

The Lincoln Launchpad

This guide is designed to assist both prospective entrepreneurs and established business owners in successfully transitioning from a business idea, or the expansion of an existing venture, to the grand opening day in Lincoln, California.

October 2026

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Welcome to Lincoln!

About Us

Lincoln sprang up as a railroad terminal in the 1800s as the western United States realized massive growth. Today, the city continues its agricultural heritage and is also known for its production of clay, lumber, and building materials. Interestingly, the world-renowned Gladding McBean & Company is the only remaining major manufacturer of decorative architectural terra cotta in the United States. Close by, many wineries and breweries can be found along the Placer Wine Trail while Thunder Valley Casino Resort, a short drive from the city center, is an entertainment hub for the region. Residents and visitors can both enjoy outdoor recreational opportunities in the mountains including, hiking and biking trails, skiing, and snowboarding with close proximity to lakes and rivers for swimming, fishing, or boating. The city also has convenient access to highways, rail services, and regional and international airports.

Mission

To provide the highest level of service responsive to our community's expectations and to enhance the quality of life and economic vitality.

Vision

America's Hometown – A City of Opportunity



Sean Scully, MPA
City Manager



Nita Wracker, MBA CPA
Assistant City Manager

City Council (2026)



Richard Pearl
Mayor, District 4



Whitney Eklund
Mayor Pro Tem, District 5



Holly Andreatta
Councilmember, District 1



Benjamin Brown
Councilmember, District 2



John Reedy
Councilmember, District 3

City Council Regular Meetings
2nd and 4th Tuesdays monthly | 6:00 p.m. at City Hall

Community Profile

Demographics

Located 27 miles northeast of California's State Capital, Sacramento, and halfway between the Bay Area and Reno, Nevada, Lincoln is a dynamic city with a diverse community in Placer County. Incorporated in 1890, this once small rural town grew into a thriving mid-size city - earning its reputation as one of the fastest growing cities in the country from 2000 to 2010.

57k+
Residents

$118,204
Median Household Income

42.38
Median Age

21,071
Number of Households

28
Square Miles Total

8,435
Est. Employees

1,161
Est. Businesses

$1.1B
Est. Annual Revenue



Notable Businesses

- Sierra Pacific Industries
- Gladding, McBean
- RobbJack Corporation

City Accomplishments



Lincoln
All-America City
2006

All America City (2006)
National Civic League

This designation honors communities that leverage civic engagement, collaboration, inclusiveness and innovation to successfully address local issues.

Collaboration in Real Estate & Finance Award of Merit (2026)
California Association for Local Economic Development (CALED)

Use of financing tools and partnerships to achieve economic development goals and complete impactful real estate projects.

Small Economic Development Organization (2026)
Business Facilities - The Source for Site Selectors

Programs and initiatives that focus on attracting and retaining companies in their communities.
(Population under 100,000)

Competitiveness Award (2026)
Greater Sacramento Economic Council (GSEC)

Projects in the region that drive future growth through bold leadership and transformative investments.

Public Sector Champion
City Manager Sean Scully (2025)
International Economic Development Council (IEDC)

A local official who has demonstrated a commitment to economic development through service in the public sector.

Rankings

Fastest Growing Small City in the U.S. (2000-2010)
U.S. Census Bureau

3rd (2026) & 4th (2025) Safest City in California
Safewise

7th Fastest Growing City in California (2026)
World Population Review

Quick Business Roadmap

Contact the City before signing a lease or purchasing a property to confirm zoning and permit requirements. This step can save significant time and cost later in the process!

Plan Your Path to Success

Putting Your Plan in Action

Getting Your Business Open

Step 1

Want to open or expand a business here? Engaging with the City early on can facilitate a smoother approval process and contribute to a successful launch, saving you time and money.

Step 2

Once you have a business idea and a potential location, contact the City to initiate the approval process and get questions answered. Most businesses undergo a similar review procedure before they can open.

Step 3

Before you open your doors, the City will verify that all necessary permits, inspections, and approvals have been finalized. The fun part can then begin!





Erin Frye
Economic Development & Communications Specialist

Daniella Stepek
Economic Development Specialist

econdev@lincolnca.gov

Business Process

Step 1: Plan Your Path to Success

Plan Your Project



Before contacting staff, think through some questions as it will be helpful information for staff.

- What type of business are you opening?
- Where do you plan to locate?
- What services will you provide?
- Will construction or remodeling be needed?
- What business previously operated at the location (if known)?
- What, if any, accessibility features are currently in place?

Find the Right Location



Before choosing a site, confirm the location is zoned for your proposed use. The City 's zoning regulations determine which types of businesses can operate in different areas. Staff can help confirm the following:

- Whether your business is allowed at a particular location.
- Any additional approvals that may be required.
- Parking requirements for your business type.



Do Your Research & Hire Professionals

Review key City standards early! Helpful resources include the Lincoln Municipal Code, Design Guidelines, and Zoning Standards.

If your project includes tenant improvements, exterior changes, or new construction, hiring a licensed architect, engineer, or design professional can help move your project forward more efficiently. Clear, complete plans reduce revisions and can speed up permit review and inspections.

Find available properties here

Business Process

Step 2: Putting Your Plan in Action

What type of project are you planning within the City of Lincoln?

A
Same Use in Existing Space

Common Steps:
Zoning Confirmation, Minor Permits (if needed), and Business License

Example:
Retail → retail
Restaurant → restaurant

B
New Use in Existing Space

Common Steps:
Zoning Review, Building Permits, and Inspections

Example:
Retail → restaurant
Office → salon

C
New Construction or Major Remodel

Common Steps:
Planning Approvals, Design Review, Planning Commission / Council Review, Permits

Example:
Ground-up development, major expansion, tear-down, and rebuild

The Planning Process for Larger Projects*



Stage 1 Entitlement Application

Submit an entitlement application to Planning. After an entitlement application is approved, the project enters the post-entitlement phases.



Stage 2 Improvement Plans

Most new projects trigger requirements for an improvement plan for the installation of infrastructure including, but not limited to, roadways, water, storm drain and sewer utilities, and on-site improvements. Development Engineering reviews the Improvement Plans submitted to the City and must be approved before Stage 3.



Stage 3 Building Permit

A building permit application for vertical construction must be submitted to the Building Division for review. Once approved, the project can start constructing the building / structure.

Important Note

The project review and approval times heavily vary and fluctuate depending on multiple factors, including:

- Quality and timeliness of applicant resubmittals
- Responsivness to comments
- Project hearing deadlines (if any)
- CEQA review
- Staff workload / holidays
- Additional circumstances not listed here

*Comprehensive descriptions of Stages 1-3 are available in Appendices A-C.

Business Process

Step 3: Getting Your Business Open



Checklist

- Zoning Approval Confirmed
- Construction Completed
- Inspections Passed
- All Required Fees Paid
- Business License Received

Additional Agencies to Contact

Depending on your type of business, additional permits, licensing, or registrations may be required from the county or state.

- Fictitious Business Name registration - *Placer County Clerk Recorder*
- Food permits and inspections - *Placer County Environmental Health*
- Alcohol licenses - *CA Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control (ABC)*
- Seller's Permit - *CA Department of Tax and Fee Administration*
- Employer Identification Number (EIN) - *Internal Revenue Service (IRS)*
- Limited Liability Corporation (LLC) registration - *CA Secretary of State*
- Sole proprietorship registration - *CA Franchise Tax Board*
- Labor compliance - *CA Department of Industrial Relations*
- Employer payroll taxes - *CA Employment Development Department (EDD)*
- Electric and Gas Services - *Pacific Gas & Electric (PG&E)*
- CAMTC Certification - *California Massage Therapy Council*

In some cases, properties may be located on unincorporated land even with a Lincoln address. This will determine whether you work with the City, Placer County, or both. You can verify whether the property is within city limits using an online zoning map.

Team Lincoln

City staff is available to help guide businesses through the process.

Economic Development
916-434-2460

Planning Division
916-434-3370

Building Division
916-434-2470

Development Engineering
916-434-2470

Public Works
916-434-2450

Parks & Recreation
916-434-3220

Code Enforcement
916-434-2477

City Manager
916-434-2490 x4



Don't forget to contact the Lincoln Area Chamber of Commerce or Downtown Lincoln Association!

Business License

Site Page

What is a business license?

A business license is required when you conduct any business activity within the City even if your business is located OUTSIDE the city limits or you have a business license from another city. Any business based in the City must have a license as well. This includes home-based businesses, building contractors, independent contractors, and non-profit businesses.

How long is a business license valid?

The business license is good for the calendar year during which it is issued. It must be renewed every January.

How long will it take to get a business license?

To complete the application, it only takes a few minutes. Depending upon the type of business you are opening, your processing time may take up to 10 days. The permanent business license certificate will be mailed in about two weeks.

Apply for a Business License

You can apply online using the link or QR code: https://lincoln.hdlgov.com/

Business License Registration

Business License Fees (as 5/26/2026)

Description	Fee***
Application Fee / Renewal Fee	$30.00
Business License Name Change or Location Change	$11.00
Home Occupancy Fees	$125.00
SB 1186	$4.00
Sidewalk Vendor Permit Fee*	$180.00
Sidewalk Vendor Permit Renewal*	$90.00
Zoning Clearance Form**	$124.00
Land Use Certification Letter	$416.00

*Vendor permit fee and vendor permit renewal are processed/issued by Code Enforcement.
**The Community Development Department collects the fees for the zoning clearance forms.
***Subject to change.

Economic Development Division

Site Page

Economic Development aims to boost a competitive economy and improve residents' quality of life by stimulating job creation, attracting investment, generating revenue, and promoting sustainable development.

Property Evaluation Tool

The new custom property evaluation tool will assist you in finding available properties with the best location in Lincoln for your business.

Permit Assistance Program

A no-cost program that provides assistance to prospective entrepreneurs and existing business owners through workshops on important topics and 1:1 help during outreach events. Recordings and upcoming workshops can be viewed online.

Entrepreneurship Support Portal

The portal provides a suite of local, regional, state, and national resources available at low-cost or free to businesses. It is a useful first stop to find most everything a business may need.



Business Spotlight Campaign

This is a free marketing campaign hosted by the City. Participants can win a free promotional video by responding to the monthly social media prompt on Instagram or Facebook.

Useful Business Resources

- CalGold Permit Tool – determine potential required permits and licensing using location and business type
- SBDC & Fundica – free access to an inventory of a government grants and loans
- NorCal Entrepreneur Hub –virtual resources, grants, and more, for small business owners, employers, and job seekers
- Placer School for Adults - offers many different classes from computer skills, personal enrichment, typing tests, truck driving, and more.
- Placer Job Network - free job board designed to connect employers located in Placer County with job seekers.

Property Evaluation Tool

Economic Development Action Plan

Community Development Department

Site Page

The Community Development Department (CDD) is the primary resource for all development-related needs, including Building Permits, Improvement Plan Reviews, and Subdivision Maps. CDD can provide information on both planned and ongoing development projects as well as developing residential, commercial, or industrial land.

Planning Division

Planning offers professional guidance and technical assistance to the City Council, Planning Commission, and public. It manages orderly growth and development in Lincoln by implementing the General Plan, Zoning Map, Subdivision Ordinances, and CEQA.

Development Activity Map

This map summarizes private development activity in the City, excluding ministerial projects like single-family homes, accessory dwelling units, residential additions, business signs, and interior remodels.

Zoning Map

This map shows zoning, general plan land use, and relevant information, with Specific Plans and General Development Plans detailing future land subdivision and zoning.



Building Division

Building aims to protect life and property by ensuring safe construction. They enforce codes, laws, and ordinances in Lincoln, ensuring all buildings meet minimum design and construction standards.

Development Engineering

Development Engineering provides essential services for city development projects. These services include reviewing and approving improvement and grading plans, preparing "Conditions of Approval" for various projects, and reviewing and approving parcel and subdivision maps. They also issue Grading Permits for commercial developments, custom lots, and subdivisions.

Development Activity Map

Zoning Map

Code Enforcement Division

Site Page

Code Enforcement is the enforcement authority for health, safety, and welfare requirements as well as whose duties include enforcement of any statute, rule, regulation, or standard.

Responsibilities

- Nuisance abatement
- Unpermitted work
- Illicit discharges
- Illegal dumping of solid waste, debris, rubbish, and receptacles
- Property maintenance and substandard housing
- Inoperative vehicles
- Illegally stored boats, trailers and RVs
- Land use issues
- Zoning compliance
- Small farm animals

Signs Placement Fact Sheet

Food Truck Permit App

Description of Violation	Related Lincoln Municipal Code
Property maintenance	LMC Chapter 8.08
Inoperable and abandoned vehicles NOT on the roadway	LMC Chapter 10.72
Improperly stored RVs, boats, and trailers NOT on the roadway	LMC 18.36.030
Signs	LMC Title 16
Accessory buildings	LMC 18.36.050
Home occupations	LMC Chapter 18.62
Second dwelling units	LMC Chapter 18.37
Animals	LMC Title 6



Public Works Department

Site Page

Public Works plays a crucial role in the effective operation of municipal services, from providing clean and safe drinking water and reliable trash collection to maintaining streets, sewer systems, and clean parks.

Water Conservation

There are strategies you can do to ensure water does not go to waste as a business and resident. Consider your water usage and identify opportunities to conserve — every drop counts.

Organics

Businesses producing over 2 cubic yards of solid waste weekly may be required to sign up for organics collection program. We have more information on our website, and readily available toolkits to help you get your program started.

Fats, Oils, Greases Program

The FOG program seeks to prevent sewage backups by educating residents and businesses about managing kitchen FOG. Pouring FOG down drains can cause blockages and lead to expensive plumbing problems.



Adopt-a-Street Program

Organizations or businesses can adopt a street for free, committing to quarterly litter pickups for one year. The city will install and maintain a sign with the sponsor's name. on their adopted street.

Parks, Trails, and Open Spaces

Lincoln encompasses 25 parks, dozens of trails, and open spaces for the community to enjoy.

Wastewater

Manages underground infrastructure for sewage transport from homes and businesses to treatment plants, where it is processed for environmental and agricultural use. It is also treated and turned into recycled water for non-potable uses.

Backflow Prevention Program

BSI Online's database has important information for new customers, including backflow prevention. New installations must send test reports to backflowtest@lincolnca.gov for account creation, while existing devices should be managed through BSI. Cross Connection Hazard Assessments on commercial properties may require replacing or adding backflow devices for better protection.

Water Resources

Organics Recycling Program

Live Sewer Smart (FOG)

BSI Online

Recreation Department

Site Page

The Recreation department provides community programs, classes, sports leagues, events, and access to parks and facilities for residents.

Love Lincoln

A shop local campaign creating awareness of the benefits of capturing sales tax revenue within Lincoln to fund our services and facilities.

Facility Rentals

The City offers several locations to host your next event, including Beermann Plaza, Community Center, Public Library Meeting Rooms, as well as McBean Park Gazebo, Pavilion, Pickleball Courts, Memorial Pool, and Stadium.

Special Event Permit

A permit is needed for any organized event on public property, including public facilities and city streets. You submit the application to the department through email. All necessary documentation should be provided at least 30 days before the event, including Insurance, ABC Licenses (if needed), and proof of security officers (if needed).

Field Rentals

There are various parks available with sports fields that can be rented. To secure a reservation, applications should be sent to Recreation@lincolnca.gov or delivered to the Lincoln Community Center. Additionally, you must include a Certificate of Insurance that names the City as an additional insured, along with the required fees.



Facility Rentals

Field Rentals

Special Event Permit

Partner Organizations

Lincoln Area Chamber of Commerce

The Chamber is the place for local businesses to find business help, support and encouragement through member-only and public events, workshops and networking with other members.

Downtown Lincoln Association (DLA)

DLA is a group of merchants, property owners, city officials, organizations, and residents united by a shared commitment to keeping downtown vibrant with a focus on everything from the appearance and success of local businesses to historical preservation and community involvement.

Greater Sacramento Economic Council (GSEC)

GSEC is a public-private partnership that unites business and community leaders to create one cohesive regional economic development strategy with a focus on growth, sustainability, equity and competitiveness.

Economic Development Committee (EDC)

The EDC is an advisory body to City Council on matters related to the attraction and retention of businesses; development and review of plans, programs, and strategies that relate to job creation; property and sales tax generation; and to serve as a source of local input into economic development.

More Partners

- Sierra College
- Jessup University
- California State University, Sacramento
- Western Placer Unified School District
- Golden Sierra Job Training Agency
- Placer Business Resource Center
- Placer County Economic Development
- Placer County Community Development Resources Agency
- Placer County Business Advantage Network
- Placer County Environmental Health
- Sierra Small Business Development Center
- Growth Factory
- Roseville Venture Lab
- The Carlsen Center for Innovation & Entrepreneurship
- California Governor's Office of Economic Development (Go-Biz)

Appendix A

Stage 1: Entitlement Process

Projects requiring entitlements typically involve new construction, major renovations, or land use changes that comply with local zoning codes. Ex: include ground-up developments, rezoning requests, conditional use permits (CUPs), and significant exterior design alterations.

Consider Pre-Application Review

The City offers pre-application review between the staff and project applicants. Also known as a "Pre-Application Conference," this costs $2,073 (as of 2026).

Submit Necessary Application Forms

Applicants will need to submit a Universal Application Form along with the appropriate submittal requirements for the different entitlements. The Levine Act Disclosure Statement is also required.

City Completeness Review

The City has 30 days to deem an application complete or not complete. If a completeness determination is not provided by the City within 30 days, the application is deemed complete automatically. Project requirements will vary on a project-by-project basis.

Routed for Staff Review

The application is routed for departmental review. Each review cycle takes a few weeks typically, but may vary depending on project type.

Some projects can skip DRB & proceed to PC

Design Review Board (DRB)*

Once staff comments are adequately addressed, the project is scheduled for review by the DRB at an upcoming meeting (once a month). The Board may issue an approval recommendation to the Planning Commission. Note: DRB is only required for certain entitlement types.

Planning Commission (PC)

Once staff comments have been adequately addressed, PC will review the project at an upcoming meeting (once a month). The meeting schedule and agenda are posted on the City's website.

Some projects finish after PC & don't need CC

City Council (CC)*

CC may be required to review projects if it involves maps, ordinances, or amending General Plans. Projects would be reviewed at an upcoming meeting which typically meet twice a month.

Project Entitled

If project obtains all necessary approvals from PC and/or CC, the project will officially be entitled. Project requirements will vary on a project-by-project basis.

Post-Entitlement Phase

After the project is entitled, it then moves onto the next phase. Improvement Plans can now be submitted to Development Engineering for review.

*Not required for every entitlement type

Overall project review and approval timelines can vary

Appendix B

Stage 2: Improvement Plans

Submit Improvement Plan

The client or their consultant is required to submit Improvement Plan along with any relevant supporting documents for review by the Development Engineering team.

City Completeness Review

The Development Engineering team will assess the Improvement Plan submission for both completeness and accuracy. Please note that only fully complete submissions will be eligible for plan review.

Routed for Staff Review

The relevant personnel from different departments, such as Planning, Fire Department, Public works, and others, will then offer their feedback.



Comments Compiled from Reviewers

Development Engineering will gather all comments from the different departments. These comments will then be shared with the client's engineer.

Comments Incorporated & Plans Resubmitted

The client's engineer will integrate the comments and resubmit the plans to the City for evaluation. The review and resubmittal process may occur mutliple times.

Prepare Improvement Plan for Final Approval

The engineer from the client's team will submit the Improvement Plan for final approval.

City Confirms Submission of Required Documents and Payment of Fees

The City will confirm the submission of all necessary documents, and ensure that the client has paid all relevant fees.

Approved Improvement Plan

The client secures an approved Improvement Plan along with the necessary permit.

Construction Phase & Inspections

The client then advances to the construction phase, scheduling and completing inspections at various stages of the process.



Overall project review and approval timelines can vary

Appendix C

Stage 3: Building Permits

Submit Building Permit Application

The client or their authorized agent is required to submit the Building Plans along with any additional documents for review to the City's Building Division.

Initial Review for Plan Acceptance

City staff will evaluate the submission for both completeness and accuracy. Please note that only complete submissions will be accepted.

Routed for Staff Review

The relevant personnel from different departments will evaluate the submitted documents. Clients might need to reach out to external departments or agencies for further assistance.

Building Code Compliance Review

Building plans undergo thorough reviews to confirm compliance with the Building Code.

Plan Review Comments or Plan Approval

The client includes feedback from City staff and resubmits the necessary documents for a subsequent review.

Repeating or completing these steps are situational

Final Project Approval & Fees Paid

City staff confirms that all relevant departments and external agencies have given their approval. The client is responsible for paying all applicable fees. Clients might need to reach out to external departments or agencies for further assistance.

Building Permit Issued

The client secures the building permit and moves forward to the construction phase.

Construction Phase & Inspections

The client organizes and carries out inspections at various stages of the process.

Building Permit Final

The client has obtained a finalized building permit.

Overall project review and approval timelines can vary

Contact Information

Thank you for choosing Lincoln!

Website
https://www.lincolnca.gov/

Phone
916-434-2400

City Hall
600 Sixth St., Lincoln, CA 95648

City Directory
A complete list of department phone numbers

City Directory

Social Media
@cityoflincolnca

City of Lincoln, Local Government

City of Lincoln, CA

City of Lincoln

