IF YOU ARE OPENING A BUSINESS IN AN EXISTING BUILDING, THERE ARE SOME THINGS YOU SHOULD KNOW REGARDING LANCASTER COUNTY'S ZONING, BUILDING & FIRE REGULATIONS:

POWER AUTHORIZATION/LETTER: Power Authorization or Power Letter is required for any business by Lancaster County prior to power being established with any power provider.

AN IMPORTANT NOTE: We strongly advise before leasing, purchasing, or otherwise committing to a property, you confirm that the existing zoning, physical layout of the building, and site are appropriate for the intended use. This includes having a clear understanding of any zoning, building, fire restrictions, or limitations that may affect your business, and any building and site modifications that may be necessary to open your business.

MEETING WITH STAFF: We encourage you to schedule a meeting with staff and we look forward to working personally with you on your project. At this initial meeting, bring your completed Power Letter application answering as many questions as you can. We will help you complete any information you do not have or uncertain about. At this initial meeting, we should be able to determine whether the property is zoned properly for your use and whether there are any major issues in meeting building requirements that might preclude moving forward.

COUNTY PERFORMS FEASIBILITY INSPECTIONS: After we meet to discuss your business, we can make a "feasibility inspection" of the site. This inspection is not intended as a construction inspection and in no way certifies the overall soundness or suitability of the building, structure, or site. The inspection is offered to give you an idea of any improvements or modifications that may be required to meet County codes, so you can determine anticipated costs and expenses to finalize your budget and plans. The inspection covers the site (parking, landscaping, ingress/egress, and handicap parking) and building to see what changes, if any, will be required for compliance with County codes.

CHANGE OF USE: Building codes and zoning regulations assign use classifications to the types of activities or businesses that take place within a building. For example, under the building codes, an insurance office is classified as business use while a music store is considered mercantile use even though to the general public they are both businesses. These classifications are important in determining what, if any, modifications you will be required to make to your new location. Additionally, certain zoning use definitions may differ from use definitions of the building code. What may be a building code defined change of use may not be considered a change of use by zoning standards.

BUILDING OR BUILDING SITE ALTERATIONS: If you plan to renovate, change or alter the building in any way, to include structural and nonstructural changes, electrical or mechanical alterations, those changes or alterations must comply with the current codes and application permits must be obtained. In some instances, depending on the size and occupancy classification of your business, architectural or engineering drawings may be required as part of a plan submittal when applying for a Building Permit.

IF YOUR BUSINESS IS CONSIDERED A CHANGE OF USE: Once the business you are planning to open or relocate is classified differently than the previous occupant's use of the space or building, there may be a requirement to make certain modifications to the building and building site. If modifications are only needed for the building than a Building Upfit Permit may need to be applied for. If changes are needed to the building site, then site plan approval may be needed.

IF YOUR BUSINESS IS NOT CONSIDERED A CHANGE OF USE, AND YOU ARE NOT DOING ANY CHANGES: Once it has been determined that your proposed business is not a change of use per the building codes or zoning regulations and no structural changes are being made, a Power Authorization or Power Letter may be issued. Please allow up to five business days for processing.

IF YOUR BUSINESS IS NOT A CHANGE OF USE: There may also be a situation where your business is classified as the same use as the previous occupant but your business creates an expansion of the use or you generate a secondary use different from the primary intended use. Even though your business may not be a change of use, an expansion of the use or the addition of another use may require additional restroom facilities or parking spaces and may require additional fire protection. For example, if you have a restroom or restrooms that are not handicapped accessible, there would be a requirement to provide accessible restrooms. Many times this cannot be accomplished without enlarging the existing restroom(s) or even adding new facilities. There may also be requirements for additional fire protection (such as sprinklers or fire rated walls) or for revisions to the site such as parking and landscaping. Also, if any structural changes are being made to the building, this would trigger the need for a Building Permit.

Lancaster County
South Carolina

Lancaster County Zoning Department

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Lancaster, South Carolina 29721-1809

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POWER AUTHORIZATION REQUEST

Name of proposed tenant/business name:_____

Property address: _____

Property owner:_____ **Email:**_____ **Contact #:**_____

Applicant:_____ **Email:**_____ **Contact #:**_____

Mailing address:_____ **Tax Map Number:**_____

Attach signed lease from the property owner acknowledging proposed use: Yes ☐ **No** ☐ **N/A** ☐

Proposed use or request:_____

Previous use:_____ **If vacant, how long?**_____

2015 International Building Code, Section 105.1 – Any owner or authorized agent who intends to construct, enlarge, alter, repair, move, demolish, or change the occupancy of a building or structure, or to erect, install, enlarge, alter, repair, remove, convert or replace any electrical, gas, mechanical or plumbing system, the installation of which is regulated by this Code, or to cause any such work to be done, shall first make application to the Building Official and obtain necessary permits. The Power Letter can only be issued if no work is to be preformed.

Are any improvements being made to the building? Yes ☐ **No** ☐ **Are any improvements being made to the site? Yes** ☐ **No** ☐

Date your business is anticipated to open:_____ **Current power provider:**_____

Square footage of your space:_____ **Total square footage of building:**_____

Total number of parking spaces for building:_____ **Number of parking spaces for business:**_____

Number of disabled parking spaces:_____ **Number of restrooms:**_____ **Accessible: Yes** ☐ **No** ☐

Zoning Permit is required for any development activity requiring a Building Permit or change of use. A site inspection will be done by the Building & Zoning Department. The applicant agrees that no land disturbance activity shall commence without first obtaining the proper approvals and permits from the Stormwater Division. The applicant certifies information on this application is true and correct. If any information is false or misleading, the Power Letter is considered void.

Signature of applicant:_____ **Date submitted:**_____

OFFICE USE ONLY

Zoning District:_____ **Feasibility Inspection:** ☐ **Yes** ☐ **No** **Date:**_____

Required disabled spaces for use:_____ **Required parking spaces for use:**_____

Proposed/existing building accessibility approved? ☐ **Yes** ☐ **No** **Power Authorization approved?** ☐ **Yes** ☐ **No**

Comments:_____

Staff signature:_____ **Date:**_____

Proud to serve the citizens of Lancaster County