yes” to all of these questions. Your business will be more successful in the end because of it.

Step 2:

Create a Business Plan. Every successful business needs a plan. Write out your business's future by creating ideas of how to grow revenues and avoid going out of business if something were to happen. Create goals for your business and find a way to make your products unique from competitors in the same market. Create a sales strategy and decide on a management and organization that will fit your business. Creating a business plan will help you to identify problems that you may stumble upon in your business before you actually run into them.

Step 3:

Ask for Outside Help. Take some extra business courses. Ask fellow business owners what they have encountered that made owning a business difficult. Get counseling or take a training class. Any of these sources of outside help can increase your success.

Step 4:

Choose a Name. Create a name for your business. Make sure you are not using a name that another business already has. Create something unique that draws people's attention and also relates to what you are selling. A good name can make all the difference.

Step 5:

Choose a Location. Choose a location that is right for your business. Make sure there are people in the area you choose that are in need of what you are selling. Even within a certain town, one side of town may be more appropriate for your business than the other side due to land formations or water ways. It is also necessary to verify the zoning for the specific location to make sure it is accepted by the town for you to start your business there. The Zoning By-Laws and maps on the Town's website can assist you in making determinations about locations where your business may be allowed.

Step 6:

Secure Financing. Make sure you have the finances to fund starting your own business. Use money you have saved, money given to you from family, or money to fund your business through loans to begin your business. Any of these options are perfectly fine as long as you know you have enough funding to open your business and keep it running before you begin making a solid income from it.

Step 7:

Choose a Business Structure. Each type of business structure has different legal and tax implications. It is necessary to choose the one that fits your particular business. The different types of business structures are sole proprietorship, limited liability,

cooperative, partnership or corporation. All of these types are different from each other and should be researched before deciding on which type.

Step 8:

Obtain a Federal Employer Tax ID Number. Obtain a free “Employer Identification Number” from the IRS. This is needed if you have employees, if you operate a business as a cooperation or partnership, or if you file tax returns for Employment, Excise, Alcohol, Tobacco, or Fire Arms. You can obtain an “Employer Tax ID Number” for free at www.irs.gov.

Step 9:

File for a Business Certificate. Make sure you file for a business certificate through the town you are opening a business in. See more information on pages 16-17.

Step 10:

Register with the State. Make sure to register with the state you are opening a business in if you are a cooperation, nonprofit organization, limited-liability company or partnership. For the state of Massachusetts, more information about this can be found at www.mass.gov.

Step 11:

Know the Tax Regulations. Taxes are a vital part of owning a business. Make sure you are familiar with the tax rules in the state you are opening a business in. For Massachusetts, more information about this can be found at www.mass.gov.

Step 12:

Acquire Licenses and Permits. Business owners must be sure to file for and obtain all the necessary licenses and permits for your particular business. Sometimes the required licenses and permits change so it is necessary to keep up to date with them.

Step 13:

Understand Employer Responsibilities. It is necessary to realize that you are responsible for every aspect of your business. You must understand how to manage your employees and meet the regulations of the state as well. For the state of Massachusetts, more information about this can be found at www.mass.gov.

Business Certificate



What is a Business Certificate?

A business certificate is the public record of the name and address of the owner(s) of a business, and is commonly referred to by the name “D.B.A” (“Doing Business As”) or Sole Proprietorship. Its purpose is primarily for consumer protection and public information. Lenders will typically request a copy of your business certificate.

Who must file a Business Certificate?

Any person conducting business in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts under any title other than the real name of the person conducting the business, whether individually or as a partnership, must file a Business Certificate in the Town Clerk’s office of every town or city that the business person or partnership is located.

Businesses who file with the Secretary of State’s office do not need to file with the town. Certain other associations and partnerships may also be exempt. To find these other exemptions, view Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 110, section 5.

How do I file or renew a Business Certificate?

Business Certificates can be obtained at the West Bridgewater Town Clerk’s Office. The fee for a Business Certificate is \$40.00. Business Certificates must be renewed every four years for \$40.00.

What do I do if I discontinue or withdraw from the business or move to another location?

If you are no longer in business or you move out of town, you should file a Withdrawal from Business Form obtained from the West Bridgewater Town Clerk’s Office.

This should be done as soon as possible to avoid additional personal property taxes on your business because these personal property taxes cannot be adjusted until West Bridgewater's Assessors receive your withdrawal form. The withdrawal is effective the date you file the form, not the date you ended your business. You should file the withdrawal form before the Business Certificate's date of expiration. The fee for withdrawing from a business is \$20.00.

What is the penalty for failing to file a Business Certificate?

The requirement to file a Business Certificate is a State Law. Failure to do so is punishable by a fine of up to \$300.00 per month of violation, or as such fines are determined by the State.

Is there anything I am required to do prior to filing a Business Certificate?

Yes, in order to file for a Business Certificate, you must also fill out a "New Business Owners" form. This form involves obtaining signatures from multiple departments to confirm that you visited that office and they informed you on any permits or licenses you may need for your business. You can find this form at: [Applications and Forms \(westbridgewaterma.org\)](http://Applications and Forms (westbridgewaterma.org))

Where can I find a Business Certificate for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts?

You can find a Business Certificate for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts in the West Bridgewater Town Clerk's Office. The Town Clerk's Office will type a Certificate which will be signed by you. If you are unable to personally go to the Office, use the form on the following page which can be removed from this guide.

Is there a way to get informal feedback on my business/project?

Yes! Several department/board representatives host monthly meetings that project proponents can attend to get *informal* feedback on their projects (for example: Is my location zoned for this type of business? What types of permits/approvals could I need?). While you will not leave this forum with specific approvals, many find it useful as they consider requirements and timing. Please refer to the Contact Information section and contact the Town Planner to request your project get placed on an upcoming agenda.

*Business Certificate
for
The Commonwealth of Massachusetts*

WEST BRIDGEWATER

CERTIFICATE NO# _____

_____, 2015

In conformity with the provisions of Chapter 110, Section 5 of the General Laws, as amended, the undersigned hereby declare(s)
that a business under the title

Of _____ is conducted at

(BUSINESS ADDRESS) WEST BRIDGEWATER, MA 02379

PHONE: _____ E-MAIL ADDRESS: _____

By the following named person(s).

FULL NAME (PLEASE PRINT) (RESIDENCE) (SIGNATURE)

FULL NAME (PLEASE PRINT) (RESIDENCE) (SIGNATURE)

FULL NAME (PLEASE PRINT) (RESIDENCE) (SIGNATURE)

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

_____, SS. _____, 2013

On this _____ day of _____, 20_____, before me, the undersigned notary public,
personally appeared _____ (name of document signer), proved to me through
satisfactory evidence of identification, which were _____, to be
the person whose name is signed on this document, and who swore or affirmed to me that the contents of the document are
truthful and accurate to the best of (his OR her) knowledge and belief.

A certificate issued in accordance with this section shall be in force and effect for four years from the date of issue and shall be
renewed each four years thereafter so long as such business shall be conducted and shall lapse and be void unless so renewed.

Business Certificate Expiration Date: _____

(Notary Signature)

(SEAL)

TOWN CLERK

PLEASE PRINT NAME

My commission expires: _____

Building Permit



Who needs to get a Building Permit?

Building Permits are issued to licensed contractors and business owners to allow construction work. Building Permits are required to construct, reconstruct, alter, repair, remove, or demolish a building or structure.

Where do I get a Building Permit?

West Bridgewater's Inspector of Buildings issues Building Permits. You can find the Building Permit application at the West Bridgewater Town Hall in the Building Department office.

How do I get a Building Permit? Are there other departments/boards involved?

First, you need to apply for a sewage construction permit from the Board of Health and a water entrance permit from the Water Department. Then you must file a Letter of Determination with the Conservation Commission and receive their approval. You must also obtain any required special permits and a building permit application. Lastly, you must get Site Plan approval from the Planning Board and or a Special Permit approval from the Special Permit Granting Authority. **Since these activities involve other departments and boards, you should plan ahead and allow plenty of time for completion of these processes.**

If you have a proposed driveway that enters or exits a state highway or town road, if sand, gravel, stone, etc. must be removed from the site, or if plumbing, gas, or electrical work need to be done you may require additional permits.

What must be turned in with the Building Permit Application?

You must attach a copy of an approved Septic System Design Plan or Site Plan, two sets of building plans with smoke detector locations, a copy of a Water Entrance Permit or fee payment slip, the fee of the building permit application, a copy of your home registration, a copy of your construction supervisor's license, proof of workman's compensation, a MAS check compliance report, proof of approved Site Plan with a Registry of Deeds receipt, and have house number, lot number and Assessor's sheet verified by Assessors Department.

Opening a Restaurant



What do you need to open a Restaurant?

You need a Business Certificate from the West Bridgewater Town Clerk's Office. Business Certificates have a fee of \$40.00. You also need a Food, Drink, and Takeout Application from the Health Department. Food, Drink, and Takeout Application fees vary between \$150.00 and \$300.00 based on the square footage of the food establishment you are opening.

Is your Restaurant going to have seating?

If so, you will need a Common Victualler License from West Bridgewater's Board of Selectmen. Common Victualler License approvals are contingent upon the approval of the Fire Department, Inspector of Buildings, and the Board of Health. This license has a fee of \$50.00.

Is your Restaurant going to serve alcohol?

If so, you will need an Alcoholic Beverage License that is approved by West Bridgewater's Board of Selectmen and the Massachusetts Alcoholic Beverages Control Commission (ABCC). There are many different kinds of Alcoholic Beverage Licenses depending on the type of alcohol being sold and whether it is being made at the restaurant or elsewhere. Applications for these licenses have filing fees of \$50 to the Town of West Bridgewater and \$200 to the ABCC. These fees are in addition to the cost of the liquor licenses which range from \$825 to \$1650 and are in addition to the Common Victualler fee mentioned above.

Are you going to put up a new outside sign?

If so, you will need to apply for a Sign Permit from West Bridgewater's Building Department. Sign Permit fees vary on the type of sign being built. Depending on the

nature and size of your sign(s), you may also need to obtain a Special Permit. The Building Department will help you determine if this step is needed.

Are you remodeling the inside of the restaurant space?

If so, you will also need a Building Permit from West Bridgewater's Building Department. Building Permit fees vary on the value of construction being done. Fee schedules and Building Permit Applications are available on the Building Department's page of the Town's website accessible through the following link:

[Building Department \(westbridgewaterma.org\)](http://westbridgewaterma.org/Building-Department)

Where can I find all of these forms?

You can find most of these necessary forms for opening your Restaurant at:

[Selectmen License Applications \(westbridgewaterma.org\)](http://westbridgewaterma.org/Selectmen-License-Applications)

Any forms you cannot find on the West Bridgewater website can be found at the Town Hall in the department offices that you are to turn the particular forms in to.

Alcoholic Beverage License



What is an Alcoholic Beverage License?

An Alcoholic Beverage License is required for establishments handling alcoholic beverages including retail pouring or package sales.

Who needs to get an Alcoholic Beverage License?

Any business that sells, stores, distributes, serves, or delivers alcohol must have an Alcoholic Beverage License.

Where do I get an Alcoholic Beverage License?

Alcoholic Beverage Licensees must be approved by West Bridgewater's Board of Selectmen, as well as the Massachusetts Alcoholic Beverages Control Commission (ABCC). West Bridgewater's Board of Selectmen, acting as the local licensing board, ultimately issues the license.

How do I get an Alcoholic Beverage License?

The application process and forms vary depending on the type of Alcoholic Beverage License being sought. You should consult West Bridgewater's Board of Selectmen's Office to determine which forms and process you need to complete. The application forms can be found on the ABCC's website at:

[Alcoholic Beverages Control Commission | Mass.gov](https://www.mass.gov/info-details/alcoholic-beverages-control-commission)

Are there any fees associated with an Alcoholic Beverage License?

Yes, there are fees associated with the Alcoholic Beverage License. The Town receives an application fee of \$50 and the ABCC receives an application fee of \$200. Costs of annual liquor licenses range from \$825 to \$1650 depending on the type of license. Once the license is approved, the annual license fee must be paid to the Town. Liquor licenses are renewed annually in November.

After obtaining an Alcoholic Beverage License, are there any other forms related to the ABCC that I need to file?

Most likely, yes, you will have to fill out more forms for the ABCC. There are many reasons you may have to do so, including changing general managers, changing license types, changing locations, changing hours, and changing from wine and malt to all alcohol. These are only a few of the more common reasons for filing additional forms with the ABCC. Most of these additional forms have a fee of \$200.00. To see a complete list of all of the possible forms you can file with the ABCC, go to the ABCC's website at:

[Alcoholic Beverages Control Commission | Mass.gov](http://www.abcc.mass.gov)

Opening a Retail Store



What do you need to open a Retail Store?

You will need a Business Certificate from the West Bridgewater Town Clerk's Office to open a Retail Store. Business Certificates have a fee of \$40.00.

Are you going to put up a new sign outside?

If so, you will need a Sign Permit from West Bridgewater's Building Department. Sign Permit fees vary on the type of sign being built. Depending on the nature and size of your sign(s), you may also need to obtain a Special Permit. The Building Department will help determine if this step is needed.

Are you going to build a new building or remodel an existing building?

If so, you will need a Building Permit from West Bridgewater's Building Department. Building Permit fees vary on the value of construction being done. Fee schedules and Building Permit Applications are available on the Building Department's page of the Town's website accessible through the following link:

[Building Department \(westbridgewaterma.org\)](http://westbridgewaterma.org/Building-Department)

Where can I find all of these forms?

You can find most of these necessary forms for opening your Retail Store at:

[Building Department \(westbridgewaterma.org\)](http://westbridgewaterma.org/Building-Department)

Any forms you cannot find on the West Bridgewater website can be found at the Town Hall in the department offices that you are to turn the particular forms in to.

Health Department

Below is a list of forms and applications needed by West Bridgewater's Health Department, if your business involves such a type of work:

- Food, Drink, and Takeout Permit Application
- Mobile Food Establishment Permit Application
- Caterer's Registration Permit
- Frozen Dessert Manufacturing License
- Milk and Cream License
- Bakery Permit
- Milk Pasteurization Permit
- Vending Machine Application
- Disposal Works Installer Permit Application
- Septage Hauler Permit Application
- Groundwater Discharge Permit
- Trash Hauler Permit Application
- Retail Food Permit
- Pet Shop Application
- Tattoo Establishment Application
- Operation of Trailer Park/Mobile Homes/Motel Application
- Installation of Potable Well Permit
- Body Piercing Establishment Application
- License to Operate a Tanning Facility Application
- Tobacco and Nicotine Delivery Product Sales Permit Application
- Piggery License
- Perc Testing
- Trench Application



You can find any of these forms at:

West Bridgewater's Health Department Office

or

[Board of Health \(westbridgewaterma.org\)](http://westbridgewaterma.org)

Board of Selectmen

Below is a list of forms and applications needed by West Bridgewater's Board of Selectmen, if your business involves such a type of work:

- Liquor License
- Garage Repair License
- Antique/Second Hand Shop License Application
- Common Victualler License
- Temporary Transient Vendor License
- Transient Vendors, Hawkers and Peddlers License
- New and Used Car Dealer Licenses
- Entertainment
- Public Amusement (coin-operated machines)
- Billiard tables
- Underground Storage Tanks
- Auction Houses

You can find any of these forms at:

West Bridgewater's Board of Selectmen Office

or

[Board of Selectmen \(westbridgewaterma.org\)](http://westbridgewaterma.org)

Assessor's Office

You will need to confirm the street address/parcel identification information with the Assessor's Office. This is especially important if the property where your proposed business will be located has not yet been assigned a street address. Additional information can be found by clicking here: [Board of Assessors](#)

Town Clerk

Below is a list of forms and applications needed by West Bridgewater's Town Clerk, if your business involves such a type of work:

- Business Certificate Application
- Business Certificate Discontinuance Form
- Change of Business Location Form

You can find any of these forms at:

West Bridgewater's Town Clerk Office

Or

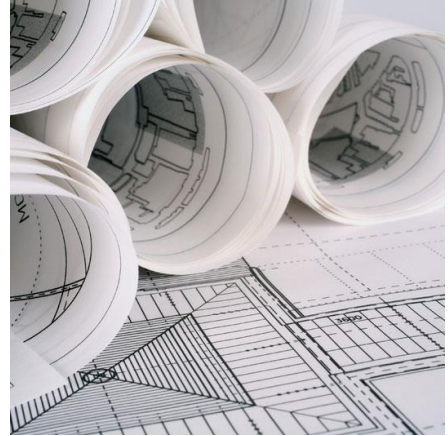
[Town Clerk \(westbridgewaterma.org\)](http://westbridgewaterma.org)



Building Department

Below is a list of forms and applications needed by West Bridgewater's Building/Inspectional Services, if your business involves such a type of work:

- Zoning Determination form from Building Inspector/Zoning Enforcement Officer (to confirm proposed use is allowed/requirements)
- Building Permit Application
- Demolition Permit
- Electrical Permit*
- Sign Permit
- Gas Permit*
- Installation of a Swimming Pool/Hot Tub Application
- Sheet Metal Permit
- Mechanical Permit
- Remodeling and Repair Permit
- Plumbing Permit*
- Tent, Plastic Membrane, or Canopy Type Structure Permit
- Shed Permit
- Woodstove, Fireplace, or Coal Stove Permit
- Zoning Determination/ Site Plan Review Application



You can find any of these forms and additional information at:

West Bridgewater's Building Department Office

or

[Building Department \(westbridgewaterma.org\)](http://westbridgewaterma.org/building-department)

*Applications and payment for these permits are obtained in the Town Clerk's Office.

***Please verify that the proposed business is allowed by zoning at the location selected.*

You can access the Town of West Bridgewater's Zoning By-Laws and maps here: Town Clerk (westbridgewaterma.org)

Conservation Department

Below is a list of forms and applications needed by the Conservation Agent, if your business involves such a type of work:

If you are doing work within 100 ft. of a wetland you will need to file on or more of these forms:

- Abbreviated Notice of Resource Area Delineation
- Request for Determination
- Notice of Intent
- Tree-cutting Work Request Form

Under the West Bridgewater Stormwater Management Program & Illicit Discharge Program you may need one these permits:

- Administrative Stormwater Permit
- General Stormwater Permit

It is all so best to make sure there are Certificate of Compliance requests needed for open permits.

You can find any of these forms at:

West Bridgewater's Conservation Department Office

or

Conservation, Preservation, Recreation (westbridgewaterma.org)

Fire Department

Below are the permits and inspections needed by West Bridgewater's Fire Department, if your business involves such a type of work:

- Sprinkler Permit
- Fire Alarm Permit
- Oil Burner Permit
- Propane Storage Permit
- Tank Installation Permit
- Tank Removal Permit
- Smoke/CO Detector Permit*



Per Town By-Law, all businesses are required to install a lockbox according to Fire Department specifications. Additionally, address numbers on buildings must face the street.

For more information you can contact:

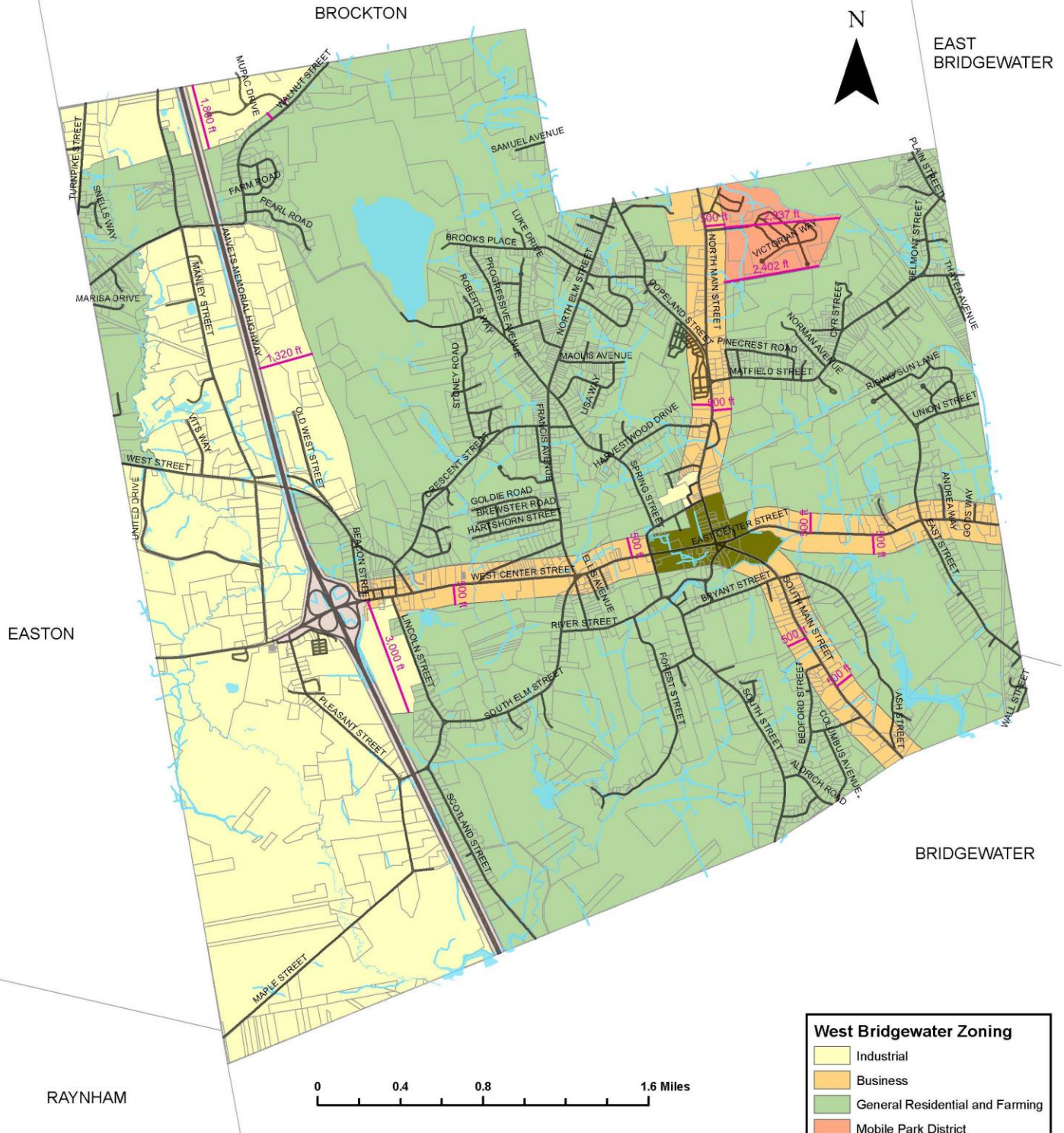
West Bridgewater's Fire Department

or visit

[Fire Department \(westbridgewaterma.org\)](http://Fire Department (westbridgewaterma.org))

*Can also be obtained in Town Clerk's Office

Town of West Bridgewater Zoning & Districts



West Bridgewater Zoning	
	Industrial
	Business
	General Residential and Farming
	Mobile Park District
	Center of Town District
	Zoning Dimensions
	Roadways
	Waterbodies and Streams
	Tax Parcels

Tax parcel mapping is a representation of property boundaries. The authoritative record of property boundaries is recorded at the registries of deeds. A legally authoritative map of property boundaries can only be produced by a professional land surveyor.
 Source Credit: MassGIS (Bureau of Geographic Information), Commonwealth of Massachusetts EOTSS, Old Colony Planning Council (OCPC), Old Colony Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)



Map Created by: Deborah Taylor, West Bridgewater GIS, December 18, 2020

Contact Information

West Bridgewater Town Offices
65 North Main St.

West Bridgewater, MA 02379

Office Hours: Monday, Tuesday & Thursday 8 AM to 4 PM
Wednesday: 8 AM to 7 PM, Friday: 8 AM to 1 PM

Board of Selectmen/Town Administration

David L. Gagne, Town Administrator

Linda Torres, Assistant Town Administrator / HR Director

Christine Eaton, Executive Assistant 508-894-1267

ceaton@wbridgewater.com

Town Clerk

Anne G. Iannitelli, Town Clerk

Sharon Ledin, Assistant Town Clerk 508-894-1200

townclerk@wbridgewater.com

Town Planner

Tracy Altrich, Town Planner 508-894-1200

taltrich@wbridgewater.com

Building Department

Mike White, Building Commissioner

Shelia Stafford, Head Secretary of Inspectional Services

Karen Lavin, Head Administrative Secretary 508-894-1207

klavin@wbridgewater.com

Health Department

Robert Casper Jr., Health Agent 508-894-1209

rcasper@wbridgewater.com

Conservation Department

Tim Hay, Conservation Agent

508-894-1200

thay@wbridgewater.com

Planning Board

Hugh Hurley, Chairman

508-894-1200

Board of Appeals

William E. Lucini, Chairman

508-894-1200

West Bridgewater Fire Department / Police Department

99 West Center Street

West Bridgewater, MA 02379

Fire Department

Lincoln Thibeault, Fire Chief

508-894-1285

lthibeault@wbridgewater.com

(Non-emergency)

Police Department

Victor Flaherty, Police Chief

508-586-2525

vflaherty@wbpd.com

(Non-emergency)



Congratulations!

You're ready to begin your journey as a business owner in West Bridgewater!

Now you have some helpful information to start the process of opening your business in West Bridgewater. We wish you every success in your adventure and hope that this guide has made it easier for you to open a business in West Bridgewater.

