



Planning Commission  
Regular Meeting  
May 5, 2026 - 7:00 PM  
City Hall Council Chambers

## AGENDA

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### CALL TO ORDER

### PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

- A. The Planning Commission Meeting scheduled for Tuesday, May 5, 2026, at 7:00 p.m. will be held in person and virtually.

Virtual Participation Link:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/86985810812>

Phone one-tap:

+12532050468,,86985810812# US

+12532158782,,86985810812# US (Tacoma)

Join via audio:

+1 253 205 0468 US

+1 253 215 8782 US (Tacoma)

877 853 5257 US Toll Free

888 475 4499 US Toll Free

Webinar ID: 869 8581 0812

### PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

### ROLL CALL

### AGENDA MODIFICATIONS

### PUBLIC COMMENT

### APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- A. 04/07/26 Draft Minutes from the Regular Planning Commission Meeting

### BUSINESS ITEM #1

- A. **City Clerks OPMA and Parliamentary Procedures Staff Introduction/Presentation (Wood)**  
City Clerk to provide an overview of OPMA and Parliamentary Procedures

### BUSINESS ITEM #2

- A. **Citywide Design Standards Update and Related Code Update Staff Introduction/Presentation (Reed)**

Staff will present the proposed updates to the Citywide Design Standards and amended code to Planning Commission for a recommendation to City Council.

**B. Public Hearing**

**C. Deliberation and Vote**

**BUSINESS ITEM #3**

**A. Downtown Design Standards Update and Associated Zoning Code Update  
Staff Introduction/Presentation (Tatro)**

Staff will present the proposed updates to the Downtown Design Standards and amended code to Planning Commission for a recommendation to City Council.

**B. Public Hearing**

**C. Deliberation and Vote**

**BUSINESS ITEM #4**

**A. Density Bonus for Existing Buildings Code Update  
Staff Introduction/Presentation (Goode)**

The City of Auburn is updating the Density Bonus Code for Existing Buildings as required under HB 1757. This update allows for the density bonuses awarded under Auburn City Code 18.02.067 to expand to the Residential Conservancy Zone, the R-1 Residential Zone, and the R-2 Residential Low Zone. Density bonuses awarded under this code section are required to be within existing buildings and shall not expand the square footage of the building or the building footprint.

**B. Public Hearing**

**C. Deliberation and Vote**

**BUSINESS ITEM #5**

**A. Nonconforming Code Update  
Staff Introduction/Presentation (Teague)**

Staff to discuss an update to Chapter 18.54 "Nonconforming Structures, Land And Uses".

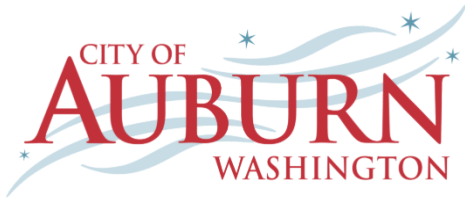
**COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT REPORT**

**ADJOURNMENT**

The City of Auburn Planning Commission is a seven member advisory body that provides recommendations to the Auburn City Council on the preparation of and amendments to land use plans and related codes such as zoning. Planning Commissioners are appointed by the Mayor and confirmed by the City Council.

Actions taken by the Planning Commission, other than approvals or amendments to the Planning Commission Rules of Procedure, are not final decisions; they are in the form of recommendations to the City Council which must ultimately make the final decision.





**AGENDA BILL APPROVAL FORM**

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**Agenda Subject:**

04/07/26 Draft Minutes from the Regular Planning Commission Meeting

**Meeting Date:**

May 5, 2026

**Department:**

Community Development

**Attachments:**

04-07-2026 Minutes

**Budget Impact:**

**Administrative Recommendation:**

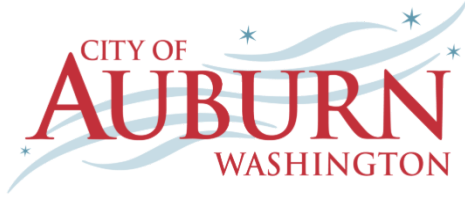
**Background for Motion:**

**Background Summary:**

See attached Minutes

**Councilmember:**

**Staff:** Jason Krum



**Planning Commission  
Regular Meeting  
April 7, 2026 - 7:00 PM  
City Hall Council Chambers**

**MINUTES**

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**CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Judi Roland called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers of Auburn City Hall, 25 West Main Street.

**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

The Planning Commission Meeting was held in person and virtually.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Chair Roland led those in attendance in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**ROLL CALL**

Commissioners present: Chair Judi Roland, Vice Chair William Stewart, Julie Berry, Lynn Walters, and Kirk Hiller. Commissioners Aaron Vanderpol and Ajay Ganesan were excused.

Staff members present: Planning Services Manager Alexandria Teague, Senior Planner Alyssa Tatro, Planner II Gabriel Clark, Senior City Staff Attorney Chandra Hein, and Deputy City Clerk Rebecca Wood-Pollock.

**AGENDA MODIFICATIONS**

Business Item #3 (Citywide Design Standards Update and Related Code Update) and Business Item #4 (Downtown Design Standards Update and Associated Zoning Code Update) were removed from the agenda.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

Bonnie Helms provided comments.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

- A. March 3, 2026 Draft Minutes from Regular Planning Commission Meeting

Commissioner Walters moved and Commissioner Hiller seconded to approve the March 3, 2026, Planning Commission Meeting minutes.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY. 5-0

## **BUSINESS ITEM #1**

### **A. Critical Areas Ordinance Update Staff Introduction/Presentation (Tatro)**

Staff will present the proposed updates to the Critical Areas Ordinance, Chapter 16.10 Auburn City Code (ACC) to Planning Commission for a recommendation to City Council

Planner Tatro provided the Commission with a presentation on the Critical Areas Ordinance Update, including its background and purpose, key objectives, and an overview of each of the updates to the Code's sections, including Definitions and Administration, Applicability, Exemptions and Nonconforming Uses, Classification and Rating of Critical Areas, and Buffer Areas and Setbacks. She also addressed geologic hazard areas, minimization measures, mitigation framework and standards, stream regulations, site potential tree height, existing and proposed stream buffers, vegetative standards, comparisons to other jurisdictions, and a summary of the changes.

### **B. Public Hearing**

Chair Roland opened the Public Hearing at 7:30 p.m.

Dylan Marcus provided comments.

Chair Roland closed the Public Hearing at 7:34 p.m.

### **C. Deliberation and Vote**

The Commission discussed the Critical Areas Ordinance Update.

Vice Chair Stewart moved and Commissioner Walters seconded to recommend to Council the proposed updates to the Critical Areas Ordinance as recommended by staff.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY. 5-0

## **BUSINESS ITEM #2**

### **A. Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) Code Update Staff Introduction/Presentation (Clark)**

Staff will present the proposed development standards and land use approval pathways for BESS to Planning Commission for a recommendation to City Council.

Planner Clark shared a presentation with the Commission on the Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) Code Update, including its purpose, applicable sections of the City Code, applicable regulations, an overview of the tiered system and zoning classifications, public feedback and concerns, and staff recommendations.

The Commission discussed firefighter protocol for thermal events and incident mitigation plans, Valley Regional Fire Authority (VRFA) resources and staffing, differences in safety between the different tiers, battery certifications, separation requirements, the steps in the application process, power substations, noise pollution, the BESS moratorium, and expressed interest in forming an ad hoc committee to do further research regarding BESS safety.

**B. Public Hearing**

Chair Roland opened the Public Hearing at 8:04 p.m.

Julien Lou, Dylan Marcus, and Bonnie Helms provided comments.

Chair Roland closed the Public Hearing at 8:15 p.m.

**C. Deliberation and Vote**

The Commission discussed power grids, setbacks, fire response, critical areas, vulnerable populations, and the next steps in the process.

Vice Chair Stewart moved and Commissioner Hiller seconded to recommend to City Council the proposed updates to the Battery Energy Storage System Code as recommended by Staff.

MOTION CARRIES. 3-2. Commissioner Berry and Commissioner Walters voted no.

The Commission discussed forming a fact finding committee for further research and added that to next month's agenda.

**COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT REPORT**

Manager Teague shared information about the new Home Depot location, unit lot subdivisions, social media advertising for the Planning Commission, the A Street Roundabout project, the awarded contract for the Auburn Theater, and shared that the next meeting would be held on May 5, 2026.

**ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business to come before the Planning Commission, the meeting was adjourned at 8:32 p.m.

APPROVED this 5th day of May, 2026.

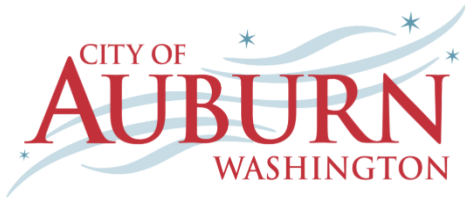
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JUDI ROLAND, CHAIR

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Rebecca Wood-Pollock, Deputy City Clerk





**AGENDA BILL APPROVAL FORM**

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**Agenda Subject:**

**City Clerks OPMA and Parliamentary Procedures  
Staff Introduction/Presentation (Wood)**

City Clerk to provide an overview of OPMA and Parliamentary Procedures

**Meeting Date:**

May 5, 2026

**Department:**

Community Development

**Attachments:**

PowerPoint Presentation

**Budget Impact:**

**Administrative Recommendation:**

**Background for Motion:**

**Background Summary:**

**Councilmember:**

**Staff:** Jason Krum



# PLANNING COMMISSION

## ROLES, LIMITATIONS, AND VOTING PROCEDURES

Rebecca Wood, Deputy City Clerk  
Shawn Campbell, City Clerk

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S E R V I C E

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# PLANNING COMMISSION AS AN ADVISORY BODY

- Created under Revised Code of Washington (RCW) 35.63
- Purpose: to serve in an **advisory** capacity to the City Council
- Role: to make **recommendations** to City Council regarding comprehensive planning, zoning and land use regulations, development standards, and other topics of discussion from the Community Development Department

# ACTIONS WITHIN THE PLANNING COMMISSION'S AUTHORITY

- **Vote to make a recommendation to Council regarding comprehensive planning, zoning and land use regulations, development standards, and other materials the Community Development Department plans to bring to Council**
- **Suggest amendments to proposed code changes and other materials the Community Development Department plans to bring to Council**
- **Hold Public Hearings**
- **Form Ad Hoc Committees**
  - If the Commission forms an ad hoc Committee, it must contain a number of Commissioners fewer than a quorum of the body
- **Postpone a vote of the Planning Commission**
  - Council may still vote on an issue even if the Planning Commission has not voted to recommend it to Council
- **Update the Planning Commission Rules of Procedure**
  - Make any changes regarding meeting dates, rules, etc. not already dictated by City Code

# ACTIONS OUTSIDE OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION'S AUTHORITY

- **Take any action that falls under the responsibility of City Council**
  - Example: extend moratoriums, pass code changes, pass legislation that enacts anything into law
- **Postpone a vote of the City Council**
  - The City Council does not require a recommendation from the Planning Commission prior to voting on an issue. While the Commission's recommendation is valued, it is not required for a vote of the City Council

# ORDER OF EVENTS

- 1. Staff Presentation**
- 2. Discussion (Clarifying questions to Staff)**
- 3. Public Hearing (if applicable)**
- 4. Deliberation (additional thoughts, support, concerns, opinions regarding the topic up for vote)**
- 5. Vote**

# DISCUSSION VS. DELIBERATION

- Discussion is conducted after (or during) the staff presentation on a topic, where Commissioners have the opportunity to ask staff clarifying questions regarding the content of the presentation and materials provided in the agenda packet
- Deliberation is conducted AFTER a staff presentation and Public Hearing (if there is one), where Commissioners can voice their opinions, support, or concerns regarding the topic up for vote

# VOTING

1. A Commissioner must be recognized the Chair and make a motion
2. Another Commissioner must be recognized by the Chair and second the motion
3. Chair asks for any further discussion on the topic
  1. Amendment(s)
4. The Chair calls for a vote
5. The motion carries if a majority of the Commissioners present votes in favor
  1. Quorum of the body versus majority of members present
6. The motion fails if there is not a majority vote in favor

# AMENDMENT (EXAMPLE)

If you wish to **amend** a code as presented by staff:

1. The motion and second must be made to “Recommend to City Council the **approval of the code as presented by staff.**”
2. The Chair will ask for any further discussion
3. A Commissioner may move to “**Amend the code to make XXX changes**”
  1. Another Commissioner must second the motion to amend
  2. Further discussion commences
  3. Vote on the amendment
  4. If the vote to amend passes, then **the amended motion becomes the main motion**
  5. If the vote to amend fails, then **the main motion stands as it was originally stated**
4. The Chair will call for a vote for the main motion
  1. If the vote to amend passes, then the new main motion is to “Recommend to City Council the approval of the code **as amended.**”
  2. If the vote to amend fails, then the main motion will stand as “Recommend to City Council the approval of the code as presented by staff.’”
5. The motion carries if a majority of the Commissioners present votes in favor

# MAKING A MOTION

- **The motion must be clear for the record**
  - **Make a Recommendation: I move to recommend to Council the adoption of Code Update XYZ as presented by staff**
  - **Make an Amendment and Recommendation: I move to recommend to Council the adoption of Code Update XYZ as amended**
  - **Form an Ad Hoc Committee: I move to form an Ad Hoc Committee for the purpose of gathering additional research and information regarding BESS safety and thermal event prevention with a report back to the Planning Commission at the XX/XX/XXXX Planning Commission meeting**
  - **Postpone a vote: I move to postpone the vote on Code Update XYZ until the XX/XX/XXXX Planning Commission meeting**

# QUESTIONS DURING A MEETING

- Questions regarding content or scheduling can be directed to Alexandria Teague or other Community Development Department staff
- Questions regarding parliamentary procedure, OPMA, Rules of Procedure, or other meeting protocols can be directed to Rebecca Wood or Chandra Hein
  - Happy to help script proposed motions if you know about one you intend to make in advance
  - Help us help you! If you know what you want to do but don't know proper verbiage or phrasing, just ask!
  - Informal body = informal motions, but they must still be clear for the record
  - Staff cannot steer you in one direction or another, but can interpret what you are trying to do and explain how you would go about it

# KEY TAKEAWAYS

- **The Planning Commission is an advisory body, created to serve in an advisory capacity to the City Council**
- **A motion must be clearly stated, seconded, and voted on before any further action can take place**
- **Discussion vs. Deliberation**
- **Don't hesitate to ask questions**

# QUESTIONS?

Rebecca Wood, Deputy City Clerk

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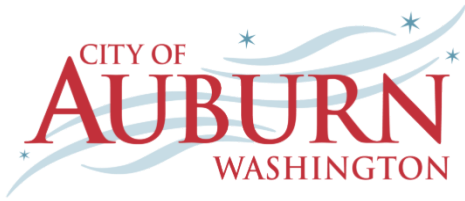
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## AGENDA BILL APPROVAL FORM

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**Agenda Subject:**

**Citywide Design Standards Update and Related Code Update  
Staff Introduction/Presentation (Reed)**

Staff will present the proposed updates to the Citywide Design Standards and amended code to Planning Commission for a recommendation to City Council.

**Meeting Date:**

May 5, 2026

**Department:**

Community Development

**Attachments:**

Staff Report , Exhibit 1  
PowerPoint Presentation, Exhibit  
2 Citywide Design Standards,  
Exhibit 3 ACC18.31.200 Text  
Amendment, Exhibit 4 ACC  
18.23.040 Text Amendment,  
Exhibit 5 ACC 18.07.030 Text  
Amendment

**Budget Impact:**

**Administrative Recommendation:**

Planning Commission to deliberate and recommend that City Council approve the updated Citywide Design Standards and associated amendment to Title 18, including Sections 18.31.200, 18.07.030 and 18.23.040 of the Auburn City Code.

**Background for Motion:**

**Background Summary:**

See attached Staff Report

**Councilmember:**

**Staff:** Jason Krum

## PLANNING COMMISSION STAFF REPORT

**AGENDA SUBJECT/TITLE:**

Citywide Design Standards Update and Related Code Update

**CITY FILE NO(s):**

City File No. ZOA26-0002

**APPLICANT/AGENT/OWNERS:**

City of Auburn

**REQUEST:**

Planning Commission to deliberate, hold a public hearing, and recommend that City Council approve the updated Citywide Design Standards and associated Code updates to comply with HB 1293 state requirements.

**LOCATION:**

Citywide

**NOTIFICATION:**

A Notice of Public Hearing (NOH) and SEP26-0003 Determination of Non-Significance (DNS) was issued on March 6, 2026.

**HEARING DATE:**

May 5, 2026

**SEPA STATUS:**

A SEPA Environmental Checklist for a Non-Project Action with a threshold determination of non-significance (DNS) was issued on March 6, 2026, with a public comment period ending on March 20, 2026, and an appeal period ending April 3, 2026.

**STAFF:**

Dinah Reed, Senior Planner, Dept. of Community Development

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:**

Planning Commission to deliberate and recommend that City Council approve the updated Citywide Design Standards and associated amendment to Title 18, including Sections 18.31.200, 18.07.030 and 18.23.040 of the Auburn City Code.

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## SUMMARY OF CODE CHANGES

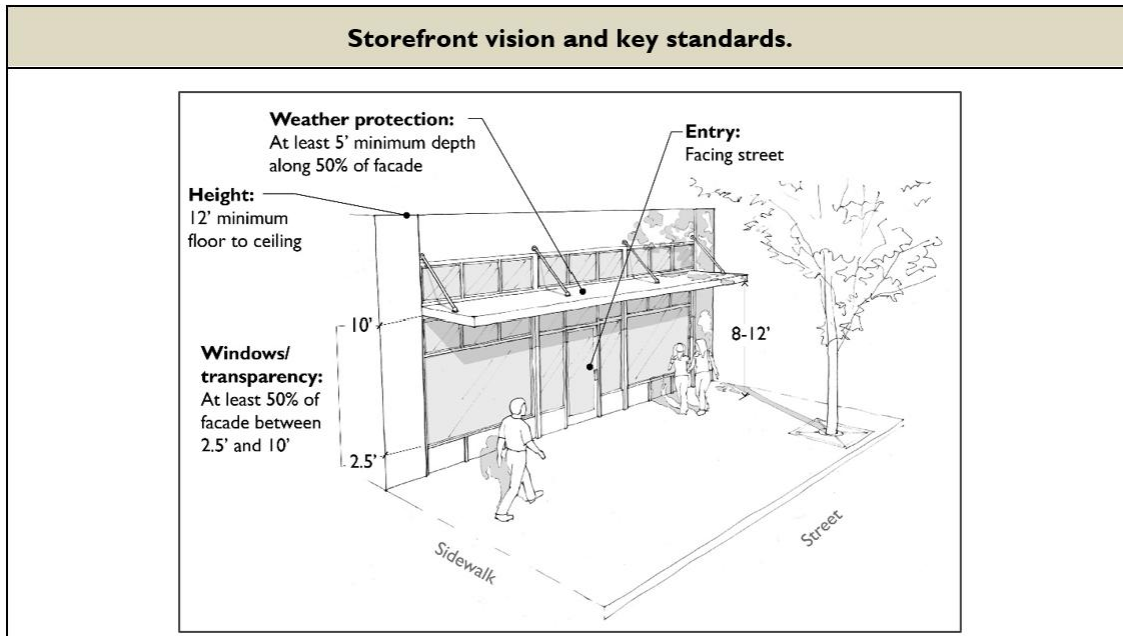
### **Section ACC 18.31.200 Architectural and site design review standards and regulations**

The purpose of the revisions in this section is as follows:

- 1) ACC 18.31.200(B)(1) clarifies for the types of new development that are applicable to the design standards
- 2) ACC 18.31.200(B)(1)(a), (b), (c), (d) clarifies that apartment buildings, mixed-use residential development, retirement apartments, congregate living facilities and senior housing are no longer subject to conditional use permits, and non-residential development, except for development within the industrial zones.
- 3) ACC 18.31.200(B)(3) removes Auburn Junction as a design review document. Auburn Junction is a specific area defined in the downtown area. The Downtown Urban Center Design Standards have largely superseded the Auburn Junction Design Standards, and they are no longer needed.
- 4) ACC 18.31.200(C) removes standard (5) and (6) related to the threshold of a site and exterior alteration. The specific threshold or levels of site and exterior alteration that would trigger design review are now contained in the Citywide Design Standards.
- 5) ACC 18.31.200(F) pre-application meetings are no longer mandatory (required) but are recommended. This update is related to HB 5290 in which cities should no longer make pre-application meetings mandatory.
- 6) ACC 18.31.200(I) updates the requirements for design review departures (formerly called adjustments). The Citywide Design Standards now contain specific departures for specific design standards. The proposed standard-specific departures will allow for flexibility for each development, while ensuring that the overall design of the development meets the purpose and intent of the design standards. Applicants are still required to make findings (explain) why the departure is necessary. This section also removes the requirement for public notice for departures. Public notice is only required when a design review application triggers a state environmental policy act review or exceeds 40 units. Therefore, it should not be triggered for a design review departure.
- 7) ACC 18.31.200(J) updates the approval criteria for design review applications. The specific standards listed in this section are no longer necessary. The proposed development must be consistent with the standards contained in the Citywide Design Standards for it to be approved.

### **Section ACC 18.07.030 Development standards (Residential Zones)**

The proposed revision to ACC 18.07.030 is to reduce the front setback in the R-4, Residential High and R-NM, Residential Neighborhood Mixed-Use zones to zero to allow for the “Storefront” option in the Citywide Design Standards. This update allows for a storefront for a mixed-use or non-residential use in the R-4 and R-NM zones to abut public sidewalks and help to create vibrant and active pedestrian-oriented shopping and dining areas within Auburn. A zero front lot line is permitted only where structures meet sight distance requirements in accordance with city engineering design and construction standards.



### **Section ACC 18.23.040 Development standards (Commercial & Industrial Zones)**

These revisions reduce the front setback in the C-1, Light Commercial, C-2, Heavy Commercial, and M-1, Light Industrial zones to zero to allow for the “Storefront” option in the Citywide Design Standards.

### **FINDINGS OF FACT:**

#### **Background Summary:**

1. House Bill (HB) 1293, an Act related to streamlining development regulations for design review, was passed by the Legislature in the 2023 Regular Session. HB 1293 requires counties and cities planning under Revised Code of Washington (RCW) 36.70A.040 to have clear and objective development regulations governing the exterior design of new development.
2. The updates to the existing Citywide Design Standards provide clear objectives for the planning and design of development projects. The standards will preserve and protect the public health, safety, and welfare of the citizens of Auburn. They will ensure that new multifamily, mixed-use, and commercial development enhances the public’s experience of Auburn and promote increased walkability, bicycling, and transit use in Auburn.
3. The updated design standards for redevelopment contain three different thresholds of construction (building additions, remodels, and site improvements) that have been established based on the percentage of the site improvement that affects the exterior appearance of the building/site and/or cumulative increase in gross floor area.
4. Design “Departures” are provided for specific standards to allow for alternative design options

provided the reviewing authority determines the design meets the purpose of the standards and other applicable criteria.

5. Block Frontage Standards are provided to achieve street level aesthetics and enhance pedestrian environments by emphasizing ground-level designs for commercial, mixed-use and multifamily developments. Key intersections along the future I line RapidRide bus stops on Auburn Way North are designated to use Block Frontage Standards for future development proposals.
6. In accordance with ACC 14.03.060 Legislative nonproject decisions made by the city council under its authority to establish policies and regulations are not classified as a “type” of project permit decision. Legislative nonproject decisions include, but are not limited to, amendments to the text and map of the comprehensive plan or development regulations.
7. Per ACC 18.68.030(B) a “Zoning Text Amendment” is an application to change the text of ACC Title 18. This type of application or initiation shall be processed as a legislative nonproject decision, consistent with ACC 14.03.060. Public notice shall be provided consistently with ACC Title 14.
8. RCW 42.21C.135 provides authority of local governmental units to adopt rules, guidelines and model ordinances by reference.
9. The associated text amendment to the updated design standards includes changes to ACC 18.31.200, ACC 18.07.030, and ACC 18.23.040.
10. The design standards update and text amendment were introduced and discussed with the Planning Commission previously at the February 3, 2026, meeting and the March 3, 2026, meeting. Staff provided memorandums and presentations.
11. A public Open House was held on February 4, 2026, at the Auburn Resource Center and was well attended.
12. An email from Auburn Communications was sent on February 7, 2026, to a list of architects in the region inviting them to review the new design standards located on the City’s public notices website.

**Procedural Steps:**

1. The proposed updates to the existing Citywide Design Standards and text amendment (zoning code update) have been discussed with the Planning Commission previously at regular meetings on February 3, 2026, and March 3, 2026.
2. Pursuant to Revised Code of Washington (RCW) 36.70A, the text amendment was transmitted to the Washington State Department of Commerce on December 31, 2025. The 60-day notice period ended on March 1, 2026.
3. A Determination of Non-Significance (DNS) (SEP26-0003) and Notice of Public Hearing (NOH) was issued on March 6, 2026. Pursuant to Chapter 18.68 ACC, the following methods of noticing for the Planning Commission public hearing were conducted:

- a. The NOH was published in the Seattle Times on March 6, 2026.
- b. The NOH was posted in three public locations (City Hall, City Annex, and the City's Public Land Use Notice webpage).
- c. The NOH was mailed to property owners in the Citywide "designated" areas on Auburn Way N ("designated" per the Citywide Design Standards) on March 19, 2026.
- d. The SEPA checklist and notice (City File No. SEP26-0003) was uploaded to the Washington State Department of Ecology SEPA registry on March 6, 2026.
- e. No public comments were received during the SEPA comment period or the open house.

**EXHIBITS:**

1. Citywide Design Standards and Code Update Presentation
2. Citywide Design Standards
3. ACC 18.31.200 Text Amendment
4. ACC 18.23.040 Text Amendment
5. ACC 18.07.030 Text Amendment

**CITYWIDE DESIGN STANDARDS AND  
RELATED CODE UPDATE**

**PLANNING COMMISSION  
HEARING**

**PRESENTED BY  
DINAH REED, SENIOR PLANNER  
MAY 5, 2026**

Department of Community Development  
Planning • Building • Development Engineering • Permit Center  
Economic Development • Code Enforcement

**Exhibit 1**

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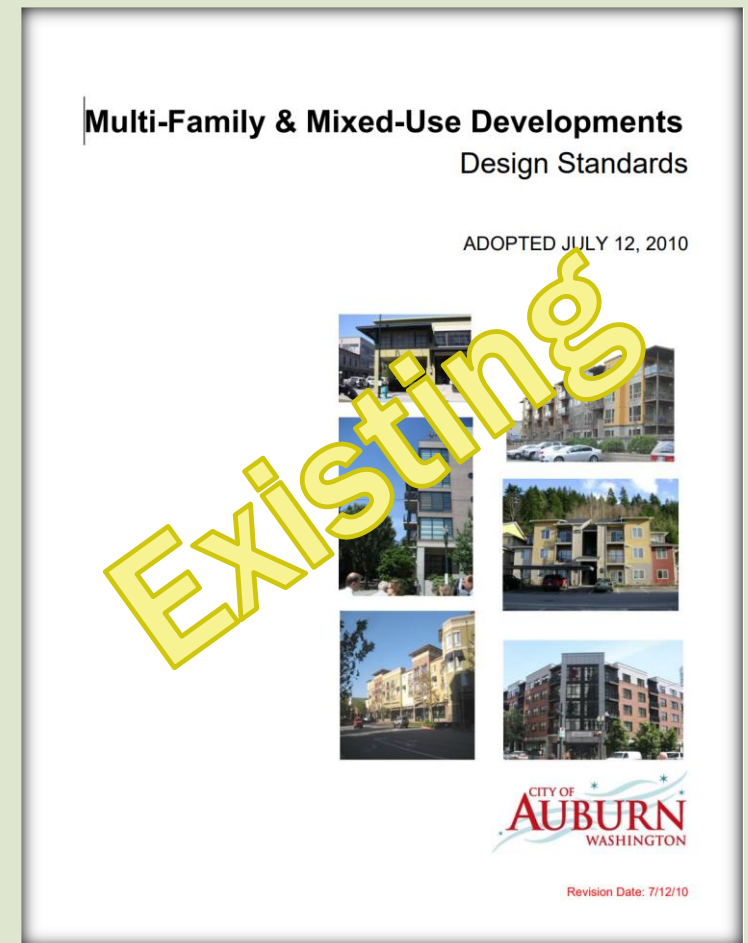
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# CITYWIDE DESIGN STANDARDS

- House Bill (HB) 1293 an Act relating to streamlining development regulations for design review was passed.
- At the regular PC Meetings on Feb 3, 2026 and Mar 3, 2026 staff introduced the revised Citywide Design Standards and Code Update.



# CITYWIDE DESIGN STANDARDS UPDATE

## PROCEDURAL STEPS

The text amendment was transmitted to WA State Dept. of Commerce on Dec 31, 2025, per (RCW) 36.70A

Notice of Public Hearing and SEP26-0003 DNS was issued on Mar 6, 2026, and the NOH was re-issued on April 24, 2026, per Chapter 18.68 ACC.

No comments were received from WA Dept. of Commerce on text amendments.

# CITYWIDE DESIGN STANDARDS UPDATE BACKGROUND

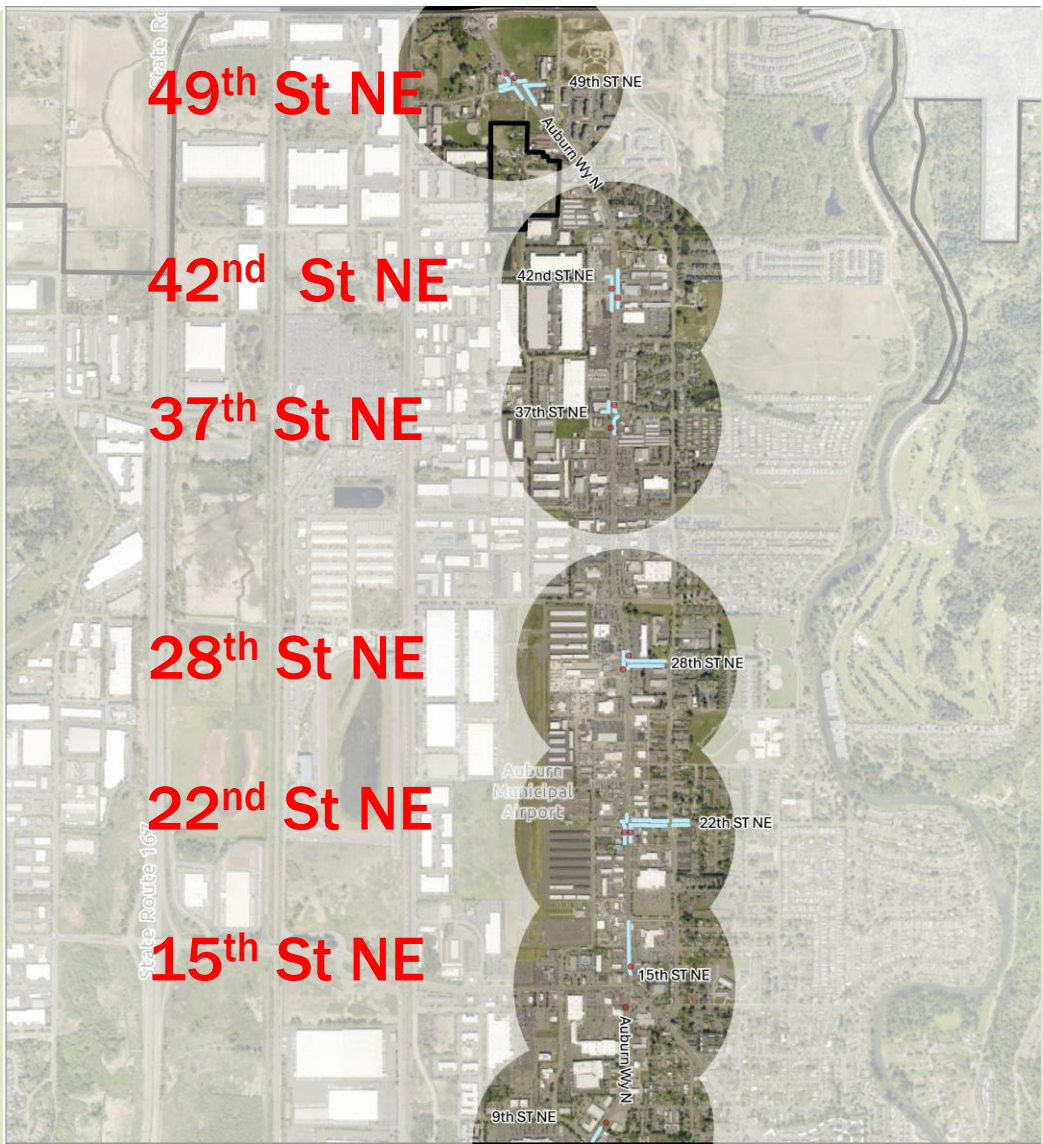
- To update existing City of Auburn “Citywide” design standards.
- To provide clear and objective development regulations for the design review process.
- The regulations apply to the exterior design of new development.

# CITYWIDE DESIGN STANDARDS UPDATE



- Applies to new development that is:
  - Non-residential
  - Mixed-use
  - Apartment buildings (with 7 or more units)
- Do not apply to:
  - DUC zone
  - Middle housing
  - Non Mixed-use development in the M-1 and M-2 Industrial zones.

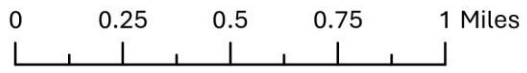
# CITYWIDE DESIGN STANDARDS UPDATE

- **Designated** intersections will incorporate “Mixed Block Frontage Standards” for new development.
- Enhance pedestrian environment
- Emphasize ground level design
- Promote street level aesthetic and pedestrian security



**Block-Frontage Designation**

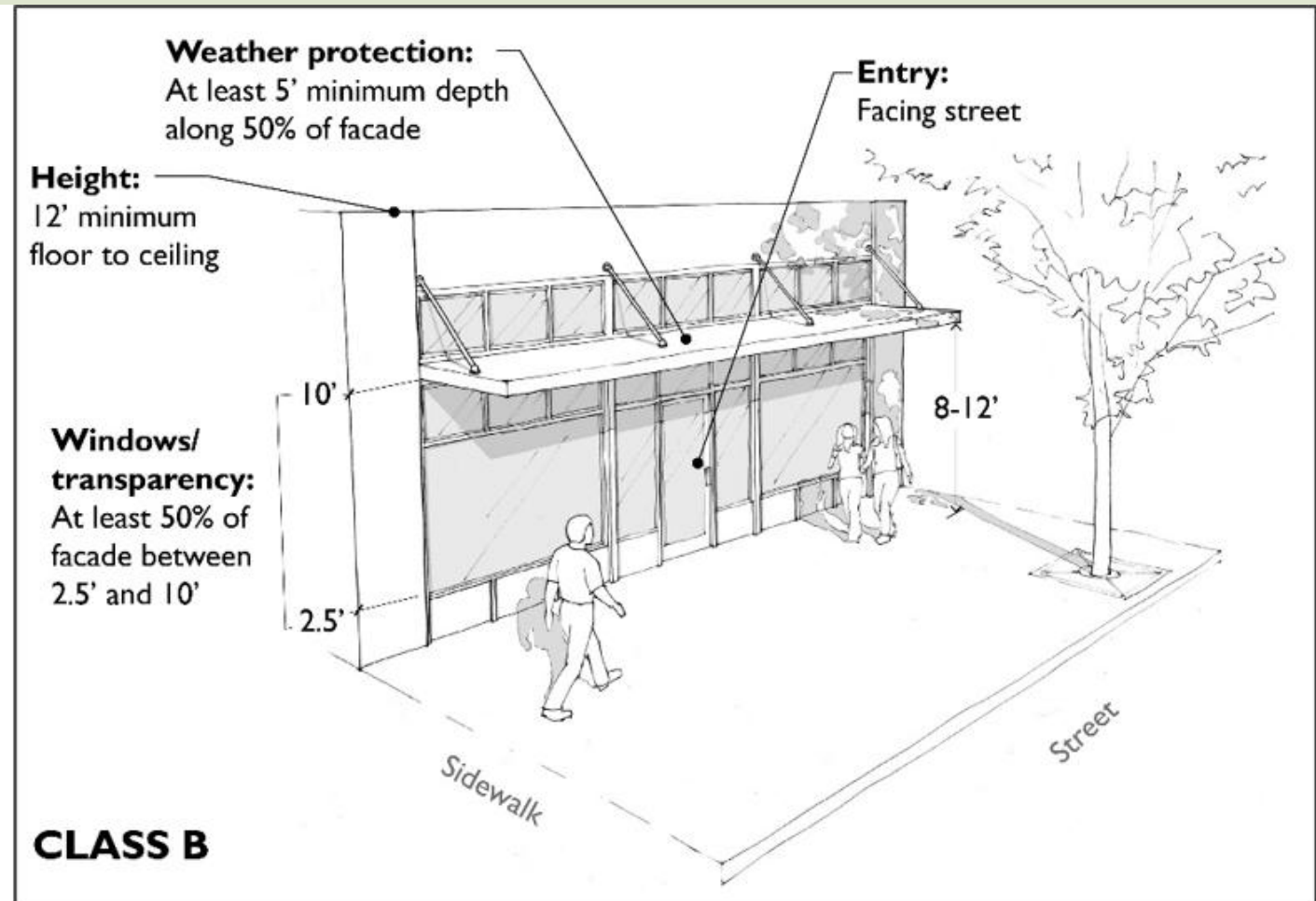
-  Mixed - Pedestrian II Streets
-  RapidRide Bus Stops



# Map of RapidRide I Line Bus Stop Intersections Along Auburn Way North

# CITYWIDE DESIGN STANDARDS UPDATE

## Mixed Block Frontage Standards include development for **Storefronts**

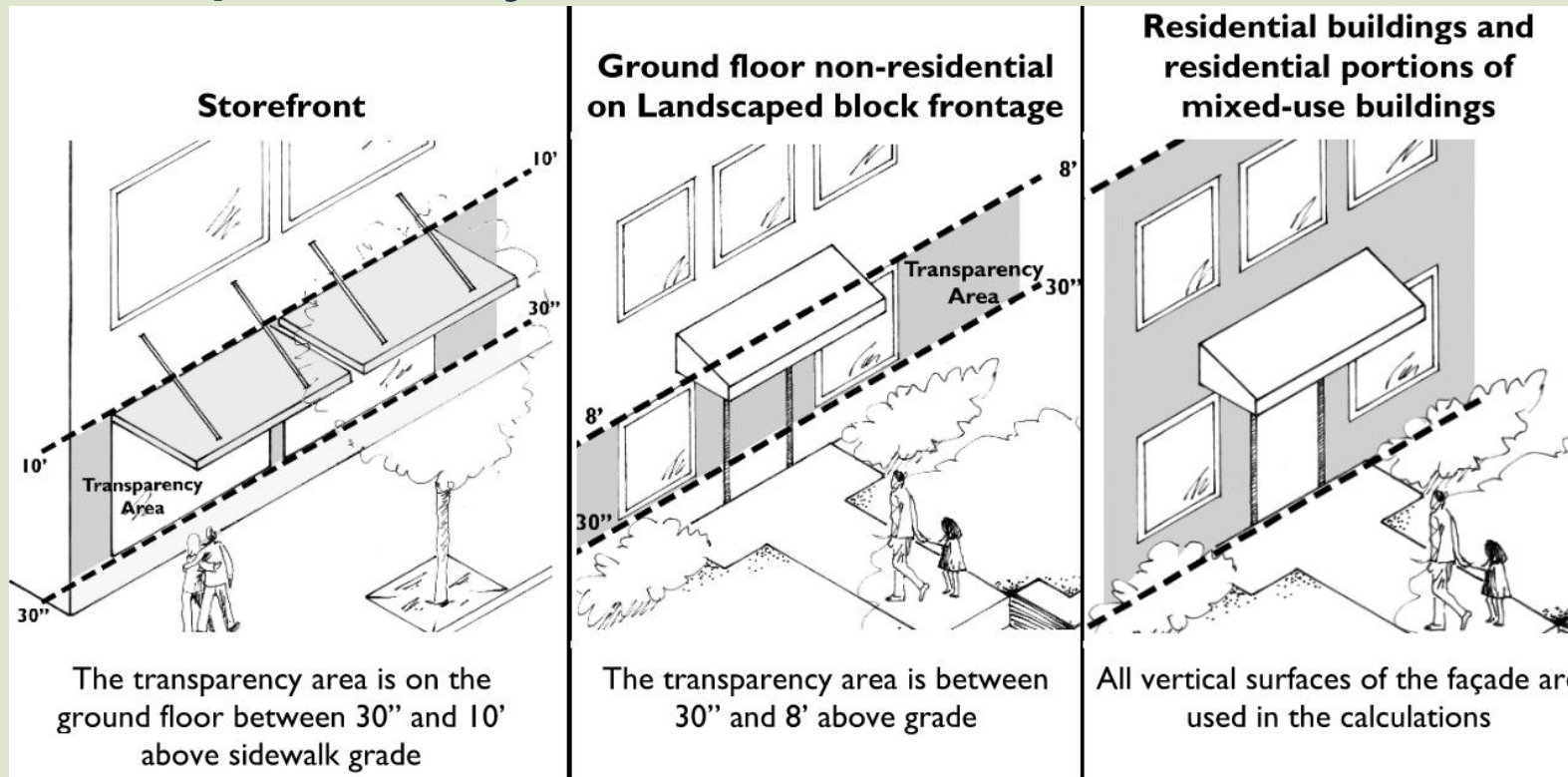


# EXAMPLES FOR **LANDSCAPED** BLOCK-FRONTAGE



# TRANSPARENCY STANDARDS

- Block frontage designations contain distinct minimum façade transparency standards.



# OTHER PROMINENT DESIGN STANDARDS

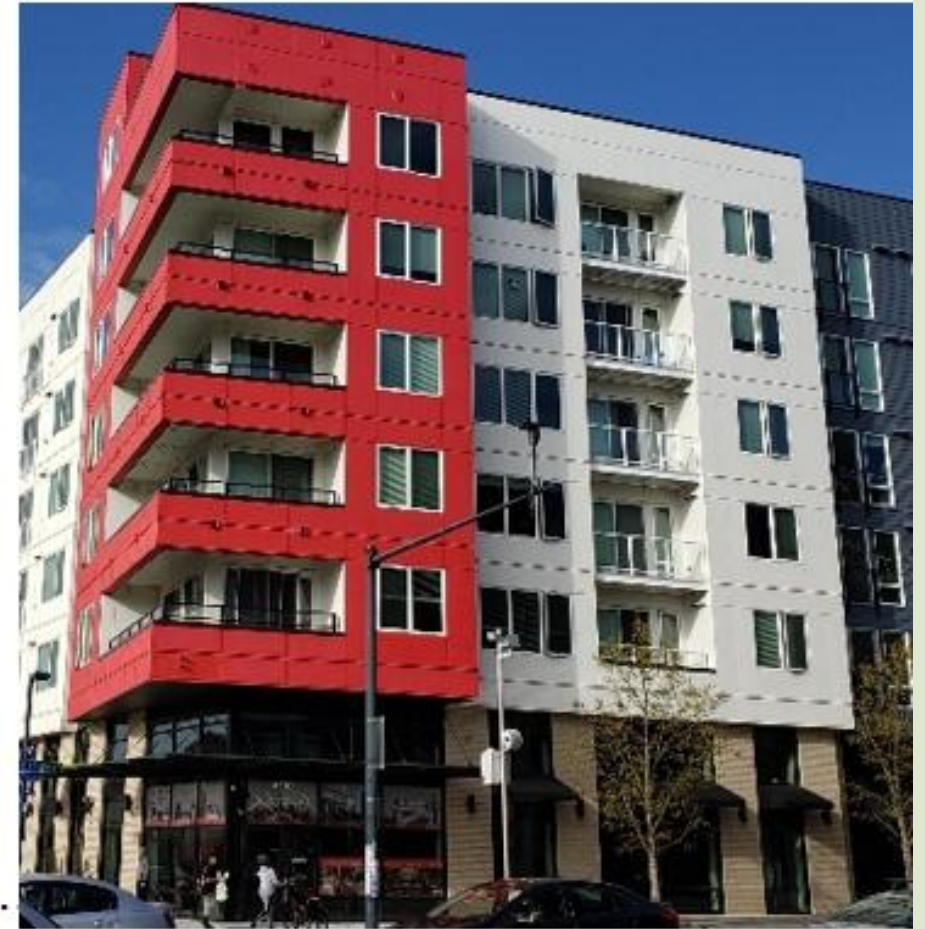


SERVICE • ENVIRONMENT • ECONOMY • CHARACTER • SUSTAINABILITY • WELLNESS • CELEBRATION

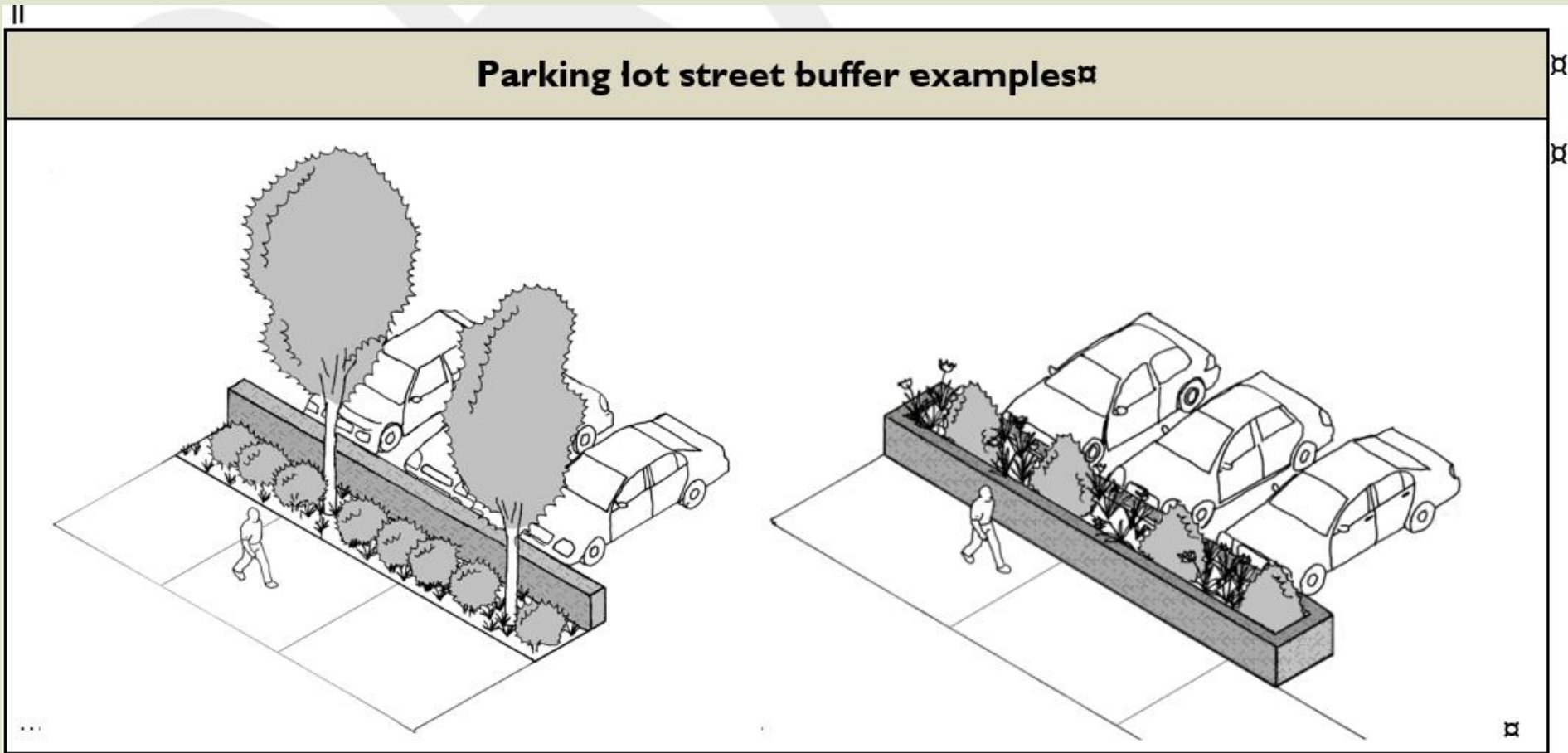
# OTHER PROMINENT DESIGN STANDARDS



Building  
Massing and  
Articulation



# PARKING



# CODE UPDATE – ACC 18.31.200(B)(1)

1. Apartment buildings, s (Formerly Multiple-Family) and Mixed-Use Developments, Congregate living development, and Non-residential development. The following land uses and types of development are subject to the ~~city's apartment and mixed-use~~ design standards document unless addressed by a different set of architectural and site design standards applicable to a specific geographic area:

# CODE UPDATE – ACC 18.31.200(B)(1)(A)(B)

- a. Apartment buildings, containing seven or more units on a single lot, development inclusive of seven or more units in all zones in the city where ~~permitted outright or as a conditional use allowed~~ and not otherwise addressed through the city's residential infill development standards (Chapter 18.25 ACC); and
- b. *Mixed-Use Residential Development*. Mixed-use development containing residential living units in all zones in the city where allowed ~~permitted outright or as a conditional use~~; and

# CODE UPDATE – ACC 18.31.200(B)(1)(C)(D)

c. Retirement apartments, congregate living facilities and senior housing complexes in all zones in the city where ~~permitted outright or as a conditional use~~allowed; and

d. Non-residential development, except for development within the M-1 and M-2 zones.

# CODE UPDATE – ACC 18.31.200(B)(3)

~~3. Auburn Junction. The following locations of development activities are subject to the city's Auburn Junction design standards document:~~

~~a. Properties located within the boundaries of West Main Street, 2nd Street SE/SW, A Street SE, and A Street SW as identified with ACC 18.29.070, downtown urban design standards.~~

# CODE UPDATE – ACC 18.31.200(C)

- ~~5. Site and exterior alterations that do not exceed 10 percent of the assessed valuation of the property building or land per the most recent county records; or~~
- ~~6. Building additions that are less than 10 percent of the existing floor area of the existing building. Any cumulative floor area increase from the adoption date of the ordinance establishing the architectural and site design standard that totals more than 10 percent shall not be exempt unless the community development director determines compliance with these standards would be infeasible and/or unreasonable.~~

# CODE UPDATE – ACC 18.31.200(F)

F. *Pre-Application Meeting ~~Recommendation with~~ – ~~When Required Associated With a~~ Design Review.*

*A pre-application conference is recommended for all other projects subject to the city's architectural and site design review but is not required.*

1. A pre-application conference is ~~required~~strongly recommended for the following instances:

a. ~~For a~~Apartments ~~in the R-3 and R-4 residential zones~~buildings; and

b. ~~For m~~Mixed-use development; ~~and containing residential living units located within R-3 and R-4 residential zones; and~~

c. ~~For mixed-use development containing residential living units located within commercial zones; and~~

cd. For retirement apartments, congregate living facilities and senior housing complexes, ~~located within R-3 and R-4 residential zones, and all commercial zones.~~

2. ~~A pre-application conference is strongly recommended for all other projects subject to the city's architectural and site design review but is not required.~~

# CODE UPDATE – ACC 18.31.200(I)

## I. Design Review ~~Departures~~Adjustments.

1. Authority for Design Review ~~Departures~~Adjustments. The community development director or designee shall have the authority, subject to the provisions for departures within design standard documentsof this section and upon such conditions as the community development director or designee may deem necessary to comply with the provisions of this section, to approve design departures or alternative design treatments. adjustments as follows:

a.—An adjustment to architectural or site design requirements such that no more than two of the total number of required menu items in the city of Auburn apartment and mixed-use design standards are out of compliance.

~~3.—Public Notification and Action on Design Review Adjustment Applications. Upon the filing of a properly completed application and associated request for a design review adjustment, the community development director or designee shall comply with the city's Type II land use review requirements for issuance of a properly noticed and appealable land use decision.~~

# CODE UPDATE – ACC 18.31.200(J)

3.—The proposed development meets required setback, landscaping, architectural style and materials, such that the building walls have sufficient visual variety to mitigate the appearance of large facades, particularly from public rights-of-way, single-unit detached dwellings and middle housing.

4.—In addition to the criteria in subsections (j)(1) through (j)(3) of this section, for apartments and retirement apartment projects, the director or designee must determine that the following key review criteria have been met:

a.—The proposed development is arranged in a manner that either:

i.—Provides a courtyard space creating a cohesive identity for the building cluster and public open space furnished to facilitate its use; or

ii.—Possesses a traditional streetscape orientation that provides clearly identifiable and visible entries from the street, views from residential units onto the street and reinforces pedestrian-oriented streetscape characteristics (e.g., building edge abutting sidewalk, entries onto the street); or

iii.—Faces and facilitates views of a major open space system;

b.—The proposed development provides a variety in architectural massing and articulation to reduce the apparent size of the buildings and to distinguish vertical and horizontal dimensions;

c.—The proposed development contains a combination of elements such as architectural forms, massing, assortment of materials, colors, and color bands sufficient to distinguish distinct portions and stories of the building;

d.—Residential buildings in large apartment projects or mixed-use projects are physically integrated into the complex possessing sufficiently different appearance or placement to be able to distinguish one building from another;

e.—Unit entrances are individualized by use of design features that make each entrance distinct or which facilitate additional personalization by residents;

f.—Areas dedicated to parking are sufficiently visually broken up and contain a complement of vegetative materials to project a landscaped appearance;

g.—Where applicable, a transition is created that minimizes impacts from apartments and mixed-use development projects on neighboring lower density residential dwelling units; and

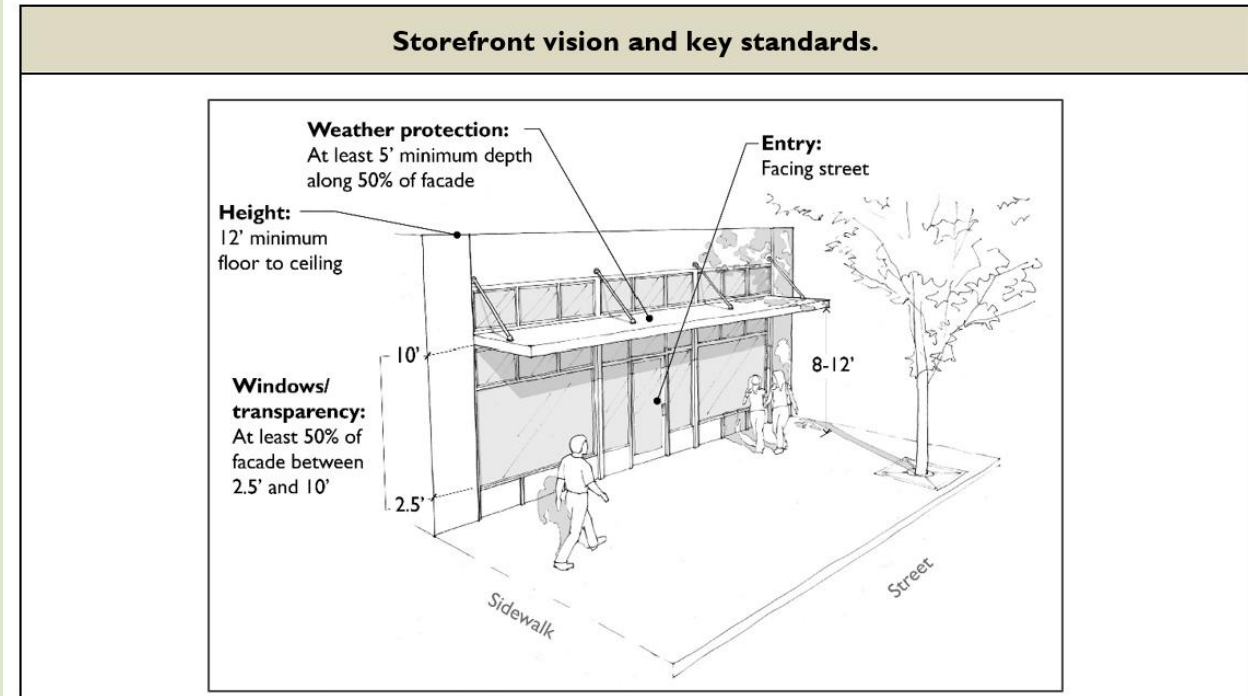
h.—Where applicable, in cases of granting density or height bonuses, the project has provided community benefits, facilities or improvements above and beyond those required in the municipal code and supports the goals, objectives and policies of the comprehensive plan. (Ord. 6959 § 1 (Exh. A), 2024; Ord. 6728 § 4 (Exh. D), 2019; Ord. 6408 § 1, 2012; Ord. 6287 § 2, 2010; Ord. 6245 § 15, 2009.)

# CODE UPDATE – ACC 18.31.040 COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL ZONES

Table 18.23.040A. C-1, C-2 and C-AG Zone Development Standards

Development Standard	Requirement by Zone		
	C-1 Light Commercial	C-2 Heavy Commercial	C-AG Mixed-Use Commercial
Minimum lot area	None	None	None <sup>1</sup>
Minimum lot width, depth	None	None	None
Maximum lot coverage	None	None	None
Minimum setbacks	<i>Minimum setbacks required for structures. See also ACC 18.31.070 for specific exceptions to these setback standards.</i>		
Front	20-ft <del>None</del> <sup>4</sup>	20-ft <del>None</del> <sup>4</sup>	20 ft

<sup>4</sup> In addition to meeting setback requirements, all structures must meet sight distance requirements in accordance with city engineering design and construction standards.



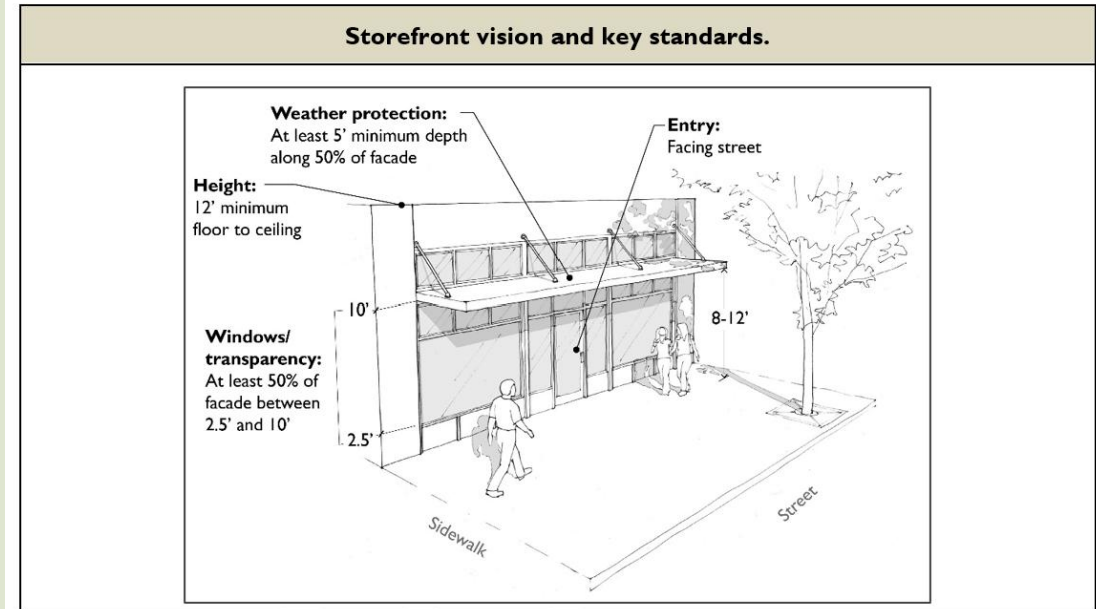
# CODE UPDATE – ACC 18.31.030

## RESIDENTIAL ZONES

	Standard	RC	R-1	R-2	R-3	R-4	R-NM	R-F
E	Minimum setbacks (feet) <sup>2, 3, 10</sup>							
1	Residence front setback <sup>3</sup>	35	35	10	10 <sup>9</sup>	<del>10</del> None	<del>10</del> None	10 <sup>9</sup>

[9 Non-residential, mixed use, and apartment buildings may have either no or a reduced front setback if the applicable Citywide “Storefront” design standards are met.](#)

[10 Minimum setbacks required for structures. See also ACC 18.31.070 for specific exceptions to these setback standards.](#)



# REQUEST

Planning Commission to deliberate and recommend that City Council approve the updated Citywide Design Standards and associated amendments to Title 18 to comply with HB 1293 state requirements.

Thank you,  
Questions?

Department of Community Development  
Planning • Building • Development Engineering • Permit Center  
Economic Development • Code Enforcement

AUBURN  
VALUES

S E R V I C E

E N V I R O N M E N T

E C O N O M Y

C H A R A C T E R

S U S T A I N A B I L I T Y

W E L L N E S S

C E L E B R A T I O N

# City of Auburn CITYWIDE DESIGN STANDARDS

Draft, February 24, 2026

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# Chapter I: Introduction

## I.1 Purpose.

These design standards are authorized by the City Council as a major implementation tool of the Auburn Comprehensive Plan. Overall, these standards intend to:

- Provide clear objectives for the planning and design of development projects.
- Preserve and protect the public health, safety, and welfare of the citizens of Auburn.
- Ensure that new multifamily, mixed-use, and commercial development enhances the public's experience of Auburn.
- Promote increased walking, bicycling, and transit use in Auburn's Growth Centers.

## I.2 Applicability.

- (1) New development. The provisions of this chapter apply to all non-residential, mixed-use, and apartment building (containing seven or more units on a single lot) developments within the City, except:
  - (a) Developments within Downtown Urban Center, which are subject to their own design standards.
  - (b) Middle housing developments that meet the standards of ACC 18.25.040 and 18.04.340(B) shall follow the middle housing design standards of ACC 18.25.070.
  - (c) Non Mixed-Use developments within the M-1 and M-2 zones.
- (2) Building additions, remodels, and site improvements. Three different thresholds have been established to determine how the standards herein are applied to such projects.
  - (a) Level I improvements include all exterior remodels, building additions, and/or site improvements that affect the exterior appearance of the building/site and/or cumulatively increase the gross floor area on a site by less than 50 percent within three years of the date of permit issuance. The requirement for such improvements is only that the proposed improvements meet applicable standards herein, and do not lead to further nonconformance with the aforementioned standards.

For example, if a property owner decides to replace a building façade's siding, then the siding shall meet the applicable exterior building material standards, but elements such as building articulation would not be required.
  - (b) Level II improvements include all improvements that cumulatively increase the gross floor area on a site by 50 percent to 100 percent within three years of the date of permit issuance. All standards that do not involve repositioning the building or reconfiguring site development shall apply to Level II improvements. In the case where the site includes multiple buildings and one or more of those buildings aren't being enlarged, such buildings are not required to be improved or relocated.
  - (c) Level III improvements include all improvements that cumulatively increase the gross floor area on a site by more than 100 percent within three years of the date of permit issuance. Such developments shall conform to all applicable standards, except in a case where there are multiple buildings on one site, and one or more buildings are not being enlarged. In that

scenario, improvements to the building or buildings not being enlarged are not required, but conformance with all other standards apply.

- (3) Public buildings. Public buildings are exempt from the design standards herein, provided design treatments are integrated to meet the following objectives:
  - (a) Enliven the pedestrian environment along the adjacent sidewalks.
  - (b) Incorporate a prominent and inviting entry visible from the street.
  - (c) Building design and materials should evoke a sense of permanence.
  - (d) Site and building design stands out from the surrounding context as a distinct landmark and provides visual interest from all observable scales.

### **1.3 How the provisions of this chapter are applied.**

Most sections within this chapter herein include the following elements:

- (1) Purpose statements, which are overarching objectives.
- (2) Standards use words such as “must” and “is/are required,” signifying required actions.
- (3) Guidelines use words such as “should” or “is/are recommended,” signifying voluntary measures.
- (4) Design “Departures” are provided for specific standards in this chapter. They allow alternative designs provided the reviewing authority determines the design meets the purpose of the standards and other applicable criteria. See ACC 18.31.200(l) for related procedures associated with departures.
- (5) Relationship to other codes and documents. Where provisions of this chapter conflict with provisions in any other section of the Auburn City Code (ACC), this chapter prevails unless otherwise noted.
- (6) This chapter contains some specific standards that are easily quantifiable, while others provide a level of discretion in how they are complied with. In the latter case, the applicant must demonstrate to the director, in writing, how the project meets the purpose of the standard or standards.

### **1.4 Definitions**

Definitions in Chapter 10.04, ACC apply to these standards. Below are supplemental definitions that apply specifically to these design standards:

- (1) Articulation - A method of styling the joints and transitions in the formal elements of architectural design for the purpose of creating visual interest. Includes treatments to building joints and transitions such as indents, projections, material changes, façade treatments.
- (2) Belt Course - A molding or projecting course running horizontally along the face of a building.
- (3) Canopy - A cover over a sidewalk providing protection from the rain or shade from the sun, which is constructed of durable, permanent materials.
- (4) Cornice - A horizontal decorative or ornamental molding located at the top of a building facade.
- (5) Director - means the director of the Auburn Planning and Development Department.
- (6) Façade – Street facing building elevations.
- (7) Multifamily – Apartment buildings featuring seven or more dwelling units on a single lot.

- (8) Parking, structured - Parking contained within an enclosed building either part of or designed to appear like it is part of the larger building complex, or a freestanding structure devoted exclusively to above-grade parking.
- (9) Plinth - A block used as the base of a column or other upright support.
- (10) Public art - Any form of painting, mural, mosaic, sculpture, or other work of art, so long as it can be appraised as a work of art and its value as such documented, displayed on the exterior of a building, at or near the pedestrian entrance, or on a public plaza, and visible to users of the public right-of-way at all times.
- (11) Public plaza - An open space that is visible and accessible to the public at all times predominantly open to the sky, and for use principally by people, as opposed to merely a setting for the building.
- (12) Storefront – A building featuring a ground level abutting the sidewalk and complying with the provisions of Section 2.4.
- (13) Street level retail - Uses providing goods and services, including food and drink, adjacent to, visible from, and directly accessible from the public sidewalk.

# Chapter 2 – Block-Frontage Standards

## 2.1 Purpose.

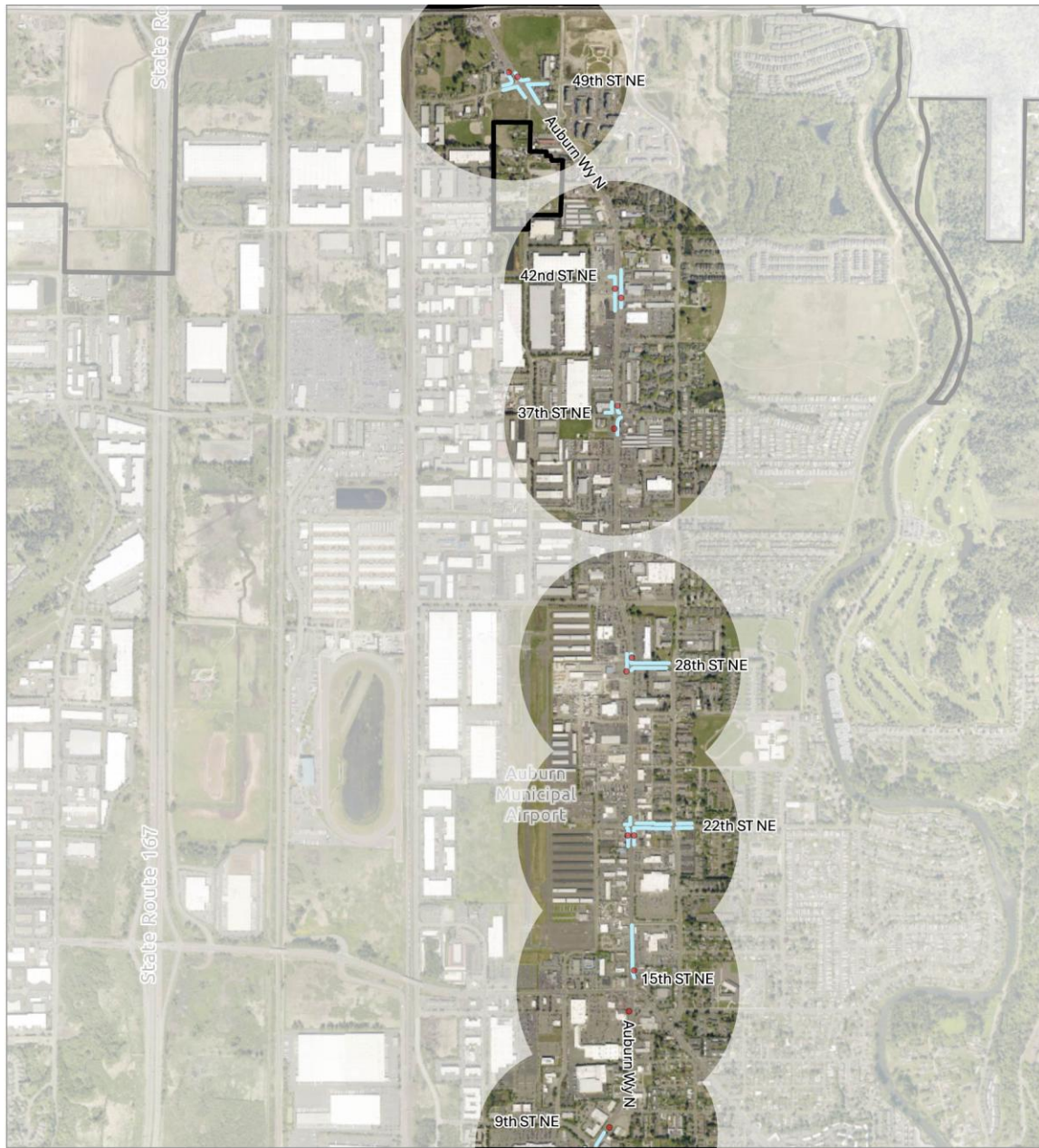
- (1) To achieve the envisioned street level aesthetic and enhance the public’s experience of Auburn.
- (2) To enhance pedestrian environments by emphasizing activated ground-level block-frontage designs for commercial, mixed-use, and multifamily developments.
- (3) To minimize potential negative impacts of driveways and off-street parking facilities on the streetscape.
- (4) To promote good visibility between buildings and the street for security for pedestrians and to create a more welcoming and interesting streetscape.

## 2.2 Block-frontage designation maps.



- (1) The block-frontage designations established by this chapter are maintained under the direction of the director. All notations, references, and other information shown have the same force and effect as if fully described in this title.

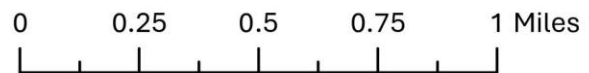
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## Designated block frontages



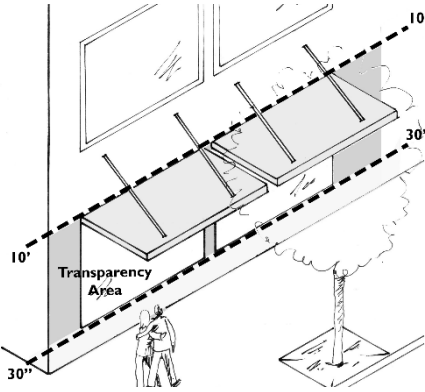
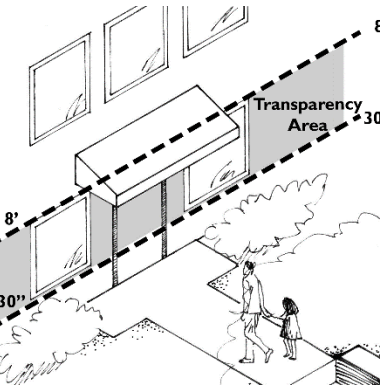
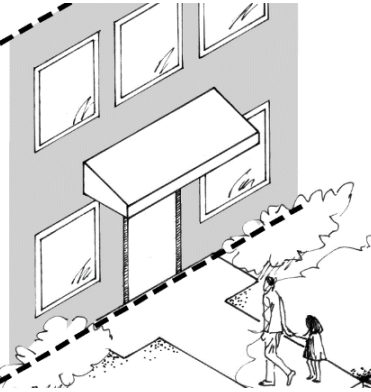


### Block-Frontage Designation

-  Mixed - Pedestrian II Streets
-  RapidRide Bus Stops



## 2.3 About the transparency standards.

All block-frontage designations contain distinct minimum façade transparency standards. The purposes of these standards are to maintain “eyes on the street” for safety and create welcoming pedestrian environments. The table below includes details in how they are measured.

Transparency standards		
Transparency area		
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Storefront</b></p>  <p>The transparency area is on the ground floor between 30” and 10’ above sidewalk grade</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Ground floor non-residential on Landscaped block frontage</b></p>  <p>The transparency area is between 30” and 8’ above grade</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Residential buildings and residential portions of mixed-use buildings</b></p>  <p>All vertical surfaces of the façade are used in the calculations</p>
Other Transparency Provisions		
<p><b>Windows must be transparent</b></p> <p>Ground-level window area for storefronts and other non-residential uses that is covered, frosted, or perforated in any manner that obscures visibility into the building must not count as transparent window area. Also, mirrored glass and highly-reflective or darkly-tinted windows must not be counted as transparent windows.</p>		
	Covered windows	Perforated sign

## Transparency standards

### Display windows & parking garages

Display windows may be used for up to 25% of non-residential transparency requirements provided they are at least 30" deep to allow changeable displays and the interior wall is non-structural so it can be removed if the windows are not used for display. Tack-on display cases as shown in the far right example do not qualify as transparent window area.

For parking garages (where allowed by block frontage standards), the left image illustrates how such a structure can meet (and not meet) the applicable transparency standards.



Integrated display windows



Tack-on display cases



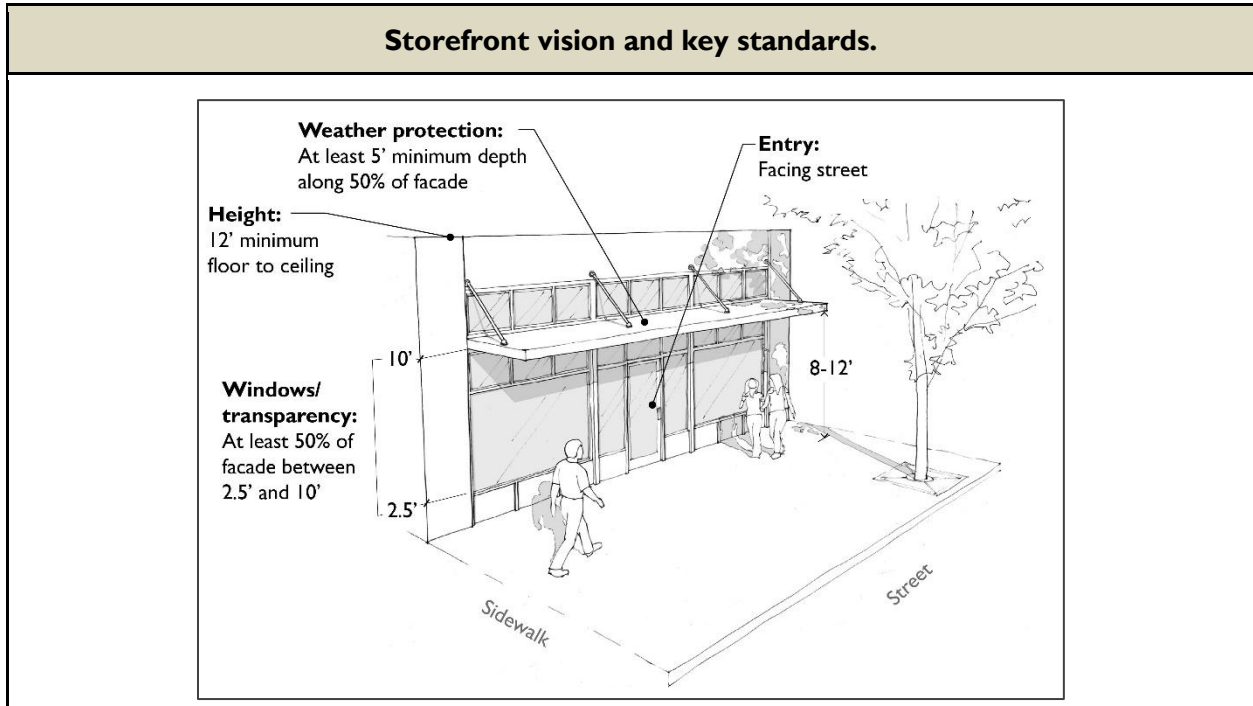
Parking garage with windows



Parking garage without windows

## 2.4 Storefront standards.

(1) **Purpose.** Storefronts abutting public sidewalks help to create vibrant and active pedestrian-oriented shopping and dining areas within Auburn. The high visibility of such facades warrants minimum design standards for transparency, weather protection, interior storefront depth and height, and entries to better ensure the long term success of these buildings and their districts or neighborhoods.



### (2) Applicability.

Storefront standards apply to situations for Mixed and Undesignated block frontages where developments choose to integrate storefronts on portions or all of their applicable block frontages.

(3) **Standards.** Applicable development must comply with the standards in Table 2.4 below.

<b>Table 2.4 Storefront standards.</b>	
The ↻ symbol refers to DEPARTURE opportunities opportunities set forth in Section 1.3 with supplemental criteria in subsection (4) below.	
Element	Storefront Standards
<b>Ground-level</b>	
Land use	<p>See ACC 18.07.020 and 18.23.030, except:</p> <p>Residential uses are prohibited except:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Live/work units featuring ground level space that complies with minimum floor to floor height and non-residential space depth herein.</li> <li>• Lobbies and accessory-uses associated with multifamily residential uses are allowed provided they are limited to 60% of block-frontages.</li> </ul>

<b>Table 2.4 Storefront standards.</b>	
The ☞ symbol refers to DEPARTURE opportunities opportunities set forth in Section 1.3 with supplemental criteria in subsection (4) below.	
<b>Element</b>	<b>Storefront Standards</b>
Floor to floor height for new buildings (applies to the minimum non-residential space depth)	12' minimum. ☞
Non-residential space depth	20' minimum. ☞
<b>Building placement</b>	Standards in this table apply when buildings are placed within 10' of the required sidewalk.
<b>Building entrances</b>	Primary building entrances must face the street or a pedestrian-oriented space that is adjacent to the street. For corner sites, the entry may face the corner, or one or both streets.
<b>Façade transparency</b> (see Section 2.3)	At least 50% of the transparency area. ☞
<b>Weather protection</b>	Weather protection is required along at least 50% of the storefront façade, and it must be a minimum of 5' deep and have 8' to 12' of vertical clearance. ☞ Note: Weather protection that encroaches over the public right-of-way will require a permit meeting the standards of ACC 12.60 and ACC 12.60.050. The director may require reduced width weather protection where necessary to avoid interfering with street trees, street lights, street signs, or extending beyond the edge of the sidewalk.
<b>Parking location</b>	Not applicable (sites are subject to applicable designated block frontage parking location provisions).
<b>Sidewalk width</b>	Sidewalks abutting storefronts must be at least 10' wide. Where such sidewalks extend beyond right-of-way limits, a public access easement is required to accommodate the full sidewalk width. Upper floors may cantilever over the sidewalk to the right-of-way edge or 4', whichever is less.

**(4) DEPARTURE criteria.** Departures from the standards in Table 2.4 that feature the ☞ symbol will be considered provided the alternative proposal meets the purpose of the standards and the following criteria:

- (a) Non-residential space depth. Reduced depths on up to 25 percent of the applicable block-frontage will be considered where the applicant can successfully demonstrate the proposed alternative design and configuration of the space is viable for a variety of permitted non-residential uses.
- (b) Façade transparency. Departures for façade transparency in the transparency area may be reduced to a minimum of 35 percent for block-frontages if the façade design between ground-level windows provides visual interest to the pedestrian and mitigates the impacts of blank walls.
- (c) Weather-protection. The reduced extent (to no less than 35 percent) or width (to no less than four-feet in width) will be considered provided the designs are proportional to architectural

features of the building and building design trade-offs (elements that clearly go beyond minimum building design standards in this chapter) meet the purpose of the standards.

## 2.5 Landscaped block-frontage standards.

- (1) **Purpose.** To provide standards for an optional block frontage design along Mixed-designated streets that incorporates modest landscaped setbacks, clear pedestrian connections between the building and the sidewalk, and minimized surface parking lots along the frontages.
- (2) **Applicability.** Standards herein apply as an option for development on Mixed designated block frontages and a requirement for new multifamily development. Note that developments featuring ground-level dwelling units along block frontages, such frontages are also subject to the provisions of Section 2.8, Ground-floor residential frontage standards.
- (3) **Standards.** Applicable developments are subject to the Landscaped block frontage standards set forth in Table 2.5.



**Table 2.5**  
**Landscaped block-frontage standards.**

The ➡ symbol refers to DEPARTURE opportunities opportunities set forth in Section 1.3 with supplemental criteria in subsection (4) below.

Element	Standards
<b>Ground-level</b>	
Land use	As set forth in ACC 18.07.020 and 18.23.030.
<b>Building placement</b>	10' minimum setback or as required in the applicable zone, whichever is greater. ➡ Block frontages with ground floor dwelling units must comply with Section 2.8.

<b>Table 2.5 Landscaped block-frontage standards.</b>	
The ➡ symbol refers to DEPARTURE opportunities opportunities set forth in Section 1.3 with supplemental criteria in subsection (4) below.	
<b>Element</b>	<b>Standards</b>
<b>Building entrances</b>	Building entries must face the street or a pedestrian-oriented space that is adjacent to the street. For corner sites, the entry may face the corner, or one or both streets.
<b>Façade transparency</b> (see Section 2.3)	For buildings with ground-level non-residential uses, at least 35% of the transparency area. ➡ For buildings with ground-level residential uses, at least 15% of the entire facade.
<b>Weather protection</b>	Weather protection at least 3' deep must be provided over individual residential and commercial tenant entries and at least 5' deep for shared residential and professional office entries.
<b>Parking location</b>	Surface level parking and access features must be located to the side or rear of buildings. For sites with multiple buildings, no more than 50 percent of arterial street block frontages may be occupied by parking and vehicular access areas. ➡ Driveways shall meet the standards of the Engineering Design and Construction Standards.
<b>Landscaping</b>	All areas between the sidewalk and the building must be landscaped, except for walkways, porches, decks, and other areas meeting the definition of pedestrian-oriented space. The required landscaping must meet the provisions of ACC 18.50.040(C) and 18.50.070. For parking lot perimeter landscaping, see Section 3.3.

**(4) DEPARTURE criteria.** Departures to the Landscaped block-frontage standards in Table 2.5 that feature the ➡ symbol will be considered provided the alternative proposal meets the purpose of the standards and the following criteria:

- (a) **Building placement:** Reduced setbacks will be considered for non-residential ground level frontages where the façade effectively integrates a blend of storefront and landscaped frontage elements. For example, window transparency levels should increase towards Storefront standards at a proportional rate as the setback gets smaller.
- (b) **Façade transparency:** Façade transparency in the transparency area may be reduced from the minimum standards by 50 percent if the façade design between ground-level windows provides visual interest to the pedestrian and mitigates the impacts of blank-walls.
- (c) **Parking location.** Alternative designs may be considered with some parking located between the street and a building or buildings where such design helps to better take advantage of the site's context. Design treatments must be included to mitigate the impact of parking areas along the street (in terms of visual impacts and pedestrian access to the buildings from the street).

## 2.6 Mixed block-frontage standards.

- (1) **Purpose.** To provide for flexibility in the design of applicable block frontages while ensuring that block frontages create a pedestrian-friendly environment.
- (2) **Applicability.** Standards herein apply to all sites containing designated Mixed block frontages per the maps in Section 2.2. Note that for developments featuring ground level dwelling units adjacent to the street, the design of such block frontages are subject to Section 2.8.
- (3) **Standards.** Applicable development may choose between Storefront standards set forth in Table 2.4 or Landscaped block frontage standards as set forth in Table 2.5 or some combination of the two, with modifications noted in the scenarios below:
  - (a) A site with a proposed storefront building (or segment of a building), the building(s) will be subject to the Storefront standards set forth in Table 2.4, except that for parking location standards, sites will be subject to the provisions in the Landscaped block frontage standards in Table 2.5.
  - (b) For a site that features a building or buildings with a mix of proposed Storefront and Landscaped block frontage designs, the storefront building segments will be subject to the Storefront standards set forth in Table 2.4, whereas everything else will be subject to the Landscaped block frontage standards as set forth in Table 2.5.
- (4) **Blending frontages.** Buildings may also employ designs that are a hybrid of storefront and landscaped block frontage forms, where they feature a small landscaped setback (less than what is required under the Landscaped block frontage standards), provided the window transparency levels increase towards Storefront standards at a proportional rate as the setback gets smaller. Weather protection isn't required in frontage areas where there's more than 16 inches of landscaping adjacent to the façade (measured perpendicular to the façade). All other standards for Storefront standards in Table 2.4 apply.

## 2.7 Other/Undesignated block-frontage standards.

- (1) **Purpose.** To provide for flexibility in the design of block frontages in areas where such flexibility is warranted.
- (2) **Applicability.** Standards herein apply to all commercial development on sites that are not otherwise designated as a Mixed block frontage.
- (3) **Standards.** Applicable developments are subject to the Other/Undesignated block frontage standards in Table 2.7, except where developments integrate storefront buildings abutting the sidewalk edge. Such storefront buildings are subject to the Storefront standards in Table 2.4.

<b>Table 2.7 Other/Undesignated block-frontage standards.</b>	
The ➡ symbol refers to DEPARTURE opportunities opportunities set forth in Section 2.7 with supplemental criteria in subsection (4) below.	
<b>Element</b>	<b>Standards</b>
<b>Building placement</b>	Where allowed in the applicable zone, buildings may be placed within 10' of the required sidewalk, provided they meet Storefront standards in Table 2.4. Buildings and portions thereof with ground floor dwelling units are subject to the standards in Section 2.8. Otherwise, buildings shall meet the applicable standards set forth in ACC 18.07.030 and 18.23.040.
<b>Building entrances</b>	Building entrances facing the street are encouraged. At a minimum, at least one building entry visible and directly accessible from the street is required. Where buildings are setback from the property line, pedestrian connections from the sidewalk are required.
<b>Façade transparency</b> (see Section 2.3)	Storefronts adjacent to the back of the sidewalk are subject to Storefront façade transparency standards in Table 2.4. Other buildings designed with non-residential uses on the ground floor within 20 feet of sidewalk, at least 30% of the ground floor between 30" and 8' above grade. ➡ For residential buildings, at least 15% of the entire façade.
<b>Weather protection</b>	Weather protection at least 3' deep must be provided over individual residential and commercial tenant entries and at least 5' deep for shared residential and professional office entries.
<b>Parking location</b>	There are no parking lot location restrictions, except for landscaped buffer requirements set forth in ACC 18.50.040.C.4 and 18.50.040(B). Driveways shall meet the standards of the Engineering Design and Construction Standards.
<b>Landscaping</b>	Sites are subject to the landscaping requirements of Section 3.3 and Chapter 18.50, ACC.

**(4) DEPARTURE criteria.** Departures to the Other/Undesignated block-frontage standards in Table 20.26.170.3 that feature the ➡ symbol will be considered provided the alternative proposal meets the purpose of the standards and the following criteria:

- (a) Façade transparency: Façade transparency in the transparency area may be reduced from the minimum standards by 50 percent if the façade design between ground-level windows provides visual interest to the pedestrian and mitigates the impacts of blank-walls.

## 2.8 Ground-floor residential frontage standards.

**(1) Purpose.** The purpose of these standards is to:

- (a) Enhance the privacy and security of residents living on the ground floor.
- (b) Provide an effective visual and physical transition between the public realm and the private realm.
- (c) Enhance the relationship between the building and the street through high-quality landscape and architectural design.

**(2) Applicability.** All developments with ground-floor residential uses adjacent to public streets, trails, through-block connections or other internal pedestrian connections, parks, publicly accessible common areas, and internal common space (hereafter collectively referred to as “public and semi-public realm”) shall comply with the frontage standards herein.

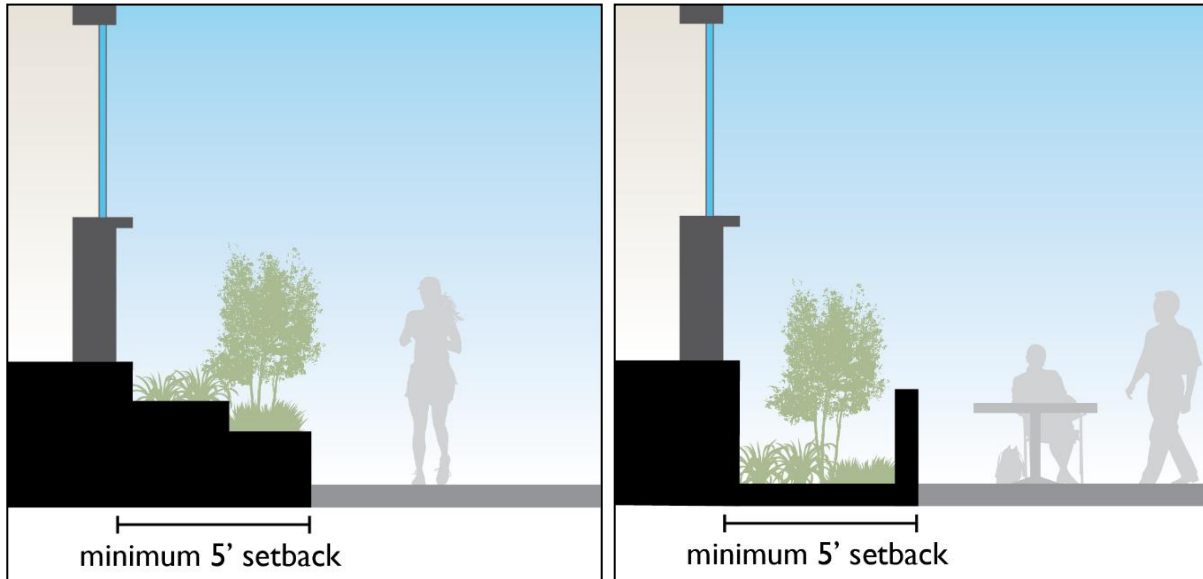
**(3) Standards.** Design treatments must be integrated to enhance the character of the public and semi-public realm while respecting the privacy of adjacent residential units. Design criteria applicable to ground-floor residential frontages are as follows:

- (a) Unit setback and elevation. Provide privacy for people living in the adjacent dwelling units and ensure the applicable public and semi-public realm environment is comfortable through all of the following measures:
  - (i) Provide a five-foot minimum setback from applicable public and semi-public realm elements. The setback shall be measured from the edge of the applicable public (e.g., sidewalk) and semi-public realm elements (e.g., walkway, pedestrian-oriented space, common open space). When adjacent to an applicable public and semi-public realm element with no adjacent walkway, the setback shall be measured from the outside edge (facing away from dwelling unit) of a physical threshold feature (e.g., low fence or hedge) that separates semi-private outdoor space with the applicable public and semi-public realm element as determined by the Director.

DEPARTURES will be considered provided the design enhances the character of the streetscape and respects the privacy of adjacent ground-floor residents.

- (ii) Where the façade is within ten feet of a sidewalk (when allowed by the applicable zone) or five feet from all other applicable public and semi-public realm elements, the ground floor must be elevated a minimum average of 30-inches to improve privacy of such residential uses and enhance their relationship to the street.

**Minimum setback between a ground floor residence and applicable public and semi-public realm element**



In the left example, the 5-foot setback area is used for raised planters next to a sidewalk. In the right example, the minimum 5-foot setback area is used for a wall and landscaped bed next to a public space.

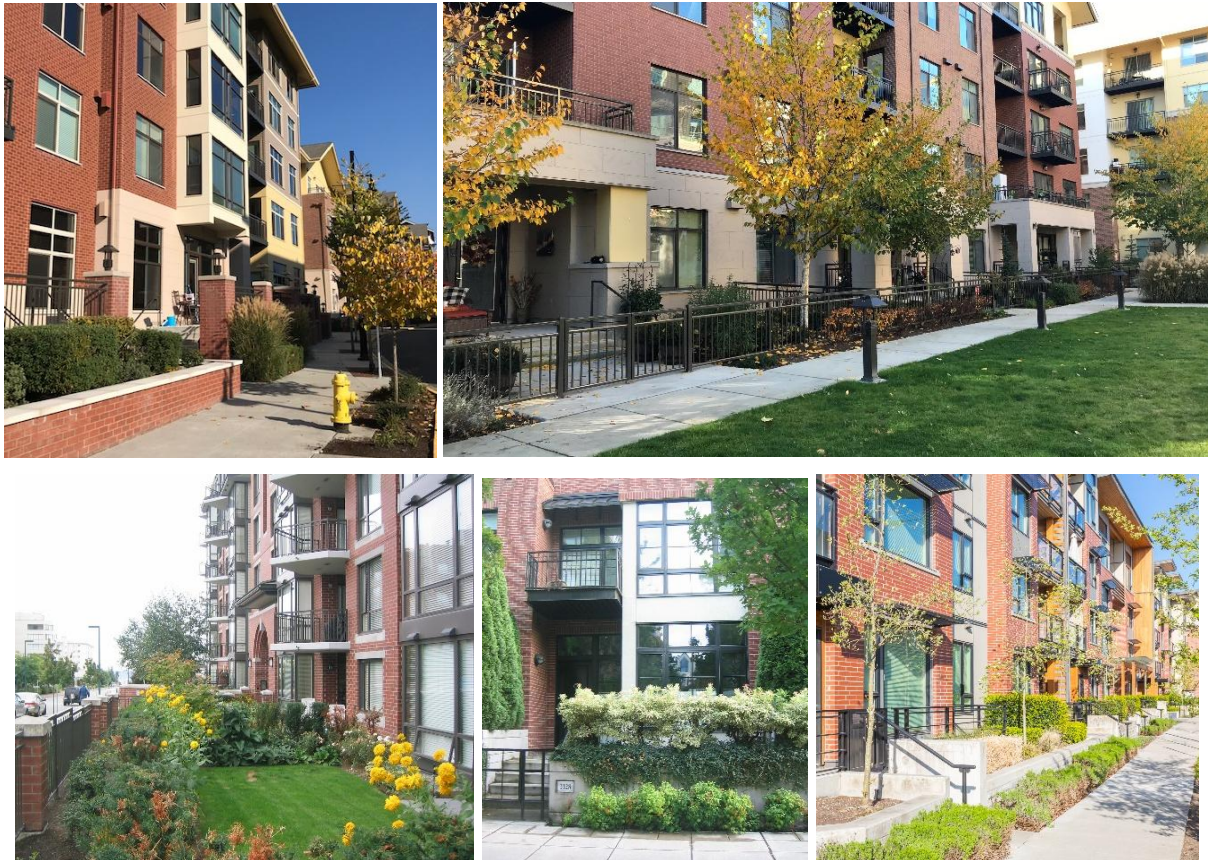
- (c) Units with direct physical access and less than ten feet setback to the sidewalk or other applicable public and semi-public realm elements must enhance the privacy of residents and provide an effective transition between the public and private realm by integrating all of the following measures:
  - (i) Provide a physical “threshold” feature, such as a hedge, retaining wall, rockery, stair, gate, railing, or a combination of such elements on private property, not to exceed 42 inches in height, that defines and bridges the boundary between the applicable public and semi-public realm element and the private entry, porch, yard, or patio. Thresholds may screen, but not completely block, eye-level views to and from the applicable public and semi-public realm element.
  - (ii) Provide an outdoor space at least four feet deep and six feet wide (24 square feet minimum area) in the front setback, such as a porch, patio, deck, or stoop. Where feasible, this space shall be at the same level as the interior of the unit.
  - (iii) Provide a covered area, porch or protected entry space, or other architectural weather protection at least three feet deep that provides cover for a person entering the unit and a transitional space between outside and inside the dwelling.
  - (iv) Landscaping planters shall be integrated into transitional areas between the dwelling unit and the adjacent public and semi-public realm element.
  - (v) Overhead building projections may cantilever over the outdoor space by up to 50 percent of the minimum ground level setback.

DEPARTURES may be proposed for the design criteria in subsection (c) above provided the design enhances the privacy of adjacent units and provides an effective and attractive transition between the public and private realm.

## Guidelines and examples of ground-level residential frontages



The above images show ground-level residential frontages with setbacks of approximately 10 feet (left image) and 5 feet (right image) along different street frontages for the same corner apartment building. These ground level units all have their own private unit access from the sidewalk and are elevated above the sidewalk to enhance the privacy to the units. The landscaping elements, brick posts, split-faced concrete block stoop walls, and black metal railings help to provide an attractive and effective transition between the public and private realms.



## Guidelines and examples of ground-level residential frontages

Good examples: Upper left image includes a stoop design with brick terraced planters and low wrought iron fences. Upper right and lower left images include low wrought iron fences that separate the sidewalk/pedestrian walkway from the private open space. Lower center and right images include stoop designs with sidewalk level planters and concrete terrace planters.

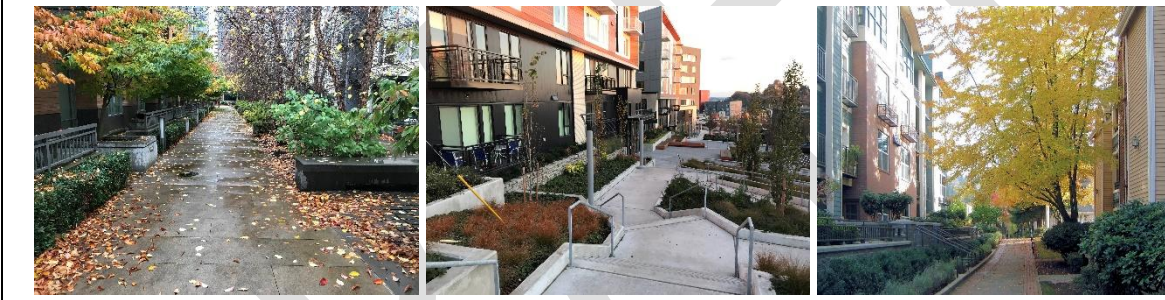


Bad examples: Despite the raised ground level, the shallow setback design in the left image above is insufficient to meet the purpose of the standards. In the above right image, the upper level building cantilever doesn't meet the standards and creates a cold "cave stoop" like form. The large areas of un-screened concrete walls in both examples are undesirable.

## 2.9 Through-block connection frontage standards.

- (1) **Purpose.** To promote through-block connection frontage designs that enhance the character and safety of such connections.
- (2) **Applicability.** These standards apply to development adjacent to through-block connections, when required (see Section 3.4).
- (3) **Standards.** Many, but not all standards depend on the type of connection and the adjacent use. Specifically:
  - (a) Non-residential building elevations (including mixed-use development with ground floor commercial uses) facing a through-block connection are subject to Other/Undesignated block frontage standards in Section 2.7, except that such building elevations must feature at least 10 percent window transparency to enhance the safety and visibility of the trail and connection. ↻
  - (b) Residential developments adjacent to a through-block connection are subject to both the Landscaped block frontage standards in Section 2.5 and Ground-floor residential frontage standards in Section 2.8.

### Good examples of through-block connections in a residential context



## 2.10 Corner site clarifications.

Where a property fronts onto more than one street, each building frontage must comply with the standards for the block-frontage upon which it fronts, with the following clarifications:

- (1) Entrances. For corner sites, entrances may be provided on both streets, but only one entrance is required.
- (2) Transparency and weather protection standards associated with corner storefronts. The block frontage containing the entry is subject to the full Storefront transparency and weather protection standards in Table 2.4. The secondary block frontage associated with the corner establishment must contain at least 50 percent of the required transparency and weather protection for Storefronts.

## 2.11 Mixed-use street corner standards.

(1) **Applicability/purpose.** The mixed-use street-corner requirements apply to new mixed-use developments located on street corner sites. The intent is to accentuate these high visibility developments to the public and create a unique sense of place.

(2) **Standards.** At least one of the following special features must be included:

- (a) Corner plaza.
- (b) Cropped building corner with a special entry feature.
- (c) Decorative use of building materials at the corner.
- (d) Distinctive façade articulation.
- (e) Sculptural architectural element.
- (f) Other decorative elements that meet the purpose of the standards.

### Acceptable high visibility street corner examples



The letters on the images refer to the special feature options above that are integrated into the design.

# Chapter 3 - Site Planning

## 3.1 Useable residential recreational space.

### (1) Purpose.

- (a) To create useable space that is suitable for leisure or recreational activities for residents.
- (b) To create open space that contributes to the residential setting.

### (2) Usable residential recreational space.

- (a) All residential developments, including residential portions of mixed-use development, must provide minimum usable recreational space equal to 10 percent of dwelling unit floor area. This includes all dwelling units, but excludes hallways, lobbies, and other common areas. The required recreational space may be provided in a combination of ways:
  - (i) Shared outdoor space. All of the required recreational space may be in the form of shared outdoor space available to all residents and meeting the requirements of subsection (b) below. Shared roof-decks located on the tops of buildings are addressed in subsection (v) below.
  - (ii) Ground/grade-level individual outdoor space. All of the required recreational space for a unit may be provided by ground-level outdoor space that is abutting and directly accessible to the subject unit. Such recreational spaces must be:
    - (A) Outdoor spaces may be located in the front, side, or rear yard provided they are generally level, feature no dimension less than ten-feet, and enclosed by a fence, railing, and/or hedge at least 32-inches in height to qualify
    - (B) Private porches may qualify as outdoor space provided they are at least 36-square-feet in area, with no dimension less than six-feet.

Individual ground-level open space that is in excess of minimum requirements must not be used in the calculations for determining the minimum usable recreational space requirements for other units in the development.

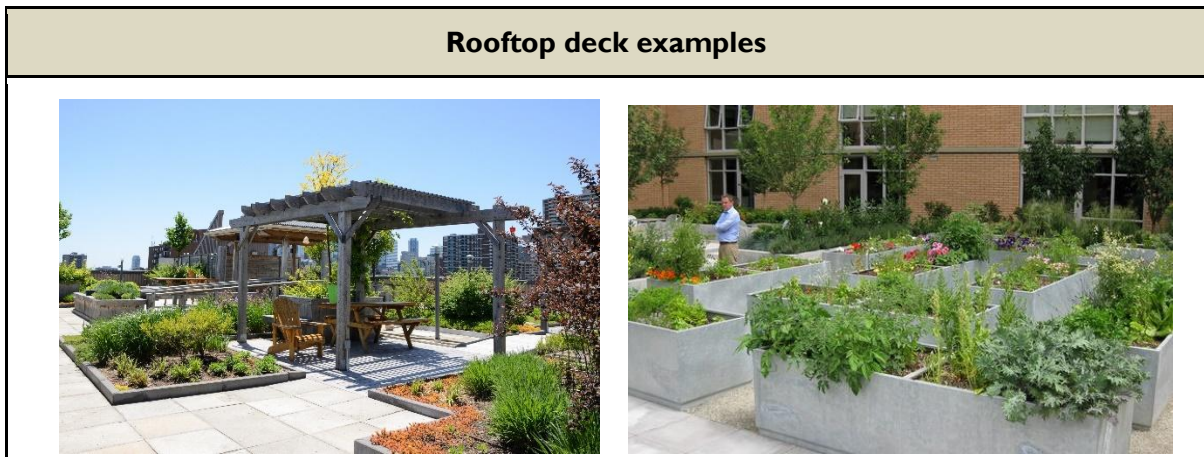
- (iii) Balconies and other similar private outdoor spaces. Up to 50 percent of the required recreational space for a unit may be provided by private balconies provided such spaces are at least 36-square-feet in area, with no dimension less than four-feet (not including railings), to provide a space usable for human activity.

Note: Balconies that encroach over the public right-of-way will require a permit meeting the standards of ACC 12.60 and ACC 12.60.050.

- (iv) Common indoor recreation-areas. Up to 50 percent of the required recreational space may be provided by common indoor recreation areas meeting the following conditions:
  - (A) The space must meet ADA standards and must be located in a visible area, such as near an entrance, lobby, or high traffic corridors.
  - (B) The space must be designed specifically to serve interior recreational functions and not merely be leftover unrentable space used to meet the open space requirement.
- (v) Shared roof-decks. For apartment buildings, up to 50 percent of the required recreational space may be provided by shared roof-decks located on the top of buildings which are

available to all residents and meet the requirements below. For mixed-use buildings, 100 percent of the required recreational space may be provided by shared roof-decks. Design requirements:

- (A) Space must feature hard surfacing, provide amenities such as seating areas, landscaping, and/or other features that encourage use.
- (B) Space must integrate landscaping elements (at least 20 percent of the space) that enhance the character of the space and encourage its use.



- (b) Shared recreational space design requirements. Shared recreational space can include landscaped courtyards or decks, entrance plazas, gardens with walkways, children’s play areas, pools, and water features provided they are accessible to all residents of the development. Accessible areas used for storm water retention, infiltration, or other multipurpose recreational and/or green spaces that meet the design criteria herein may qualify as shared recreational space.

Special requirements for shared recreational spaces include the following:

- (i) Shared recreational space must be located in centralized areas that are visible from units within the development.
- (ii) Shared recreational space must feature no dimension less than 15-feet in order to provide functional leisure or recreational activity. Wider minimum dimensions are required perpendicular to building elevations containing windows of dwelling units whose only solar access is from the applicable building wall. Specifically:
  - (A) 20-feet minimum for such elevations up to three-stories tall.
  - (B) 25-feet minimum for such elevations four-stories tall.
  - (C) 30-feet minimum for such elevations five or more stories tall.
- (iii) Shared recreational space must feature paths, landscaping, seating, and lighting plus play structures, sports courts, and/or other pedestrian amenities to make the area more functional and enjoyable for a range of users.
- (iv) Stairways and service elements located within or on the edge of shared recreational space must not be included in the open space calculations.
- (v) Shared porches may qualify as shared recreational space, provided they are at least eight-feet in depth and 96-square-feet in total area.

## Shared recreational space examples



The upper left example is a courtyard over a parking deck. Notice the transition elements between the courtyard and adjacent residential units. The upper right courtyard is shared by ground-level commercial uses and apartments above.

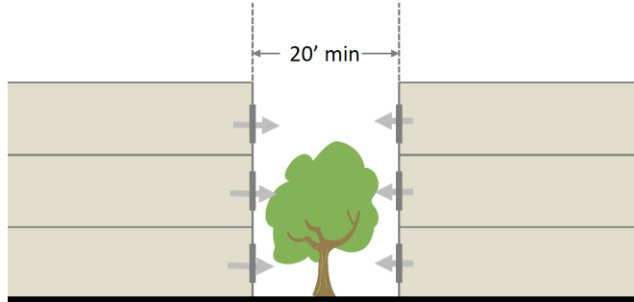


The left image above includes a covered gathering space with outdoor grills adjacent to a landscaped commons with a central walkway. The right image is an example of shared indoor recreation space.

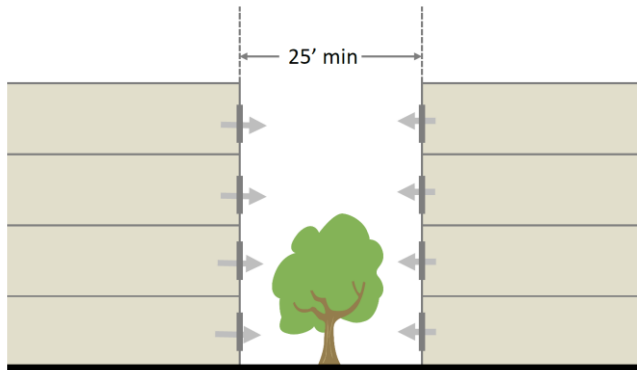


The left image above includes a turf play area with mounds for fun play. The right image shows traditional play equipment.

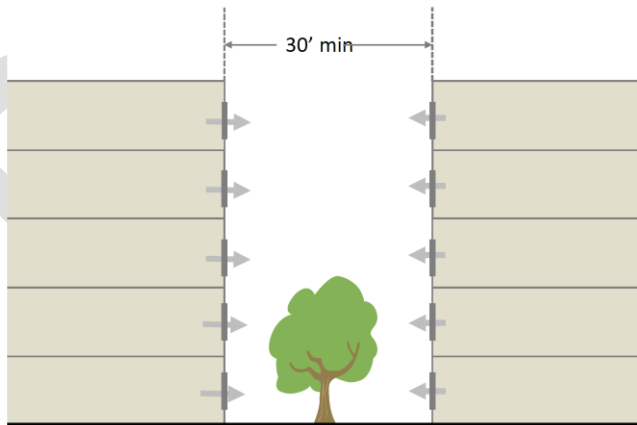
**Shared recreational space – minimum widths when abutting building elevations containing windows of dwelling units whose only solar access is from the applicable building wall**



20-foot minimum for such elevations up to three-stories tall.



25-foot minimum for such elevations four-stories tall.



30-foot minimum for such elevations five or more stories tall

## 3.2 Public Plazas and pedestrian-oriented space.

### (1) Purpose.

- (a) To encourage plazas and other pedestrian oriented spaces in downtown that enhance the public's opportunity for active and passive activities, such as dining, resting, people watching, and recreational activities.
- (b) To enhance the comfort and leisure capabilities of public plazas.
- (c) To enhance the development character and attractiveness of the Downtown Urban Center.

**(2) Applicability.** These standards apply when publicly accessible plazas are included in the development.

### (3) Public plaza standards.

- (a) Public plazas must abut and be within three feet in elevation of a public sidewalk. Ramps must be provided consistent with ADA standards.
- (b) Public plazas must be at least 25 feet wide.
- (c) At least ten percent of the plaza area shall be planted with trees and other vegetation. Planters with trees, shrubs, or other vegetation are permitted to count towards the ten percent.
- (d) At least 20 percent of the plaza shall have physical or natural shade structures. Seated areas with umbrellas, planted trees that will have a canopy radius of at least 2.5 feet, canopies, and other shade structures are permitted to count towards the 20 percent.
- (e) At least two feet of seating area (a bench or ledge at least 16-inches deep and appropriate seating height) or one individual seat per 60-square-feet of plaza area or open space. Moveable seating may be used to meet up to 75 percent of this requirement.
- (f) Desirable public plaza features (to be encouraged) include site furniture, artwork, drinking fountains, water features, kiosks, play structures, or other similar features.

#### Example of site development integrating pedestrian-oriented space





All of the above spaces front onto sidewalks and include bordering storefronts to help enliven the spaces. The bottom plaza includes a crushed rock surface, with concrete pathways on the side to facilitate pedestrian movement. Note the mix of fixed and movable seating options.

### 3.3 Parking lots, garages, and drive access design.

#### (1) Purpose.

- (a) To create a safe, convenient, and efficient network for vehicle circulation and parking that minimizes conflicts with pedestrian circulation and activity.
- (b) To mitigate the visual impact of parking lots on the streetscape and development context.
- (c) To enhance the function, safety, and visual appearance of parking garages.

#### (2) Parking lot pedestrian circulation and design.

The project must provide an integrated and connected pedestrian circulation network that encourages walking and functions as one of the defining features of the development. Specifically:

- (a) Pedestrian connections not less than five feet wide shall be provided through parking lots where they separate building entrances from sidewalks and/or transit stops. Pedestrian connection walkways are required to meet minimum ADA requirements.
- (b) Pedestrian connections through parking lots shall be clearly defined by at least two of the following:
  - (i) Six-inch vertical curb in combination with a raised walkway.
  - (ii) Textured paving, including across vehicular lanes, such as unit pavers, stamped and scored concrete.
  - (iii) Bollards.
  - (iv) Trellis.
  - (v) Continuous landscape area on at least one side of the walkway that is at least three feet wide.
  - (vi) Pedestrian-scale lighting.
- (c) Parking lot walkways. For developments with large surface parking lots, one walkway shall be provided for every four rows of parking, or at a maximum spacing of 200 feet.
- (d) Crosswalks. Crosswalks are required when a walkway crosses an on-site paved area accessible to vehicles.
- (e) Raised crosswalks (speed tables). On sites larger than one acre, all crosswalks near major building entrances, parking garage entries, vehicular entries to the site, and other high-traffic areas shall be vertically raised to sidewalk level. The purpose of raised crosswalks is to provide a continuous walking or rolling surface, increase the visibility of pedestrians, and slow the speed of vehicular traffic. This requirement does not apply to crosswalks crossing public roadways.

#### (3) Through-block connection standards for the development of large sites.

Through-block connections may include private streets, shared pedestrian and vehicular access routes, and other non-motorized routes that are intended to run between streets through an entire block. The standards herein allow flexibility in the type of connections best suited for the particular development and its use mix. The M and I zones are exempt from this standard. Specific regulations for such through-block connections:

- (a) The maximum distance between a street and through block connection or between through-block connection is 500 feet.

Development sites with smaller dimensions are not required to integrate through-block connections with new development.

- (b) Departures and exceptions to the through-block connection standards:
  - (i) The Director may approve a departure from the dimensional standards set forth in subsection (a) by up to 25 percent provided the quality of the through-block connection exceeds minimum design standards.
  - (ii) The Director may approve an exception from the dimensional standards set forth in subsection (a) where topography, existing uses/construction, or other geographic conditions prevent compliance or impose an unusual hardship on the applicant, provided the proposed design maximizes pedestrian and vehicular connectivity on the site given the constraints.
- (c) Public access easement. Such through-block connections shall be provided within a public access easement.
- (d) Alignment. Specific alignments for the through-block connections will be developed during the development review process for applicable sites.
- (e) Accessibility. Through-block connections must be accessible to the public at all times and may take a variety of forms, depending on the block size and use mix, as specified in subsection (F), Through-block connections, below.
- (f) Cantilever design. Buildings may project or cantilever into minimum required easement areas on building levels above the connection provided a 13-foot, six-inch vertical clearance is maintained and all other regulations are met.
- (g) Through-block connection types. Unless otherwise noted below and elsewhere in this chapter, required through-block connections may take any of the following forms set forth below. A combination of designs set forth above may be used for each connection.
  - (i) Private street. Such streets shall comply with the Engineering Design and Construction Standards.
  - (ii) Alley. Alleys shall comply with the Engineering Design and Construction Standards.
  - (iii) Shared lane. The shared-lane approach can work well for lower traffic situations and helps to reduce the total space needed to accommodate access. They must include a 20-foot wide minimum two-way shared travel lane within a 32-foot wide public access easement. Parallel or angled parking pockets may be integrated into the lane provided the public access easement is widened accordingly. Landscape planters with a mixture of trees, shrubs, and ground cover must be integrated on at least one side of the shared-lane.
  - (iv) Landscaped passageway design. This includes an eight-foot minimum width paved pathway within a 24-foot public access easement. Six-foot minimum landscaping strips (with a mixture of trees, shrubs, and ground cover) are required on each side of the path.
  - (v) Urban passageway design. This is a 12-foot minimum width concrete or unit paver walkway within a public access easement (same width) with buildings generally on each side. The building elevations on each side of an Urban passageway must include 40 percent transparency between 30 inches and eight feet above grade. Weather protection is required over all building entrances (at least three feet deep across the full width of the entrance).

## Shared lane examples



Image courtesy eya.com

## Landscaped and urban passageway examples



Landscaped passageway examples above and urban passageway examples below, though the lower right is a blended example of urban and landscaped passageway.



### (4) Vehicular access and design.

- (a) Driveways. Driveways, where permitted by applicable Block Frontage Standards in Chapter 2, shall meet the standards of the Engineering Design and Construction Standards, including, but not limited to, standards for intersection spacing, distance from crosswalks, and width.
- (b) Parking lot location and design. Parking lot location standards are set forth in the Block Frontage Standards in Chapter 2. All other parking lot design standards are set forth in ACC Chapter 18.52 unless modified herein.
  - (i) See subsection (2) above for interior parking lot pathways.
  - (ii) See subsection (5) below for parking lot landscaping standards.
- (c) Garage and parking structures. Where such structures are located along a public street, they are subject to applicable block frontage standards as set forth in Chapter 2. Supplemental standards:
  - (i) The ground level of free-standing parking structures shall include at least three of the following elements along block frontages and/or other elevations adjacent to internal streets and other required through-block connections, customer and/or resident parking lots, and pedestrian-oriented space:

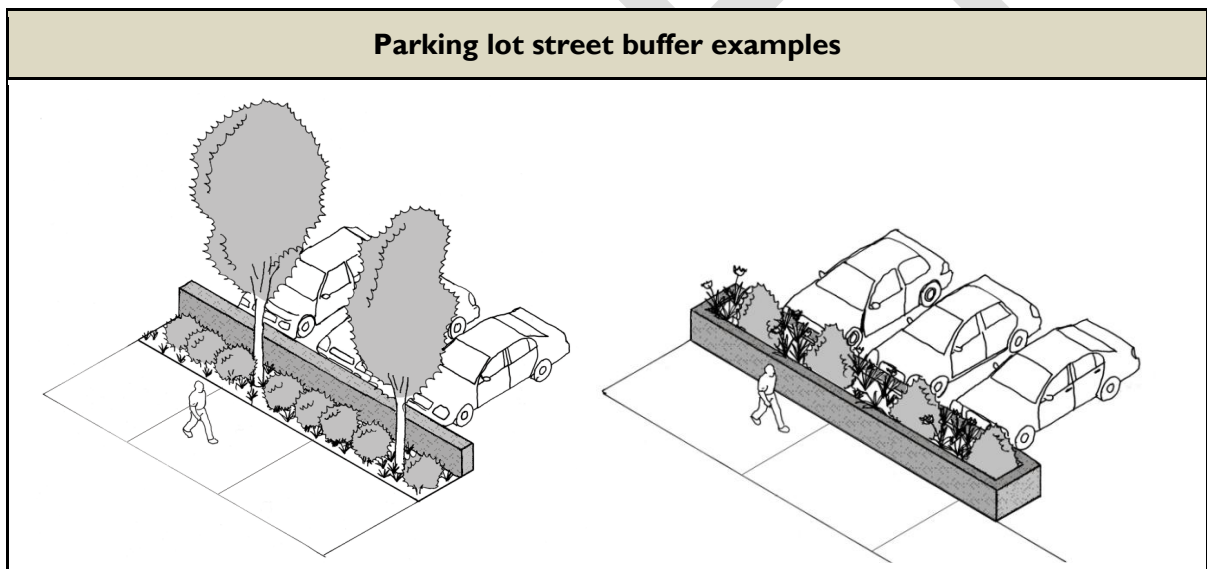
- (A) Pedestrian scale signs, associated with storefront uses integrated into the ground floor frontage.
  - (B) Canopies and other forms of weather protection where the parking structure integrates storefronts along the ground floor frontage.
  - (C) Plinths for columns.
  - (D) Ground level and/or terraced planting beds integrated between the sidewalk and the parking structure.
  - (E) Ornamental tilework.
  - (F) Glass elevator and/or stair tower.
  - (G) Departure. Other design features will be considered provided they meet the purpose of this section.
- (ii) Upper levels of structured parking shall be screened or treated architecturally by two or more of the following:
- (A) Roughly square openings rather than horizontal.
  - (B) Planting designed to grow on the façade.
  - (C) Louvers.
  - (D) Expanded metal panels.
  - (E) Decorative metal grills.
  - (F) Spandrel (opaque) glass.
- Departure. Other design features will be considered provided they meet the purpose of this section.
- (iii) Parking garage entries and service area entries should be well-integrated into the design of the building and should not dominate the streetscape. They should be designed and sited to complement, not subordinate, the pedestrian entry.
- (iv) Where vehicles enter and exit a parking garage or service area across a sidewalk or internal walkway, direct visibility between pedestrians and motorists shall be provided. Possible treatments to meet this requirement may include setback entries, cropped wall corners, wall openings, or other treatments to enhance safety and visibility. Treatments should also include pavement markings or changes in pavement materials. Mirrors and electronic visual/audio warnings alone are not acceptable methods of visibility.
- (v) Parking garage entries shall meet the standards of the Engineering Design Standards, Chapter 10, which details requirements for adding visibility and/or auditory treatments between pedestrians and motorists.
- (vi) Garage entry doors and gates, if provided, shall be at least 50 percent transparent between the bottom and top of the door or gate to enhance the safety of garage users.
- (v) Lighting fixtures within garages are encouraged to be screened from view from the street.

## **(5) Parking lot landscaping.**

- (a) Surface parking lots consisting of ten or more stalls shall feature landscaped planter beds at a ratio of one to every six stalls. Each planter bed shall include at least one tree, a minimum caliper of two inches at the time of planting. ➡

- (b) The minimum planter size shall be 100 square feet. Planters shall be protected by concrete curbs and shall also feature shrubs and/or groundcover. ➡
- (c) Surface parking lots located adjacent to any street (excluding alleys) shall be screened by one or a combination of the following:
  - (i) Low walls made of decorative concrete, masonry, or other similar material, not exceeding a maximum height of 30 inches.
  - (ii) Raised planter walls (not exceeding a total height of 30 inches) planted with shrubs (a minimum of 80 percent of which must be evergreen).
  - (iii) Landscape plantings consisting of trees (of which at least 80 percent are deciduous) and shrubs and groundcover materials (of which at least 80 percent are evergreen).
  - (iv) All plant material used for parking lot screening shall provide clear views between 30 inches and eight feet above the ground surface, for visibility and safety.
  - (v) Planting areas shall be a minimum of five feet in width and shall be irrigated.

DEPARTURES will be considered provided the design enhances the function, safety, convenience, or visual appearance of the parking lot and mitigates the visual appearance on the streetscape and development context.



## 3.4 Service areas and mechanical equipment.

### (1) Purpose.

- (a) To minimize adverse visual, odor, and noise impacts of mechanical equipment, utility cabinets and service areas at ground and roof levels.
- (b) To provide adequate, durable, well-maintained, and accessible service and equipment areas.
- (c) To protect residential uses and abutting properties from impacts due to location and utilization of service areas.

### (2) Location of ground related service areas and mechanical equipment.

- (a) Service areas (e.g., loading docks, trash dumpsters, compactors, recycling areas, electrical panels, and mechanical equipment areas, etc.) must be located for convenient service access while avoiding negative visual, auditory, olfactory, or physical impacts on the streetscape environment, pedestrian-oriented spaces, uses within the development, and abutting residentially zoned properties.
- (b) Exterior loading areas. Exterior loading areas for commercial uses must not be located within 20-feet of a residentially zoned property. Where the director finds that this is the only option for locating an exterior loading area, design measures will be required to mitigate impacts to adjacent uses, such as adding a masonry wall at least eight-feet high.
- (c) Service areas must not be visible from the sidewalk and abutting properties. Where the director finds that the only option for locating a service area is an area visible from a street, internal walkway or pedestrian area, or from an abutting property, the area must be screened with structural and/or landscaping screening measures.

### (3) Screening of ground related service areas and mechanical equipment.

Service elements are encouraged to be integrated within the structure. Where they are not provided within the structure, the following standards apply:

- (a) Where screening of ground-level service areas is required [see subsection (2) above], the following applies:
  - (i) A structural enclosure (including gates) must be constructed of masonry, heavy-gauge metal, or decay-resistant material that is also used with the architecture of the main building. Alternative materials other than those used for the main building may be allowed if the finishes are similar in color and texture or if the proposed enclosure materials are more durable than those for the main structure. The walls must be sufficient to provide full screening from the affected roadway, pedestrian areas and adjacent use. The enclosure may use overlapping walls to screen dumpsters and other materials.
  - (ii) Where the interior of a service enclosures is visible from surrounding streets, walkways, and buildings, an opaque or semi-opaque horizontal cover or screen must be used to mitigate unsightly views. The horizontal screen/cover should be integrated into the enclosure design (in terms of materials and/or design).
- (b) Where loading docks are sited along block frontages (only allowed when no other reasonable options are available as determined by the director), they must be designed to minimize impacts on the pedestrian environment. Standards:
  - (i) Configure loading docks/bays to minimize their frontage length along blocks.

- (ii) Integrate architectural and/or landscaping design features to screen loading dock elements and add visual interest to pedestrians along adjacent sidewalks. See Blank Wall provisions of Section 4.5 for standards and examples.

**(4) Utility meters, electrical conduit, and other service utility apparatus.**

- (a) Utility equipment such as power and gas meters, electrical boxes, and small-scale battery storage systems mounted in a location visible from the street, pedestrian walkway, shared recreational space, or shared auto courtyards, shall have at least one of the following treatments:
  - (i) Screened with vegetation or landscaping.
  - (ii) Integrated into the building's architecture or screened with decay-resistant material similar in color and texture to the main building.
  - (iii) Wrapped with a City approved utility wrap.
- (b) Project designers are strongly encouraged to coordinate with applicable service providers early in the design process to determine the best approach to meet these standards.

**Utility meter location and screening - good and bad examples**

Place utility meters in less visible locations. The lower left example is successfully tucked away in a less visible location and screened by vegetation. The right image is poorly executed and would not be permitted in such visible locations (along the sidewalk). Such meters must be coordinated and better integrated with the architecture of the building.



# Chapter 4 - Building Design

## 4.1 Building massing and articulation.

### (1) Purpose.

To employ façade articulation techniques that reduce the perceived scale of large buildings and add visual interest from all observable scales.

### (2) Façade-articulation. All buildings except free-standing parking structures must include façade-articulation features at maximum-specified intervals to create a human-scaled pattern.

#### (a) Maximum facade-articulation intervals:

(i) Storefronts: 35 feet. Buildings 50 feet wide or less are exempt.

(ii) Large footprint non-residential buildings (individual establishments with a building footprint of more than 50,000 square feet). 75 feet.

(iii) Residential buildings: 30 feet. Buildings 60 feet wide or less are exempt.

#### (b) Articulation features. At least two of the following articulation features must be employed for all buildings in compliance with the maximum-specified façade-articulation intervals.

(i) Use of a window-fenestration pattern.

(ii) Use of weather protection features. An example is a different canopy for each articulation interval (rather than a continuous canopy).

(iii) Use of vertical piers/columns (applies to all floors of the façade, excluding upper level stepbacks).

(iv) Change in building height or roofline with a difference in height, slope or pitch, direction, or shape (such as towers or dormers).

(v) Change in building material and/or siding style (applies to all floors of the façade, excluding upper-level stepbacks).

(vi) Vertical elements such as a trellis with plants, green wall, art element that meet the purpose of the standard.

(vii) Providing vertical building modulation of at least 12-inches in depth if tied to a change in roofline or a change in building material, siding style, or color. Balconies may be used to qualify for this option if they are recessed or projected from the façade by at least 18-inches.

Note: Façade-articulation features that encroach over the public right-of-way will require a permit meeting the standards of ACC 12.60 and ACC 12.60.050.

DEPARTURES will be considered provided they meet the purpose of the standards and the design criteria below.

## Façade articulation examples.



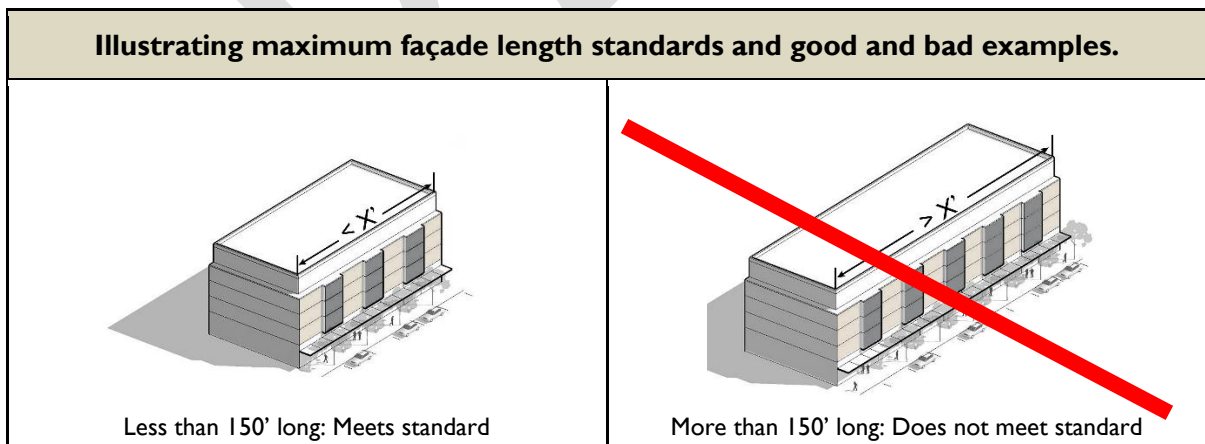
All three buildings above include a combination of window patterns, vertical building modulation, and changes in building material/siding style. The varying styles of balconies in each also help to articulate the facades. The mixed-use example on the left also uses separate awnings above the storefront to articulate the facade. The middle image also uses roofline modulation.



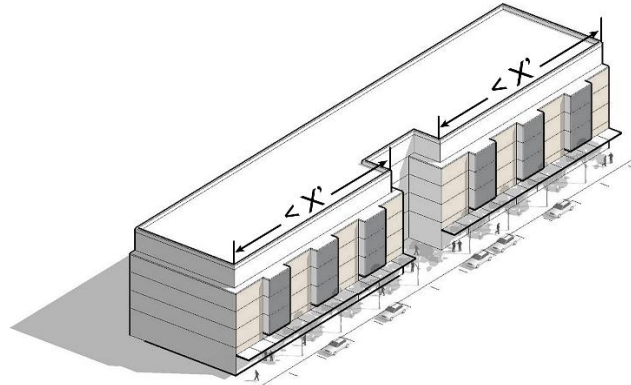
The buildings on the left uses a combination of window patterns, vertical building modulation, roofline modulation, and changes in building material/siding style. The middle image uses window patterns, awnings, and vertical piers. The right image uses window patterns, vertical building modulation, and weather protection elements.

- (c) DEPARTURE criteria associated with articulation standards. Proposals must meet the purpose of the standards. The following criteria will be considered in determining whether the proposed articulation treatment meets the “purpose”.
- (i) Consider the type and width of the proposed articulation treatment and how effective it is in meeting the purpose given the building’s current and desired context if a subarea plan is in effect where the building is proposed.
  - (ii) Consider the applicable block-frontage designation. Undesigned block-frontages warrant more flexibility than Mixed block-frontages.
  - (iii) Consider the size and width of the building. Smaller buildings (less than 120-feet wide) warrant greater flexibility than larger buildings.
  - (iv) Consider the quality of façade materials in concert with doors, windows, and other façade features and their ability to add visual interest to the street from a pedestrian scale and more distant observable scales.

- (3) Maximum façade length.** Facades of buildings longer than 150 feet and containing four or more stories must include at least one of the following features to break up the massing of the building and add visual interest. Freestanding parking structures are exempt from this standard.
- (a) Provide vertical building modulation at least six-feet deep and 15-feet long. For multi-story buildings, the modulation must extend through at least one-half of the building floors.
  - (b) Use of a contrasting vertically modulated design component featuring all the following:
    - (i) Utilizes a change in building materials that effectively contrast from the rest of the façade.
    - (ii) Component is modulated vertically from the rest of the façade by an average of six inches.
  - (c) Façade employs building walls with contrasting articulation that make it appear like multiple distinct buildings. To qualify for this option, these contrasting façades must employ all the following:
    - (i) Different building materials and/or configuration of building materials.
    - (ii) Contrasting window design (sizes or configurations).
  - (d) DEPARTURES to the above standards will be considered provided the design meets the purpose of the standards. Supplemental consideration for approving alternative designs:
    - (i) Width of the façade. The larger the façade, the more substantial articulation/ modulation features need to be.
    - (ii) Block-frontage designation and visibility/street context. Mixed block-frontages warrant the most scrutiny than Undesignated block frontages, and narrow side streets warrant more flexibility than collector or arterial streets.
    - (iii) The type of articulation treatment and how effective it is in meeting the purpose given the building's context.



**Illustrating maximum façade length standards and good and bad examples.**



Building incorporates a courtyard along the façade (technique #1 noted above) to effectively break it up into smaller components: Meets standard.



The left building uses technique # 1 (vertical building modulation at least six-feet deep and 15-feet wide). The right building uses technique #2 (contrasting vertical modulated design component) together with different window fenestration designs on each side. Both examples are effective in breaking up the perceived scale of the building and adding visual interest.

## 4.2 Building details.

### (1) Purpose.

- (a) To encourage the incorporation of design details and small-scale elements into building façades that are attractive at a pedestrian scale.
- (b) To integrate window design that adds depth, richness, and visual interest to the façade.

### (2) Façade details – Storefront block frontages and other storefront designs. Storefront buildings must be enhanced with appropriate details. Such buildings must employ at least one detail element from each of the three categories below for each façade articulation interval (see subsection 4.1.2).

- (a) Window and/or entry treatment, such as:
  - (i) Transom windows.
  - (ii) Roll-up windows/doors. [Use of this feature exempts buildings from having to meet detailed standards in subsections (b) and (c) below.]
  - (iii) Recessed entry.
  - (iv) Decorative door.
  - (v) Other decorative or specially designed window or entry treatment could be proposed via DEPARTURE provided they meet the purpose of the standards.

#### Examples of architectural elements and façade attachments.

i: Transom windows



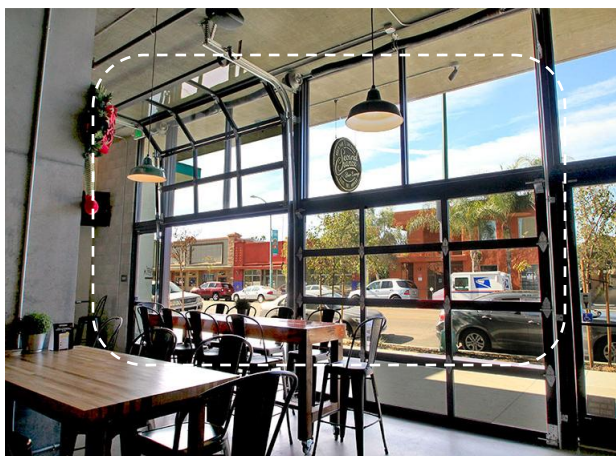
iii: Recessed entry



ii: Roll-up or similar windows/doors

iv: Decorative door.

## Examples of architectural elements and façade attachments.



- (b) Architectural elements and façade attachments, such as:
- (i) Custom-designed weather protection element such as a steel canopy, glass, or retractable awning. Custom-designed cloth awnings may be counted as a detail provided they are constructed of durable, high-quality material.
  - (ii) Decorative rooflines, which could take a variety of forms. It could include an ornamental molding, entablature, frieze or other roofline device visible from the ground level. If the roofline decoration is in the form of a linear molding or board, then the molding or board must be at least 8-inches wide. Such details could occur at an intermediate floor, where the upper floors are set back beyond the front façade. Examples could also include a modern interpretation of a traditional cornice line with distinct detailing.
  - (iii) Bay windows, trellises, towers, and similar elements.
  - (iv) The use of neon in artwork or to emphasize building features.
  - (v) Other architectural element or façade attachment details could be proposed via DEPARTURE provided they meet the purpose of the standards.

## Examples of architectural elements and façade attachments.

### i: Custom designed weather protection



Left: retractable awning. Right: custom decorative canopy



### iii: Bay windows, trellises, towers, etc.

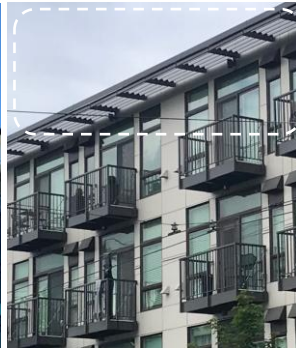


Decorative tower

### ii: decorative rooflines



Left: decorative cornice and top floor. Right: decorative projecting cornice feature.



### v: Other details that meet the purpose of the standards.



Custom hanging bike rack and repair station integrated as a storefront design element

### (c) Building material details, including:

- (i) Use of decorative building materials/use of building materials. Examples include decorative use of brick, tile, or stonework.
- (ii) Decorative kick-plate, pilaster, base panel, or other similar feature.
- (iii) Decorative belt course.
- (iv) Decorative building-mounted light fixtures.
- (v) Hand-crafted material, such as special wrought iron or carved wood.
- (vi) Other building material details could be proposed via DEPARTURE provided they meet the purpose of the standards.

DEPARTURES for façade detail standards of subsection (2) of this section will be considered provided the façade (at the overall scale and at the individual articulation scale) meets the purpose of the standards.

**Examples of Examples of building material details that enhance the visual intrigue of the building**

**i: Decorative building materials**



**iii: Decorative light fixtures.**



**ii: Decorative kick-plate, pilaster, base panel, or similar**

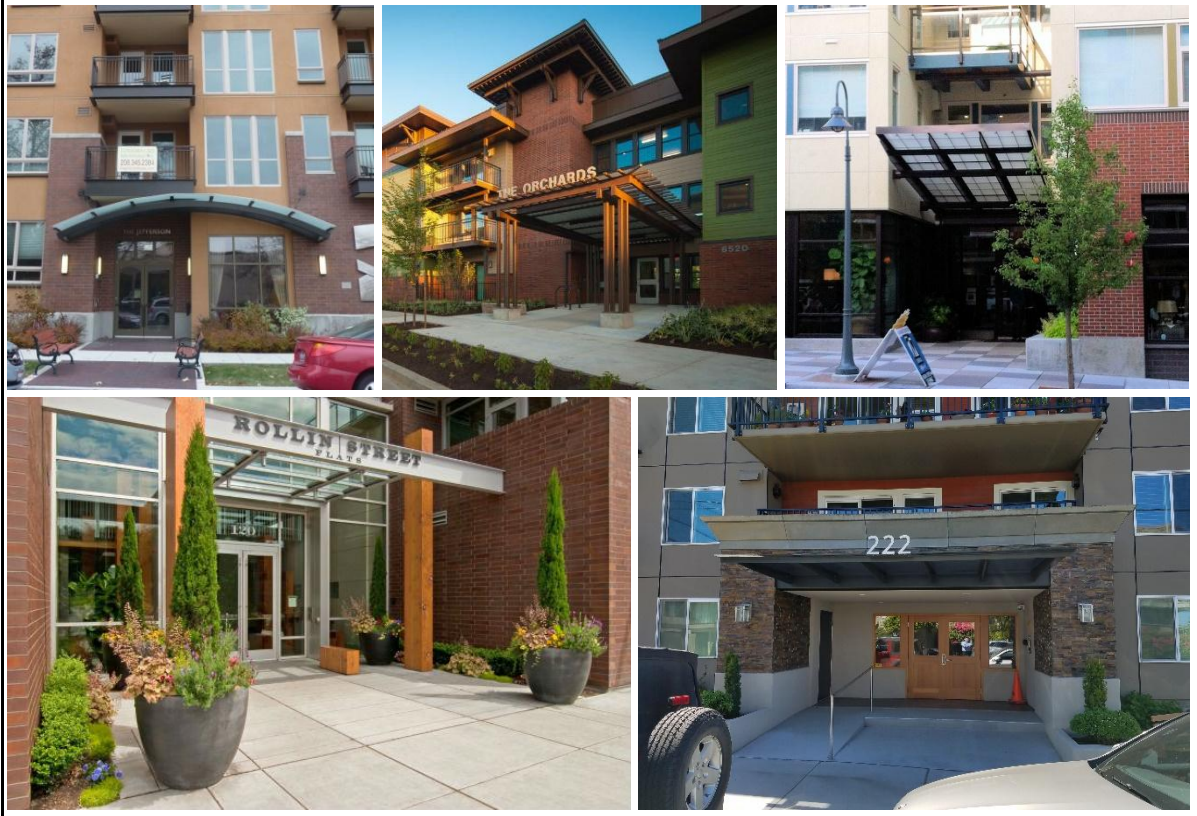


**iv: Hand-crafted material or other details that meet the purpose of the standards.**



4. **Articulated building entries.** The primary building entrance for an office building, hotel, apartment building of more than 50 units, or community-based facility or other multi-story commercial building must be designed as a clearly defined and demarcated standout architectural feature of the building. Such entrances must be distinguishable from regular storefront entrances on the building. Such entries must be scaled proportional to the building.

**Acceptable building entry examples.**



## 4.3 Building materials.

### (1) Purpose.

- (a) To encourage the use of durable, high quality, and urban building materials that minimize maintenance cost and provide visual interest from all observable vantage points.
- (b) To promote the use of a distinctive mix of materials that helps to articulate façades and lends a sense of depth and richness to the buildings.
- (c) To place the highest priority on the first floor in the quality and detailing of materials at the pedestrian scale.

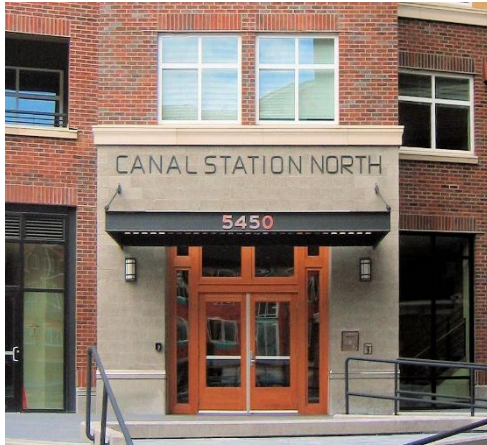
### (2) Applicability. Standards in this section apply to only to mixed-use developments.

### (3) Special conditions and limitations for the use of certain cladding materials.

- (a) Concrete block (a.k.a. Concrete Masonry Unit or CMU) may be used as a secondary cladding material (no more than 1/3 of total façade cladding) on all building façades and other building elevations facing parks, pedestrian-oriented spaces, and containing primary building entrances provided it is incorporated with other permitted materials.

DEPARTURES will be considered for alternative designs that use concrete block as the primary, but not the only, cladding material provided the design incorporates a combination of textures and/or colors to add visual interest. For example, combining split or rock-façade units with smooth blocks can create distinctive patterns. The figures below illustrate acceptable concrete block use/designs.

### Acceptable concrete block use/design.



The above building uses smooth-faced CMU as a contrasting feature that helps to highlight the main building entry. The simple design helps to add emphasis to the doors, canopy and decorative sconce lights.



The above building illustrates an acceptable departure example, as CMU is used as the primary cladding material. Note the use of beige split-façade CMU's above each of the awnings and coupled with the use of smooth-faced gray CMU's on the vertical columns (which employ black accent tiles for added interest).

- (b) Metal siding may be used on all building façades and other building elevations facing parks, pedestrian-oriented spaces, and containing primary building entrances provided it complies with the following standards:

It must feature visible corner molding and trim and does not extend to the ground-level of non-residential and mixed-use buildings and no lower than two-feet above grade for residential buildings. Masonry, concrete, or other durable material must be incorporated between the metal siding and the ground plane.

DEPARTURES will be considered provided the material's integration and overall façade composition meets the purpose of the standards.

## Acceptable metal siding examples



The upper building examples successfully use metal siding more as an accent element to help articulate the façade. Metal siding is the primary material for the lower building examples. The lower left building integrate subtle changes in color to go with articulation features and design details. The right building uses an intricate scaling pattern combined with recessed windows to add depth and interest to the façade.

(c) Standards for the use of Exterior Insulation and Finish System (EIFS). Such material/finishes may be used when it complies with the following:

- i. EIFS is limited to no more than 20 percent of the total façade area and may not be the primary cladding material on non-residential and mixed-use buildings.
- ii. EIFS must feature a smooth or sand finish only.
- iii. EIFS must be trimmed in wood, masonry, or other material and must be sheltered from weather by roof overhangs or other methods.
- iv. EIFS must not be used on the ground floor of facades containing non-residential uses.

DEPARTURES will be considered provided the material's integration and overall façade composition meets the purpose of the standards.

**Acceptable and unacceptable EIFS examples.**



The upper building examples mix EIFS with brick and other materials and integrate trim details around windows to add a sense of depth to the façade. The lower left building uses EIFS between the window and sidewalk - this design is prohibited. The lower right building uses EIFS as the primary siding material, which is prohibited.

- (d) Cementitious wall board paneling/siding may be used provided it meets the following provisions:
- i. Cement board paneling/siding may not be used on ground-level elevation (containing non-residential uses) of mixed-use building facades.
  - ii. Where cement board paneling/siding is the dominant siding material, the design must integrate a mix of colors and/or textures that are articulated consistent with windows, balconies, and modulated building surfaces and are balanced with façade details that add visual interest from the ground-level and adjacent buildings.

DEPARTURES will be considered provided the material's integration and overall façade composition meets the purpose of the standards.

### Acceptable and unacceptable cementitious wall board examples.



The above buildings use cementitious wall board in different textures and colors to help articulate the façade.



The wall board panels covering a large area in a single color in the left building would not meet the purpose of the standards. The right building's design is a better example and combines larger panels (dark maroon color) with horizontal wall board siding (beige color) as effective articulation features. Below is a similar acceptable example.

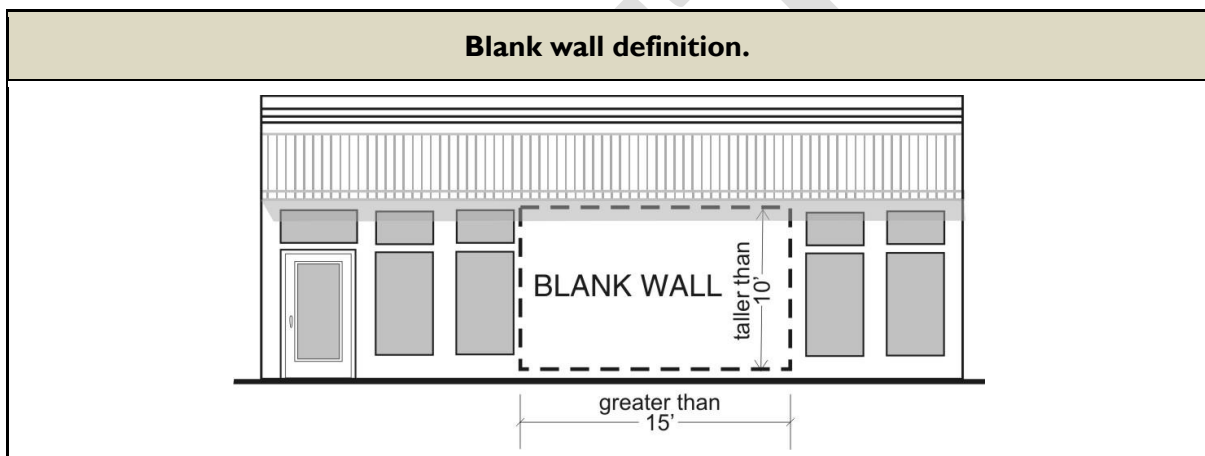
## 4.4 Blank wall treatment.

### (1) Purpose.

- (a) To avoid untreated blank walls.
- (b) To retain and enhance the character of Auburn's streetscapes.

### (2) Blank wall definition. "Blank wall" means:

- (a) For storefront and other buildings placed within ten feet of the sidewalk, a ground floor wall or portion of a ground floor wall over 10-feet in height and a horizontal length greater than 15-feet and does not include a transparent window or door.
- (b) For all other buildings, a ground floor wall or portion of a ground floor wall over 10-feet in height and a horizontal length greater than 30-feet and does not include a transparent window or door.



### (3) Blank wall treatment standards. Untreated blank walls adjacent to a public street, pedestrian-oriented space, common usable open space, or pedestrian walkway are prohibited. Methods to treat blank walls can include:

- (a) Display windows at least 16-inches of depth to allow for changeable displays. Tack-on display cases do not qualify as a blank wall treatment.
- (b) Landscape planting bed at least five-feet deep or a raised planter bed at least two-feet high and three-feet deep in front of the wall with planting materials that are sufficient to obscure or screen at least 60 percent of the wall's surface within three years.
- (c) Installing a vertical trellis in front of the wall with climbing vines or plant materials.
- (d) Installing a mural. Commercial advertisements are not permitted on such murals. The use of neon in artwork is permitted.

DEPARTURES. Other design including special building detailing that adds visual interest at a pedestrian scale will be considered. Such detailing must use a variety of surfaces.

For large visible blank walls, a variety of treatments may be required to meet the purpose of the standards.

**Blank wall treatment examples.**



Buildings A-C feature acceptable treatments including a combination of high quality materials and landscaping (A), decorative lighting/sculptural element (B), and special building detailing (C). The display cases in Building D don't meet the 16" depth requirement, nor do they meet the purpose of the standards.

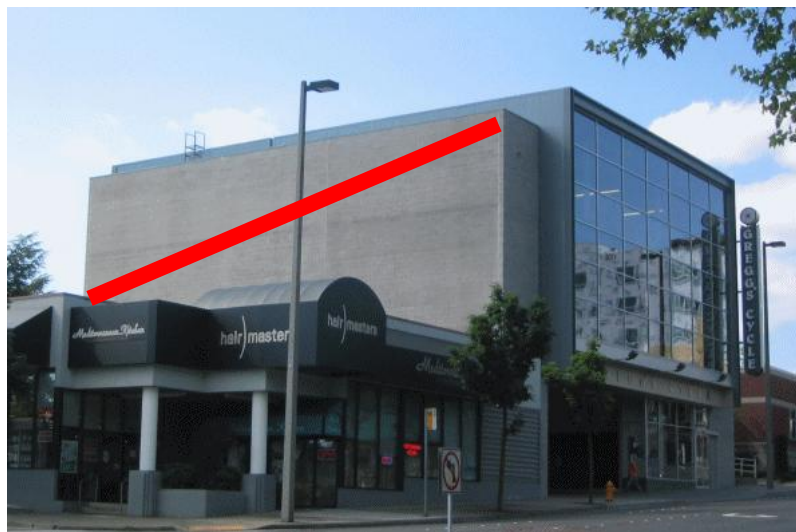
**(4) Firewalls.** Firewalls along property lines are exempt from the above standards, but where they are visible to the public (from the adjacent street), they must be designed to provide visual interest from all observable distances. Examples may include the use of varying materials, textures, and/or colors, the use of green or living walls, and/or the use of modulated building walls to form design patterns.

Murals are also encouraged as a firewall treatment. Commercial advertisements are not permitted on such murals.

**Acceptable firewall design where visible to the public.**



The left images uses a combination of paint bands and climbing vines to enhance the appearance of this large exposed firewall. The building in the right image uses simple scoring patterns and change in materials and color on part of the top floor to add visual interest.



Plain-gray concrete block firewalls such as this are not allowed when visible from the street.

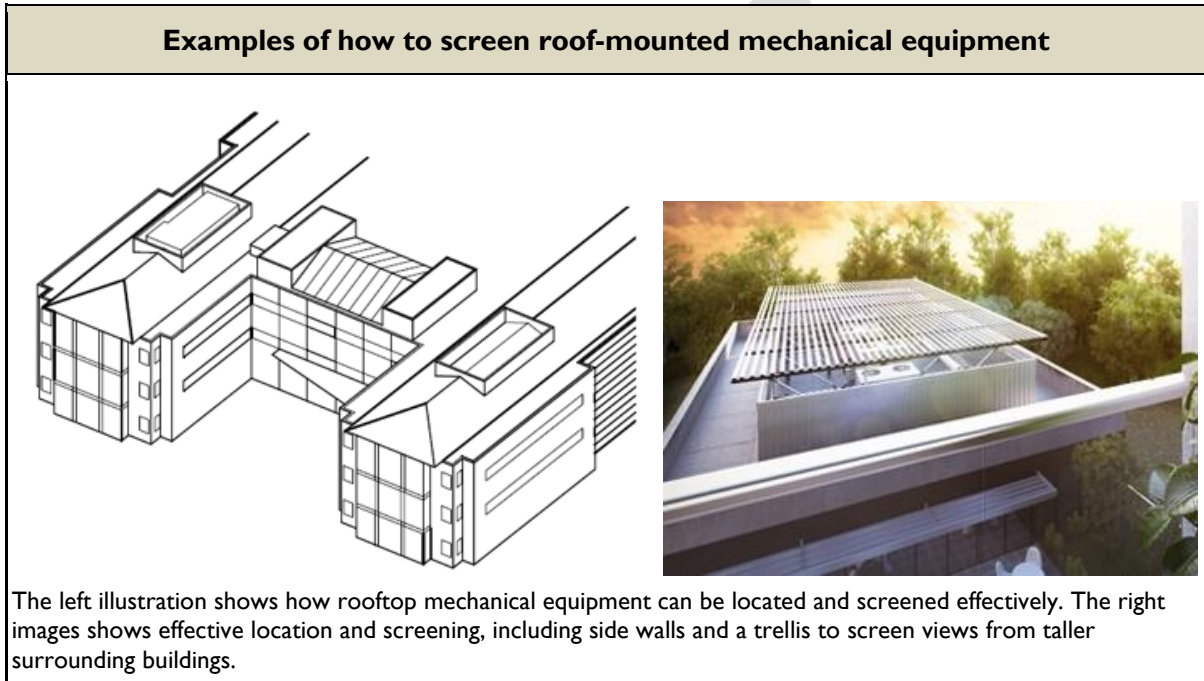
## 4.5 Rooftop services area and mechanical equipment.

### (1) Purpose.

To obscure service and mechanical equipment from the visual sightlines of people walking through Auburn.

### (2) Rooftop equipment screening.

- (a) All rooftop mechanical equipment, including air conditioners, heaters, vents, and similar equipment must be effectively screened from public view. Screening shall be integrated with the architecture of the building.



# Chapter 5 – Guidelines For All Developments

## 5.1 Climate Friendly Design.

### (1) Purpose.

To encourage design techniques that reduce greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) and help buildings be more resilient to extreme heat and wildfire smoke.

### (2) Applicability. The following standards are recommended, not required.

### (3) Guidelines. Projects are encouraged to incorporate one or more of the following:

- (a) Design buildings in accordance with the principles and guidelines of Passive House, LEED, or Built Green design.
- (b) Buildings designed with triple glazed windows.
- (c) Buildings designed with exterior shading features on windows to help regulate heat gain and energy used for cooling. Shading features can be operable or inoperable.

## 5.2 Defensive Space (CPTED).

### (1) Purpose.

To encourage design techniques that reduce the rate of crime associated with persons and property.

### (2) Applicability. The following standards are recommended, not required.

### (3) Guidelines. Projects are encouraged to incorporate one or more of the following:

- (a) Building entryways should be oriented to be visible from other buildings, apartments, and houses.
- (b) Screening such as landscaping, fences, and screen wall should not block visibility and make two-way surveillance difficult.
- (c) Lighting for trails and bike paths should be provided at an appropriate scale and have appropriate spacing to avoid creation of dark spots of insufficiently lighted areas.
- (d) Over-illumination and glare should be avoided where pedestrians and vehicles meet to minimize pedestrian vehicle conflicts.

## 18.31.200 Architectural and site design review standards and regulations.

A. *Intent and Purpose.* The architectural and site design regulations provide an administrative review process for evaluating the design and arrangement of development. The architectural and site design regulations are intended to be consistent with and implement the policies of the comprehensive plan. The purposes of these design review regulations are to:

1. Foster good decision-making for development through architectural and site design within the context of the community's built and natural environmental character, scale and diversity;
2. Promote the use of appropriate scale of buildings and the configuration of open space and parking areas for development to safely and comfortably accommodate pedestrian activities;
3. Coordinate the interrelationship of buildings and public and private open space;
4. Discourage monotony in building design and arrangement, while promoting harmony among distinct building identities; and
5. Mitigate, through design and site plan measures, the visual impact of large building facades, particularly those which have high public visibility (encourage the creative use of architectural and landscape features in order to reduce the actual and perceived scale and bulk of structures).

B. *Applicability.* The following land uses, types of development activities, including all related site improvements, and geographic areas, are subject to the architectural and site design standards and the processes and regulations for conducting design review contained in this chapter:

1. Apartment buildings, s (Formerly Multiple-Family) and Mixed-Use Developments, Congregate living development, and Non-residential development. The following land uses and types of development are subject to the ~~city's apartment and mixed-use~~ design standards document unless addressed by a different set of architectural and site design standards applicable to a specific geographic area:

a. Apartment ~~buildings, containing seven or more units on a single lot, development inclusive of seven or more units~~ in all zones in the city where ~~permitted outright or as a conditional use~~allowed ~~and not otherwise addressed through the city's residential infill development standards (Chapter 18.25 ACC);~~ and

b. *Mixed-Use Residential Development.* Mixed-use development containing residential living units in all zones in the city where allowed ~~permitted outright or as a conditional use~~; and

c. Retirement apartments, congregate living facilities and senior housing complexes in all zones in the city where ~~permitted outright or as a conditional use~~allowed; and

d. Non-residential development, except for development within the M-1 and M-2 zones.

2. *Downtown Urban Center.* The following locations of development activities are subject to the city's downtown urban design standards document:

a. Properties located within the boundaries of the DUC, downtown urban center-zoning district boundary, as identified on the comprehensive zoning map.

~~3. *Auburn Junction.* The following locations of development activities are subject to the city's Auburn Junction design standards document:~~

~~a. Properties located within the boundaries of West Main Street, 2nd Street SE/SW, A Street SE, and A Street SW as identified with ACC 18.29.070, downtown urban design standards.~~

4. *Northeast Auburn Special Planning Area.* The following locations of development activities are subject to the city's Auburn Gateway architectural and site design standards document:

a. Properties located within the boundaries of the Auburn Gateway Project as defined by the development agreement approved by city Resolution No. [4756](#), or as may be subsequently amended. The Auburn Gateway architectural and site design is addressed in Section 4 of that resolution and provided as Attachment 4 to the resolution.

C. *Exemptions.* The following activities as determined by the community development director shall be exempt from the provisions of the design standards:

1. Any building activity that does not require a building permit; or
2. Interior construction work which does not alter the exterior of the structure; or
3. Normal or routine building and site maintenance/repair that is exempt from issuance of a permit, including the repair or maintenance of structural members; or
4. Interior alterations that do not modify an existing site condition; ~~or~~
- ~~5. Site and exterior alterations that do not exceed 10 percent of the assessed valuation of the property building or land per the most recent county records; or~~
- ~~6. Building additions that are less than 10 percent of the existing floor area of the existing building. Any cumulative floor area increase from the adoption date of the ordinance establishing the architectural and site design standard that totals more than 10 percent shall not be exempt unless the community development director determines compliance with these standards would be infeasible and/or unreasonable.~~

D. *Design Standard Documents.* Adopted by reference are the following architectural and site design documents, copies of which shall be maintained by the city clerk. These documents contain the standards for the design and development of the built environment. The community development director or designee shall have the authority to apply the standards to specific development proposals. The following specific architectural and design standards documents may be amended upon approval by the community development director:

1. ~~Mixed-use and apartment (formerly multiple-family) development~~Citywide design standards.
2. Auburn Gateway architectural and site design standards.
3. Downtown urban design standards.
- ~~4. Auburn Junction design standards.~~

E. *Timing of Administrative Design Review.*

1. Design review shall be conducted by the community development director or designee prior to or concurrent with the processing of building permits and/or review of discretionary land use approvals/permits.

2. The decision on the administrative design review shall be issued prior to issuance of the building permits and/or issuance of discretionary land use approvals/permits.

F. *Pre-Application Meeting ~~Recommendation with- When Required Associated With a Design Review.~~* A pre-application conference is recommended for all other projects subject to the city's architectural and site design review but is not required.

1. A pre-application conference is ~~required~~strongly recommended for the following instances:

- a. ~~For a~~Apartments in the R-3 and R-4 residential zones~~buildings~~; and
- b. ~~For m~~Mixed-use development; and containing residential living units located within R-3 and R-4 residential zones; and
- c. ~~For mixed-use development containing residential living units located within commercial zones; and~~
- cd. For retirement apartments, congregate living facilities and senior housing complexes, ~~located within R-3 and R-4 residential zones, and all commercial zones.~~

~~2. A pre-application conference is strongly recommended for all other projects subject to the city's architectural and site design review but is not required.~~

G. *Design Review Submittal Requirements.* In addition to any other documentation required for submittal of a complete application for building permit or discretionary land use approvals/permits, the following items shall be required for the architectural and site design review:

1. Elevation drawings prepared by an architect licensed in the state of Washington of all proposed construction, including dimensional drawings at one-eighth inch equals one foot or comparable scale showing the type of exterior materials, color (where applicable), exterior finishes for buildings and accessory structures, location and elevations of exterior lighting for buildings, the type, style and model of exterior lighting fixtures (where applicable), parking areas, and fenestration details;
2. A to-scale landscape plan prepared by a landscape architect licensed in the state of Washington showing existing vegetation to be retained and proposed vegetation to be

installed inclusive of the common and botanical name of all vegetation, the location and quantity of vegetation, the initial planting size and methods of irrigation;

3. A context vicinity map that shows all structures on the property and within 200 feet in each direction of the subject property drawn approximately to scale;

4. A neighborhood circulation plan consistent with the provisions of Chapter [17.16](#) ACC (Neighborhood Circulation Plan); and

5. Conceptual plans for any public infrastructure, including roads, water, sewer, and storm facilities.

H. *Interpretations.*

1. The community development director shall be authorized to interpret the meaning of words, phrases and sentences which relate to the implementation of the specific architectural and design standards document. Any interpretations regarding implementation of the specific architectural and design standards document shall be made in accordance with its intent or purpose statements and the intent and purpose statements of this chapter. For interpretations, life safety and public health regulations shall be given priority over all other regulations.

2. Administrative interpretations may be appealed to the hearing examiner as prescribed in ACC [18.70.050](#).

I. *Design Review ~~Departures~~Adjustments.*

1. *Authority for Design Review ~~Departures~~Adjustments.* The community development director or designee shall have the authority, subject to the provisions for departures within design standard documents of this section and upon such conditions as the community development director or designee may deem necessary to comply with the provisions of this section, to approve design departures or alternative design treatments. adjustments as follows:

~~a. An adjustment to architectural or site design requirements such that no more than two of the total number of required menu items in the city of Auburn apartment and mixed-use design standards are out of compliance.~~

~~b. An adjustment to required building wall and roof modulation standards, as contained in the city of Auburn apartment and mixed-use design standards, up to 20-percent of the amount of any quantified standards contained therein.~~

~~c. An adjustment to the architectural or site design requirements that remains consistent with the purpose and intent of the architectural and site design standards.~~

2. *Required Findings to Grant Design Review Departures Adjustments*. Each determination granting ~~a departure~~an adjustment by the community development director or designee shall be supported by written findings showing specifically wherein all of the following conditions exist:

a. That the granting of such departure adjustment ~~meets the purpose of the standards and any other applicable departure criteria that applies to the specific standard~~does not constitute a grant of special privilege inconsistent with the limitations upon uses of other properties in the vicinity and/or zone of the subject site; and

b. That the granting of such departure adjustment will not ~~adversely affect the established character of the surrounding neighborhood,~~ discourage maintenance or upgrades on surrounding properties ~~nor result in perpetuation of those design qualities and conditions which the comprehensive plan intends to eliminate or avoid;~~ and

c. That the project incorporates alternate design characteristics that are equivalent or superior to those otherwise achieved by strict adherence to the standard. ~~stated menu options;~~ and

~~3. Public Notification and Action on Design Review Adjustment Applications. Upon the filing of a properly completed application and associated request for a design review adjustment, the community development director or designee shall comply with the city's Type II land-use review requirements for issuance of a properly noticed and appealable land use decision.~~

~~34. Appeal of Director's Decision on Design Review Departures. Adjustment~~

a. If a written objection to the initial determination notice is filed within 14 business days of said notification, the community development director or designee shall

reconsider the initial determination in light of the objection(s) as raised and render a final decision on the permit. This final decision shall result in either the community development director's affirmation of the original determination of approval, the approval with additional modifications or denial.

b. Upon completion of the community development director's reconsideration, all parties notified of the original determination shall receive notification of the community development director's final decision. Any party aggrieved by the community development director's final decision may file an appeal of that decision to the hearing examiner in accordance with the city's land use appeal provisions. Such appeals for hearing examiner review must be filed within 14 business days from the date the written decision was made and shall include the following:

- i. The appeal shall be filed on forms provided by the department of planning and development.
- ii. The appeal shall clearly state the decision being appealed, setting forth the specific reason, rationale, and/or basis for the appeal.
- iii. Fees associated with the appeal shall be paid to the city upon filing of the appeal in accordance with a fee schedule established by resolution.

5. Upon filing of a timely and complete appeal, the hearing examiner shall conduct a public hearing to consider the merits of the appeal. This hearing shall be subject to the city's public noticing and public hearing requirements and shall include notification of all parties notified of the community development director's final decision. The hearing examiner may affirm the community development director's decision or may remand the matter to the community development director for further review in accord with the examiner's direction.

6. If no written objection is filed to the initial determination within the specified time limits, the community development director shall render a final decision on the permit in accord with the initial determination.

J. *Approval Criteria for Design Review.* The community development director or designee may approve, modify and approve, or deny an application for an administrative design review. Each

determination granting approval or approval with modifications shall be supported by written findings showing the applicant satisfies all the following criteria:

1. The plans and supplemental materials submitted to support the plan meet the requirements of the specific architectural and site design documents; and
2. The proposed development is consistent with the comprehensive plan.
- ~~3. The proposed development meets required setback, landscaping, architectural style and materials, such that the building walls have sufficient visual variety to mitigate the appearance of large facades, particularly from public rights-of-way, single-unit detached dwellings and middle housing.~~
- ~~4. In addition to the criteria in subsections (j)(1) through (j)(3) of this section, for apartments and retirement apartment projects, the director or designee must determine that the following key review criteria have been met:
  - ~~a. The proposed development is arranged in a manner that either:
    - ~~i. Provides a courtyard space creating a cohesive identity for the building cluster and public open space furnished to facilitate its use; or~~
    - ~~ii. Possesses a traditional streetscape orientation that provides clearly identifiable and visible entries from the street, views from residential units onto the street and reinforces pedestrian-oriented streetscape characteristics (e.g., building edge-abutting sidewalk, entries onto the street); or~~
    - ~~iii. Faces and facilitates views of a major open space system;~~~~
  - ~~b. The proposed development provides a variety in architectural massing and articulation to reduce the apparent size of the buildings and to distinguish vertical and horizontal dimensions;~~
  - ~~c. The proposed development contains a combination of elements such as architectural forms, massing, assortment of materials, colors, and color bands sufficient to distinguish distinct portions and stories of the building;~~~~

- 
- ~~d. Residential buildings in large apartment projects or mixed-use projects are physically integrated into the complex possessing sufficiently different appearance or placement to be able to distinguish one building from another;~~
- ~~e. Unit entrances are individualized by use of design features that make each entrance distinct or which facilitate additional personalization by residents;~~
- ~~f. Areas dedicated to parking are sufficiently visually broken up and contain a complement of vegetative materials to project a landscaped appearance;~~
- ~~g. Where applicable, a transition is created that minimizes impacts from apartments and mixed-use development projects on neighboring lower density residential dwelling units; and~~
- ~~h. Where applicable, in cases of granting density or height bonuses, the project has provided community benefits, facilities or improvements above and beyond those required in the municipal code and supports the goals, objectives and policies of the comprehensive plan. (Ord. 6959 § 1 (Exh. A), 2024; Ord. 6728 § 4 (Exh. D), 2019; Ord. 6408 § 1, 2012; Ord. 6287 § 2, 2010; Ord. 6245 § 15, 2009.)~~
-

**18.23.040 Development standards.**

A. Hereafter, no use shall be conducted and no building, structure and appurtenance shall be erected, relocated, remodeled, reconstructed, altered or enlarged unless in compliance with the requirements in Tables 18.23.040A (C-1, C-2, and C-AG Zone Development Standards) and 18.23.040B (M-1 and M-2 Zone Development Standards) and in compliance with the provisions of this title, and then only after securing all permits and approvals required hereby. These standards may be modified through either an administrative variance or variance, subject to the procedures of Chapter [18.70](#) ACC.

**Table 18.23.040A. C-1, C-2 and C-AG Zone Development Standards**

Development Standard	Requirement by Zone		
	C-1 Light Commercial	C-2 Heavy Commercial	C-AG Mixed-Use Commercial
Minimum lot area	None	None	None <sup>1</sup>
Minimum lot width, depth	None	None	None
Maximum lot coverage	None	None	None
Minimum setbacks	<i>Minimum setbacks required for structures. See also ACC <a href="#">18.31.070</a> for specific exceptions to these setback standards.</i>		
Front	<del>20 ft</del> None <sup>4</sup>	<del>20 ft</del> None <sup>4</sup>	20 ft
Side, Interior	None <sup>2</sup>	None <sup>2</sup>	None <sup>2</sup>
Side, Street	15 ft	15 ft	15 ft
Rear	None <sup>2</sup>	None <sup>2</sup>	None <sup>2</sup>
Height limit	<i>Maximum allowable height of structures. See also ACC <a href="#">18.31.030</a></i>		

Development Standard	Requirement by Zone		
	C-1 Light Commercial	C-2 Heavy Commercial	C-AG Mixed-Use Commercial
	<i>(Height limitations – Exceptions) for specific height limit exceptions.</i>		
<b>Maximum height</b>	45 ft <sup>3</sup>	75 ft	75 ft
<b>Additional development standards</b>	None	None	None
<b>Fences and hedges</b>	See Chapter <a href="#">18.31</a> ACC		
<b>Landscaping</b>	See Chapter <a href="#">18.50</a> ACC		
<b>Parking</b>	See Chapter <a href="#">18.52</a> ACC		
<b>Signs</b>	See Chapter <a href="#">18.56</a> ACC		
<b>Lighting</b>	See Chapter <a href="#">18.55</a> ACC		
<b>Nonconforming structures, land and uses</b>	See Chapter <a href="#">18.54</a> ACC		

**Notes:**

**1** Residential uses: no minimum lot size; provided, that residential density does not exceed 20 units per gross acre (this includes privately owned open space tracts but excludes dedicated public roads).

**2** A 25-foot setback is required when adjacent to a residential zone.

**3** Buildings within the Auburn north business area, as established by Resolution No. 2283, may exceed 45 feet if one additional foot of setback is provided from each property line (or required minimum setback) for each foot the building exceeds 45 feet in height.

**4** In addition to meeting setback requirements, all structures must meet sight distance requirements in accordance with city engineering design and construction standards.

**Table 18.23.040B. M-1 and M-2 Zone Development Standards**

Development Standard	Requirement by Zone	
	M-1 Light Industrial	M-2 Heavy Industrial
Minimum lot area	None	None
Minimum lot width, depth	None	None
Maximum lot coverage	None	None
Minimum setbacks	<i>Minimum setbacks required for structures. See also ACC <a href="#">18.31.070</a> for specific exceptions to these standards.</i>	
Front	<del>20 ft</del> None	30 ft
Side, Interior	None <sup>1</sup>	None <sup>1</sup>
Side, Corner	20 ft	30 ft
Rear	None <sup>1</sup>	None <sup>1</sup>
Height limit	<i>Maximum allowable height of structures. See also ACC <a href="#">18.31.030</a> (Height limitations – Exceptions) for specific height limit exceptions</i>	
Maximum height	45 ft <sup>2</sup>	45 ft <sup>2</sup>
Additional development standards	None	None

Development Standard	Requirement by Zone	
	M-1 Light Industrial	M-2 Heavy Industrial
<b>Fences and hedges</b>	See Chapter <a href="#">18.31</a> ACC	
<b>Landscaping</b>	See Chapter <a href="#">18.50</a> ACC	
<b>Parking</b>	See Chapter <a href="#">18.52</a> ACC	
<b>Signs</b>	See Chapter <a href="#">18.56</a> ACC	
<b>Lighting</b>	See Chapter <a href="#">18.55</a> ACC	
<b>Nonconforming structures, land and uses</b>	See Chapter <a href="#">18.54</a> ACC	

**Notes:**

**1** A 25-foot setback is required when adjacent to a residential zone.

**2** Buildings may exceed 45 feet if one foot of setback is provided from each property line (or required minimum setback) for each foot the building exceeds 45 feet.

(Ord. 6959 § 1 (Exh. A), 2024; Ord. 6885 § 1 (Exh. A), 2022; Ord. 6728 § 3 (Exh. C), 2019; Ord. 6433 § 26, 2012.)

**18.07.030 Development standards.**

**Table 18.07.030. Residential Development Standards**

	<b>Standard</b>	<b>RC</b>	<b>R-1</b>	<b>R-2</b>	<b>R-3</b>	<b>R-4</b>	<b>R-NM</b>	<b>R-F</b>
A	Minimum density units or lots per acre (lot area per unit) <sup>1, 5</sup>	0.25 (174,000 sf of lot area per unit)	1 (43,500 sf of lot area per unit)	7 (6,222 sf lot area per unit)	12 (3,630 sf lot area per unit)	16 (2,723 sf lot area per unit)	30 (1,452 sf lot area per unit)	7 (6,222 sf lot area per unit)
B	Minimum lot size (square feet) <sup>8</sup>	174,000	43,500	4,400	2,700	2,200	2,200	4,400
C	Minimum lot width (feet) <sup>2, 5, 7</sup>	125	125	40	20 for interior lots; 35 for exterior lots	20 for interior lots; 35 for exterior lots	20 for interior lots; 35 for exterior lots	40
D	Units allowed							
1	Base units allowed per lot <sup>6</sup>	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
2	Base units per lot allowed with transit or affordability bonus <sup>6</sup>	6	6	6	6	6	6	6
3	Lot area per unit above base (B1 or B2 as applicable) allowance (square feet) <sup>6</sup>	X	X	1,250	750	N/A	N/A	1,250
4	Maximum units per lot <sup>6</sup>	6	6	6	20	N/A	N/A	6

	<b>Standard</b>	<b>RC</b>	<b>R-1</b>	<b>R-2</b>	<b>R-3</b>	<b>R-4</b>	<b>R-NM</b>	<b>R-F</b>
E	Minimum setbacks (feet) <sup>2,3,10</sup>							
1	Residence front setback <sup>3</sup>	35	35	10	10 <sup>9</sup>	<del>10</del> None	<del>10</del> None	10 <sup>9</sup>
2	Garage (minimum front setback required from street access) <sup>3</sup>	20	20	20	20	20	20	20 unless alley-loaded then 15 provided there are 20 feet from any garage
3	Setback to any property line for barns, stables, or similar structures for enclosure of large domestic animals  For other animals, see the supplemental development standards for animals in ACC <a href="#">18.31.220</a>	75	X	X	X	X	X	X
4	Setback to any property line for any corral, exercise yard, or arena for large domestic animals  For other animals, see the supplemental development standards for animals in ACC	35	X	X	X	X	X	X

	<b>Standard</b>	<b>RC</b>	<b>R-1</b>	<b>R-2</b>	<b>R-3</b>	<b>R-4</b>	<b>R-NM</b>	<b>R-F</b>
	<a href="#">18.31.220</a>							
5	Interior side setback	20	10	5	5	5	5	5
6	Street side setback <sup>3</sup>  In all zones, 20 feet minimum street side setback required from street access.	35	20	10	10	10	10	10
7	Rear setback <sup>3</sup>	35	20	15	15	10	10	15
8	Rear setback, detached structure <sup>3, 8</sup>  In all zones, 20 feet minimum street side setback required from street access.	15	15	10	5	5	5	10
F	Maximum impervious area (%)	25	50	75	80	90	90	75
G	Maximum building height (feet)	35	35	35	45	75	75	45
H	Maximum height of accessory buildings and structures	35 <sup>4</sup>	35	24	24	24	24	24
I	Minimum front setback area landscape strip (feet)	N/A	N/A	N/A	5	10	10	N/A
J	Minimum side setback area landscape strip	N/A	N/A	N/A	5	10	10	N/A

	Standard	RC	R-1	R-2	R-3	R-4	R-NM	R-F
	(feet)							
K	Minimum landscaped open space (%)	N/A	N/A	See Chapter <a href="#">18.50</a> ACC	See Chapter <a href="#">18.50</a> ACC	See Chapter <a href="#">18.50</a> ACC	See Chapter <a href="#">18.50</a> ACC	N/A

**1** See Chapter [18.32](#) ACC for calculating density.

**2** All minimum lot widths, setbacks, and landscaping strips are subject to demonstration to the satisfaction of the city engineer that all required utility infrastructure, access requirements, and street elements can be accommodated in accordance with the [city engineering design standards](#) and construction standards.

**3** In addition to meeting setback requirements, all structures must meet sight distance requirements in accordance with city [engineering](#) design and construction standards.

**4** Barns and other specialized structures used for agricultural purposes may exceed the height limits.

**5** Provision applicable to residential subdivision.

**6** See ACC [18.02.067](#) for calculating units allowed per lot.

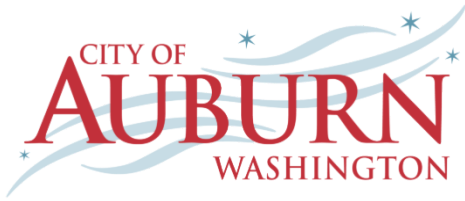
**7** Applies to new parent lots within a unit lot subdivision.

**8** When abutting an alley, detached accessory dwelling units are allowed within the rear setback.

**9** [Non-residential, mixed use, and apartment buildings may have either no or a reduced front setback if the applicable Citywide “Storefront” design standards are met.](#)

**10** [Minimum setbacks required for structures. See also ACC 18.31.070 for specific exceptions to these setback standards.](#)

(Ord. 6959 § 1 (Exh. A), 2024; Ord. 6661 § 3, 2018; Ord. 6600 § 10, 2016; Ord. 6245 § 5, 2009.)



**AGENDA BILL APPROVAL FORM**

**Agenda Subject:**

**Downtown Design Standards Update and Associated Zoning Code Update**

**Meeting Date:**

May 5, 2026

**Staff Introduction/Presentation (Tatro)**

Staff will present the proposed updates to the Downtown Design Standards and amended code to Planning Commission for a recommendation to City Council.

**Department:**

Community Development

**Attachments:**

Staff Report , Exhibit 1  
PowerPoint Presentation, Exhibit 2  
Chapter 18.29 ACC Text Amendment, Exhibit 3  
Downtown Design Standards, Exhibit 4  
DUC Zoning Districts Map, Exhibit 5  
ACC 18.02.070 Text Amendment

**Budget Impact:**

**Administrative Recommendation:**

Planning Commission to deliberate and take action to recommend to City Council approval of the updated Downtown Urban Center Design Standards and amendments to Chapter 18.29 ACC.

**Background for Motion:**

**Background Summary:**

See attached Staff Report

**Councilmember:**

**Staff:** Jason Krum

## PLANNING COMMISSION STAFF REPORT

**AGENDA SUBJECT/TITLE:**

Downtown Design Standards Update and Downtown Urban Center Zoning Code Update

**CITY FILE NO(s):**

City File No. ZOA26-0003

**APPLICANT/AGENT/OWNERS:**

City of Auburn

**REQUEST:**

Planning Commission to hold a public hearing, deliberate, and take action on the updated Downtown Urban Center Design Standards and associated zoning code amendments to Chapter 18.29 Auburn City Code (ACC) to implement the Downtown Subarea Plan and comply with HB 1293.

**LOCATION:**

Downtown Urban Center

**NOTIFICATION:**

A Notice of Public Hearing (NOH) was issued on April 13, 2026.

**HEARING DATE:**

May 5, 2026

**SEPA STATUS:**

A Notice of Adoption of an Existing Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) was issued on March 12, 2026 (SEP26-0004). The City has adopted the Downtown Subarea Plan Planned Action FEIS to satisfy SEPA requirements for this non-project action.

**STAFF:**

Alyssa Tatro, Senior Planner, Dept. of Community Development

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:**

Planning Commission to deliberate and take action to recommend to City Council approval of the updated Downtown Urban Center Design Standards and amendments to Chapter 18.29 ACC.

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### SUMMARY OF UPDATES

**Downtown Design Standards**

At a high level, the proposed Downtown Design Standards update:

- Implements the goals and policies of Auburn’s Downtown Subarea Plan related to economic vitality, walkability, placemaking, and community identity;

- Replaces discretionary, guideline-based provisions with clear, measurable, and objective standards in compliance with HB 1293;
- Prioritizes pedestrian-oriented design;
- Improves predictability and transparency in the development review process while maintaining the character of downtown; and
- Allows flexibility through departures, rather than subjective discretion.

The existing Downtown Design Standards rely on intent-based guidelines and qualitative evaluation. Compliance with the design standards is often determined by whether a proposal meets the intent of a guideline, which requires staff judgment and interpretation. The proposed standards instead rely on objective criteria such as minimum and maximum dimensions, percentages, and clearly defined requirements. This allows projects to be evaluated based on measurable outcomes rather than subjective interpretation, which will improve consistency and predictability in the application of the standards.

#### *1. Block-Frontage-Based Framework:*

The proposed update replaces the Pedestrian I and Pedestrian II Street classification system with a block-frontage-based framework. Frontage types such as Storefront, Mixed, and Landscaped are assigned to streets and blocks and are paired with standards for building placement, ground-floor design, transparency, weather protection, and parking location.

#### *2. Emphasis on Pedestrian Experience and Economic Vitality:*

The proposed standards strengthen requirements for active ground floors, prominent building entrances, transparency, and weather protection along key streets. These standards are intended to encourage walking, increase foot traffic to businesses, and create streets that are comfortable and engaging year-round.

#### *3. Ground-Floor Residential Design Standards:*

The proposed update introduces clearer standards for ground-floor residential units, including setbacks, elevation, and the transition between public sidewalks and private space. These standards are designed to protect resident privacy while maintaining active and visually interesting streetscapes.

#### *4. Flexibility Through Departures:*

Rather than relying on subjective judgement, the proposed standards identify specific provisions that may be modified through a departure process. Departures are limited in scope and must demonstrate how the alternative design meets the stated purpose of the standard. This approach allows flexibility while maintaining transparency and consistency.

**Chapter 18.29 – Downtown Urban Center Zoning Code Update**

At a high level, the proposed Downtown Urban Center zoning code update:

- Aligns zoning districts and development standards with the recently adopted Downtown Plan;
- Updates use regulations to better reflect intended land use patterns within each district;
- Revises parking standards to reduce minimum requirements;
- Clarifies applicability;
- Adds a new Planned Action Standards section to implement the Downtown Subarea Planned Action Environmental Impact Statement (EIS); and
- Includes overall changes to ensure clarity and consistency with state law.

*1. Expanded and Refined Implementing Districts:*

The Downtown Urban Center remains a land use designation, and the proposed revisions refine implementing district structure. These districts are more clearly defined with specific purposes and development expectations. Each district now includes clearer intent language and specific density and height limits, helping align zoning with the Downtown Plan’s land use framework.

*2. Updated Use Regulations by District:*

The existing code generally prohibits a list of uses across the entire Downtown Urban Center. The proposed code reorganizes use limitations so that prohibited uses are identified by district rather than applied uniformly. The update also adds a new section for uses requiring a Conditional Use Permit.

*3. Revisions to Parking Standards:*

The proposed code significantly updates parking requirements across the Downtown Urban Center. Changes include:

- Reducing or eliminating minimum parking requirements for several residential uses;
- Establishing no minimum parking requirements for affordable housing, senior housing, and small commercial uses; and
- Eliminating parking requirements for ground-floor nonresidential uses in mixed-use buildings.

*4. District Development Standards:*

The proposed code reorganizes development standards so that they are clearly applied by district. For example:

- Core districts continue to use the FAR-based system with bonuses;
- The Neighborhood Residential district includes minimum density, lot size, and setback standards

tailored to middle housing; and

- Commercial and industrial districts include standards that address compatibility with adjacent residential areas.

#### *5. Addition of Planned Action Standards:*

The proposed code adds a new section establishing Planned Action Standards for the Downtown Urban Center. This text is taken directly from the Planned Action Ord. (No. 7006) adopted by Council on December 15, 2025. The purpose of adding the text in code is for ease of access for staff and the public. This section implements the Downtown Subarea Planned Action EIS and allows qualifying projects to rely on the existing environmental review rather than completing separate SEPA reviews.

#### *6. Minor Text and Process Updates:*

These changes are primarily administrative and intended to improve clarity and consistency. Additional updates include updating references and cross-references, minor adjustments to exemption language and bonus features section, and inclusion of existing sign regulations from the Design Standards into code for ease of access.

### **FINDINGS OF FACT:**

#### **Background Summary:**

1. In December 2025, the City of Auburn adopted the Downtown Subarea Plan, which establishes a long-term vision and land use framework for the Downtown Urban Center, including anticipated growth, development patterns, and urban design expectations.
2. The Downtown Urban Center Design Standards and Chapter 18.29 ACC zoning regulations function as the primary implementation tools for achieving the goals and policy direction established in the Downtown Subarea Plan.
3. The existing Downtown Design Standards were originally adopted in 2007 and most recently amended in 2021 and rely in part on discretionary, guideline-based provisions.
4. House Bill 1293 requires cities planning under the Growth Management Act to adopt clear and objective design standards and limit reliance on subjective design review.
5. The proposed Downtown Design Standards update establishes a more objective and predictable regulatory framework, including a block-frontage-based system that organizes standards based on street context and frontage type.
6. The updated standards include defined applicability thresholds that determine when and how standards apply to new development, additions, and site modifications, ensuring that requirements are proportional to the scale of development.

7. The proposed standards include a structured departures process that allows flexibility from specific standards when alternative designs meet the intent of the standards, while maintaining overall design quality and consistency.
8. The proposed amendments to Chapter 18.29 ACC align zoning regulations with the Downtown Subarea Plan by refining implementing districts and establishing a district-based structure for use regulations and development standards.
9. The updated zoning framework differentiates development standards by district, reflecting varying intensities of development across the Downtown Urban Center. The standards will preserve and protect the public health, safety, and welfare of the citizens of Auburn and support a more walkable, mixed-use, and transit-oriented downtown environment.
10. In accordance with ACC 14.03.060 Legislative nonproject decisions made by the city council under its authority to establish policies and regulations are not classified as a “type” of project permit decision. Legislative nonproject decisions include, but are not limited to, amendments to the text and map of the comprehensive plan or development regulations.
11. Per ACC 18.68.030(B) a “Zoning Text Amendment” is an application to change the text of ACC Title 18. This type of application or initiation shall be processed as a legislative nonproject decision, consistent with ACC 14.03.060. Public notice shall be provided consistently with ACC Title 14.
12. Revised Code of Washington (RCW) 42.21C.135 Gives authority of local governmental units to adopt rules, guidelines and model ordinances by reference.
13. The design standards update and text amendment were introduced and discussed with the Planning Commission previously at the February 3, 2026, meeting and the March 3, 2026, meeting. Staff provided memorandums and presentations.
14. A public Open House was held on February 11, 2026, at City Council Chambers and approximately 20 attendees were present.
15. An email from Auburn Communications was sent on February 7, 2026, to a list of architects in the region inviting them to review the new design standards located on the City’s public notices website.

**Procedural Steps:**

1. The proposed updates to the existing Downtown Design Standards and text amendment (zoning code update) have been discussed with the Planning Commission previously at regular meetings on February 3, 2026, and March 3, 2026.
2. Pursuant to RCW 36.70A, the text amendment was transmitted to the Washington State Department of Commerce on December 31, 2025. The 60-day notice period ended on March 1, 2026.

3. A Notice of Adoption of an existing FEIS was issued on March 12, 2026.
4. A Notice of Public Hearing (NOH) was issued on April 13, 2026. Pursuant to Chapter 18.68 ACC, the following methods of noticing for the Planning Commission public hearing were conducted:
  - a. The NOH was published in the Seattle Times on April 13, 2026.
  - b. The NOH was posted in three public locations (City Hall, City Annex, and the City's Public Land Use Notice webpage).
  - c. The NOH was mailed to property owners in the Downtown Urban Center by April 25, 2026.

**EXHIBITS:**

1. Downtown Design Standards and Code Presentation
2. Chapter 18.29 ACC Text Amendment
3. Downtown Design Standards
4. DUC Zoning Districts Map
5. ACC 18.02.070 Text Amendment

PLANNING COMMISSION – PUBLIC  
HEARING

DOWNTOWN DESIGN  
STANDARDS AND CODE  
UPDATE

PRESENTED BY  
ALYSSA TATRO, SENIOR PLANNER  
MAY 5, 2026

Department of Community Development  
Planning • Building • Development Engineering • Permit Center  
Economic Development • Code Enforcement

AUBURN  
VALUES

S E R V I C E  
E N V I R O N M E N T  
E C O N O M Y  
C H A R A C T E R  
S U S T A I N A B I L I T Y  
W E L L N E S S  
C E L E B R A T I O N

# 2024 Auburn Downtown Subarea Plan Update

October 2025



## BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

- SERVICE
- ENVIRONMENT
- ECONOMY
- CHARACTER
- SUSTAINABILITY
- WELLNESS
- CELEBRATION

# DOWNTOWN DESIGN STANDARDS AND CODE

## Downtown Subarea Plan

**Downtown  
Design  
Standards**

**Chapter 18.29  
ACC – Text  
Amendment**



**IMPLEMENT DOWNTOWN  
SUBAREA PLAN**



**COMPLIANCE WITH HB  
1293**

## GOALS OF UPDATE

- SERVICE
- ENVIRONMENT
- ECONOMY
- CHARACTER
- SUSTAINABILITY
- WELLNESS
- CELEBRATION

## PROCEDURAL STEPS

- Presentation on Feb 3, 2026, and March 3, 2026, Planning Commission Meeting
- Text Amendment sent to the Department of Commerce on Dec 31, 2025. No comments received
- Notice of Public Hearing issued March 24, 2026



## PUBLIC OUTREACH

SERVICE   
ENVIRONMENT   
ECONOMY   
CHARACTER   
SUSTAINABILITY   
WELLNESS   
CELEBRATION



**Replace discretionary guidelines with objective standards**



**Improve predictability and transparency**



**Strengthen pedestrian-oriented design**



**Refine zoning districts and use regulations**



**Reduce or eliminate certain parking requirements**



**And add a Planned Action framework for environmental review**

## OVERVIEW OF CHANGES

- SERVICE
- ENVIRONMENT
- ECONOMY
- CHARACTER
- SUSTAINABILITY
- WELLNESS
- CELEBRATION

# DOWNTOWN DESIGN STANDARDS

## Downtown Urban Center City of Auburn Design Standards

ADOPTED 2/12/07;  
AMENDED 4/14/08, 06/9/08, 06/16/09, 05/24/10,  
2/21/17, 2/21/17, 08/16/21;  
REVISION EFFECTIVE 09/20/21

City of Auburn Downtown Standards  
Downtown Urban Center Zone  
September 20, 2021

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GUIDELINES APPLICABLE TO ALL DEVELOPMENT IN DOWNTOWN

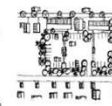
Site Design

### GUIDELINES APPLICABLE TO SITE DESIGN

#### 1. PARKING LOTS AND GARAGES

**Intent:** Reduce the visual impact of surface parking lots and garages

- A. General
1. Parking shall be located over, under, behind, or to the side of buildings. Parking structures are strongly encouraged.
  2. All parking lots shall meet the design and construction standards of ACC 18.52 unless modified herein.
    - Parking stall standards for 90 degree stalls in structured parking facilities shall be 18 feet in length and 9 feet in width. All other dimensions shall meet ACC 18.52.
  3. Compact parking stalls shall be permitted but only 30% of the parking provided may be dedicated to compact parking.
- B. Screening and Landscaping
1. Surface parking lots consisting of ten or more stalls shall feature landscaped planter beds at a rate of one to every six (6) stalls. Each planter bed shall include at least one tree, a minimum caliper of two (2) inches at the time of planting.
  2. The minimum planter size shall be 100 square feet. Planters shall be protected by concrete curbs and shall also feature shrubs and/or groundcover.
  3. Surface parking lots located adjacent to any street (excluding alleys) shall be screened by one or a combination of the following:
    - a. Low walls made of decorative concrete, masonry, or other similar material, not exceeding a maximum height of 30 inches.
    - b. Raised planter walls planted with a minimum of 80% evergreen shrubs, not exceeding a total height of 30 inches.
    - c. Landscaping plantings consisting of trees (of which at least 80% are deciduous) and shrubs and groundcover materials (of which at least 80% are evergreen).
    - d. All plant material used for parking lot screening shall provide clear views between 30 inches and eight (8) feet above the ground surface, for visibility and safety.
    - e. Planting areas shall be a minimum of five (5) feet in width and shall be irrigated.

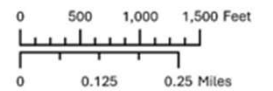
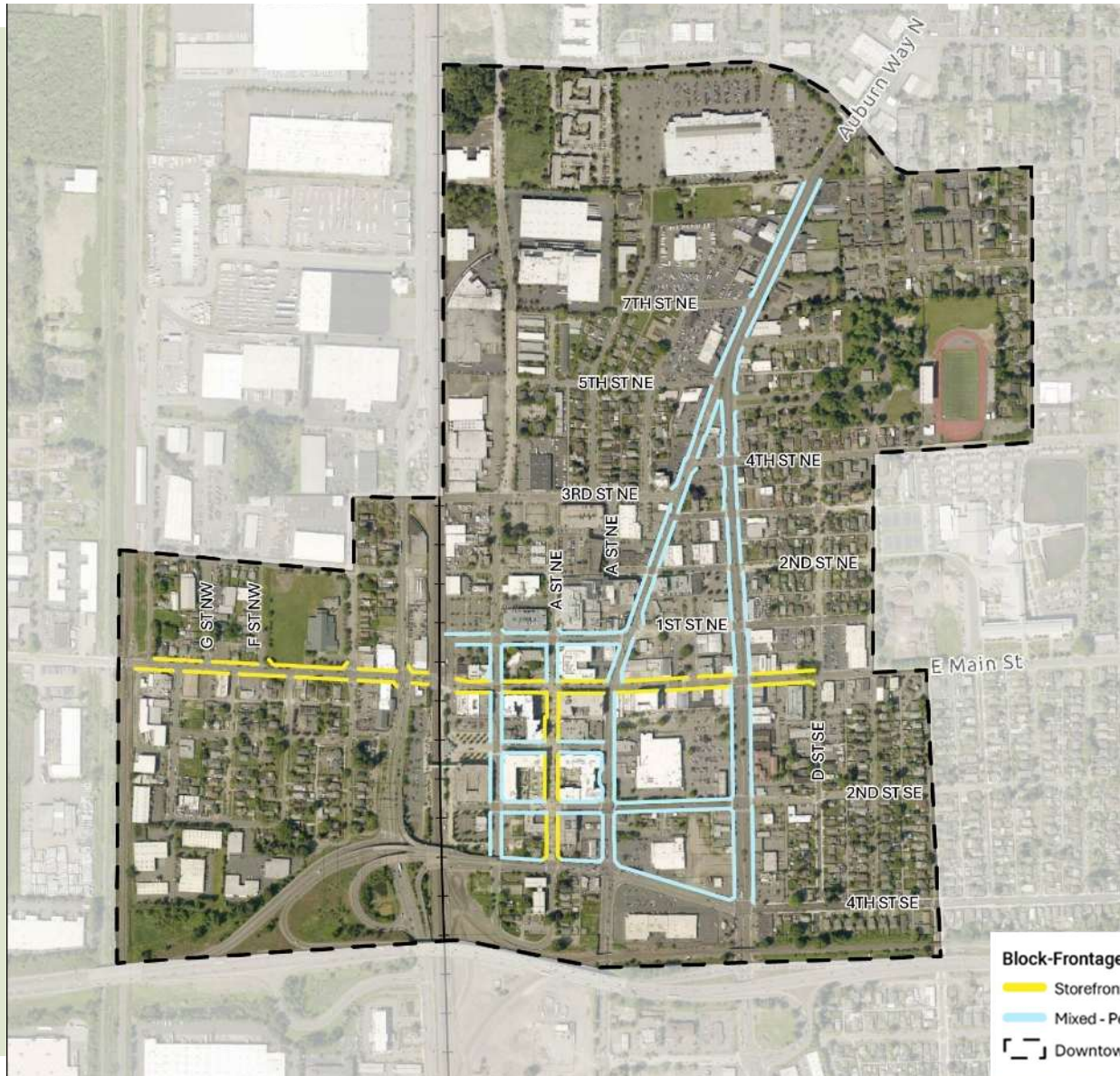


City of Auburn Downtown Standards  
Downtown Urban Center Zone  
September 20, 2021

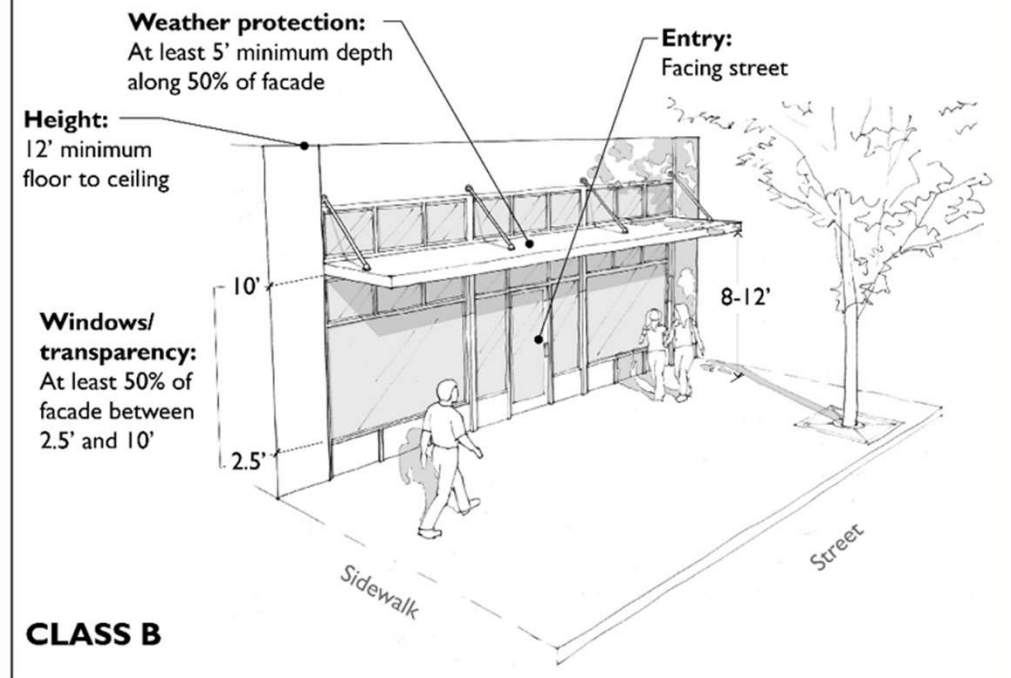
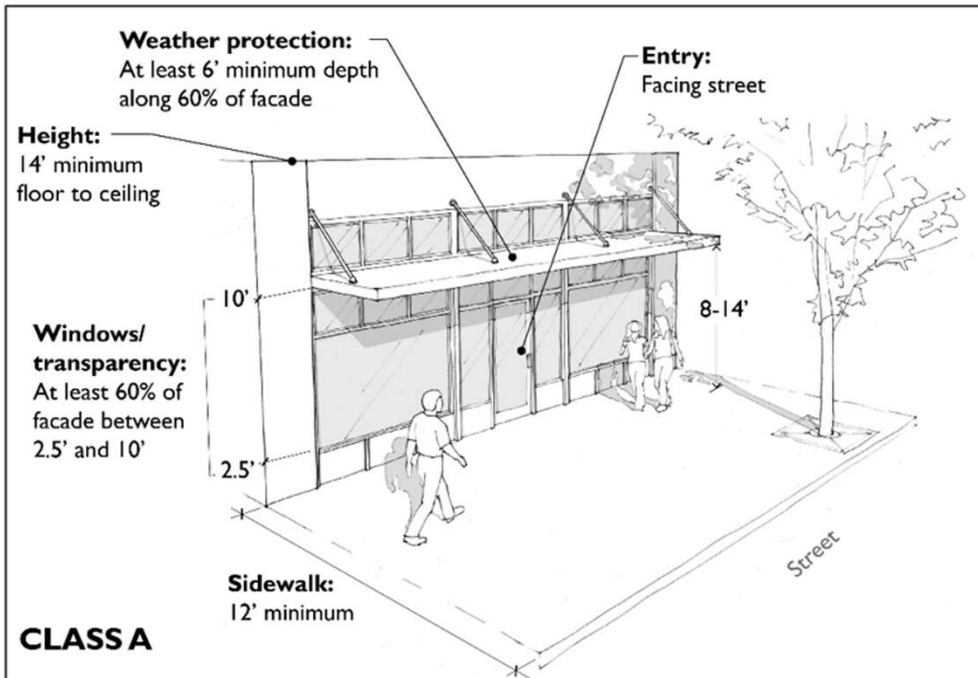
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# BLOCK-FRONTAGE STANDARDS:



# STOREFRONT BLOCK-FRONTAGE



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Weather protection  
over entry

Special facade  
transparency  
requirements

Entry facing  
the street

Landscaped setback

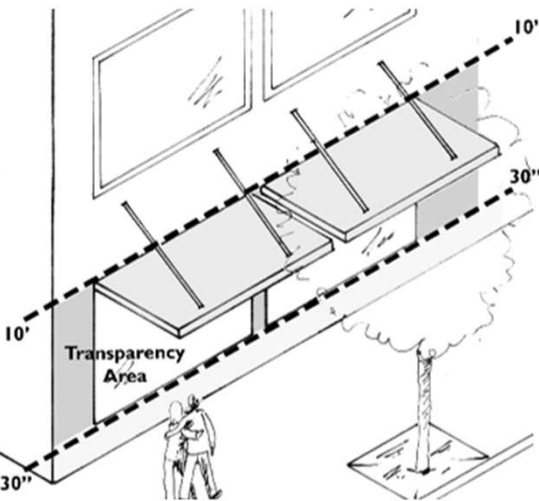
## LANDSCAPED BLOCK- FRONTAGE

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# TRANSPARENCY STANDARDS

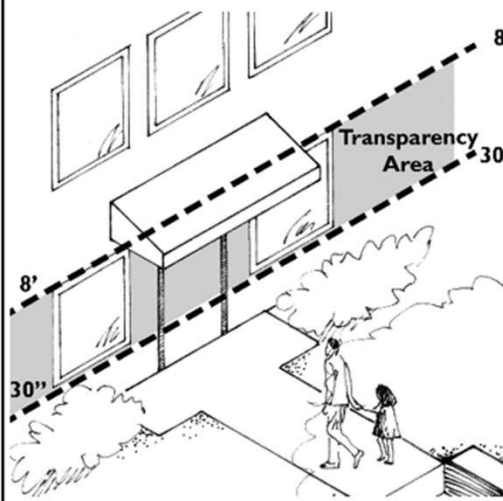
## Transparency area

### Storefront



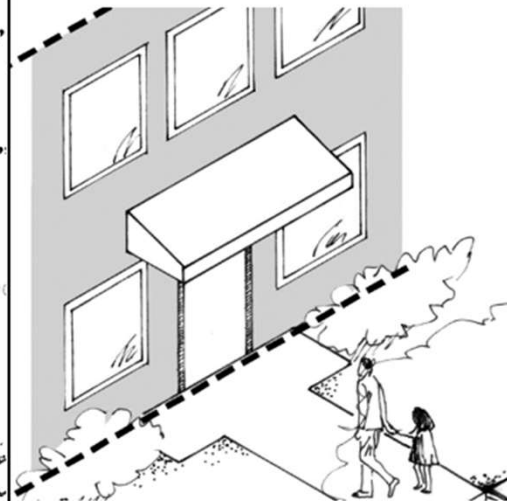
The transparency area is on the ground floor between 30" and 10' above sidewalk grade

### Ground floor non-residential on Landscaped block frontage



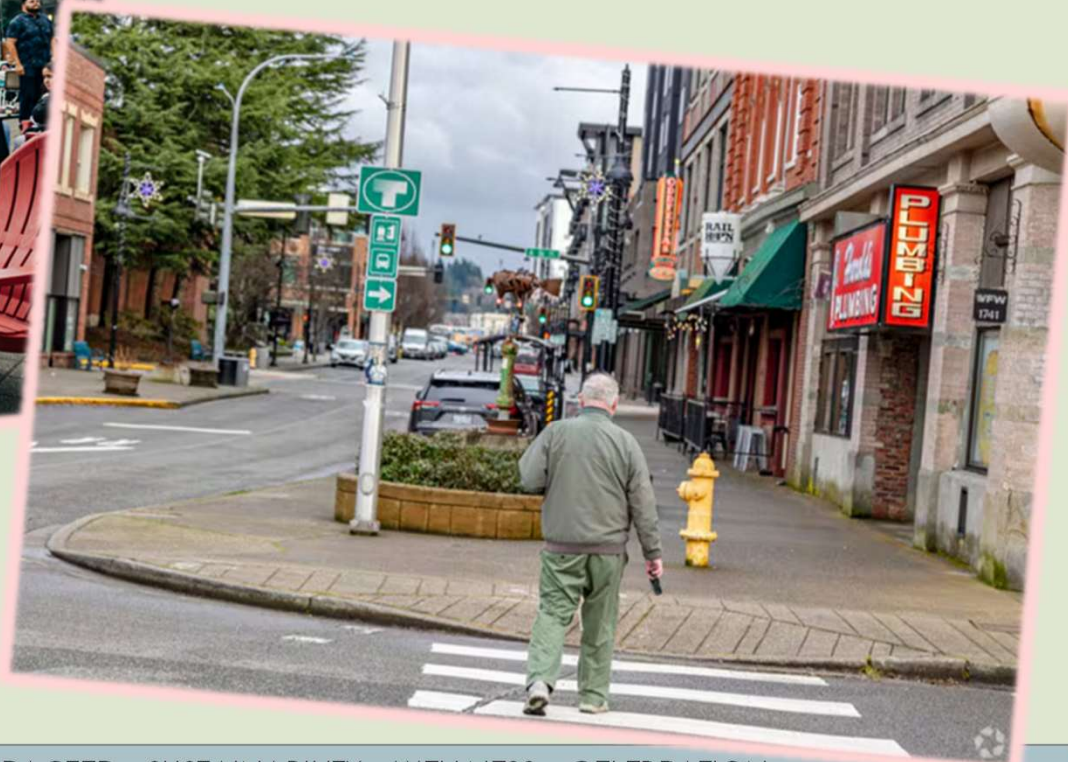
The transparency area is between 30" and 8' above grade

### Residential buildings and residential portions of mixed-use buildings



All vertical surfaces of the façade are used in the calculations

- Support multimodal transit
- Support local businesses
- Pedestrian friendly environment



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# APPLICABILITY

- Level 1 Improvements
- Level 2 Improvements
- Level 3 Improvements



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# DEPARTURES

**Table 2.4**  
**Storefront block-frontage standards.**

The ↻ symbol refers to DEPARTURE opportunities as set forth in Section 1.3 with supplemental criteria in subsection (4) below.

**(4) DEPARTURE criteria.** Departures from the standards in Table 2.4 that feature the ↻ symbol will be considered provided the alternative proposal meets the purpose of the standards and the following criteria:

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# CHAPTER 18.29 ACC – TEXT AMENDMENT

## Chapter 18.29 DUC DOWNTOWN URBAN CENTER DISTRICT

Sections:

- 18.29.010 Intent.**
- 18.29.020 Scope.**
- 18.29.030 Process.**
- 18.29.040 Definitions.**
- 18.29.050 Use limitations.**
- 18.29.053 Uses/activities requiring an administrative use permit.**
- 18.29.055 Deviation from development standards.**
- 18.29.057 Implementing districts.**
- 18.29.060 Development standards.**
- 18.29.070 Design standards.**

# CHAPTER 18.29 ACC – OVERVIEW OF CHANGES



**Refine the implementing districts of the DUC**



**Clarify permitted and prohibited uses by district.**



**Refine development standards**



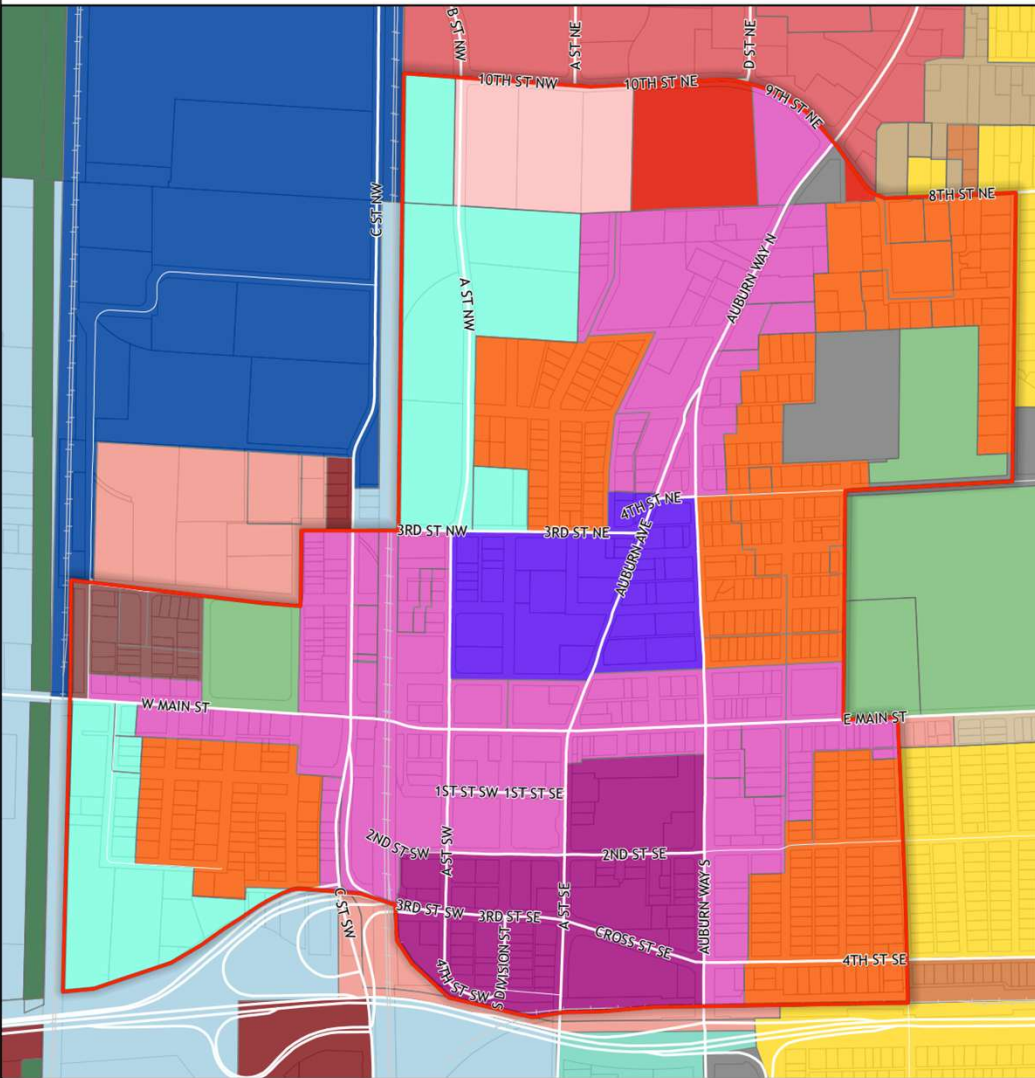
**Add a Planned Action section to align with the Downtown Subarea EIS.**



**Improve organization, consistency, and clarity within the chapter.**

# City of Auburn Downtown Urban Center Zoning Districts

# DOWNTOWN URBAN CENTER ZONING MAP



- DUC - Core 125
- DUC - Core 75
- DUC - FR Flex Residential
- DUC - Health & Wellness 125
- DUC - C-1 Light Commercial
- DUC - C-2 Heavy Commercial
- DUC - M-1 Light Industrial
- DUC - NR Neighborhood Residential
- DUC - Downtown Urban Center
- C-AG - Auburn Gateway
- C-1 - Light Commercial
- C-2 - Heavy Commercial
- I - Institutional
- M-1 - Light Industrial
- M-2 - Heavy Industrial
- LF - Airport Landing Field
- OS - Open Space
- P-1 - Public Use
- Planned Unit Development District
- R-1 - Residential 1 DU/Acre
- R-2 - Residential Low
- R-3 - Residential Moderate
- R-4 - Residential High
- Lakeland Hills PUD
- R-MHC - Residential Manufactured/Mobile Home Community
- R-NM - Neighborhood Mixed-Use
- RC - Residential Conservancy
- R-F - Residential Flex
- Terrace View District
- Unclassified Use District
- Downtown Urban Center

# DUC CORE 125 AND DUC CORE 75

## Land Use

### Allowed Uses

- Retail/residential vertical mixed-use
- Office commercial
- Retail
- Multifamily residential (apartments and co-living housing)
- Restaurants/bars
- Craft industry/light industrial
- Arts/entertainment (gallery, theater, fine arts studio)

### Prohibited

- FAR below 0.75
- Outdoor storage and sales
- Most industrial uses
- Self-storage
- On Pedestrian I Streets: Drive-throughs

# DUC NEIGHBORHOOD RESIDENTIAL (N-R)

## Land Use

### Allowed Uses

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- Single-unit detached, middle housing, townhouses, small apartments, and small co-living housing
- Retail under 4,000 sf, including mixed use
- Small medical/professional offices

### Prohibited

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- Most commercial uses
- Industrial uses

# DUC HEALTH & WELLNESS (H-W)

## Land Use

### Allowed Uses

- Medical offices and services
- Hospital-related
- Office commercial
- Retail/residential vertical mixed-use
- Retail
- Multifamily residential (apartments and co-living housing)
- Food production, i.e. brewery, coffee roastery
- Arts/entertainment (gallery, theater, fine arts studio)

### Prohibited

- FAR below 0.75
- Outdoor storage and sales
- On Pedestrian I streets: Drive-throughs
- Most industrial uses
- Self-storage

# DUC COMMERCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL ZONES



**DUC M-1 – Light Industrial**

**DUC C-1 – Light Commercial**

**DUC C-2 – Heavy Commercial**



# DUC FLEX RESIDENTIAL (F-R)

## Land Use

### Allowed Uses

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- Commercial/light industrial
- Residential
- Artisan/small workshops/  
manufacturing/flex-tech
- Vertical and horizontal mixed use
- Outdoor storage/sales with screening

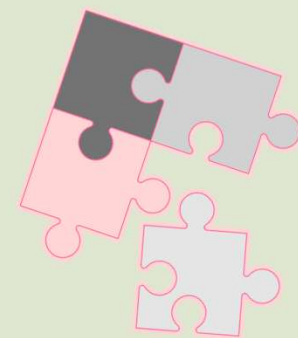
### Prohibited

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- Heavy industrial uses

## IMPACT OF CHANGES

- Improves clarity and predictability in design review
- Ensures compliance with HB 1293
- Alignment with the vision of the Downtown Subarea Plan



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# REQUEST

**Planning Commission to deliberate and recommend that City Council approve the updated Downtown Design Standards and associated amendments to Title 18 to comply with HB 1293 state requirements.**

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Thank you,  
Questions?

Department of Community Development  
Planning • Building • Development Engineering • Permit Center  
Economic Development • Code Enforcement

AUBURN  
VALUES

S E R V I C E

E N V I R O N M E N T

E C O N O M Y

C H A R A C T E R

S U S T A I N A B I L I T Y

W E L L N E S S

C E L E B R A T I O N

## Chapter 18.29 DUC DOWNTOWN URBAN CENTER DISTRICT

Sections:

<b>18.29.010</b>	<b>Intent.</b>
<b>18.29.020</b>	<b>Scope.</b>
<b>18.29.030</b>	<b>Process.</b>
<b>18.29.040</b>	<b>Definitions.</b>
<b>18.29.050</b>	<b>Use limitations.</b>
<b>18.29.053</b>	<b>Uses/activities requiring an administrative use permit.</b>
<b><u>18.29.054</u></b>	<b><u>Uses/activities requiring a conditional use permit.</u></b>
<b>18.29.055</b>	<b>Deviation from development standards.</b>
<b>18.29.04557</b>	<b>Implementing districts.</b>
<b>18.29.060</b>	<b>Development standards.</b>
<b>18.29.070</b>	<b>Design standards.</b>
<b><u>18.29.080</u></b>	<b><u>Planned action standards.</u></b>

### **18.29.010 Intent.**

The downtown urban center ~~zone~~ is intended to create a distinct and strong identity for downtown Auburn by establishing land use and design standards for review of development proposals within the core area of the city of Auburn’s designated urban center, in order to implement the city of Auburn downtown plan and the goals, policies and objectives of the Auburn comprehensive plan. The ~~downtown urban center is zone~~ is intended to produce a concentration and mixture of commercial, office, medical, retail, residential and civic uses within the downtown area; to encourage private and public investment, attract shoppers and visitors, and appeal to existing and new residents; to provide a development pattern that supports pedestrian movement, bicycles and use of public transit; and to provide opportunities to increase the city’s tax base, thereby helping to fund public improvements and public services. (Ord. 6071 § 6 (Exh. A), 2007.)

## 18.29.020 Scope.

- A. ~~A~~The downtown urban center ~~district-zone~~ may be applied to any property designated as "Downtown" on the Auburn comprehensive plan map.
- B. Site plan and building design review and approval shall be required for all public and private development activities requiring permits within ~~a~~the downtown urban center ~~districtzone~~ unless exempted under subsection ~~C~~ of this section. The planning and development director is given the authority to require building design and site plans consistent with the design standards contained or referenced herein and to require revisions as necessary in order to ensure development is consistent with the purpose of this chapter.
- C. The following activities, as determined by the director, shall be exempt from the provisions of this chapter ~~if the property has frontage on a pedestrian street as defined in the downtown-urban-center design standards:~~
1. Interior alterations that do not alter the exterior appearance of a structure or modify an existing site condition;
  2. Normal or routine building and site maintenance/repair that is exempt from permit requirements; and
  3. Any remodeling or expansion of existing single-unit detached residences and middle housing developments, with no change in use or addition of dwelling units involved.
- ~~D. The following activities, as determined by the director, shall be exempt from the provisions of this chapter if the property does not have frontage on a pedestrian street as defined in the downtown-urban-center design standards:~~
- ~~1. Interior alterations that do not alter the exterior appearance of a structure or modify an existing site condition;~~
  - ~~2. Site and exterior alterations that do not exceed 10 percent of the assessed valuation of the property (building or land) per the most recent county records;~~
  - ~~3. Building additions that are less than 10 percent of the existing floor area of the existing building(s). Any cumulative floor area increase (from the adoption date of the ordinance codified in this chapter) that totals more than 10 percent shall not be exempt; unless the~~

~~director determines compliance with these standards would be unfeasible and/or unreasonable;~~

~~4. Normal or routine building and site maintenance/repair that is exempt from permit requirements;~~

~~5. Any remodeling or expansion of existing single-unit detached residences with no change in use or addition of dwelling units involved. (Ord. 6959 § 1 (Exh. A), 2024; Ord. 6287 § 2, 2010; Ord. 6230 § 1, 2009; Ord. 6071 § 6 (Exh. A), 2007.)~~

### **18.29.030 Process.**

A. Compliance with all development and design standards contained or referenced herein shall occur in conjunction with any required permit process. The director shall provide appropriate forms that shall accompany a permit application. The director may approve, approve with conditions, or deny a building or site development permit application to ensure compliance with these standards. Any decision regarding a permit application shall be set forth in writing and contain findings of fact and conclusions that support the decision made.

B. The decision of the director shall be final unless the applicant or any affected party appeals the decision to the hearing examiner. All appeals shall be in accordance with ACC [18.70.050\(B\)](#) through (E). (Ord. 6071 § 6 (Exh. A), 2007.)

### **18.29.040 Definitions.**

These words shall have the following meanings for the purposes of this chapter:

A. "Canopy" means a cover over a sidewalk providing protection from the rain, which is constructed of durable, permanent materials.

B. "Director" means the director of the Auburn ~~d~~Department of ~~Community planning and~~ ~~d~~Development.

- C. "Green roof" means a roof designed with principles of environmental sustainability, involving the use of vegetation and storm water collection and cleaning. It may or may not be accessible.
- D. "Health club" means a use that offers exercise and recreational activities for tenants and/or the general public, either with or without a fee.
- E. "Parking, below grade" means any portion of a structure containing parking that is located below the average finished grade around a building.
- F. "Parking, structured" means parking contained within an enclosed building, designed to appear like it is part of the larger building complex, or a freestanding structure devoted exclusively to above-grade parking.
- G. "Performing space" means any interior or exterior area designated for live performing and entertainment.
- H. "Public art" means any form of painting, mural, mosaic, sculpture, or other work of art, so long as it can be appraised as a work of art and its value as such documented, displayed on the exterior of a building, at or near the pedestrian entrance, or on a public plaza, and visible to users of the public right-of-way at all times.
- I. "Public meeting room" means a space that can be used by the general public and having a capacity of at least 50 people. It may operate under a reservation or nominal fee system and must be easily accessible from a lobby or plaza.
- J. "Public plaza" means an open space that is visible and accessible to the public at all times, predominantly open to the sky, and for use principally by people, as opposed to merely a setting for the building.
- K. "Street level retail" means uses providing goods and services, including food and drink, adjacent to, visible from, and directly accessible from the public sidewalk.
- ~~L. "Water feature" means a fountain, cascade, stream, fall, pond of water, or combination thereof, that serves as a focal point, located outside of a building, publicly visible and accessible, and active during daylight hours. (Ord. 6287 § 2, 2010; Ord. 6071 § 6 (Exh. A), 2007.)~~

### 18.29.050 Use limitations.

Hereafter, all buildings, structures or properties may be used for any use, unless specifically prohibited herein. Ground floor retail, restaurants and/or office use is required for all building frontages facing Main Street. All uses shall be subject to review and approval by the director.

A. The following uses are prohibited in all DUC zoning districts:

- ~~—A. Sexually oriented businesses as defined in Chapter 18.74 ACC.~~
  - ~~—B. All industrial uses as defined in the North American Industrial Classification System— (2022 Edition), categories 48 through 49 (transportation), 31 through 33 (manufacturing) and 42 (wholesale trade).~~
  - ~~—C. Outdoor storage of materials and equipment (except during active construction projects).~~
  - ~~—D. New automobile maintenance and repair businesses.~~
  - ~~—E. Work release facilities; secure community transition facilities.~~
  - ~~—F. Wrecking yards.~~
  - ~~—G. Solid waste transfer stations.~~
  - ~~—H. Car washes.~~
  - ~~—I. New gasoline stations.~~
  - ~~—J. Street-level ministorage.~~
  - ~~—K. Outdoor sales of vehicles, boats or equipment.~~
  - ~~—L. Drive-in/drive-through facilities with direct vehicular driveway access onto Main Street.~~
  - ~~—M. All marijuana-related businesses and marijuana cooperatives.~~
  - ~~—N. New single-unit detached dwellings; except for DUC neighborhood residential district.~~
1. Battery Energy Storage Systems, Tier III.
  2. New motor freight terminals.~~O. Other uses may be prohibited by the director if the use is determined to be inconsistent with the intent of this zone or is of the same general character of the other prohibited uses listed in this section. (Ord. 6959 § 1 (Exh. A), 2024; Ord. 6642 § 10, 2017; Ord. 6071 § 6 (Exh. A), 2007.)~~

3. Other uses may be prohibited by the director if the use is determined to be inconsistent with the intent of the downtown urban center or is of the same general character of the other prohibited uses listed in this section.
4. Solid waste transfer stations.
5. Use as dwelling units of (1) recreational vehicles that are not part of an approved recreational vehicle park, (2) boats, (3) automobiles, and (4) other vehicles.
6. Work release facilities; secure community transition facilities.

B. The following uses are prohibited in the DUC Core 75, Core 125, and H-W Districts:

1. All industrial uses as defined in the North American Industrial Classification System (2022 Edition), categories 48 through 49 (transportation), 31 through 33 (manufacturing) and 42 (wholesale trade), except wine production facility, small craft distillery, small craft brewery with a tasting room and/or tourism.
2. All marijuana-related businesses and marijuana cooperatives.
3. Car washes.
4. Drive-in/drive-through facilities with direct vehicular driveway access onto Main Street.
5. New automobile maintenance and repair businesses.
6. New fueling stations.
7. New single-unit detached dwellings.
8. Outdoor sales of vehicles, boats or equipment.
9. Outdoor storage of materials and equipment (except during active construction projects).
10. Sexually oriented businesses as defined in Chapter 18.74 ACC.
11. Street-level ministorage.
12. Wrecking (tow) yards.

C. The following uses are prohibited in the DUC N-R District:

1. Agricultural enterprises.
2. All industrial uses as defined in the North American Industrial Classification System (2022 Edition), categories 48 through 49 (transportation), 31 through 33 (manufacturing) and 42 (wholesale trade).
3. All marijuana-related businesses and marijuana cooperatives.
4. Apartments (more than 20 units).
5. Café, or coffee shop over 4,000 sf in floor area.
6. Car washes.
7. Civic, social and fraternal clubs.
8. Co-living (more than 80 sleeping units).
9. Commercial over 4,000 sf in floor area.
10. Convenience store over 4,000 sf in floor area.
11. Drive-in/drive-through facilities with direct vehicular driveway access onto Main Street.
12. Group residence facilities (7 or more residents).
13. Hospitals (except animal hospitals).
14. Library, museum.
15. New automobile maintenance and repair businesses.
16. New fueling stations.
17. Outdoor sales of vehicles, boats or equipment.
18. Outdoor storage of materials and equipment (except during active construction projects).
19. Nursing homes.
20. Sexually oriented businesses as defined in Chapter 18.74 ACC.
21. Street-level ministorage.

22. Use as dwelling units of (1) recreational vehicles that are not part of an approved recreational vehicle park, (2) boats, (3) automobiles, and (4) other vehicles.

23. Wrecking (tow) yards.

D. The following uses are prohibited in the DUC M-1 District:

1. Apartments, standalone.

2. Live/work unit, standalone.

3. Manufacturing, assembling and packaging – Heavy intensity.

4. Marijuana cooperative.

5. New single unit detached dwellings.

6. Nursing home, assisted living facility.

7. Pharmacies.

8. Senior housing, except developments vested prior to Resolution No. 5187.

9. Work/live unit, standalone.

10. Youth community support facility.

E. The following uses are prohibited in the DUC C-1 District:

1. All industrial uses as defined in the North American Industrial Classification System (2022 Edition), categories 48 through 49 (transportation), 31 through 33 (manufacturing) and 42 (wholesale trade).

2. All marijuana-related businesses and marijuana cooperatives.

3. Ambulance, taxi, and specialized transportation facility.

4. Apartment units, as part of a mixed-use development.

5. Apartments, standalone.

6. Battery Energy Storage System, Tier II.

7. Building and landscape materials sales.

8. Car washes.
9. Commercial recreation facility, outdoor.
10. Construction and heavy equipment sales and rental.
11. Drive-in/drive-through facilities with direct vehicular driveway access onto Main Street.
12. Equipment rental and leasing.
13. Heliport.
14. Kennel, animal boarding.
15. Mobile home, boat, or RV sales
16. Nursery.
17. Outdoor sales of vehicles, boats or equipment.
18. Outdoor storage of materials and equipment (except during active construction projects).
19. Regional retail establishment.
20. Senior housing, except developments vested prior to Resolution No. 5187.
21. Sexually oriented businesses as defined in Chapter 18.74 ACC.
22. Sports and entertainment assembly facility.
23. Street-level ministorage.
24. Vehicle services – Repair/body work
25. Wrecking (tow) yards.

F. The following uses are prohibited in the DUC C-2 District:

1. All marijuana-related businesses and marijuana cooperatives.
2. Apartments, standalone.
3. Battery Energy Storage System, Tier II.
4. Building contractor, heavy

5. Construction and heavy equipment sales and rental
6. Live/work unit, standalone.
7. Manufacturing, assembling and packaging – Heavy intensity.
8. New single unit detached dwellings.
9. Nursing home, assisted living facility.
10. Pharmacies.
11. Senior housing, except developments vested prior to Resolution No. 5187.
12. Warehousing and distribution.
13. Work/live unit, standalone.
14. Wrecking (tow) yards.
15. Youth community support facility.

G. The following uses are prohibited in the DUC F-R District:

1. All marijuana-related businesses and marijuana cooperatives.
2. Apartments, standalone.
3. Battery Energy Storage System, Tier II.
4. Co-living units, more than 80 sleeping units.
5. Live/work unit, standalone.
6. Manufacturing, assembling and packaging – Heavy intensity.
7. Mixed-use, more than 20 units.
8. Nursing home, assisted living facility.
9. Pharmacies.
10. Senior housing, except developments vested prior to Resolution No. 5187.
11. Work/live unit, standalone.
12. Wrecking (tow) yards.
13. Youth community support facility.

### 18.29.053 Uses/activities requiring an administrative use permit.

A. The following uses/activities may be permitted in the DUC Core 75, Core 125, and H-W Districts when an administrative use permit has been issued pursuant to the provisions of Chapter 18.64 ACC:

1. Animal daycare businesses that feature outdoor exercise areas and/or kennels.

2. A.—Expansions of existing automobile maintenance and repair businesses.;

3. B.—Expansions of existing gasoline (fueling) stations.;

1. C.— Animal daycare businesses that feature outdoor exercise areas and/or kennels;

1. D.— Wine production facility; small craft distillery; small craft brewery; and a tasting room is an outright allowed use in the DUC zone. (Ord. 6368 § 8, 2011; Ord. 6269 § 32, 2009.)

B. The following uses/activities may be permitted in the DUC N-R District when an administrative use permit has been issued pursuant to the provisions of Chapter 18.64 ACC:

1. Government facilities.

2. Grocery or specialty food store.

3. Neighborhood recreational buildings and facilities owned and managed by the neighborhood homeowners' association.

4. Personal service shop, over 4,000 sf in floor area.

5. Privately owned and operated parks and playgrounds and not homeowners' association-owned recreational area.

6. Religious institutions, less than one acre lot size. Reference ACC 18.31.165 for standards related to homeless encampments hosted by a religious organization.

7. Restaurant.

C. The following uses/activities may be permitted in the DUC M-1 District when an administrative use permit has been issued pursuant to the provisions of Chapter 18.64 ACC:

1. Any commercial use abutting a residential zone which has hours of operation outside of the following: Sunday: 9:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. or Monday – Saturday: 7:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m.
  2. Conference/convention facility.
  3. Construction and heavy equipment sales and rental.
  4. Entertainment, commercial.
  5. Government facilities; this excludes offices and related uses that are permitted outright.
  6. Indoor emergency housing or shelter. Reference ACC 18.31.160 for specific standards.
  7. Kennel, animal boarding.
  8. Library, museum.
  9. Lodging – Hotel or motel.
  10. Religious institutions, lot size less than one acre.
  11. Religious institutions, lot size more than one acre.
  12. Sports and entertainment assembly facility.
  13. Supportive housing (permanent). Reference ACC 18.31.160 for specific standards.
  14. Transitional housing. Reference ACC 18.31.160 for specific standards.
  15. Utility transmission or distribution line or substation.
  16. Wrecking (tow) yard.
- D. The following uses/activities may be permitted in the DUC C-1 District when an administrative use permit has been issued pursuant to the provisions of Chapter 18.64 ACC:
1. Animal daycare (excluding kennels and animal boarding).

2. Any commercial use abutting a residential zone which has hours of operation outside of the following: Sunday: 9:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. or Monday – Saturday: 7:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m.
3. Auto parts sales with installation services.
4. Auto/vehicle sales and rental.
5. Automobile washes (automatic, full or self-service).
6. Drive-through espresso stands.
7. Drive-through facility, including banks and restaurants.
8. Entertainment, commercial.
9. Fueling station.
10. Government facilities; this excludes offices and related uses that are permitted outright.
11. Library, museum.
12. Printing and publishing (of books, newspaper and other printed matter).
13. Private school – Specialized education/training (for profit).
14. Repair service – Equipment, appliances.
15. Utility transmission or distribution line or substation.

E. The following uses/activities may be permitted in the DUC C-2 District when an administrative use permit has been issued pursuant to the provisions of Chapter 18.64 ACC:

1. Ambulance, taxi, and specialized transportation facility.
2. Any commercial use abutting a residential zone which has hours of operation outside of the following: Sunday: 9:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. or Monday – Saturday: 7:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m.
3. Commercial recreation facility, outdoor.

4. Conference/convention facility.
5. Government facilities; this excludes offices and related uses that are permitted outright.
6. Kennel, animal boarding.
7. Library, museum.
8. Manufacturing, assembling and packaging – Medium intensity.
9. Senior housing, except developments vested prior to Resolution No. 5187.
10. Sports and entertainment assembly facility.
11. Utility transmission or distribution line or substation.

F. The following uses/activities may be permitted in the DUC F-R District when an administrative use permit has been issued pursuant to the provisions of Chapter 18.64 ACC:

1. Civic, social and fraternal clubs.
2. Commercial retail establishment, over 4,000 sf in floor area.
3. Government facilities.
4. Grocery or specialty food store, over 4,000 sf in floor area.
5. Religious institutions, less than one acre lot size. Reference ACC 18.31.165 for standards related to homeless encampments hosted by a religious organization.
- 4.6. Restaurant, café, or coffee shop, over 4,000 sf in floor area.

#### **18.29.054 Uses/activities requiring a conditional use permit.**

A. The following uses/activities may be permitted in the DUC Core 75, Core 125, and H-W Districts when a conditional use permit has been issued pursuant to the provisions of Chapter 18.64 ACC:

1. Battery Energy Storage System, Tier II.

B. The following uses/activities may be permitted in the DUC N-R District when a conditional use permit has been issued pursuant to the provisions of Chapter 18.64 ACC:

1. Religious institutions, one acre or larger lot size. Reference ACC 18.31.165 for standards related to homeless encampments hosted by a religious organization.

2. Transmitting towers.

3. Utility facilities and substations. Excludes all public and private utility facilities addressed under ACC 18.02.040(E).

C. The following uses/activities may be permitted in the DUC M-1 when a conditional use permit has been issued pursuant to the provisions of Chapter 18.64 ACC:

1. Heliport.

2. All marijuana-related businesses.

3. Battery Energy Storage System, Tier II.

D. The following uses/activities may be permitted in the DUC C-2 District when a conditional use permit has been issued pursuant to the provisions of Chapter 18.64 ACC:

1. Heliport.

2. Marijuana retailer.

E. The following uses/activities may be permitted in the DUC F-R District when a conditional use permit has been issued pursuant to the provisions of Chapter 18.64 ACC:

1. Hospitals (except animal hospitals).

2. Nursing homes.

3. Religious institutions, one acre or larger lot size. Reference ACC 18.31.165 for standards related to homeless encampments hosted by a religious organization.

4. Transmitting towers.

5. Utility facilities and substations. Excludes all public and private utility facilities addressed under ACC 18.02.040(E).

## 18.29.055 Deviation from development standards.

Any development project that seeks to deviate from any development standard listed in ACC [18.29.060](#) must be granted an administrative variance or variance, depending on the threshold of relief, pursuant to the provisions of Chapter [18.70](#) ACC. (Ord. 6959 § 1 (Exh. A), 2024; Ord. 6269 § 12, 2009; Ord. 6071 § 6 (Exh. A), 2007.)

## 18.29.04557 Implementing districts.

~~Downtown urban center zone is intended to create a distinct and strong identity for downtown Auburn by establishing land use and design standards for review of development proposals within the core area of the city of Auburn's designated urban center. This zone is intended to produce a concentration and mixture of commercial, office, medical, retail, entertainment, residential and civic uses within the downtown area; to encourage private and public investment, attract shoppers and visitors, and appeal to existing and new residents; to provide a development pattern that supports pedestrian movement, bicycles and use of public transit; and to provide opportunities to increase the city's tax base, thereby helping to fund public improvements and public services.~~ In order to implement the city of Auburn Downtown Plan and the goals, policies and objectives of the Auburn Comprehensive Plan, the ~~zone~~ downtown is divided into the following districts:

A. ~~DUC Downtown Core 125 District. DUC-The Core 125 district is implemented only in the downtown urban center and is intended for higher density residential and mixed-uses and commercial activity. Storefronts in this district that are located on a Pedestrian I street are required to contain retail, residential, or personal services uses.~~ ~~The DUC Core is~~ subject to uses and development standards of this chapter and the downtown urban design guidelines. Development in the DUC downtown Core 125 district shall not exceed 125 feet in vertical height and is subject to other applicable height restrictions found in Chapter [18.38](#) ACC.

B. ~~DUC *Downtown Core -75 District*. The DUC downtown core ~~Core -75 district zone~~ is consistent with requirements described in the DUC downtown ~~Core -125~~, except a maximum 75-vertical-foot height limit shall apply.~~

~~C. *DUC Downtown Core -55 District*. The DUC downtown core -55 zone is consistent with the requirements described in the DUC downtown core -125 except a maximum 55-vertical-foot height limit shall apply.~~

D. ~~DUC *N-R Neighborhood Residential District*. The N-R district overlaps with residential areas of downtown and is intended to support moderate density residential housing types such as fourplexes, sixplexes, townhomes, and small apartment buildings. The N-R district allows for middle housing options, which are designed to support gradual infill development. The district does allow for limited non-residential uses. This district is subject to uses and development standards of this chapter and the downtown urban design guidelines. R-2 uses per ACC Table 18.07.020 allowed subject to the development standards of this chapter and the downtown urban design guidelines.Development in the N-R district shall not exceed 45 feet in vertical height.~~

~~CE. *DUC H-W Health and Wellness District*. This ~~district zone~~ district is to be used exclusively for the hospital area, located in the vicinity of 2nd Street NE and Auburn Avenue, and is intended to be used for medical and related uses and those uses compatible with the medical community. Residential may be included as part of vertical mixed-use development with medical being the primary development use. Storefronts in this district that are located on a Pedestrian I street are required to contain retail, residential, or personal services uses. This district is subject to the uses and development standards of this chapter and the downtown urban design guidelines. Developments in the DUC H-W district shall not exceed 125 feet in vertical height.~~

~~EF. *DUC M-1 Light Industrial District*. The DUC M-1 district is intended to accommodate a variety of light to medium intensity industrial and manufacturing uses. The primary goal of the district is to preserve land for industrial use; however, some commercial uses are also allowable. While allowed, outdoor storage will be regulated in a manner that mitigates visual impacts, taking surrounding uses and vehicular corridors into consideration. This district is subject to uses and development standards of this chapter and the downtown urban design guidelines. M-1 zone—uses allowed per ACC Table 18.23.030, subject to the development standards of this chapter—and the downtown urban design guidelines.Developments in the DUC M-1 45 feet in vertical height.~~

F. *DUC C-1 Light Commercial District.* The DUC C-1 district is intended for lower intensity commercial uses that are adjacent and compatible with residential neighborhoods. This district represents the primary commercial designation for small- to moderate-scale commercial activities that are developed in a manner which is consistent with and attracts pedestrian-oriented activities. This district encourages a broad mix of small-scale uses that are conducive to attracting shoppers and pedestrians. This district is subject to uses and development standards of this chapter and the downtown urban design guidelines. Developments in the DUC C-1 district shall not exceed 45 feet in vertical height.

G. *DUC C-2 Heavy Commercial District.* The DUC C-2 district is intended to allow for medium-to-high intensity commercial uses, primarily uses that are oriented to automobiles. The uses in this classification may be larger in scale and building size and have more potential for impacts to surrounding properties and street systems than those uses permitted in the more restrictive commercial classifications. This district is subject to uses and development standards of this chapter and the downtown urban design guidelines. Developments in the DUC C-2 district shall not exceed 75 feet in vertical height.

~~HG. *DUC F-R Residential-Flex Residential District.* The DUC F-R is-districtzone is intended to promote craft industrial/commercial and commercial uses that are compatible with residential areas (i.e., workshop, brewery, etc.). This district is subject to uses and development standards of this chapter and the downtown urban design guidelines. R-F zone uses allowed per ACC Table 18.07.020, subject to the development standards of this chapter and the downtown urban design guidelines. Developments in the DUC F-R district shall not exceed 45 feet in vertical height.~~ (Ord. 6959 § 1 (Exh. A), 2024.)

## **18.29.060 Development standards.**

A. The following zoning development standards apply to the DUC Core 75, Core 125, and H-W Districts:

1. ~~A.~~—Minimum lot area: none.
2. ~~B.~~—Minimum lot width: none.
3. ~~C.~~—Minimum lot depth: none.
4. ~~D.~~—Floor Area Ratio. Floor area ratio is the cumulative amount of floor area within a building as a multiple of the lot area.

### Floor Area Ratio (FAR)<sup>1</sup>

Basic Allowable "As of Right"		Maximum Allowable <del>W</del> with Bonuses		
Nonresidential <sup>2</sup>	Residential <sup>2</sup>	Nonresidential	Residential <sup>3</sup>	Combined <sup>4</sup>
3.0	2.0	4.0	3.5	5.0

**1** Floor area is measured to the inside face of exterior walls. The following shall be excluded from floor area calculation:

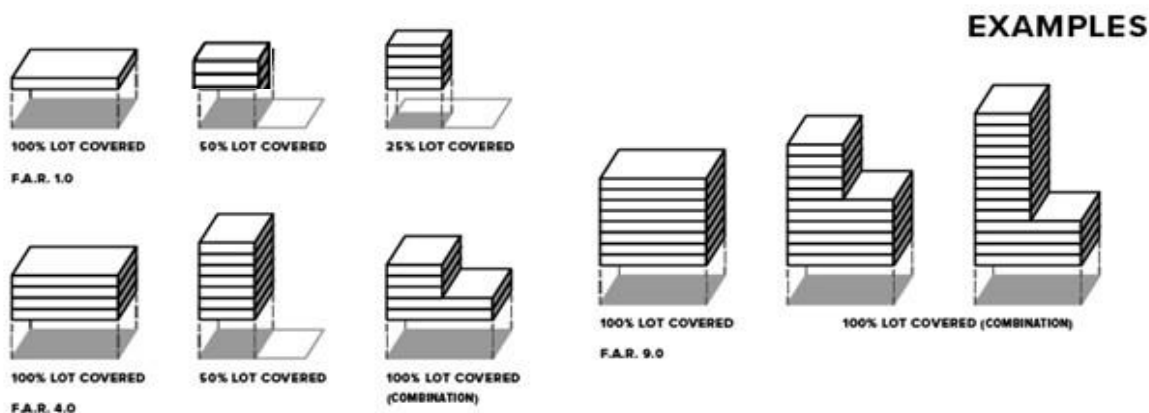
- a** All space below finished grade.
- b** Space dedicated to structured parking.
- c** Space used for any bonus feature listed in subsection **E** of this section.

**2** Minimum required FAR is 0.75; basic allowable FAR is 1.0.

**3** Hotels, nursing homes, assisted living centers, etc., shall be considered residential for the purpose of calculating FAR.

**4** Allowable FAR for nonresidential and residential uses may be added together within a project, for a combined total.

**5** FAR for the DUC H-W district based on mixed use development.



~~4.5.~~ **E.** *Bonus Features Allowing Increased Floor Area Ratio.* An applicant may be required to provide a legally binding agreement or easement to ensure any of the below features is maintained over the life of the project.

<b>Feature</b>	<b>Additional Gross Floor Area for Each Feature</b>
Street level retail	100 sf of floor area for each linear foot of retail frontage
Restaurant	100 sf of floor area for each linear foot of restaurant frontage
Public plaza	5 sf of floor area for each sf of plaza
Widening public sidewalk	4 sf of floor area for each sf of sidewalk made available for public use
Canopy	4 sf of floor area for each sf of canopy
Daycare	<del>10</del> 4 sf of floor area for each sf of daycare
Health club	2 sf of floor area for each sf of health club
Performing space	2 sf of floor area for each sf of performing space
Public meeting room	<del>2</del> 5 sf of floor area for each sf of meeting room

Feature	Additional Gross Floor Area for Each Feature
Public art (arts commission approval required)	10 sf of floor area for each \$100 of valuation
<del>Water feature</del>	<del>10 sf of floor area for each \$100 of valuation</del>
Structured parking	<del>10.5</del> sf of floor area for each sf of required parking above grade
Below grade parking	1 sf of floor area for each sf of required parking below grade (including half-level plate below grade)
Green roof	2 sf of floor area for each sf of green roof
Public restrooms	<del>10.5</del> sf of floor area for each sf of public restroom
Contribution to a public park or cultural facility such as a library, museum or theater within 0.5 miles of the DUC zone; also, any project including a performance or entertainment venue is eligible for these	10 sf of floor area for each \$100 of contribution towards acquisition or development. This can be used to exceed both maximum FAR and maximum building height by up to 25%.

Feature	Additional Gross Floor Area for Each Feature
bonuses, based upon the value of construction	
Development of open space such as open roof decks, balconies, lanais or parts of the building and improved for outdoor living; including rooftop daycare play areas, dog walking areas, etc.	5-10 sf of floor area for each sf of open space

~~F. *Maximum Building Height.* Maximum building height within the DUC zone shall be based on each zoning district 75 feet, unless bonus height is permitted per subsection E of this section.~~

~~1. If retail uses occupy the ground floor, the minimum height for that floor shall be 14 feet.~~

~~2. Mechanical penthouses, stair/elevator overruns, and antennas may be excluded from building height calculation, provided they extend no more than 20 feet above the roof deck.~~

~~3. Maximum building height may be increased by up to 20 percent if the top is designed as a nonhabitable, architectural element. This element may extend above the increased height limit.~~

6. *G. Minimum Building Height.* The minimum height for any new structure shall be two stories for the full extent of the building footprint.

7. *Signs.* The design of all signs shall be in conformance with the design standards referenced in ACC 18.29.070. Any permanent or permanently affixed sign that projects into the public right-of-way is subject to a right-of-way use permit. Allowable types, numbers and sizes of signs shall be as follows:

- a. Freestanding: not allowed, except for monument signs as described within the downtown Auburn design standards; no more than one per street frontage; maximum size: 64 square feet, calculated at a rate of one square foot of sign area per lineal foot of site frontage; minimum entitlement shall be 32 square feet; maximum height: five feet.
- b. Wall signs: maximum area of 150 square feet per building facade, calculated at a rate of one square foot of sign area for every lineal foot of facade; minimum entitlement shall be 16 square feet.
- c. Suspended signs: attached under a marquee or canopy: one double-faced sign, no greater than three square feet per face allowed for each building entrance; minimum clearance above grade: eight feet.
- d. Portable Signs: may be allowed for each business entrance, subject to the following:
  - i. Signs may be placed within the public right-of-way, within 12 feet of a business entrance, subject to the guidelines provided by the director in consultation with the city engineer such that sign placement does not interfere with pedestrian or vehicular traffic, does not create a sight hazard, and conforms to the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act. Additional portable signage may be authorized in order to support downtown events that are permitted or sanctioned by the city.
  - ii. The sign shall be in accordance with the provisions of ACC 18.56.030(L).
  - iii. The sign area cannot exceed 42 inches in height, 32 inches in width, and be limited to two faces.
  - iv. Portable signs are not permitted to be affixed to city infrastructure located within the right-of-way (e.g., street lights, fire hydrants, public art). This includes a prohibition of chaining or otherwise securing portable signs to such infrastructure.
  - v. Signs may be displayed during business hours and shall not be displayed when the business is closed.
  - vi. No landscaping may be covered, cut, damaged, or modified to accommodate a portable sign. The city may require replacement of any damaged landscaping pursuant to Chapter 18.50 ACC.
  - vii. All portable signs shall have the permit number affixed to the back of the sign.
- e. Temporary signs: allowed subject to the provisions provided in ACC 18.56.030(B).

B. The following zoning development standards apply to the DUC N-R District:

1. Minimum lot area: new lots shall be a minimum of 2,000 square feet.
2. Minimum density: 7 units or lots per acre.
3. Minimum lot width: 20 feet, 35 for corner lots.
4. Minimum lot depth: none.
5. Maximum impervious surface: 75%.
6. Setbacks:
  - a. Front: 10 feet.
  - b. Front, garage: 20 feet.
  - c. Side, street: 10 feet.
  - d. Side, interior: 5 feet.
  - e. Rear: 5 feet.
  - f. Rear, garage: 20 feet.
7. Units per lot: subject to the standards contained in ACC 18.07.030(D)(1), (2), and (3).
8. Signs: subject to the signs standards contained in ACC 18.56.040(A).

C. The following zoning development standards apply to the DUC M-1 District:

1. Minimum lot area: none.
2. Minimum lot width: none.
3. Minimum lot depth: none.
4. Maximum impervious surface: none.
5. Setbacks:
  - a. Front: none.
  - b. Side, street: none, subject to the Engineering Design Standards.
  - c. Side, interior: none, 25 feet when adjacent to a residential zone.
  - d. Rear: none, 25 feet when adjacent to a residential zone.
6. Apartment buildings and mixed-use developments: subject to the zoning development standards of ACC 18.29.060(A).
- 4-7. Signs: subject to the signs standards contained in ACC 18.56.040(D).

D. The following zoning development standards apply to the DUC C-1 District:

1. Minimum lot area: none.
2. Minimum lot width: none.
3. Minimum lot depth: none.
4. Maximum impervious surface: none.
5. Setbacks:
  - a. Front: none.
  - b. Side, street: none, subject to the Engineering Design Standards.
  - c. Side, interior: none, 25 feet when adjacent to a residential zone.
  - d. Rear: none, 25 feet when adjacent to a residential zone.
6. Apartments buildings and mixed-use developments: subject to the zoning development standards of ACC 18.29.060(A).
7. Signs: subject to the signs standards contained in ACC 18.56.040(B).

D. The following zoning development standards apply to the DUC C-2 District:

1. Minimum lot area: none.
2. Minimum lot width: none.
3. Minimum lot depth: none.
4. Maximum impervious surface: none.
5. Setbacks:
  - a. Front: none.
  - b. Side, street: none, subject to the Engineering Design Standards.
  - c. Side, interior: none, 25 feet when adjacent to a residential zone.
  - d. Rear: none, 25 feet when adjacent to a residential zone.
6. Apartments buildings and mixed-use developments: subject to the zoning development standards of ACC 18.29.060(A).
7. Signs: subject to the signs standards contained in ACC 18.56.040(E).

E. The following zoning development standards apply to the DUC F-R District:

1. Minimum lot area: new lots shall be a minimum of 3,000 square feet.
2. Minimum density: 7 units or lots per acre.
3. Minimum lot width: 20 feet, 35 for corner lots.
4. Minimum lot depth: none.
5. Maximum impervious surface: 75%.
6. Setbacks:
  - a. Front: none.
  - b. Side, street: none, subject to the Engineering Design Standards.
  - c. Side, interior: none.
  - d. Rear: none, 25 feet when adjacent to a residential zone.
7. Units per lot: see R-F zone under ACC 18.07.030.
8. Mixed-use developments: subject to the zoning development standards of ACC 18.29.060(A).
9. Signs: subject to the signs standards contained in ACC 18.56.040(B).

F. The following zoning development standards apply to all DUC districts:

1. Maximum Building Height. Maximum building height within the DUC shall be based on each zoning district, subject to the airport overlay and Part 77 Surfaces, unless bonus height is permitted per subsection E of this section.
  - a. Mechanical penthouses, stair/elevator overruns, and antennas may be excluded from building height calculation, provided they extend no more than 20 feet above the roof deck.
  - b. Maximum building height may be increased by up to 20 percent if the top is designed as a nonhabitable, architectural element. This element may extend above the increased height limit.
2. H.Parking Ratios. The following parking standards shall apply within ~~the a~~ DUC ~~district~~zone in lieu of any standard noted in ACC [18.52.020](#) or provision of ACC [18.52.030](#):

Use Type	Minimum Required	Maximum Allowed for Surface Parking Lots
<del>Retail</del>	<del>2 stalls/1,000 nsf</del>	<del>4 stalls/1,000 nsf<sup>1</sup></del>
<del>Office</del>	<del>2 stalls/1,000 nsf</del>	<del>4 stalls/1,000 nsf</del>
Residential (mixed-use, apartment, live/work, work/live)	<del>0.5</del> stall per dwelling unit	2 <u>stalls</u> per dwelling unit
Residential (middle housing)	1 stall per dwelling unit outside of one-half mile walking distance of a major transit stop	2 stalls per dwelling unit outside of one-half mile walking distance of a major transit stop
<del>Residential (single unit detached) over 1,200 nsf</del>	<del>1 stall per residence</del>	<del>N/A</del>
<del>Residential (single unit detached), 1,200 nsf and under</del>	<del>0</del>	<del>N/A</del>
<del>Affordable housing units</del>	<del>0</del>	<del>N/A</del>
<del>Senior housing</del>	<del>0</del>	<del>1 stall per unit</del>
<del>Child care centers (including home based daycares)</del>	<del>0</del>	<del>N/A</del>

Use Type	Minimum Required	Maximum Allowed for Surface Parking Lots
<u>Commercial (nonresidential business purposes, including retail, office, wholesale, general merchandise, and food services) over 3,000 nsf</u>	<u>2 stall per 1,000 nsf</u>	<u>4 stalls per 1,000 nsf<sup>a</sup></u>
<u>Commercial (nonresidential business purposes, including retail, office, wholesale, general merchandise, and food services) 3,000 nsf and under</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>N/A</u>
<u>Ground floor nonresidential in mixed use buildings</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>N/A</u>
<u>Restaurant</u>	<u>0.5 stall per 4 seats</u>	<u>1 stall per 4 seats</u>
<u>Industrial</u>	<u>0.5 stall per 1,000 nsf</u>	<u>N/A</u>

1 nsf = net square feet

- a. 1.—Parking requirements for uses not listed shall be determined by a study of parking demand for that use, as prepared by a qualified professional and as accepted by the director.
- ~~2.~~ ~~Retail and restaurant uses less than 3,000 nsf in area shall be exempt from parking requirements.~~
- b. 3.—Uses sharing a common parking facility may reduce the required number of stalls by 25 percent.
- c. 4.—Required parking may be located off site, so long as it is: (a) located within ~~the a~~ DUC ~~zoned~~district, (b) within 1,000 feet of the property, (c) connected to the property by streets improved with sidewalks or walkways, and (d) tied to the site by a

contractual agreement reviewed and approved by the city attorney that is filed with the city and deed of record at the county.

~~5. On-street parking that is located directly adjacent to a development site may be used to satisfy minimum parking requirements and shall not be included in determining maximum surface parking allowances.~~

d. 6. ~~If subject to the standards provide in ACC 18.29.060(A),~~ Dedicated off-site parking provided within a parking structure may be used to provide FAR bonuses for a project on a separate site, provided the parking structure is located consistent with this chapter.

e. 7. The maximum standards noted in the table above may be exceeded if all stalls above the maximum limit are provided within a parking structure.

f. 8. Compliance with these standards is not required for a change of use within an existing building or whenever there is an expansion of an existing building or a new building replaces an existing building that does not increase the floor area by more than 25 percent.

~~9. In lieu of providing the minimum parking required by this section, an applicant may request to pay for each required parking stall into a special fund that will be used to provide and upgrade municipal parking to serve the DUC zone. The per-stall fee shall be as specified in the city's fee schedule.~~

~~1. Signs. The design of all signs shall be in conformance with the design standards referenced in ACC 18.29.070. Allowable types, numbers and sizes of signs shall be as follows:~~

~~1. Freestanding: not allowed, except for monument signs as described within the downtown Auburn design standards; no more than one per street frontage; maximum size: 64 square feet, calculated at a rate of one square foot of sign area per lineal foot of site frontage; minimum entitlement shall be 32 square feet; maximum height: five feet.~~

~~2. Wall signs: maximum area of 150 square feet per building facade, calculated at a rate of one square foot of sign area for every lineal foot of facade; minimum entitlement shall be 16 square feet.~~

~~3. Suspended signs attached under a marquee or canopy: one double-faced sign, no greater than three square feet per face allowed for each building entrance; minimum clearance above grade: eight feet.~~

~~4. Portable Signs. Portable signs may be allowed for each business entrance, subject to the following:~~

- ~~— a. Signs may be placed within the public right-of-way, within 12 feet of a business entrance, subject to the guidelines provided by the director in consultation with the city engineer such that sign placement does not interfere with pedestrian or vehicular traffic, does not create a sight hazard, and conforms to the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act. Additional portable signage may be authorized in order to support downtown events that are permitted or sanctioned by the city.~~
  - ~~— b. The sign shall be in accordance with the provisions of ACC 18.56.030(L).~~
  - ~~— c. The sign area cannot exceed 42 inches in height, 32 inches in width, and be limited to two faces.~~
  - ~~— d. Portable signs are not permitted to be affixed to city infrastructure located within the right-of-way (e.g., street lights, fire hydrants, public art). This includes a prohibition of chaining or otherwise securing portable signs to such infrastructure.~~
  - ~~— e. Signs may be displayed during business hours and shall not be displayed when the business is closed.~~
  - ~~— f. No landscaping may be covered, cut, damaged, or modified to accommodate a portable sign. The city may require replacement of any damaged landscaping pursuant to Chapter 18.50 ACC.~~
  - ~~— g. All portable signs shall have the permit number affixed to the back of the sign.~~
3. ~~J.—Landscaping.~~ Landscaping shall be provided as defined in the downtown ~~Auburn~~ design standards, ~~except for development subject to the middle housing and single unit detached design standards.~~
  4. ~~Fences:~~ Fencing shall be subject to the standards in ACC 18.31.020(A) through (F); ~~except for the DUC M-1 district in which the standards of ACC 18.31.020 (G) and (H) also apply. Where there is a conflict between ACC 18.31.020 and the downtown design standards shall govern.~~
  5. ~~Outdoor lighting:~~ Outdoor lighting shall be subject to the standards in Chapter 18.55 ACC. ~~Where there is a conflict between Chapter 18.55 and the downtown design standards shall govern.~~

## 18.29.070 Design standards.

Adopted by reference are the downtown Auburn design standards ~~and the Auburn Junction design standards~~, a copy of which shall be maintained by the city clerk. These documents contain standards for development of the built environment in the DUC zoning district~~se~~. The director shall have the authority to apply the standards to specific development proposals. These standards may be amended upon approval by the community development director. (Ord. 6828 § 1 (Exh. A), 2021; Ord. 6532 § 29, 2014; Ord. 6419 § 2, 2012; Ord. 6287 § 2, 2010; Ord. 6190 § 1, 2008; Ord. 6071 § 6 (Exh. A), 2007.)

### **18.29.080 Planned action standards.**

A. Purpose of the planned action. The purpose of this section is to:

1. Set forth a procedure designating certain project actions within a specific subject site as “planned actions” consistent with state law, RCW 43.21C.031; and
2. Provide the public with an understanding as to what constitutes a planned action and how land use applications which qualify as planned actions will be processed by the city; and
3. Streamline and expedite the development review process for this designated planned action by relying on completed and existing detailed environmental analysis for the subject site; and
4. Combine environmental analysis with land use planning; and
5. Apply the city’s development regulations together with the mitigation measures described in the environmental impact statement (EIS) and this chapter to address the impacts of future development contemplated by the planned action.

B. Findings. The city council makes the following findings:

1. The City is subject to the requirements of the GMA (Chapter 36.70A RCW) and is applying Planned Action to an Urban Growth Area (UGA).
2. The procedural requirements of Chapter 36.70A RCW have been complied with.
3. The procedural and substantive requirements of SEPA (Chapter 43.21C RCW) have been complied with.

4. The City has an adopted Comprehensive Plan complying with the GMA and is replacing the 2001 Auburn Downtown Plan with the 2024 Auburn Downtown Subarea Plan.
5. An EIS has been prepared for the Planned Action Area and the City Council finds that the EIS adequately identifies and addresses the probable significant environmental impacts associated with the type and amount of development planned to occur in the designated Planned Action Area.
6. The 2024 Auburn Downtown Subarea Plan and Planned Action EIS, together with adopted City development and environmental regulations, will adequately mitigate significant impacts from development within the Planned Action Area.
7. The regulation of land and development is subject to the authority and general police power of the City, and the City reserves its powers and authority to appropriately amend, modify, and revise such land use controls in accordance with applicable law.
8. The 2024 Auburn Downtown Subarea Plan and EIS identify the location, type, and amount of development contemplated by the Planned Action.
9. Essential public facilities defined in RCW 47.06.140 are excluded from the Planned Action and are not eligible for review or permitting as Planned Action Projects unless they are an accessory to or part of a project that otherwise qualifies as a planned action.
10. The Planned Action is located entirely within a UGA and applies to a defined area that is smaller than the overall City boundary.
11. Public services and facilities are adequate to serve the proposed Planned Action with implementation of the City's adopted Engineering Design Standards and the Comprehensive System Plans.
12. The City has provided several opportunities for meaningful public involvement in the 2024 Auburn Downtown Subarea Plan and EIS including a community meeting consistent with RCW 43.21C.440, and has considered all comments received, and, as appropriate, has modified the proposal or mitigation measures.
13. Future projects that are implemented consistent with the Downtown Subarea Planned Action EIS and mitigation measures will protect the environment, benefit the public, and enhance economic development.

*C. Applicability of the Planned Action.*

1. Planned Action Area. This section applies to approximately 360 acres included in the Auburn downtown subarea project area as described in the Downtown Subarea Planned Action EIS issued by the City on January 22, 2025 (and any addenda thereto) and shown in Exhibit A of Ord. No. 7006 are designated as the Downtown Planned Action Area.
2. Environmental Document. A Planned Action Project determination for a site-specific project application within the Downtown Planned Action Area shall be based on the environmental analysis contained in the Downtown Subarea Planned Action EIS. The mitigation measures contained in this section, as well as Exhibit B of Ord. No. 7006, are based upon the findings of the Downtown Subarea Planned Action EIS and shall, along with adopted City regulations, provide the framework the City will apply appropriate conditions on qualifying Planned Action Projects within the Downtown Planned Action Area.
3. Planned Action Designated. Uses and activities described in the Downtown Subarea Planned Action EIS (and any addenda thereto), subject to thresholds (ACC 18.29.080(D)) and the mitigation measures contained in this section, are designated Planned Action Projects pursuant to RCW 43.21C.440. A development application for a site-specific project located within the Downtown Planned Action Area that meets the criteria in ACC (ACC 18.29.080(D) and (E) may be designated a Planned Action Project pursuant to the process in ACC 18.28.080(I).

D. Planned Action Thresholds. Subject to the zoning regulations for the site and the mitigation measures described in this chapter, the maximum levels of development described below have been evaluated in the Downtown Subarea Planned Action EIS, as described in the EIS (and any addenda thereto), and are planned actions pursuant to RCW 43.21C.031. In order to qualify as a planned action, total cumulative development within the Downtown Planned Action Area that has been permitted under this chapter shall meet all of the following criteria:

1. Land Use. The following general types of land uses are considered Planned Actions:
  - a. Single-unit detached housing and middle housing;
  - b. Multi-family housing (apartments and co-living housing);
  - c. Mixed-use (vertical or horizontal);
  - d. Retail, commercial, office, services;
  - e. Restaurants and bars;

- f. Craft industry/light industrial, small food production;
  - g. Arts/entertainment (gallery, theater, fine arts studios);
  - h. Medical offices and hospital;
  - i. Open space, passive or active parks, trails, recreation;
  - j. Civic, cultural, government, and utility facilities as identified in the Plan and allowed in the Auburn Zoning Code;
  - k. Uses allowed in the Zoning Code provided for each implementing district (Chapter 18.29 DUC);
  - l. Other uses applicable to the 2024 Auburn Downtown Subarea Plan that are similar to uses listed above as determined by the Community Development Director or designee;
  - m. Multi-modal transportation improvements consistent with the Comprehensive Transportation Plan and the Planned Action EIS; and
  - n. Enlargement or intensification of uses existing at the time the Planned Action Area is approved, so long as such enlargement or intensification complies with the Zoning Code to the extent practical.
2. Planned Action Uses. A land use shall qualify as a Planned Action Project land use when:
- a. It is within the Downtown Planned Action Area; and
  - b. It is within one or more of the land use categories described above; or
  - c. It is a common accessory use or appurtenance to a permitted use.
3. A Planned Action Project may be a single Planned Action land use, or a combination of Planned Action land uses in a mixed-use development.
4. Development Thresholds. The following amount of new various land uses are contemplated by the Planned Action (Table 2 Ord. No. 7006):

**Planned Action Development Limits: 2024 – 2044: Preferred Alternative.**

	Current (2021)			Preferred Alternative (2044)		
	Jobs	Population	Housing	Jobs	Population	Housing
<b>Downtown Planned Action Area</b>	4,799	3,708	1,724	<b>8,185</b>	<b>15,478</b>	<b>7,603</b>

- a. Shifting development amounts between land use identified above may be permitted provided the transportation thresholds are not exceeded and the development impacts identified in the Downtown Subarea Planned Action EIS are mitigated consistently with the mitigation measures.
  - b. Further environmental review may be required pursuant to WAC 197-11-172, if any individual Planned Action Project or combination of Planned Action Projects exceed the development thresholds specified above and/or alter the assumptions and analysis in the Downtown Subarea Planned Action EIS.
5. Transportation Thresholds.
- a. Level of Service Threshold. The City uses an LOS rating system to evaluate the operations of its roadway system. LOS is a concept used to describe traffic operations from the driver's perspective. LOS ratings are defined by intersection delay in seconds—LOS ranges from LOS A, which signifies no congestion and little delay, to LOS F, which signifies substantial congestion and delay. All intersections currently meet the City's minimum LOS standards. As of Dec. 2025, one intersection does not meet the City's minimum LOS standards: C Street NW & 3rd Street NW – LOS F. This intersection is currently identified in the Comprehensive Transportation Plan and 6-Year Transportation Improvement Plan for future mitigation.
  - b. Concurrency. All Planned Action Projects shall meet the City's transportation concurrency requirement standards and the level of service thresholds according to the Comprehensive Transportation Plan and Engineering Design Standards. Applicants shall be required to document that the project meets concurrency standards.
  - c. Impact Fee. In order to mitigate transportation related impacts, all Planned Action Projects shall pay impact fees, with adjustments made for any applicable credits.
  - d. Mitigation. Each Planned Action Project shall provide its proportionate share of transportation capital improvements analyzed in the Planned Action EIS. The City Engineer shall have the discretion to adjust the allocation of responsibility for required improvements between individual Planned Action Projects based on their identified impacts.

e. *Discretion.* The City Engineer shall have discretion to determine incremental and total trip generation, consistent with Chapter 19.04 ACC for each Planned Action Project proposed under this Planned Action.

E. *Elements of the Environment and Degree of Impacts.* A Planned Action Project that would result in a significant change in the type or degree of adverse impacts to any element(s) of the environment analyzed in the Planned Action EIS will not qualify as a Planned Action Project.

F. *Changed Conditions.* Should environmental conditions change significantly from those analyzed in the Downtown Subarea Planned Action EIS, the City's SEPA Responsible Official or designee may determine that the Planned Action designation is no longer applicable until supplemental environmental review is conducted.

G. *Review Criteria for Planned Actions.* The City's SEPA Responsible Official or designee may designate projects as "Planned Action Projects", pursuant to RCW 43.21C.030, applications that meet the following conditions:

1. The proposal is located within the Planned Action Area identified above.
2. The proposed uses and activities are consistent with those described in the Downtown Subarea Planned Action EIS and this Section.
3. The proposal is within the Planned Action thresholds and other criteria of this Section.
4. The proposal is consistent with the Auburn Comprehensive Plan and the 2024 Auburn Downtown Subarea Plan.
5. The proposal's significant adverse environmental impacts have been identified in the Downtown Subarea Planned Action EIS.
6. The project's significant impacts will be mitigated by application of the measures identified ACC 18.29.080(j) and other applicable City regulations, together with any conditions, modifications, variances, design review, or special permit that may be required.
7. The project complies with all applicable local, state, and/or federal laws and regulations, and the SEPA Responsible Official or designee determines that these laws and regulations constitute adequate mitigation.

8. The project is not an essential public facility as defined by RCW 36.70A.200 unless the essential public facility is an accessory to or part of a development that is designated as a Planned Action Project.

H. Effect of Planned Action Designation. Designation as a Planned Action Project by the City's SEPA Responsible Official or designee means that a qualifying proposal has been reviewed in accordance with this Section and found to be consistent with the development parameters and thresholds established herein and with the environmental analysis contained in the Downtown Subarea Planned Action EIS

I. Planned Action Permit Process. Applications for Planned Action Projects shall be reviewed pursuant to the following process:

1. Development applications shall meet all applicable requirements of the Auburn Municipal Code and this Section in place at the time of the Planned Action Project application.
2. Applications for Planned Action Projects shall:
  - a. Be made on forms provided by the City;
  - b. Include the SEPA checklist in WAC 197-11; and
  - c. Meet all applicable requirements of the Auburn Municipal Code and this Section.
3. The City's SEPA Responsible Official or designee shall determine whether the application is complete as provided in Title 14 ACC.
4. If the application for a project within the Planned Action Area, as defined in Exhibit A of Ord. No. 7006, then the application will be reviewed to determine if it is consistent with the criteria of this ordinance and thereby qualifies as a Planned Action Project.
5. The decision of the City's SEPA Responsible Official or designee determining if a project is a Planned Action Project is a Type 1 decision. The City's SEPA Responsible Official or designee shall notify the applicant of their decision in writing to the applicant or project representative, as listed on the application, and federally recognized tribal governments and agencies with jurisdiction over the Planned Action Project pursuant to RCW 43.21C.440.
6. If the project is determined to qualify as a Planned Action Project, it shall proceed in accordance with the applicable permit review procedures specified in Title 14 ACC,

- except that no SEPA threshold determination, EIS, or additional SEPA review shall be required.
7. Notice of application for a Planned Action Project shall be consistent with Title 14 ACC.
  8. If notice is otherwise required for the underlying permit, the notice shall state that the project has qualified as a Planned Action Project. If notice is not otherwise required for the underlying permit, no special notice is required by this Ordinance.
  9. To provide additional certainty about applicable requirements, the City or applicant may request consideration and execution of a development agreement for a Planned Action Project, consistent with RCW 36.70B.170.
  10. If a project is determined to not qualify as a Planned Action Project, the City SEPA Responsible Official or designee shall notify the applicant and prescribe a SEPA review procedure consistent with the City's SEPA regulations and requirements of state law. The notice shall describe the elements of the application that result in failure to qualify as a Planned Action Project.
  11. Projects that fail to qualify as Planned Action Projects may incorporate or otherwise use elements of the Downtown Subarea Planned Action EIS, as well as other relevant SEPA documents, to meet their SEPA requirements. The City SEPA Responsible Official or designee may limit the scope of SEPA review for the non-qualifying project to those issues and environmental impacts not previously addressed in the Downtown Subarea Planned Action EIS.

J. *Planned Action Mitigation Measures.* The planned action mitigation measures set forth in Exhibit B attached to Ord. No. 7006 and codified in this chapter and incorporated herein by this reference shall apply to the project identified therein. Exhibit B shall not be codified with the provisions of this chapter but shall be on file and available for review in the office of the city clerk.

K. *Amendments.* Amendments to this chapter may be initiated by the city, the proponent, or the proponent's successor, and shall occur as follows:

1. The director may interpret the words and meaning of certain conditions in order to resolve conflicts in implementation. All words in the ordinance codified in this chapter shall carry their customary and ordinary meaning.

2. If changes to the language of the ordinance codified in this chapter are required, such proposed changes shall be reviewed by the director. If, in the estimation of the director, the proposed change is minor, then the proposed change shall be forwarded directly to the city council for its consideration. If, in the estimation of the director, the change is major, the proposed change shall be referred to the planning commission which shall conduct a public hearing and make a recommendation to the city council.

# City of Auburn DOWNTOWN DESIGN STANDARDS

Draft, February 24, 2026

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# Chapter I: Introduction

## I.1 Purpose.

These design standards are authorized by the City Council as a major implementation tool of the Auburn Comprehensive Plan and the Downtown Auburn Subarea Plan. Overall, these standards intend to:

- Provide clear objectives for the planning and design of development projects.
- Preserve and protect the public health, safety, and welfare of the citizens of Auburn.
- Ensure that new multifamily, mixed-use, and commercial development enhances the public's experience of Auburn's Downtown Urban Center.
- Promote increased walking, bicycling, and transit use in Auburn's Downtown Urban Center.

## I.2 Applicability.

- (1) New development. The provisions of this chapter apply to all development within the Downtown Urban Center, except:
  - (a) Single-unit detached dwellings shall follow the single-unit detached siting and design standards of ACC 18.31.050.
  - (b) Middle housing developments that meet the standards of ACC 18.25.040 and 18.04.340(B) shall follow the middle housing design standards of ACC 18.25.070.
  - (c) Activities identified in ACC 18.29.020(C).
- (2) Building additions, remodels, and site improvements. Three different thresholds have been established to determine how the standards herein are applied to such projects.
  - (a) Level I improvements include all exterior remodels, building additions, and/or site improvements that affect the exterior appearance of the building/site and/or cumulatively increase the gross floor area on a site by less than 50 percent within three years of the date of permit issuance. The requirement for such improvements is only that the proposed improvements meet applicable standards herein, and do not lead to further nonconformance with the aforementioned standards.

For example, if a property owner decides to replace a building façade's siding, then the siding shall meet the applicable exterior building material standards, but elements such as building articulation would not be required.
  - (b) Level II improvements include all improvements that cumulatively increase the gross floor area on a site by 50 percent to 100 percent within three years of the date of permit issuance. All standards that do not involve repositioning the building or reconfiguring site development shall apply to Level II improvements. In the case where the site includes multiple buildings and one or more of those buildings aren't being enlarged, such buildings are not required to be improved or relocated.
  - (c) Level III improvements include all improvements that cumulatively increase the gross floor area on a site by more than 100 percent within three years of the date of permit issuance. Such developments shall conform to all applicable standards, except in a case where there are multiple buildings on one site, and one or more buildings are not being enlarged. In that

scenario, improvements to the building or buildings not being enlarged are not required, but conformance with all other standards apply.

- (3) Public buildings. Public buildings are exempt from the design standards herein provided design treatments are integrated to meet the following objectives:
  - (a) Enliven the pedestrian environment along the adjacent sidewalks.
  - (b) Incorporate a prominent and inviting entry visible from the street.
  - (c) Building design and materials should evoke a sense of permanence.
  - (d) Site and building design stands out from the surrounding context as a distinct landmark and provides visual interest from all observable scales.

### **1.3 How the provisions of this chapter are applied.**

Most sections within this chapter herein include the following elements:

- (1) Purpose statements, which are overarching objectives.
- (2) Standards use words such as “must” and “is/are required,” signifying required actions.
- (3) Guidelines use words such as “should” or “is/are recommended,” signifying voluntary measures.
- (4) Design “Departures” are provided for specific standards in this chapter. They allow alternative designs provided the reviewing authority determines the design meets the purpose of the standards and other applicable criteria. See ACC 18.31.200(l) for related procedures associated with departures.
- (5) Relationship to other codes and documents. Where provisions of this chapter conflict with provisions in any other section of the Auburn City Code (ACC), this chapter prevails unless otherwise noted.
- (6) This chapter contains some specific standards that are easily quantifiable, while others provide a level of discretion in how they are complied with. In the latter case, the applicant must demonstrate to the director, in writing, how the project meets the purpose of the standard or standards.

## I.4 Definitions

Definitions in Chapter 18.04 ACC apply to these standards. Below are supplemental definitions that apply specifically to these design standards:

- (1) Articulation - A method of styling the joints and transitions in the formal elements of architectural design for the purpose of creating visual interest. Includes treatments to building joints and transitions such as indents, projections, material changes, façade treatments.
- (2) Belt Course - A molding or projecting course running horizontally along the face of a building.
- (3) Canopy - A cover over a sidewalk providing protection from the rain or shade from the sun, which is constructed of durable, permanent materials.
- (4) Cornice - A horizontal decorative or ornamental molding around a wall or just below a ceiling.
- (5) Director - means the director of the Department of Community Development or designee.
- (6) Multifamily – Apartment building(s) featuring seven or more dwelling units on a single lot.
- (7) Parking, structured - Parking contained within an enclosed building either part of or designed to appear like it is part of the larger building complex, or a freestanding structure devoted exclusively to above-grade parking.
- (8) Plinth - A block used as the base of a column or other upright support.
- (9) Public art - Any form of painting, mural, mosaic, sculpture, or other work of art, so long as it can be appraised as a work of art and its value as such documented, displayed on the exterior of a building, at or near the pedestrian entrance, or on a public plaza, and visible to users of the public right-of-way at all times.
- (10) Public plaza - An open space that is visible and accessible to the public at all times predominantly open to the sky, and for use principally by people, as opposed to merely a setting for the building.
- (11) Street level retail - Uses providing goods and services, including food and drink, adjacent to, visible from, and directly accessible from the public sidewalk.

# Chapter 2 – Block-Frontage Standards

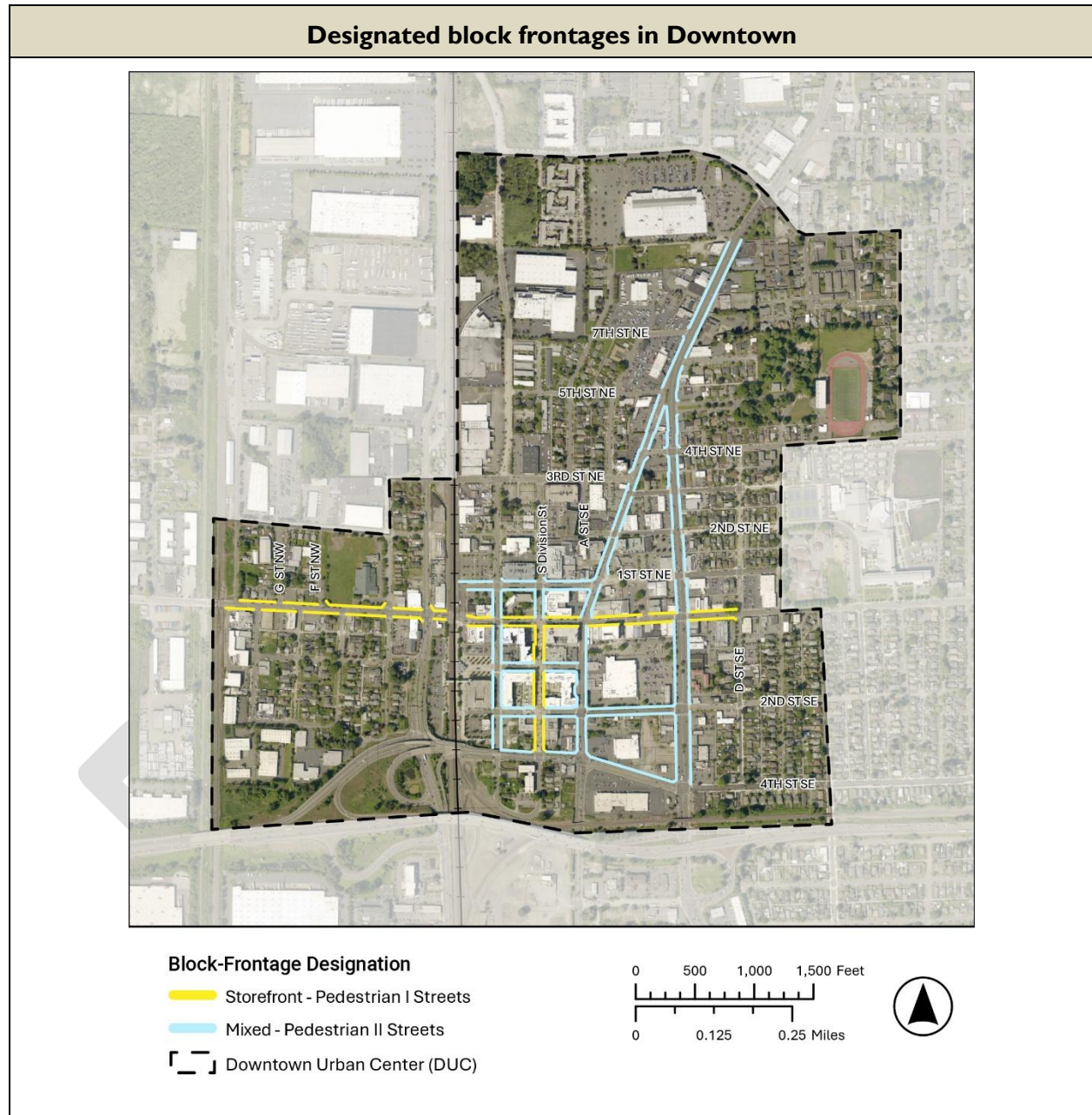
## 2.1 Purpose.

- (1) To achieve the envisioned street level aesthetic and enhance the public's experience of Auburn's Downtown Urban Center.
- (2) To enhance pedestrian environments by emphasizing activated ground-level block-frontage designs for commercial, mixed-use, and multifamily developments.
- (3) To minimize potential negative impacts of driveways and off-street parking facilities on the streetscape.
- (4) To promote good visibility between buildings and the street for security for pedestrians and to create a more welcoming and interesting streetscape.

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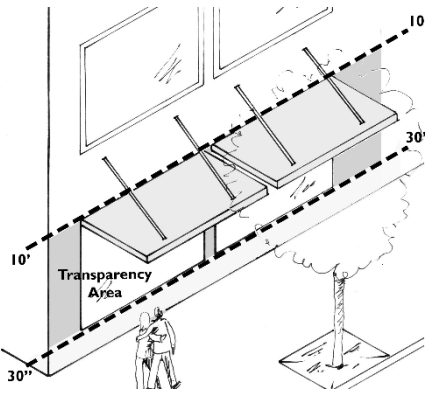
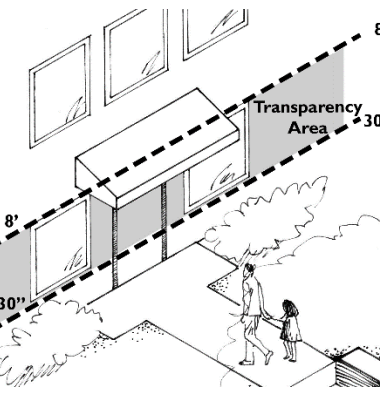
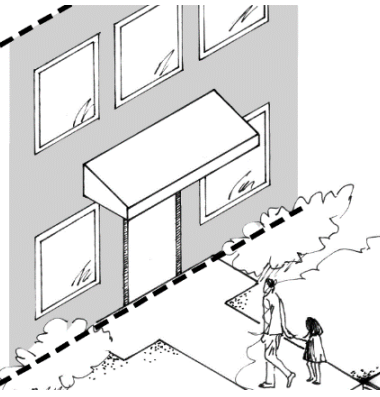


## 2.2 Block-frontage designation maps.

- (1) The block-frontage designations established by this chapter are maintained under the direction of the director. All notations, references, and other information shown have the same force and effect as if fully described in this title.



## 2.3 About the transparency standards.

All block-frontage designations contain distinct minimum façade transparency standards. The purposes of these standards are to maintain “eyes on the street” for safety and create welcoming pedestrian environments. The table below includes details in how they are measured.

Transparency standards		
Transparency area		
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Storefront</b></p>  <p>The transparency area is on the ground floor between 30” and 10’ above sidewalk grade</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Ground floor non-residential on Landscaped block frontage</b></p>  <p>The transparency area is between 30” and 8’ above grade</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Residential buildings and residential portions of mixed-use buildings</b></p>  <p>All vertical surfaces of the façade are used in the calculations</p>
Other Transparency Provisions		
<p><b>Windows must be transparent</b></p> <p>Ground-level window area for storefronts and other non-residential uses that is covered, frosted, or perforated in any manner that obscures visibility into the building must not count as transparent window area. Also, mirrored glass and highly-reflective or darkly-tinted windows must not be counted as transparent windows.</p>		
	Covered windows	Perforated sign

## Transparency standards

### Display windows & parking garages

Display windows may be used for up to 25% of non-residential transparency requirements provided they are at least 30" deep to allow changeable displays and the interior wall is non-structural so it can be removed if the windows are not used for display. Tack-on display cases as shown in the far-right example do not qualify as transparent window area.

For parking garages (where allowed by block frontage standards), the left image illustrates how such a structure can meet (and not meet) the applicable transparency standards.



Integrated display windows



Tack-on display cases



Parking garage with windows



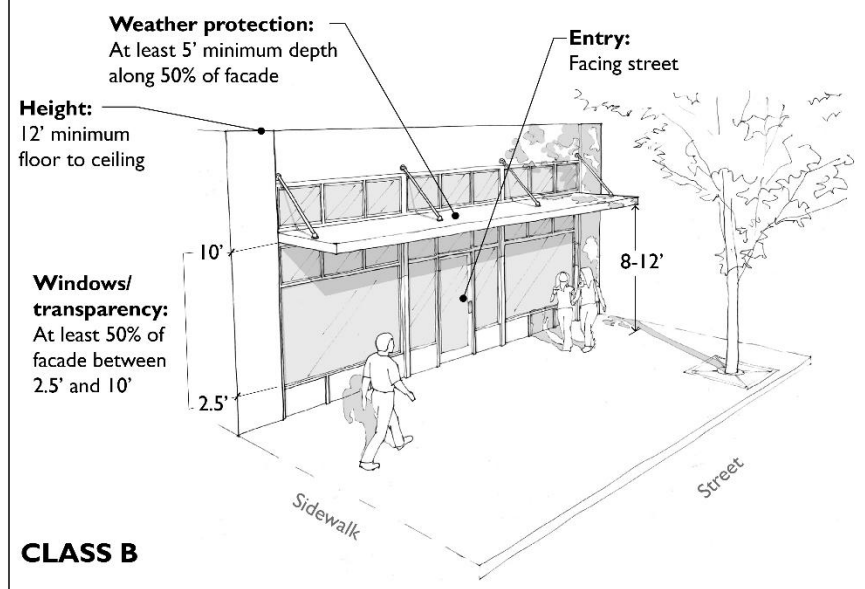
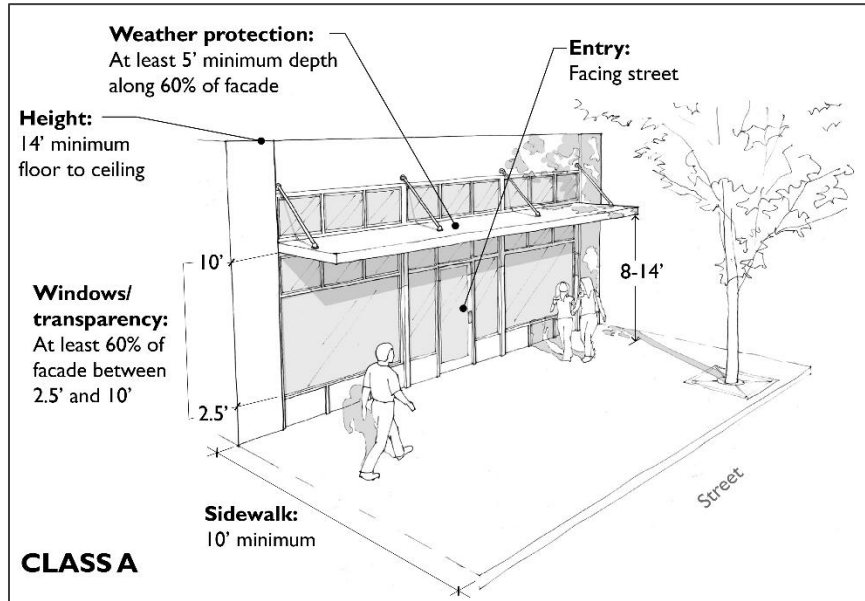
Parking garage without windows

## 2.4 Storefront block-frontage standards.

(I) **Purpose.** Storefront block-frontages are the most vibrant and active shopping and dining areas within Auburn. Blocks designated as Storefront block-frontages include continuous storefronts placed along the sidewalk edge with small scale shops and many business entries.

There are two tiers of Storefront block frontage designations: Class A and Class B. Class B Storefronts have slightly relaxed ground-level use, transparency, and weather protection standards.

### Storefront block frontage vision and key standards.



**(2) Applicability.**

- (a) Class A Storefront standards apply to designed Storefront block frontages as set forth in the block frontage map above.
- (b) Class B Storefront standards apply to situations for Mixed and Undesignated block frontages where developments choose to integrate storefronts on portions or all of their applicable block frontages.

**(3) Standards.** Applicable development must comply with the standards in Table 2.4 below.

<b>Table 2.4 Storefront block-frontage standards.</b>		
The ➡ symbol refers to DEPARTURE opportunities as set forth in Section 1.3 with supplemental criteria in subsection (4) below.		
<b>Element</b>	<b>Class A Storefront Standards</b>	<b>Class B Storefront Standards</b>
<b>Ground-level</b>		
Land use	See ACC18.29.050 for use provisions, except: Residential uses are prohibited except lobbies and accessory-uses associated with multifamily residential uses are allowed provided they are limited to 30% of block-frontages.	See ACC18.29.050 for use provisions, except: Residential uses are prohibited except: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Live/work units featuring ground level space that complies with minimum floor to floor height and non-residential space depth herein.</li> <li>• Lobbies and accessory-uses associated with multifamily residential uses are allowed provided they are limited to 60% of block-frontages.</li> </ul>
Floor to floor height for new buildings (applies to the minimum non-residential space depth)	14' minimum. ➡	12' minimum. ➡
Non-residential space depth	30' minimum. ➡	20' minimum. ➡
<b>Building placement</b>	Buildings must be placed at the back edge of the required sidewalk. Additional setbacks are allowed for a widened sidewalk or providing open space for public use such as plazas, courtyards, and seating areas.	Standards in this table apply when buildings are placed at the back edge of the required sidewalk.
<b>Building entrances</b>	Primary building entrances must face the street or a pedestrian-oriented space that is adjacent to the street. For corner sites, the entry may face the corner, or one or both streets.	
<b>Façade transparency</b> (see Section 2.3)	At least 60% of the transparency area. ➡	At least 50% of the transparency area. ➡

**Table 2.4  
Storefront block-frontage standards.**

The ➡ symbol refers to DEPARTURE opportunities as set forth in Section 1.3 with supplemental criteria in subsection (4) below.

Element	Class A Storefront Standards	Class B Storefront Standards
<p><b>Weather protection</b></p> <p>Note: Weather protection that encroaches over the public right-of-way will require a permit meeting the standards of ACC 12.60 and ACC 12.60.050.</p>	<p>Weather protection is required along at least 60% of the storefront façade, and it must be a minimum of 5' deep and have 8' to 14' of vertical clearance. ➡</p> <p>The director may require reduced width weather protection where necessary to avoid interfering with street trees, street lights, street signs, or extending beyond the edge of the sidewalk.</p>	<p>Weather protection is required along at least 50% of the storefront façade, and it must be a minimum of 5' deep and have 8' to 12' of vertical clearance. ➡</p> <p>The director may require reduced width weather protection where necessary to avoid interfering with street trees, street lights, street signs, or extending beyond the edge of the sidewalk.</p>
<p><b>Parking location</b></p>	<p>New surface level parking and access features adjacent to the street are prohibited. Parking may be placed below, above, and/or behind storefronts. Driveways are allowed from designated Storefront block frontages only when no other option exists.</p>	<p>Not applicable (sites are subject to applicable designated block frontage parking location provisions).</p>
<p><b>Sidewalk width</b></p>	<p>Sidewalks abutting storefronts must be at least 10' wide. Where such sidewalks extend beyond right-of-way limits, a public access easement is required to accommodate the full sidewalk width. Upper floors may cantilever over the sidewalk to the right-of-way edge or 4', whichever is less.</p>	

**(4) DEPARTURE criteria.** Departures from the standards in Table 2.4 that feature the ➡ symbol will be considered provided the alternative proposal meets the purpose of the standards and the following criteria:

- (a) Non-residential space floor to floor height. Some flexibility for reduced non-residential floor to floor heights may be allowed (up to 25 percent of such space) to allow for a greater variety of such spaces where the applicant can successfully demonstrate the proposed alternative design and configuration of the space is viable for a variety of permitted non-residential uses.
- (b) Non-residential space depth. Reduced depths on up to 25 percent of the applicable block-frontage will be considered where the applicant can successfully demonstrate the proposed alternative design and configuration of the space is viable for a variety of permitted non-residential uses.
- (c) Facade transparency. Departures for facade transparency in the transparency area may be reduced to a minimum of 35 percent for block-frontages if the façade design between ground-level windows provides visual interest to the pedestrian and mitigates the impacts of blank walls.

- (d) Weather-protection. The reduced extent (to no less than 50 percent of Class A and no less than 35 percent of Class B Storefront block-frontages) or width weather-protection features (to no less than four-feet in width) will be considered provided the designs are proportional to architectural features of the building and building design trade-offs (elements that clearly go beyond minimum building design standards in this chapter) meet the purpose of the standards.

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## 2.5 Landscaped block-frontage standards.

- (1) **Purpose.** To provide standards for an optional block frontage design along Mixed-designated streets that incorporates modest landscaped setbacks, clear pedestrian connections between the building and the sidewalk, and minimized surface parking lots along the frontages.
- (2) **Applicability.** Standards herein apply as an option for development on Mixed designated block frontages and a requirement for new multifamily development. Note that developments featuring ground-level dwelling units along block frontages, such frontages are also subject to the provisions of Section 2.8, Ground-floor residential frontage standards.
- (3) **Standards.** Applicable developments are subject to the Landscaped block frontage standards set forth in Table 2.5.



**Table 2.5  
Landscaped block-frontage standards.**

The ↻ symbol refers to DEPARTURE opportunities opportunities set forth in Section 1.3 with supplemental criteria in subsection (4) below.

Element	Standards
<b>Ground-level</b>	
Land use	As set forth in ACC 18.29.050 and 18.07.020.
<b>Building placement</b>	5' minimum setback. ↻ No minimum setback is required for upper building levels. Block frontages with ground floor dwelling units must comply with Section 2.8.
<b>Building entrances</b>	Building entries must face the street or a public plaza that is adjacent to the street. For corner sites, the entry may face the corner, or one or both streets.

<b>Table 2.5 Landscaped block-frontage standards.</b>	
The ➡ symbol refers to DEPARTURE opportunities opportunities set forth in Section 1.3 with supplemental criteria in subsection (4) below.	
<b>Element</b>	<b>Standards</b>
<b>Façade transparency</b> (see Section 2.3)	For buildings with ground-level non-residential uses, at least 35% of the transparency area. ➡ For buildings with ground-level residential uses, at least 15% of the entire facade.
<b>Weather protection</b>	Weather protection at least 3' deep must be provided over individual residential and commercial tenant entries and at least 5' deep for shared residential and professional office entries.
<b>Parking location</b>	Surface level parking and access features must be located to the side or rear of buildings. For sites with multiple buildings, no more than 50 percent of arterial street block frontages may be occupied by parking and vehicular access areas. ➡
<b>Landscaping</b>	All areas between the sidewalk and the building must be landscaped, except for walkways, porches, decks, and other areas meeting the definition of public plazas. The required landscaping must meet the provisions of ACC 18.50.040(C) and 18.50.070. For parking lot perimeter landscaping, see Section 3.3.

**(4) DEPARTURE criteria.** Departures to the Landscaped block-frontage standards in Table 2.5 that feature the ➡ symbol will be considered provided the alternative proposal meets the purpose of the standards and the following criteria:

- (a) Building placement. Reduced setbacks will be considered for non-residential ground level frontages where the façade effectively integrates a blend of storefront and landscaped frontage elements. For example, window transparency levels should increase towards Class B Storefront standards at a proportional rate as the setback gets smaller.
- (b) Façade transparency. Façade transparency in the transparency area may be reduced from the minimum standards by 50 percent if the façade design between ground-level windows provides visual interest to the pedestrian and mitigates the impacts of blank-walls.
- (c) Parking location. Alternative designs may be considered with some parking located between the street and a building or buildings where such design helps to better take advantage of the site's context. Design treatments must be included to mitigate the impact of parking areas along the street (in terms of visual impacts and pedestrian access to the buildings from the street).

## 2.6 Mixed block-frontage standards.

- (1) **Purpose.** To provide for flexibility in the design of applicable block frontages while ensuring that block frontages create a pedestrian-friendly environment.
- (2) **Applicability.** Standards herein apply to all sites containing designated Mixed block frontages per the map in Section 2.2. Note that for developments featuring ground level dwelling units adjacent to the street, the design of such block frontages are subject to Section 2.8.
- (3) **Standards.** Applicable development may choose between the Class B Storefront standards set forth in Table 2.4 or Landscaped block frontage standards as set forth in Table 2.5 or some combination of the two, with modifications noted in the scenarios below:
  - (a) A site with a proposed storefront building (or segment of a building), the building(s) will be subject to the Class B Storefront standards set forth in Table 2.4, except that for parking location standards, sites will be subject to the provisions in the Landscaped block frontage standards in Table 2.5.
  - (b) For a site that features proposed a building or buildings with a mix of proposed Storefront and Landscaped block frontage designs, the storefront building segments will be subject to the Class B Storefront standards set forth in Table 2.4, whereas everything else will be subject to the Landscaped block frontage standards as set forth in Table 2.5.
- (4) **Blending frontages.** Buildings may also employ designs that are a hybrid of storefront and landscaped block frontage forms, where they feature a small landscaped setback (less than what is required under the Landscaped block frontage standards), provided the window transparency levels increase towards Class B Storefront standards at a proportional rate as the setback gets smaller. Weather protection isn't required in frontage areas where there's more than 16 inches of landscaping adjacent to the façade (measured perpendicular to the façade). All other standards for Class B Storefront standards in Table 2.4 apply.

## 2.7 Other/Undesignated block-frontage standards.

- (1) **Purpose.** To provide for flexibility in the design of block frontages in areas where such flexibility is warranted.
- (2) **Applicability.** Standards herein apply to all development on sites that are not otherwise designated as a Storefront, Mixed, or Landscaped block frontage.
- (3) **Standards.** Applicable developments are subject to the Other/Undesignated block frontage standards set forth in Table 2.7, except where developments integrate storefront buildings abutting the sidewalk edge. Such storefront buildings are subject to the Class B Storefront standards set forth in Table 2.4.

<b>Table 2.7 Other/Undesignated block-frontage standards.</b>	
The ➡ symbol refers to DEPARTURE opportunities opportunities set forth in Section 2.7 with supplemental criteria in subsection (4) below.	
<b>Element</b>	<b>Standards</b>
<b>Building placement</b>	Where allowed in the applicable zone, buildings may be placed up to the sidewalk edge, provided they meet Class B Storefront block-frontage standards in Table 2.4. Buildings and portions thereof with ground floor dwelling units are subject to the standards in Section 2.8. Otherwise, there is no minimum or maximum setback provided buildings meet applicable standards herein.
<b>Building entrances</b>	Building entrances facing the street are encouraged. At a minimum, at least one building entry visible and directly accessible from the street is required. Where buildings are setback from the property line, pedestrian connections from the sidewalk are required.
<b>Façade transparency</b>	Storefronts abutting the back of the sidewalk are subject to Class B Storefront façade transparency standards in Table 2.4. Other buildings designed with non-residential uses on the ground floor within 10 feet of sidewalk, at least 30% of the ground floor between 4-8 feet above the sidewalk. ➡ For residential buildings, at least 15% of the entire façade (all vertical surfaces generally facing the street).
<b>Weather protection</b>	Buildings within 16" of the back of the sidewalk are subject to Class B Storefront block-frontage weather protection standards in Table 2.4. For all other buildings, weather protection at least 3' deep must be provided over individual residential and commercial tenant entries and at least 5' deep for shared residential and professional office entries.
<b>Parking location</b>	There are no parking lot location restrictions, except for landscaped buffer requirements set forth in PMC 20.58.005.
<b>Landscaping</b>	Sites are subject to the landscaping requirements of Section 3.3 and Chapter 18.50 ACC.

**(4) DEPARTURE criteria.** Departures to the Other/Undesignated block-frontage standards in Table 2.7 that feature the ➡ symbol will be considered provided the alternative proposal meets the purpose of the standards and the following criteria:

- (a) Façade transparency. Façade transparency in the transparency area may be reduced from the minimum standards by 50 percent if the façade design between ground-level windows provides visual interest to the pedestrian and mitigates the impacts of blank-walls.

## 2.8 Ground-floor residential frontage standards.

**(1) Purpose.** The purpose of these standards is to:

- (a) Enhance the privacy and security of residents living on the ground floor.
- (b) Provide an effective visual and physical transition between the public realm and the private realm.
- (c) Enhance the relationship between the building and the street through high-quality landscape and architectural design.

**(2) Applicability.** All developments with ground-floor residential uses adjacent to public streets, trails, through-block connections or other internal pedestrian connections, parks, publicly accessible common areas, and internal common space (hereafter collectively referred to as “public and semi-public realm”) shall comply with the frontage standards herein.

**(3) Standards.** Design treatments must be integrated to enhance the character of the public and semi-public realm while respecting the privacy of adjacent residential units. Design criteria applicable to ground-floor residential frontages are as follows:

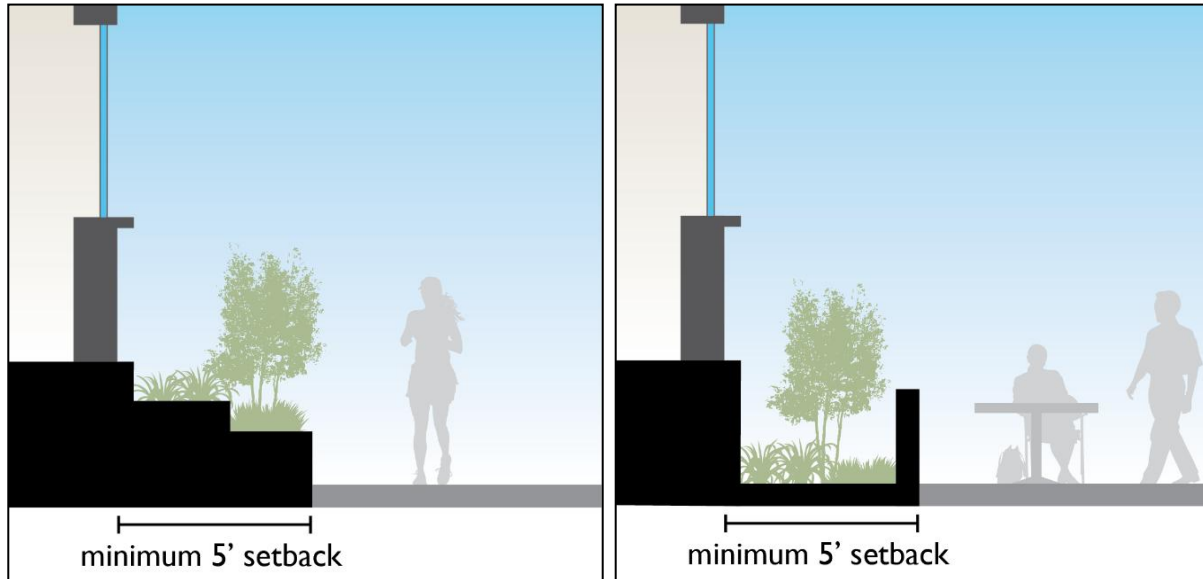
(a) Unit setback and elevation. Provide privacy for people living in the adjacent dwelling units and ensure the applicable public and semi-public realm environment is comfortable through all of the following measures:

- (i) Provide a five foot minimum setback from applicable public and semi-public realm elements. The setback shall be measured from the edge of the applicable public (e.g., sidewalk) and semi-public realm elements (e.g., walkway, public plaza, shared outdoor space). When adjacent to an applicable public and semi-public realm element with no adjacent walkway, the setback shall be measured from the outside edge (facing away from dwelling unit) of a physical threshold feature (e.g., low fence or hedge) that separates semi-private outdoor space with the applicable public and semi-public realm element as determined by the Director.

DEPARTURES will be considered provided the design enhances the character of the streetscape and respects the privacy of adjacent ground-floor residents.

- (ii) Where the façade is within ten feet of a sidewalk (when allowed by the applicable zone) or five feet from all other applicable public and semi-public realm elements, the ground floor must be elevated a minimum average of 30-inches to improve privacy of such residential uses and enhance their relationship to the street.

### Minimum setback between a ground floor residence and applicable public and semi-public realm element



In the left example, the 5 foot setback area is used for raised planters next to a sidewalk. In the right example, the minimum 5 foot setback area is used for a wall and landscaped bed next to a public space.

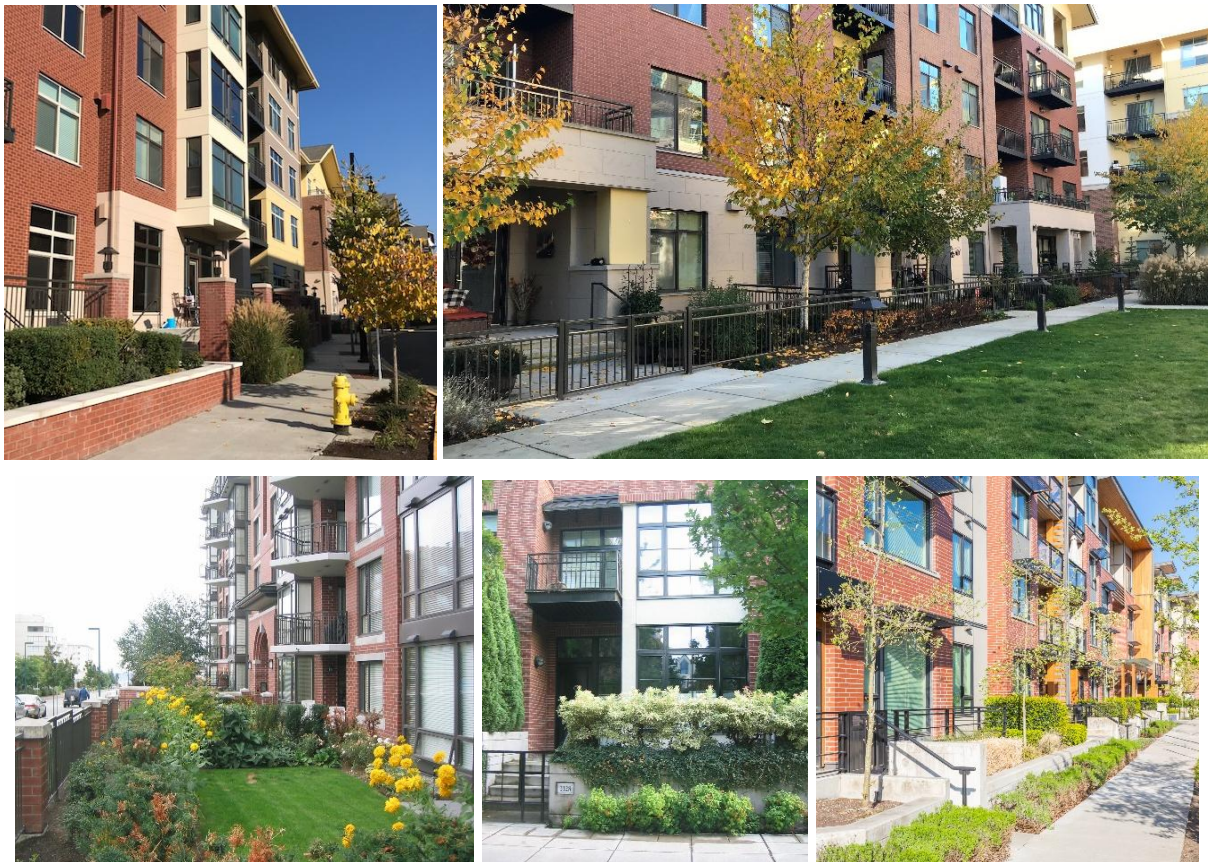
- (c) Units with direct physical access and less than ten feet setback to the sidewalk or other applicable public and semi-public realm elements must enhance the privacy of residents and provide an effective transition between the public and private realm by integrating all of the following measures:
- (i) Provide a physical “threshold” feature, such as a hedge, retaining wall, rockery, stair, gate, railing, or a combination of such elements on private property, not to exceed 42 inches in height, that defines and bridges the boundary between the applicable public and semi-public realm element and the private entry, porch, yard, or patio. Thresholds may screen, but not completely block, eye-level views to and from the applicable public and semi-public realm element.
  - (ii) Provide an outdoor space at least four feet deep and six feet wide (24 square feet minimum area) in the front setback, such as a porch, patio, deck, or stoop. Where feasible, this space shall be at the same level as the interior of the unit.
  - (iii) Provide a covered area, porch or protected entry space, or other architectural weather protection at least three feet deep that provides cover for a person entering the unit and a transitional space between outside and inside the dwelling.
  - (iv) Landscaping planters shall be integrated into transitional areas between the dwelling unit and the adjacent public and semi-public realm element (see examples below).
  - (v) Overhead building projections may cantilever over the outdoor space by up to 50 percent of the minimum ground level setback.

DEPARTURES may be proposed for the design criteria in subsection (c) above provided the design enhances the privacy of adjacent units and provides an effective and attractive transition between the public and private realm.

## Guidelines and examples of ground-level residential frontages



The above images show ground-level residential frontages with setbacks of approximately 10 feet (left image) and 5 feet (right image) along different street frontages for the same corner apartment building. These ground level units all have their own private unit access from the sidewalk and are elevated above the sidewalk to enhance the privacy to the units. The landscaping elements, brick posts, split-faced concrete block stoop walls, and black metal railings help to provide an attractive and effective transition between the public and private realms.



## Guidelines and examples of ground-level residential frontages

Good examples: Upper left image includes a stoop design with brick terraced planters and low wrought iron fences. Upper right and lower left images include low wrought iron fences that separate the sidewalk/pedestrian walkway from the private open space. Lower center and right images include stoop designs with sidewalk level planters and concrete terrace planters.



Bad examples: Despite the raised ground level, the shallow setback design in the left image above is insufficient to meet the intent of the standards. In the above right image, the upper level building cantilever doesn't meet the standards and creates a cold "cave stoop" like form. The large areas of unscreened concrete walls in both examples are undesirable.

## 2.9 Through-block connection frontage standards.

- (1) **Purpose.** To promote through-block connection frontage designs that enhance the character and safety of such connections.
- (2) **Applicability.** These standards apply to development adjacent to through-block connections, when required (see Section 3.4).
- (3) **Standards.** Many, but not all standards depend on the type of connection and the adjacent use. Specifically:
  - (a) Non-residential building elevations (including mixed-use development with ground floor commercial uses) facing a through-block connection are subject to Other/Undesignated block frontage standards in Section 2.7, except that such building elevations must feature at least 10 percent window transparency to enhance the safety and visibility of the trail and connection. ↻
  - (b) Residential developments adjacent to a through-block connection are subject to both the Landscaped block frontage standards in Section 2.5 and Ground-floor residential frontage standards in Section 2.8.

## Good examples of through-block connections in a residential context



### 2.10 Corner site clarifications.

Where a property fronts onto more than one street, each building frontage must comply with the standards for the block-frontage upon which it fronts, with the following clarifications:

- (1) Entrances. For corner sites, entrances may be provided on both streets, but only one entrance is required unless the site fronts a Storefront block frontage on both sides, in which case the entrance shall be provided on the corner or on each street.
- (2) Transparency and weather protection standards associated with corner storefronts.
  - (a) For corner-sites featuring a Storefront block frontage designation on one street, corner buildings must meet applicable Storefront block frontage transparency and weather protection standards. Such storefront buildings may be built up to the sidewalk along the other block frontage, provided they contain at least 50 percent of the required Class A transparency and weather protection on Storefront block frontages. Where such corner buildings contain additional storefront uses on the non-Storefront block frontage, then those storefronts are subject to the full Class A Storefront block frontage transparency and weather protection standards.
  - (b) For street corners with Storefront designations on both block frontages, buildings must employ the full transparency on the dominant frontage (based on the frontage width or established neighborhood pattern), and a 50 percent reduction in minimum transparency and weather protection is permitted on the secondary façade associated with the corner establishment. Other storefront uses the corner establishment are subject to the full Storefront block frontage transparency and weather protection standards.
  - (c) For corner storefront establishments without a Storefront designation on either street, the block frontage containing the entry is subject to the full Class B Storefront block frontage transparency and weather protection standards. The secondary block frontage associated with the corner establishment must contain at least 50 percent of the required transparency and weather protection for Class B Storefront block frontages.

## 2.11 High-visibility street corner standards.

(1) **Applicability/purpose.** The high visibility street-corner requirements apply to the following sites to accentuate designated street-corners with high visibility to the public:

- (a) Street corners where at least one block frontage is designated Storefront block frontage.
- (b) Other sites where a storefront building is proposed.

(2) **Standards.** At least one of the following special features must be included [the Figure below illustrates acceptable examples]:

- (a) Corner plaza.
- (b) Cropped building corner with a special entry feature.
- (c) Decorative use of building materials at the corner.
- (d) Distinctive façade articulation.
- (e) Sculptural architectural element.
- (f) Other decorative elements that meet the purpose of the standards.



# Chapter 3 - Site Planning

## 3.1 Useable residential recreational space.

### (1) Purpose.

- (a) To create useable space that is suitable for leisure or recreational activities for residents.
- (b) To create open space that contributes to the residential setting.

**(2) Applicability.** These standards apply to residential developments, including portions of mixed-use development, that include usable recreational or open space towards a density bonus. Otherwise, the following text are guidelines that do not have to be met.

### (3) Usable residential recreational space.

- (a) All residential developments, including residential portions of mixed-use development, must provide minimum usable recreational space equal to 5 percent of dwelling unit floor area. This includes all dwelling units, but excludes the floor area of hallways, lobbies, and other common areas. The required recreational space may be provided in a combination of ways:
  - (i) Shared outdoor space. All of the required recreational space may be in the form of shared outdoor space available to all residents and meeting the requirements of subsection (b) below. Shared roof-decks located on the tops of buildings are addressed in subsection (v) below.
  - (ii) Ground/grade-level individual outdoor space. All of the required recreational space for a unit may be provided by ground-level outdoor space that is abutting and directly accessible to the subject unit. Such recreational spaces must be:
    - (A) Outdoor spaces may be located in the front, side, or rear yard provided they are generally level, feature no dimension less than ten-feet, and enclosed by a fence, railing, and/or hedge at least 32-inches in height to qualify
    - (B) Private porches may qualify as outdoor space provided they are at least 36-square-feet in area, with no dimension less than six-feet.Individual ground-level open space that is in excess of minimum requirements must not be used in the calculations for determining the minimum usable recreational space requirements for other units in the development.
  - (iii) Balconies and other similar private outdoor spaces. Up to 50 percent of the required recreational space for a unit may be provided by private balconies provided such spaces are at least 36 square feet in area, with no dimension less than four feet (not including railings), to provide a space usable for human activity.
  - (iv) Common indoor recreation-areas. Up to 50 percent of the required recreational space may be provided by common indoor recreation areas meeting the following conditions:
    - (A) The space must meet ADA standards and must be located in a visible area, such as near an entrance, lobby, or high traffic corridors.
    - (B) The space must be designed specifically to serve interior recreational functions and not merely be leftover unrentable space used to meet the open space requirement.

- (v) Shared roof-decks. For apartment buildings, up to 50 percent of the required recreational space may be provided by shared roof-decks located on the top of buildings which are available to all residents and meet the requirements below. For mixed-use buildings, 100 percent of the required recreational space may be provided by shared roof-decks. Design requirements:
  - (A) Space must feature hard surfacing, provide amenities such as seating areas, landscaping, and/or other features that encourage use.
  - (B) Space must integrate landscaping elements (at least 20 percent of the space) that enhance the character of the space and encourage its use.



- (b) Shared outdoor space design requirements. Shared outdoor space can include landscaped courtyards or decks, entrance plazas, gardens with walkways, children’s play areas, pools, and water features provided they are accessible to all residents of the development. Accessible areas used for storm water retention, infiltration, or other multipurpose recreational and/or green spaces that meet the design criteria herein may qualify as shared recreational space.

Special requirements for shared outdoor spaces include the following:

- (i) Shared outdoor space must be located in centralized areas that are visible from units within the development.
- (ii) Shared outdoor space must feature no dimension less than 15-feet in order to provide functional leisure or recreational activity. Wider minimum dimensions are required perpendicular to building elevations containing windows of dwelling units whose only solar access is from the applicable building wall. Specifically:
  - (A) 20-feet minimum for such elevations up to three-stories tall.
  - (B) 25-feet minimum for such elevations four-stories tall.
  - (C) 30-feet minimum for such elevations five or more stories tall.
- (iii) Shared outdoor space must feature paths, landscaping, seating, and lighting plus play structures, sports courts, and/or other pedestrian amenities to make the area more functional and enjoyable for a range of users.
- (iv) Stairways and service elements located within or on the edge of shared recreational space must not be included in the open space calculations.

- (v) Shared porches may qualify as shared outdoor space, provided they are at least eight feet in depth and 96-square-feet in total area.

**Shared outdoor and indoor recreational space examples**



The upper left example is a courtyard over a parking deck. Notice the transition elements between the courtyard and adjacent residential units. The upper right courtyard is shared by ground-level commercial uses and apartments above.

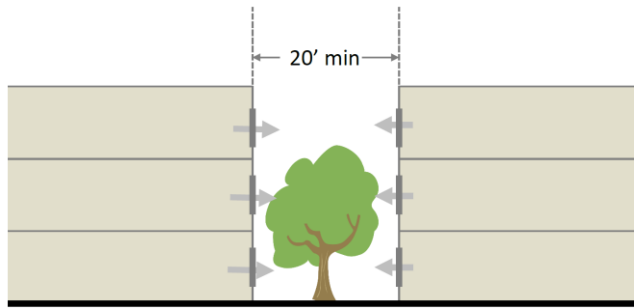


The left image above includes a covered gathering space with outdoor grills adjacent to a landscaped commons with a central walkway. The right image is an example of shared indoor recreation space.

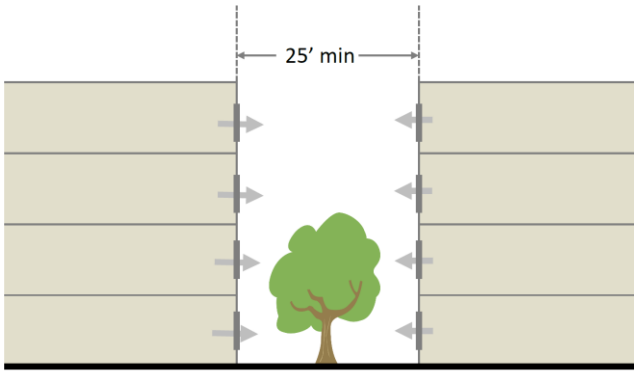


The left image above includes a turf play area with mounds for fun play. The right image shows traditional play equipment.

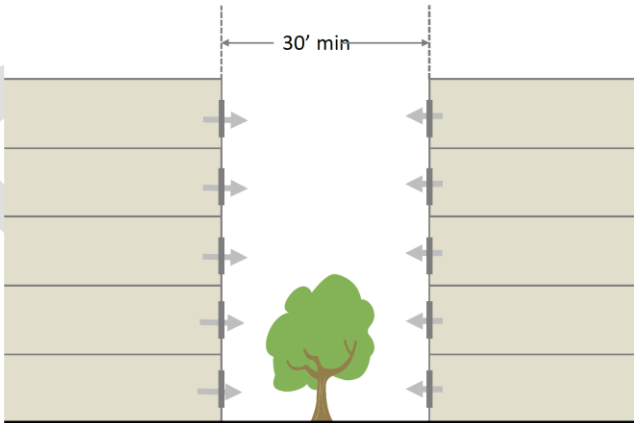
**Shared outdoor space – minimum widths when abutting building elevations containing windows of dwelling units whose only solar access is from the applicable building wall**



20-feet minimum for such elevations up to three-stories tall.



25-feet minimum for such elevations four-stories tall.



30-feet minimum for such elevations five or more stories tall

## 3.2 Public plazas.

### (1) Purpose.

- (a) To encourage plazas and other pedestrian oriented spaces in downtown that enhance the public's opportunity for active and passive activities, such as dining, resting, people watching, and recreational activities.
- (b) To enhance the comfort and leisure capabilities of public plazas.
- (c) To enhance the development character and attractiveness of the Downtown Urban Center.

**(2) Applicability.** These standards apply when publicly accessible plazas are included in the development.

### (3) Public plaza standards.

- (a) Public plazas must abut and be within three feet in elevation of a public sidewalk. Ramps must be provided consistent with ADA standards.
- (b) Public plazas must be at least 25 feet wide.
- (c) At least 10 percent of the plaza area shall be planted with trees and other vegetation. Planters with trees, shrubs, or other vegetation are permitted to count towards the 10 percent.
- (d) At least 20 percent of the plaza shall have physical or natural shade structures. Seated areas with umbrellas, planted trees that will have a canopy radius of at least 2.5 feet, canopies, and other shade structures are permitted to count towards the 20 percent.
- (e) At least two feet of seating area (a bench or ledge at least 16-inches deep and appropriate seating height) or one individual seat per 60-square-feet of plaza area or open space. Moveable seating may be used to meet up to 75 percent of this requirement.
- (f) Desirable public plaza features (to be encouraged) include site furniture, artwork, drinking fountains, water features, kiosks, play structures, or other similar features.

#### Example of site development integrating public plazas



### Example of site development integrating public plazas



All of the above spaces front onto sidewalks and include bordering storefronts to help enliven the spaces. The bottom plaza includes a crushed rock surface, with concrete pathways on the side to facilitate pedestrian movement. Note the mix of fixed and movable seating options.

## 3.3 Parking lots, garages, and drive access design.

### (1) Purpose.

- (a) To create a safe, convenient, and efficient network for vehicle circulation and parking that minimizes conflicts with pedestrian circulation and activity.
- (b) To mitigate the visual impact of parking lots on the streetscape and development context.
- (c) To enhance the function, safety, and visual appearance of parking garages.

### (2) Parking lot pedestrian circulation and design.

The project must provide an integrated and connected pedestrian circulation network that encourages walking and functions as one of the defining features of the development. Specifically:

- (a) Pedestrian connections not less than five feet wide shall be provided through parking lots where they separate building entrances from sidewalks and/or transit stops. Pedestrian connection walkways are required to meet minimum ADA requirements.
- (b) Pedestrian connections through parking lots shall be clearly defined by at least two of the following:
  - (i) Six-inch vertical curb in combination with a raised walkway.
  - (ii) Textured paving, including across vehicular lanes, such as unit pavers, stamped and scored concrete.
  - (iii) Bollards.
  - (iv) Trellis.

- (v) Continuous landscape area on at least one side of the walkway that is at least three feet wide.
- (vi) Pedestrian-scale lighting.
- (c) Parking lot walkways. For developments with large surface parking lots, one walkway shall be provided for every four rows of parking, or at a maximum spacing of 200 feet.
- (d) Crosswalks. Crosswalks are required when a walkway crosses an on-site paved area accessible to vehicles.
- (e) Raised crosswalks (speed tables). On sites larger than one acre, all crosswalks near major building entrances, parking garage entries, vehicular entries to the site, and other high-traffic areas shall be vertically raised to sidewalk level. The purpose of raised crosswalks is to provide a continuous walking or rolling surface, increase the visibility of pedestrians, and slow the speed of vehicular traffic. This requirement does not apply to crosswalks crossing public roadways.

**(3) Through-block connection standards for the development of large sites.**

Through-block connections may include private streets, shared pedestrian and vehicular access routes, and other non-motorized routes that are intended to run between streets through an entire block. The standards herein allow flexibility in the type of connections best suited for the particular development and its use mix. Specific regulations for such through-block connections:

- (a) The maximum distance between a street and through block connection or between through-block connection is 330 feet.  
Development sites with smaller dimensions are not required to integrate through-block connections with new development.
- (b) Departures and exceptions to the through-block connection standards:
  - (i) The Director may approve a departure from the dimensional standards set forth in subsection (a) by up to 25 percent provided the quality of the through-block connection exceeds minimum design standards.
  - (ii) The Director may approve an exception from the dimensional standards set forth in subsection (a) where topography, existing uses/construction, or other geographic conditions prevent compliance or impose an unusual hardship on the applicant, provided the proposed design maximizes pedestrian and vehicular connectivity on the site given the constraints.
- (c) Public access easement. Such through-block connections shall be provided within a public access easement.
- (d) Alignment. Specific alignments for the through-block connections will be developed during the development review process for applicable sites.
- (e) Accessibility. Through-block connections must be accessible to the public at all times and may take a variety of forms, depending on the block size and use mix, as specified in subsection (F), Through-block connections, below.
- (f) Cantilever design. Buildings may project or cantilever into minimum required easement areas on building levels above the connection provided a 13-foot, six-inch vertical clearance is maintained and all other regulations are met.
- (g) Through-block connection types. Unless otherwise noted below and elsewhere in this chapter, required through-block connections may take any of the following forms set forth below. A combination of designs set forth above may be used for each connection.

- (i) Private street. Such streets shall comply with the Engineering Design and Construction Standards.
- (ii) Alley. Alleys shall comply with the Engineering Design and Construction Standards.
- (iii) Shared lane. The shared-lane approach can work well for lower traffic situations and helps to reduce the total space needed to accommodate access. They must include a 20-foot wide minimum two-way shared travel lane within a 32-foot wide public access easement. Parallel or angled parking pockets may be integrated into the lane provided the public access easement is widened accordingly. Landscape planters with a mixture of trees, shrubs, and ground cover must be integrated on at least one side of the shared-lane.
- (iv) Landscaped passageway design. This includes an eight-foot minimum width paved pathway within a 24-foot public access easement. Six-foot minimum landscaping strips (with a mixture of trees, shrubs, and ground cover) are required on each side of the path.
- (v) Urban passageway design. This is a 12-foot minimum width concrete or unit paver walkway within a public access easement (same width) with buildings generally on each side. The building elevations on each side of an Urban passageway must include 40 percent transparency between 30 inches and eight feet above grade. Weather protection is required over all building entrances (at least three feet deep across the full width of the entrance).

### Shared lane examples



Image courtesy eya.com

## Landscaped and urban passageway examples



Landscaped passageway examples above and urban passageway examples below, though the lower right is a blended example of urban and landscaped passageway.



### (4) Vehicular access and design.

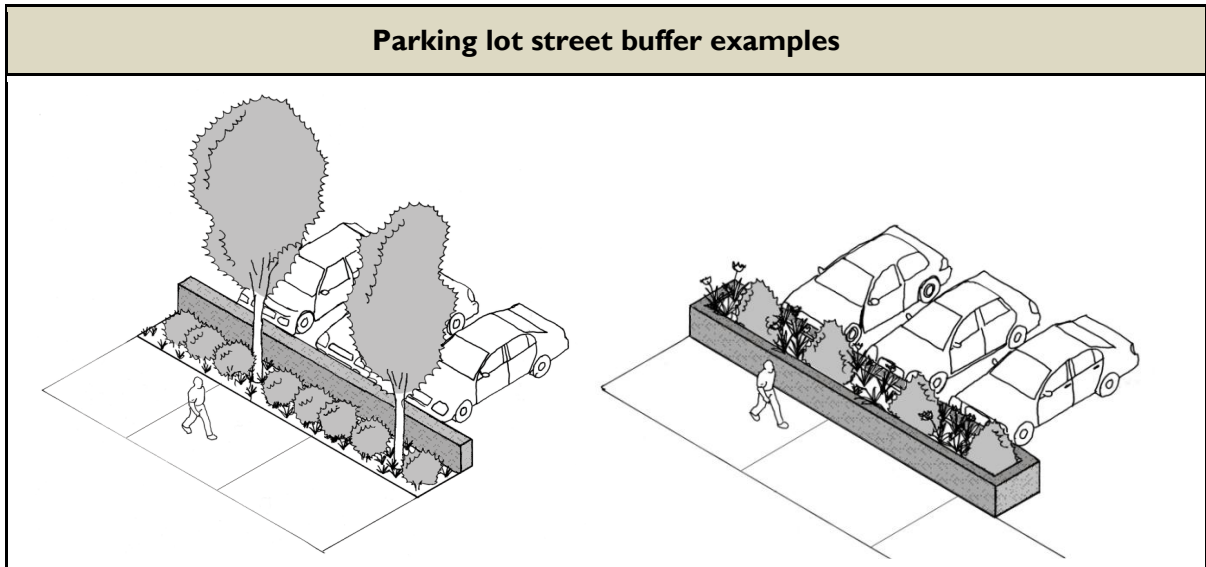
- (a) Driveways. Driveways, where permitted by applicable Block Frontage Standards in Chapter 2, shall meet the standards of the Engineering Design and Construction Standards, including, but not limited to, standards for intersection spacing, distance from crosswalks, and width.
- (b) Parking lot location and design. Parking lot location standards are set forth in the Block Frontage Standards in Chapter 2. All other parking lot design standards are set forth in ACC Chapter 18.52 unless modified herein.
  - (i) See subsection (2) above for interior parking lot pathways.
  - (ii) See subsection (5) below for parking lot landscaping standards.
- (c) Garage and parking structures.
  - (i) The ground level of free-standing parking structures shall include at least three of the following elements:
    - (A) Pedestrian scale signs.
    - (B) Canopies.

- (C) Plinths for columns.
  - (D) Containers for seasonal plantings.
  - (E) Ornamental tilework.
  - (F) Glass elevator and/or stair tower.
  - (G) An element, as approved by the City, which meets the intent of this section.
- (ii) Upper levels of structured parking shall be screened or treated architecturally by two or more of the following:
- (A) Roughly square openings rather than horizontal.
  - (B) Planting designed to grow on the façade.
  - (C) Louvers.
  - (D) Expanded metal panels.
  - (E) Decorative metal grills.
  - (F) Spandrel (opaque) glass.
  - (G) An element, as approved by the City, which meets the intent of this section.
- (iii) Parking garage entries and service area entries should be well-integrated into the design of the building and should not dominate the streetscape. They should be designed and sited to complement, not subordinate, the pedestrian entry. They shall meet the standards of the Engineering Design Standards, Chapter 10.
- (iv) Garage entry doors and gates, if provided, shall be at least 50 percent transparent between the bottom and top of the door or gate in order to enhance the safety of garage users.
- (v) Lighting fixtures within garages are encouraged to be screened from view from the street.

**(5) Parking lot landscaping.**

- (a) Surface parking lots consisting of ten or more stalls shall feature landscaped planter beds at a ratio of one to every six stalls. Each planter bed shall include at least one tree, a minimum caliper of two inches at the time of planting. ➡
- (b) The minimum planter size shall be 100 square feet. Planters shall be protected by concrete curbs and shall also feature shrubs and/or groundcover. ➡
- (c) Surface parking lots located adjacent to any street (excluding alleys) shall be screened by one or a combination of the following:
  - (i) Low walls made of decorative concrete, masonry, or other similar material, not exceeding a maximum height of 30 inches.
  - (ii) Raised planter walls (not exceeding a total height of 30 inches) planted with shrubs (a minimum of 80 percent of which must be evergreen).
  - (iii) Landscape plantings consisting of trees (of which at least 80 percent are deciduous) and shrubs and groundcover materials (of which at least 80 percent are evergreen).
  - (iv) All plant material used for parking lot screening shall provide clear views between 30 inches and eight feet above the ground surface, for visibility and safety.
  - (v) Planting areas shall be a minimum of five feet in width and shall be irrigated.

DEPARTURES will be considered provided the design enhances the function, safety, convenience, or visual appearance of the parking lot and mitigates the visual appearance on the streetscape and development context.



### 3.4 Service areas and mechanical equipment.

#### (1) Purpose.

- (a) To minimize adverse visual, odor, and noise impacts of mechanical equipment, utility cabinets and service areas at ground and roof levels.
- (b) To provide adequate, durable, well-maintained, and accessible service and equipment areas.
- (c) To protect residential uses and abutting properties from impacts due to location and utilization of service areas.

#### (2) Location of ground-related service areas and mechanical equipment.

- (a) Service areas (loading docks, trash dumpsters, compactors, recycling areas, electrical panels, and mechanical equipment areas) must be located for convenient service access while avoiding negative visual, auditory, olfactory, or physical impacts on the streetscape environment, public plazas, uses within the development, and abutting residentially zoned properties.
- (b) Exterior loading areas. Exterior loading areas for commercial uses must not be located within 20-feet of a residentially zoned property. Where the director finds that this is the only option for locating an exterior loading area, design measures will be required to mitigate impacts to adjacent uses, such as adding a masonry wall at least eight-feet high.
- (c) Service areas must not be visible from the sidewalk and abutting properties. Where the director finds that the only option for locating a service area is an area visible from a street, internal walkway or pedestrian area, or from an abutting property, the area must be screened with structural and/or landscaping screening measures.

#### (3) Screening of ground related service areas and mechanical equipment.

Service elements are encouraged to be integrated within the structure. Where they are not provided within the structure, the following standards apply:


- (a) Where screening of ground-level service areas is required [see subsection (2) above], the following applies:
  - (i) A structural enclosure (including gates) must be constructed of masonry, heavy-gauge metal, or decay-resistant material that is also used with the architecture of the main building. Alternative materials other than those used for the main building may be allowed if the finishes are similar in color and texture or if the proposed enclosure materials are more durable than those for the main structure. The walls must be sufficient to provide full screening from the affected roadway, pedestrian areas and adjacent use. The enclosure may use overlapping walls to screen dumpsters and other materials.
  - (ii) Where the interior of a service enclosure is visible from surrounding streets, walkways, and buildings, an opaque or semi-opaque horizontal cover or screen must be used to mitigate unsightly views. The horizontal screen/cover should be integrated into the enclosure design (in terms of materials and/or design).
- (b) Where loading docks are sited along block frontages (only allowed when no other reasonable options are available as determined by the director), they must be designed to minimize impacts on the pedestrian environment. Standards:
  - (i) Configure loading docks/bays to minimize their frontage length along blocks.
  - (ii) Integrate architectural and/or landscaping design features to screen loading dock elements and add visual interest to pedestrians along adjacent sidewalks. See Blank Wall provisions of Section 4.5 for standards and examples.

**(4) Utility meters, electrical conduit, and other service utility apparatus.**

- (a) Utility equipment such as power and gas meters, electrical boxes, and small-scale battery storage systems shall have at least one of the following treatments:
  - (i) Screened with vegetation or landscaping.
  - (ii) Integrated into the building's architecture or screened with decay-resistant material similar in color and texture to the main building.
  - (iii) Wrapped with a City approved utility wrap.
- (b) Project designers are strongly encouraged to coordinate with applicable service providers early in the design process to determine the best approach in meeting these standards.

**Utility meter location and screening - good and bad examples**

Place utility meters in less visible locations. The lower left example is successfully tucked away in a less visible location and screened by vegetation. The right image is poorly executed and would not be permitted in such visible locations (along the sidewalk). Such meters must be coordinated and better integrated with the architecture of the building.



# Chapter 4 - Building Design

## 4.1 Building massing and articulation.

### (1) Purpose.

To employ façade articulation techniques that reduce the perceived scale of large buildings and add visual interest from all observable scales.

### (2) Façade-articulation. All buildings must include façade-articulation features at maximum-specified intervals to create a human-scaled pattern. These standards apply to building elevations facing streets and parks.

#### (a) Maximum facade-articulation intervals:

- (i) Storefronts: 35 feet. Buildings 50 feet wide or less are exempt.
- (ii) Large footprint non-residential buildings (individual establishments with a building footprint of more than 50,000 square feet). 75 feet.
- (iii) Residential buildings: 30 feet. Buildings 60 feet wide or less are exempt.

#### (b) Articulation features. At least two of the following articulation features must be employed for all buildings in compliance with the maximum-specified façade-articulation intervals.

- (i) Use of a window-fenestration pattern.
- (ii) Use of weather protection features. An example is a different canopy for each articulation interval (rather than a continuous canopy).
- (iii) Use of vertical piers/columns (applies to all floors of the façade, excluding upper level stepbacks).
- (iv) Change in building height or roofline with a difference in height, slope or pitch, direction, or shape (such as towers or dormers).
- (v) Change in building material and/or siding style (applies to all floors of the façade, excluding upper-level stepbacks).
- (vi) Vertical elements such as a trellis with plants, green wall, art element that meet the purpose of the standard.
- (vii) Providing vertical building modulation of at least 12-inches in depth if tied to a change in roofline or a change in building material, siding style, or color. Balconies may be used to qualify for this option if they are recessed or projected from the façade by at least 18-inches.

Note: Façade-articulation features that encroach over the public right-of-way will require a permit meeting the standards of ACC 12.60 and ACC 12.60.050.

DEPARTURES will be considered provided they meet the purpose of the standards and the design criteria below.

## Façade articulation examples.



All three buildings above include a combination of window patterns, vertical building modulation, and changes in building material/siding style. The varying styles of balconies in each also help to articulate the facades. The mixed-use example on the left also uses separate awnings above the storefront to articulate the facade. The middle image also uses roofline modulation.

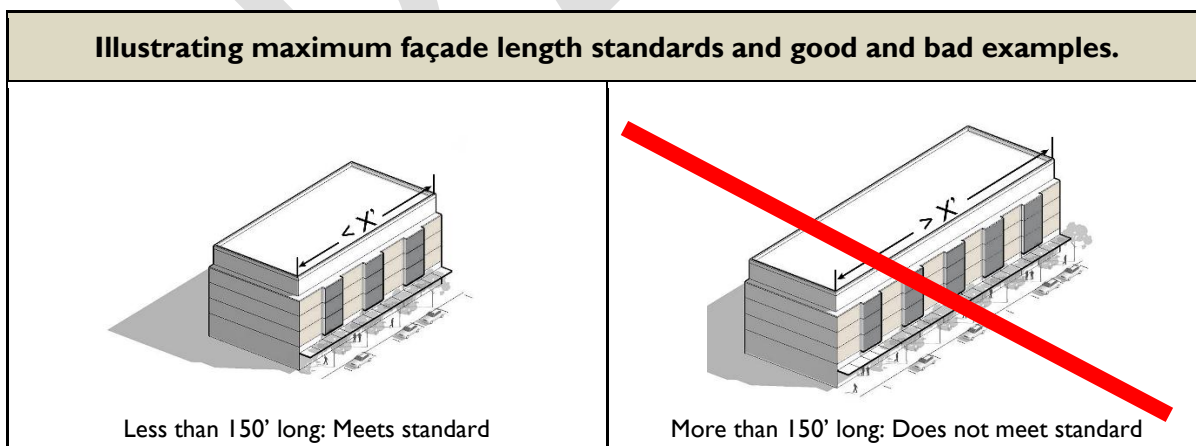


The buildings on the left uses a combination of window patterns, vertical building modulation, roofline modulation, and changes in building material/siding style. The middle image uses window patterns, awnings, and vertical piers. The right image uses window patterns, vertical building modulation, and weather protection elements.

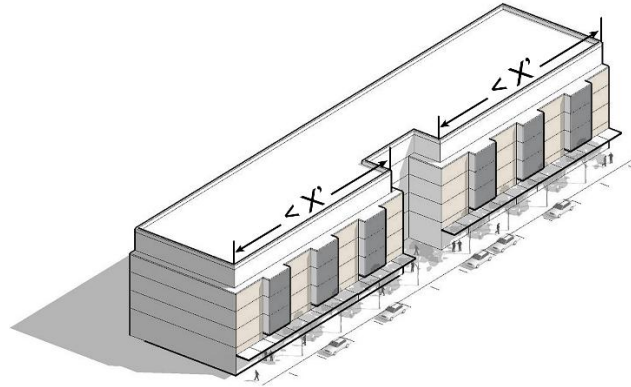
- (c) DEPARTURE criteria associated with articulation standards. Proposals must meet the purpose of the standards. The following criteria will be considered in determining whether the proposed articulation treatment meets the “purpose”.
- (i) Consider the type and width of the proposed articulation treatment and how effective it is in meeting the purpose given the building’s current and desired context if a subarea plan is in effect where the building is proposed.
  - (ii) Consider the applicable block-frontage designation. Undesigned block-frontages warrant more flexibility than Storefront block-frontages.
  - (iii) Consider the size and width of the building. Smaller buildings (less than 120-feet wide) warrant greater flexibility than larger buildings.
  - (iv) Consider the quality of façade materials in concert with doors, windows, and other façade features and their ability to add visual interest to the street from a pedestrian scale and more distant observable scales.

**(3) Maximum façade length.** Facades of buildings longer than 150 feet and containing four or more stories must include at least one of the following features to break up the massing of the building and add visual interest.

- (a) Provide vertical building modulation at least six-feet deep and 15-feet long. For multi-story buildings, the modulation must extend through at least one-half of the building floors.
- (b) Use of a contrasting vertical modulated design component featuring all of the following:
  - (i) Utilizes a change in building materials that effectively contrast from the rest of the façade.
  - (ii) Component is modulated vertically from the rest of the façade by an average of six-inches.
- (c) Façade employs building walls with contrasting articulation that make it appear like multiple distinct buildings. To qualify for this option, these contrasting façades must employ all of the following:
  - (i) Different building materials and/or configuration of building materials.
  - (ii) Contrasting window design (sizes or configurations).
- (d) DEPARTURES to the above standards will be considered provided the design meets the purpose of the standards. Supplemental consideration for approving alternative designs:
  - (i) Width of the façade. The larger the façade, the more substantial articulation/ modulation features need to be.
  - (ii) Block-frontage designation and visibility/street context. Storefront block-frontages warrant the most scrutiny, whereas narrow Mixed or Undesignated side streets might warrant more flexibility in design.
  - (iii) The type of articulation treatment and how effective it is in meeting the purpose given the building's context.



**Illustrating maximum façade length standards and good and bad examples.**



Building incorporates a courtyard along the façade (technique #1 noted above) to effectively break it up into smaller components: Meets standard.



The left building uses technique # 1 (vertical building modulation at least six-feet deep and 15-feet wide). The right building uses technique #2 (contrasting vertical modulated design component) together with different window fenestration designs on each side. Both examples are effective in breaking up the perceived scale of the building and adding visual interest.

## 4.2 Roofline design

### (1) Purpose.

To employ roofline design techniques for visual interest and help direct water away from the structure.

### (2) Flat roofline/cornice design. All buildings more than three stories tall shall employ a distinctive roofline that effectively provides an identifiable “top” to the building, including one of the following:

- (a) A traditional cornice line (a horizontal decorative molding that projects along the top of a wall or building, serving both as a decorative element and a functional component to help direct water away from the structure).
- (b) Understated cornice lines are permitted depending on the materials and design of the base and middle elements in reinforcing the base/middle/top configuration.
- (c) Contemporary overhanging cornice line, which overhangs the façade by at least four feet. Such rooflines shall be proportional to the size and scale of the building.
- (d) Employ roofline modulation option to help comply with façade articulation standards in Section 4.1. This includes adjustments in height of roofline/cornice elements.

Rooftop solar units are permitted, provided the placement and design of units visible from the surrounding streetscape are carefully integrated into the overall design concept of the building.

DEPARTURE: Alternative roofline designs may be acceptable provided the building design, collectively, meets the purpose of the standards. For example, additional articulation treatments and/or detailing may help the building meet the departure criteria.

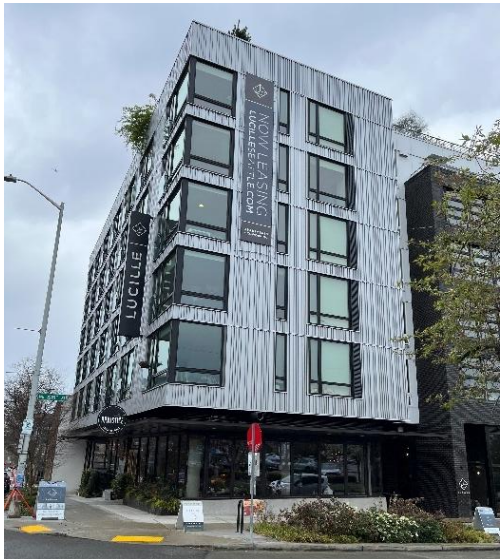
### Acceptable and unacceptable roofline design.

#### (a) Traditional cornice lines



#### (b) Understated cornice lines

Acceptable and unacceptable roofline design.



(c) Contemporary overhanging cornice lines



**Acceptable and unacceptable roofline design.**



**(d) Modulated roofline**



**Other acceptable rooflines (departures)**

The left image features a combination of understated cornice line on main façade, with a setback upper level with a large overhanging cornice line. The right example also features an understated cornice line but also integrates multiple modulated elements and a top floor setback.

**Acceptable and unacceptable roofline design.**



**Unacceptable roofline**

Basic roofline with no detail or articulation that help to define the “top” of the building.



## 4.3 Building details.

### (1) Purpose.

- (a) To encourage the incorporation of design details and small-scale elements into building façades that are attractive at a pedestrian scale.
- (b) To integrate window design that adds depth, richness, and visual interest to the façade.

**(2) Façade details – Storefront block frontages and other storefront designs.** Storefront buildings on designated Storefront block frontages and Mixed or Undesignated block frontages must be enhanced with appropriate details. Such buildings must employ at least one detail element from each of the three categories below for each façade articulation interval (see subsection 4.1.2).

- (a) Window and/or entry treatment, such as:
  - (i) Transom windows.
  - (ii) Roll-up windows/doors. [Use of this feature exempts buildings from having to meet detailed standards in subsections (b) and (c) below.]
  - (iii) Recessed entry.
  - (iv) Decorative door.
  - (v) Other decorative or specially designed window or entry treatment could be proposed via DEPARTURE provided they meet the purpose of the standards.

### Examples of architectural elements and façade attachments.

i: Transom windows



iii: Recessed entry



ii: Roll-up or similar windows/doors

iv: Decorative door.

## Examples of architectural elements and façade attachments.



- (b) Architectural elements and façade attachments, such as:
- (i) Custom-designed weather protection element such as a steel canopy, glass, or retractable awning. Custom-designed cloth awnings may be counted as a detail provided they are constructed of durable, high-quality material.
  - (ii) Decorative rooflines, which could take a variety of forms. It could include an ornamental molding, entablature, frieze or other roofline device visible from the ground level. If the roofline decoration is in the form of a linear molding or board, then the molding or board must be at least 8-inches wide. Such details could occur at an intermediate floor, where the upper floors are set back beyond the front façade. Examples could also include a modern interpretation of a traditional cornice line with distinct detailing.
  - (iii) Bay windows, trellises, towers, and similar elements.
  - (iv) The use of neon in artwork or to emphasize building features.
  - (v) Other architectural element or façade attachment details could be proposed via DEPARTURE provided they meet the purpose of the standards.

## Examples of architectural elements and façade attachments.

### i: Custom designed weather protection



Left: retractable awning. Right: custom decorative canopy



### iii: Bay windows, trellises, towers, etc.

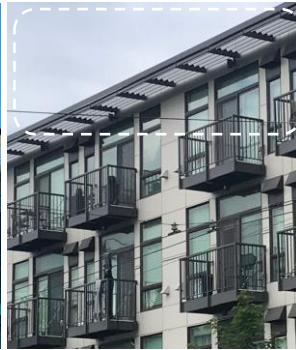


Decorative tower

### ii: decorative rooflines



Left: decorative cornice and top floor. Right: decorative projecting cornice feature.



### v: Other details that meet the purpose of the standards.



Custom hanging bike rack and repair station integrated as a storefront design element

### (c) Building material details, including:

- (i) Use of decorative building materials/use of building materials. Examples include decorative use of brick, tile, or stonework.
- (ii) Decorative kick-plate, pilaster, base panel, or other similar feature.
- (iii) Decorative building-mounted light fixtures.
- (iv) Hand-crafted material, such as special wrought iron or carved wood.
- (v) Other building material details could be proposed via DEPARTURE provided they meet the purpose of the standards.

DEPARTURES for façade detail standards of subsection (2) of this section will be considered provided the façade (at the overall scale and at the individual articulation scale) meets the purpose of the standards.

**Examples of Examples of building material details that enhance the visual intrigue of the building**

**i: Decorative building materials**



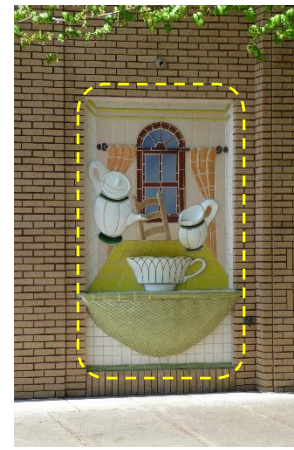
**iii: Decorative light fixtures.**



**ii: Decorative kick-plate, pilaster, base panel, or similar**



**iv: Hand-crafted material or other details that meet the purpose of the standards.**



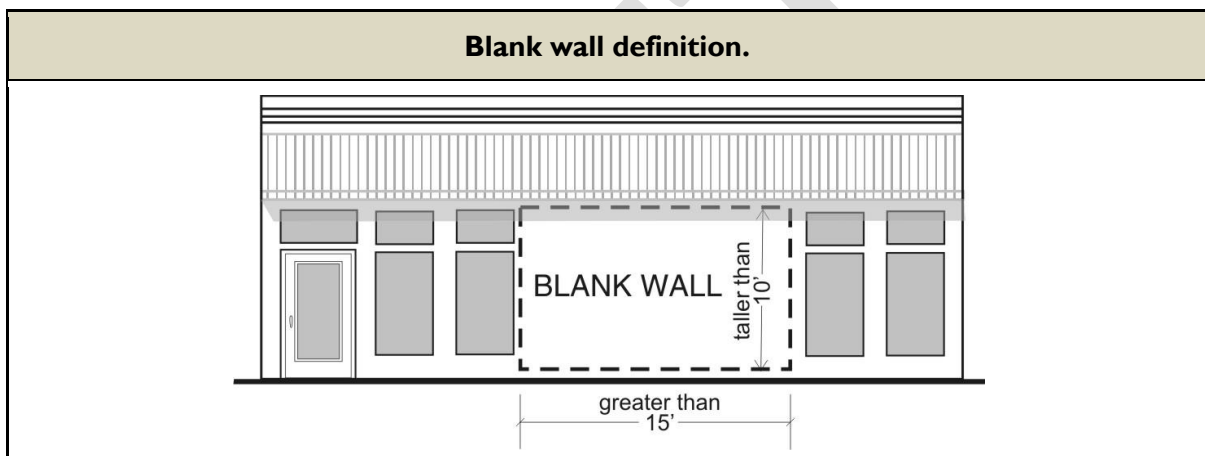
## 4.4 Blank wall treatment.

### (1) Purpose.

- (a) To avoid untreated blank walls.
- (b) To retain and enhance the character of Auburn's streetscapes.

### (2) Blank wall definition. "Blank wall" means:

- (a) For storefront and other buildings placed within ten feet of the sidewalk, a ground floor wall or portion of a ground floor wall over 10-feet in height and a horizontal length greater than 15-feet and does not include a transparent window or door.
- (b) For all other buildings, a ground floor wall or portion of a ground floor wall over 10-feet in height and a horizontal length greater than 30-feet and does not include a transparent window or door.



### (3) Blank wall treatment standards. Untreated blank walls abutting a public street, public plazas, shared outdoor space, or pedestrian walkway are prohibited. Methods to treat blank walls can include:

- (a) Display windows at least 16-inches of depth to allow for changeable displays. Tack-on display cases do not qualify as a blank wall treatment.
- (b) Landscape planting bed at least five-feet deep or a raised planter bed at least two-feet high and three-feet deep in front of the wall with planting materials that are sufficient to obscure or screen at least 60 percent of the wall's surface within three years.
- (c) Installing a vertical trellis in front of the wall with climbing vines or plant materials.
- (d) Installing a mural. The use of neon in artwork is permitted.

DEPARTURES. Other design including special building detailing that adds visual interest at a pedestrian scale will be considered. Such detailing must use a variety of surfaces.

For large visible blank walls, a variety of treatments may be required to meet the purpose of the standards.

**Blank wall treatment examples.**



Buildings A-C feature acceptable treatments including a combination of high quality materials and landscaping (A), decorative lighting/sculptural element (B), and special building detailing (C). The display cases in Building D don't meet the 16" depth requirement, nor do they meet the purpose of the standards.

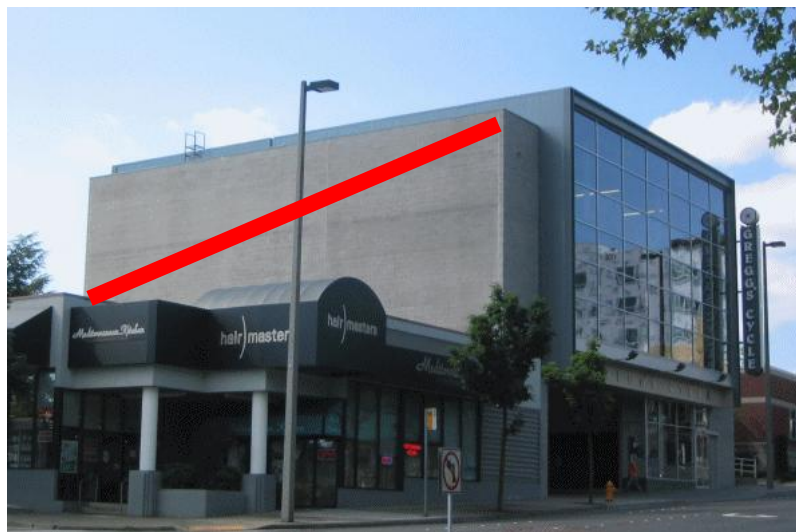
- (4) Firewalls.** Firewalls along property lines are exempt from the above standards, but where they are visible to the public (from the adjacent street), they must be designed to provide visual interest from all observable distances. Examples may include the use of varying materials, textures, and/or colors, the use of green or living walls, and/or the use of modulated building walls to form design patterns.

Murals are also encouraged as a firewall treatment. Commercial advertisements are not permitted on such murals.

**Acceptable firewall design where visible to the public.**



The left images uses a combination of paint bands and climbing vines to enhance the appearance of this large exposed firewall. The building in the right image uses simple scoring patterns and change in materials and color on part of the top floor to add visual interest.



Plain-gray concrete block firewalls such as this are not allowed when visible from the street.

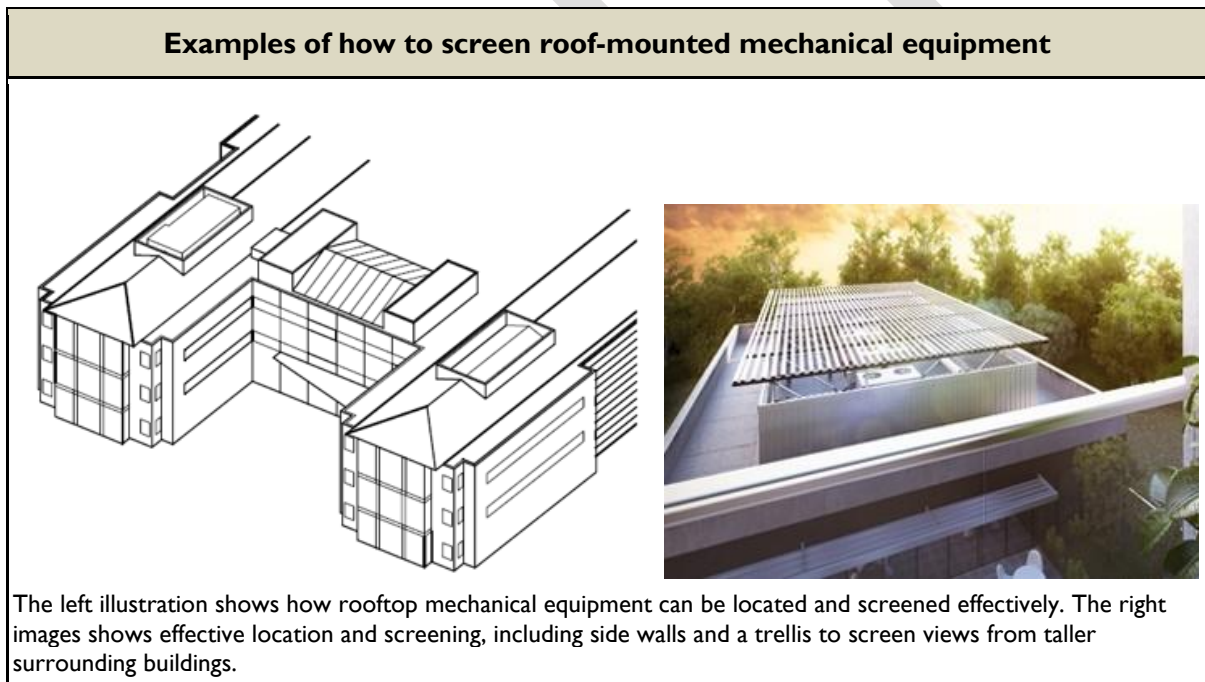
## 4.5 Rooftop services area and mechanical equipment.

### (1) Purpose.

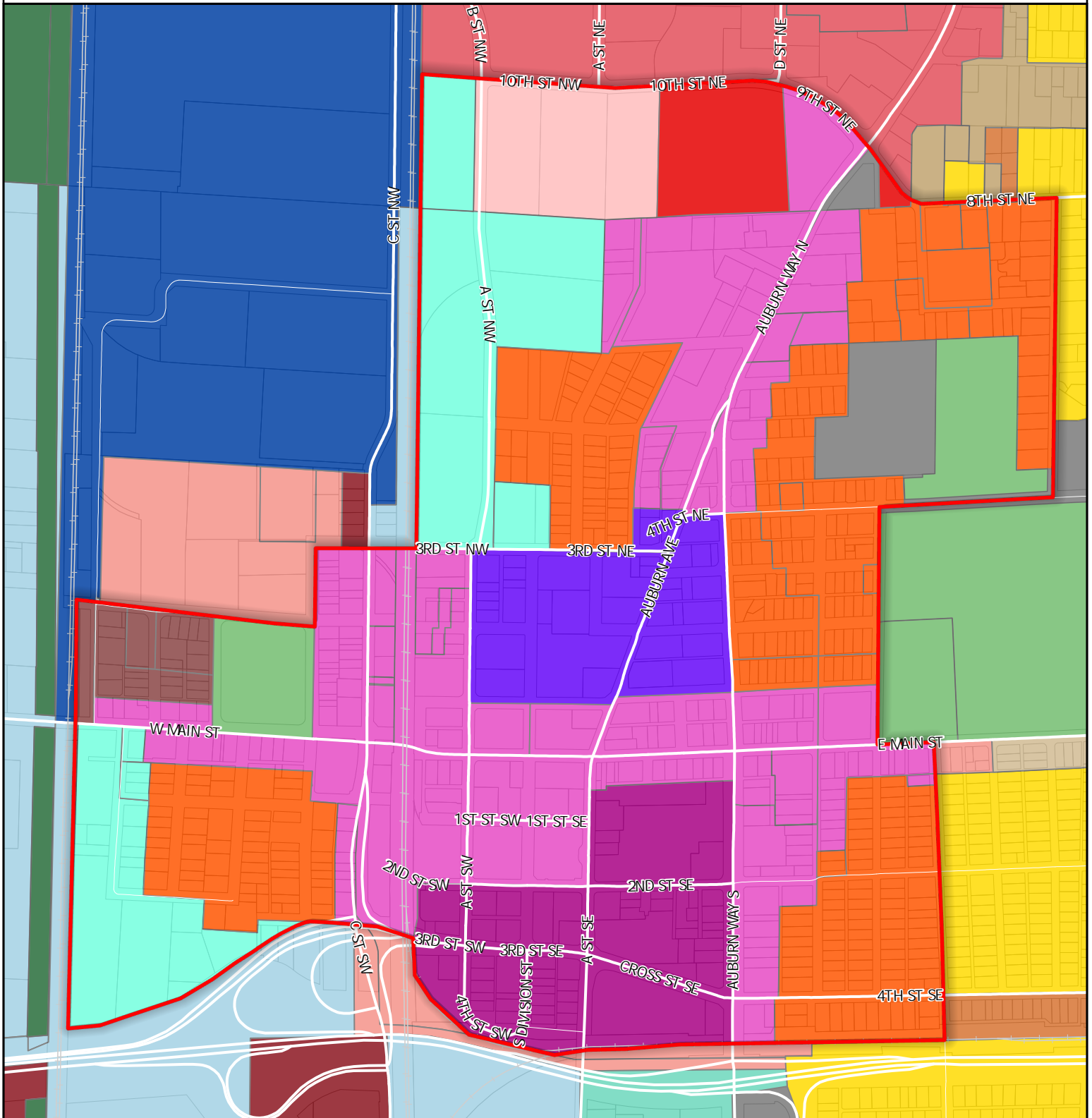
To obscure service and mechanical equipment from the visual sightlines of people walking through Downtown Auburn.

### (2) Rooftop equipment screening.

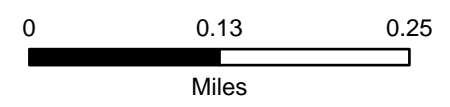
- (a) All rooftop mechanical equipment, including air conditioners, heaters, vents, and similar equipment must be effectively screened from public view. Screening shall be integrated with the architecture of the building.
- (b) An access easement to rooftops shall be provided to the City of Auburn, which will allow the installation of devices for wireless coverage and maintenance of those devices. The applicant shall also provide access to power on rooftops to be used for City wireless facilities. The parameters of the access easement and location of devices shall be approved by the City. Any cabling and/or power shall be secured so the facilities are not damaged by other activity on the roof.



# City of Auburn Downtown Urban Center Zoning Districts



- |   |  |  |  |
|---|--|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>DUC - Core 125</li> <li>DUC - Core 75</li> <li>DUC - FR Flex Residential</li> <li>DUC - Health &amp; Wellness 125</li> <li>DUC - C-1 Light Commercial</li> <li>DUC - C-2 Heavy Commercial</li> <li>DUC - M-1 Light Industrial</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>DUC - NR Neighborhood Residential</li> <li>DUC - Downtown Urban Center</li> <li>C-AG - Auburn Gateway</li> <li>C-1 - Light Commercial</li> <li>C-2 - Heavy Commercial</li> <li>I - Institutional</li> <li>M-1 - Light Industrial</li> <li>M-2 - Heavy Industrial</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>LF - Airport Landing Field</li> <li>OS - Open Space</li> <li>P-1 - Public Use</li> <li>Planned Unit Development District</li> <li>R-1 - Residential 1 DU/Acre</li> <li>R-2 - Residential Low</li> <li>R-3 - Residential Moderate</li> <li>R-4 - Residential High</li> <li>Lakeland Hills PUD</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>R-MHC - Residential Manufactured/Mobile Home Community</li> <li>R-NM - Neighborhood Mixed-Use</li> <li>RC - Residential Conservancy</li> <li>R-F - Residential Flex</li> <li>Terrace View District</li> <li>Unclassified Use District</li> <li>Downtown Urban Center</li> </ul> |
|---|--|--|--|



Updated On: 12/30/2025  
 Printed On: 1/8/2026  
 Map ID: 6356



Information shown is for general reference purposes only and does not necessarily represent exact geographic or cartographic data as mapped. The City of Auburn makes no warranty as to its accuracy.

**18.02.070 Establishment of zones.**

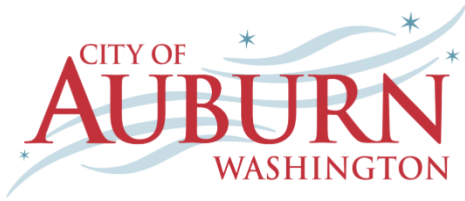
A. The city is divided into the following classes of zones:

1. RC, residential conservancy zone (one dwelling unit per four acres);
2. R-1, residential one unit per acre zone;
3. R-2, residential low zone;
4. R-3, residential moderate zone;
5. R-4, residential high zone;
6. R-MHC, manufactured/mobile home community zone;
7. R-F, residential flex zone;
8. R-NM, residential neighborhood mixed-use zone;
9. C-1, light commercial zone;
10. C-2, heavy commercial zone;
11. C-AG, auburn gateway zone;
- ~~12.~~ M-1, light industrial zone;
- ~~13.~~ M-2, heavy industrial zone;
- ~~14.~~ L-F, airport landing field zone;
- ~~15.~~ P-1, public use zone;
- ~~16.~~ UNC, unclassified use zone;
- ~~17.~~ I, institutional use zone;
- ~~18.~~ DUC, downtown urban center, 125 District;
- ~~19.~~ DUC, downtown urban center, 75 District;
- ~~19. DUC, downtown urban center, 55 District;~~

- 
20. DUC, neighborhood residential district;
  21. DUC, health and wellness district;
  22. DUC, residential-flex district;
  23. DUC, light commercial district;
  24. DUC, heavy commercial district;
  25. DUC, light industrial district;
  26. OS, open space zone.

B. The zones set out in subsection [A](#) of this section are established as the designations, locations, and boundaries thereof as set forth and indicated on the zoning map.

C. The intent statement for each zone set forth in this title shall be used to guide the application of the zones to all lands in the city of Auburn. The intent statements shall guide interpretation and application of land use regulations within the zones, and any change to the range of allowed uses within each zone through amendment to this title. (Ord. 6959 § 1 (Exh. A), 2024; Ord. 6885 § 1 (Exh. A), 2022; Ord. 6677 § 1, 2018; Ord. 6245 § 2, 2009.)



## AGENDA BILL APPROVAL FORM

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**Agenda Subject:****Density Bonus for Existing Buildings Code Update  
Staff Introduction/Presentation (Goode)**

The City of Auburn is updating the Density Bonus Code for Existing Buildings as required under HB 1757. This update allows for the density bonuses awarded under Auburn City Code 18.02.067 to expand to the Residential Conservancy Zone, the R-1 Residential Zone, and the R-2 Residential Low Zone. Density bonuses awarded under this code section are required to be within existing buildings and shall not expand the square footage of the building or the building footprint.

**Meeting Date:**

May 5, 2026

**Department:**

Community Development

**Attachments:**

Staff Report , Exhibit 1  
PowerPoint Presentation, Exhibit  
2 ACC 18.02.067 DRAFT

**Budget Impact:****Administrative Recommendation:**

Planning Commission to deliberate and recommend that City Council approve a text amendment to Title 18 "Zoning", Section 18.02.067, to bring the City of Auburn into compliance with Revised Code of Washington (RCW) 35.21.990 for new housing in existing buildings—Prohibitions on local regulation. The code was previously implemented under ACC 18.02.067, Units allowed per lot, to allow for density bonuses of up to 50 percent within existing buildings located within commercial or mixed-use zones. The amendments within the RCW and proposed within the ACC will expand eligibility for density bonuses to all residential zones (RC, R-1, and R-2) and provide further clarification on when and where energy code updates are required during the proposed density bonus within existing buildings.

**Background for Motion:****Background Summary:**

See attached Staff Report

**Councilmember:**

**Staff:** Jason Krum

## PLANNING COMMISSION STAFF REPORT

**AGENDA SUBJECT/TITLE:**

Density Bonus for Existing Buildings Code Update

**CITY FILE NO(s):**

ZOA26-0005

**APPLICANT/AGENT/OWNERS:**

City of Auburn

**REQUEST:**

Planning Commission to hold a public hearing, deliberate, and take action on proposed amendments to regulations governing density bonuses for existing buildings to comply with the state requirements.

**LOCATION:**

City-wide

**NOTIFICATION:**

The Notice of Public Hearing was published in the Seattle Times and posted on the City's Land Use Notice webpage and physically at City Hall and City Hall Annex on April 20, 2026.

**HEARING DATE:**

May 5, 2026

**SEPA STATUS:**

A SEPA Environmental Checklist – Non-Project Action was submitted and reviewed with the application. A DNS using the Optional process was issued on April 20, 2026, with the appeal period expiring on May 18, 2026.

**STAFF:**

Owen Goode, Planner II, Dept. of Community Development

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:**

Approve a text amendment to Title 18 “Zoning”, Section 18.02.067, to bring the City of Auburn into compliance with Revised Code of Washington (RCW) 35.21.990 for New housing in existing buildings— Prohibitions on local regulation. The code was previously implemented under ACC 18.02.067, Units allowed per lot, to allow for density bonuses of up to 50 percent within existing buildings located within commercial or mixed-use zones. The amendments within the RCW and proposed within the ACC will expand eligibility for density bonuses to all residential zones (RC, R-1, and R-2) and provide further clarification on when and where energy code updates are required during the proposed density bonus within existing buildings.

**SUMMARY OF CODE CHANGES:*****Density Bonus for Existing Buildings******Amend ACC 18.02.067 Units Allowed per Lot***

ACC 18.02.067(H) is revised to expand density bonuses in existing buildings to include all residential zones (RC, R-1, and R-2), and provide further clarification on when and where energy code updates are required during the proposed density bonus within existing buildings.

**FINDINGS OF FACT:****Background Summary:**

1. Washington State is experiencing a housing affordability crisis. Allowing density bonuses within existing buildings is one tool to help increase housing inventory.
2. On May 21, 2025, Planning Commission approved several code updates related to housing, including “Density Bonus for Existing Commercial, Mixed-Use, and Apartment Buildings”, to comply with Revised Code of Washington (RCW) 35.21.990 which allowed for 50% density bonuses within existing commercial, mixed-use, and apartment buildings.
3. Requirements for density bonus within existing buildings take effect June 30, 2026. By this date, jurisdictions must adopt or amend density bonus within existing buildings standards, consistent with RCW 35.21.990. If local regulations are not updated, the statute will “supersede, preempt, and invalidate any conflicting local development regulations.”
4. Per RCW 35.21.990, the amendment requires the density bonus allowance to expand to all residential zones and not just specific building types. Under this current amendment, density bonuses of up to 50 percent more than what is allowed in the underlying zone will be permissible in the RC, R-1, and R-2 Zones.
5. Per RCW 35.21.990, cities may not require unchanged portions of an existing building that have been used for residential or previously permit-approved conditioned space purposes, to meet the current energy code, solely because of the addition of new dwelling units within the building.
6. Per RCW 35.21.990, changed portions of each new unit must meet current energy code except if:
  - a. The square footage is less than 50% of the total square footage of the existing building or does not exceed 2,500 square feet.
  - b. The building owner submits documentation, in a form acceptable to the city, showing the building's residential units' projected energy use intensity is less than or equal to the energy use intensity target in accordance with the clean buildings performance standard in RCW 19.27A.210; or

- c. In all areas zoned for residential housing, an additional housing unit is created within an existing home.
7. Per ACC 18.68.030(B) A “Zoning Text Amendment” is an application to change the text of Title 18 ACC. This type of application or initiation shall be processed as a legislative non-project decision, consistent with ACC 14.03.060. Public notice shall be provided consistent with Title 14 ACC.

**Procedural Steps:**

1. The proposed text amendment (zoning code update) has been discussed with the Planning Commission on May 5, 2026.
2. Pursuant to Revised Code of Washington (RCW) 36.70A, the text amendment was transmitted to the Washington State Department of Commerce on February 6, 2026. The 60-day notice period ended on April 7, 2026, with no comments received.
3. ACC 18.68.030(B) outlines the Zoning Text Amendment requirements for this proposal.
  - a. A “Zoning Text Amendment” is an application to change the text of ACC Title 18. This type of application or initiation shall be processed as a legislative nonproject decision, consistent with ACC 14.03.060. Public notice shall be provided consistent with ACC Title 14.
    - i. Substantive Zoning Text Amendments. For the purposes of this chapter, substantive zoning text amendments shall be distinguished from procedural or administrative amendments in accordance with the following: “Substantive” matters relate to regulations that define or limit what can be done in terms of conduct, use or action (e.g., what land use may be made of property, what requirements apply to development, and what public infrastructure may be required of certain developments). “Procedural” or “administrative” matters are those that relate to the process of how an application to take such action must be pursued (e.g., time limits for decisions and appeals, what forms must be used, and where or how applications must be submitted. Essentially, “procedural” or “administrative” matters are the mechanical rules by which substantive issues may be pursued.) Substantive text amendments shall be reviewed by the planning commission and the planning commission shall conduct a public hearing and make a recommendation before being presented to the city council for consideration and action.
    - ii. The text amendment proposed is a Substantive Zoning Text Amendment and requires a public hearing to be held by Planning Commission prior to City Council approval.
4. A Notice of Public Hearing (NOH) was issued on April 20, 2026. Pursuant to ACC 14.22.100, the following methods of noticing for the Planning Commission public hearing were conducted:
  - a. The NOH was published in the Seattle Times on April 20, 2026.

- b. The NOH was posted in two general public locations (City Hall and City Annex).
  - c. The NOH was posted on City's Public Land Use Notice webpage.
5. A public hearing will be conducted by the Planning Commission on May 5, 2026.

**EXHIBITS:**

- 1. PowerPoint Presentation
- 2. Residential Density Bonus Text Amendment

**PLANNING COMMISSION**

**RESIDENTIAL DENSITY  
BONUS CODE TEXT  
AMENDMENT**

**PRESENTED BY  
OWEN GOODE, PLANNER II  
MAY 5, 2026**

Department of Community Development  
Planning • Building • Development Engineering • Permit Center  
Economic Development • Code Enforcement

AUBURN  
VALUES

- S E R V I C E
- E N V I R O N M E N T
- E C O N O M Y
- C H A R A C T E R
- S U S T A I N A B I L I T Y
- W E L L N E S S
- C E L E B R A T I O N

## PURPOSE OF TEXT AMENDMENT

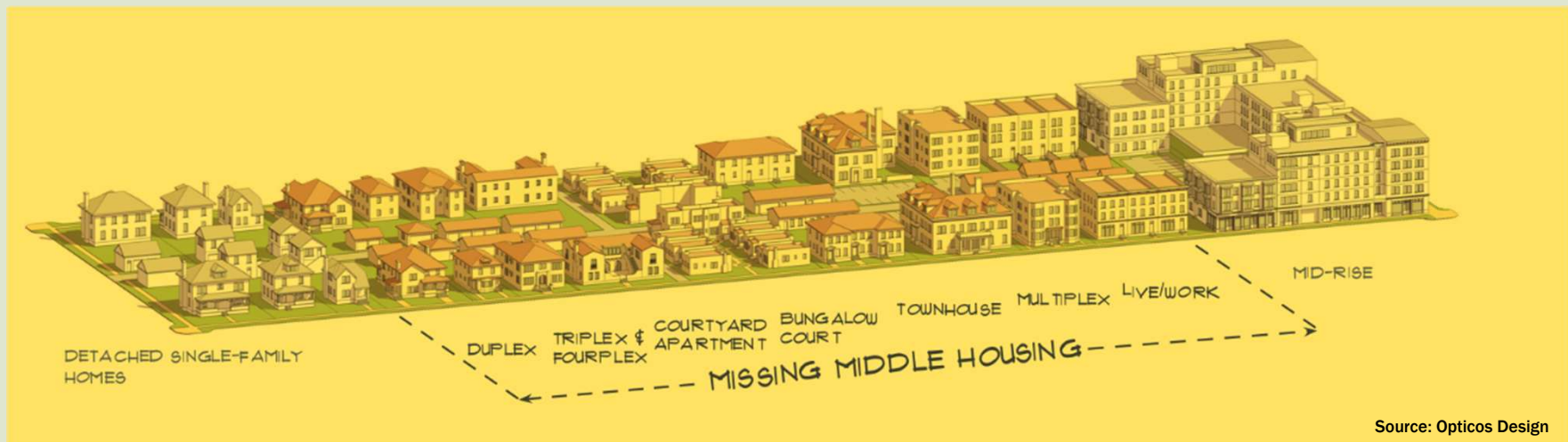
- **Comply with RCW 35.21.990 amendments to expand density bonuses within existing buildings to include all residential zones**
- **Density Bonus is currently allowed under Auburn City Code 18.02.067(H) Density Bonus for Existing Commercial, Mixed-Use, and Apartment Building**

## EFFECT OF TEXT AMENDMENT

- **Expand 50% Density Bonus within existing buildings to RC, R-1, and R-2 Zone**
- **Density Bonus shall not exceed 50% bonus**
- **Density Bonus shall be entirely within the existing building**
- **Base units allowed per lot is 4 units – 50% bonus would allow up to 6 units when utilizing this code section**

## REASON FOR TEXT AMENDMENT

- One of many tools to combat the current housing crisis
- Not a single solution to the housing crisis



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## RECOMMENDATION

**Recommend approval of the draft text amendments to Title 18 of the Auburn City Code which allows for density bonuses of up to 50% of what is allowed in the underlying zone within the RC, R-1, and R-2 zones**

# QUESTIONS?

Department of Community Development  
Planning • Building • Development Engineering • Permit Center  
Economic Development • Code Enforcement

## AUBURN VALUES

S E R V I C E  
E N V I R O N M E N T  
E C O N O M Y  
C H A R A C T E R  
S U S T A I N A B I L I T Y  
W E L L N E S S  
C E L E B R A T I O N

## 18.02.067 Units allowed per lot.

H. *Density Bonus for Existing Commercial, Mixed-Use, and ~~ResidentialApartment~~ Buildings.* Existing commercial, mixed-use, and ~~residentialapartment~~ buildings may qualify for a density bonus of up to 50 percent when adding housing units; provided, that:

1. The additional housing units are located entirely within the existing building envelope, and generally applicable health and safety standards, including but not limited to building code standards and fire and life safety standards, can be met within the building;
2. The existing parking is not reduced through the addition of new housing units;
3. The existing building is located within one of the following zones that allows for mixed-use development: ~~RC, R-1, R-2~~, R-3, R-4, R-NM, R-F, C-2, C-AG, and M-1;
4. The addition of dwelling units complies with mixed-use and apartment development design standards when located along multimodal transportation corridors;
5. The building received a final certificate of occupancy three years prior to the permit application to add housing units;
6. The proposal is consistent with the development standards of the underlying zone;
7. The proposal is allowed the following exemptions:
  - a. The proposal shall not be required to provide additional parking for added housing units;
  - b. The proposal shall not be required to meet the current energy code for unchanged portions of an existing building ~~that have been used for residential or previously permit-approved conditioned space purposes, solely because of the addition of new dwelling units within the building. New units provided are not exempt from current energy code requirements.~~
  - c. The proposal shall be exempt from providing a transportation concurrency study under RCW [36.70A.070](#) or an environmental study under Chapter [43.21C](#) RCW based on the

addition of residential units within an existing building. (Ord. 6977 § 1 (Exh. A), 2025; Ord. 6959 § 1 (Exh. A), 2024.)

8. When any other existing building is converted to new dwelling units, changed portions of each of those new units must meet the requirements of the current energy code, except if:

a. The square footage of new dwelling units does not exceed 2,500 square feet or 50 percent of the total building square footage, whichever is greater;

b. The building owner submits documentation, in a form acceptable to the city, showing the building's residential units' projected energy use intensity is less than or equal to the energy use intensity target in accordance with the clean buildings performance standard in RCW 19.27A.210; or

c. In all areas zoned for residential housing, an additional housing unit is created within an existing home.

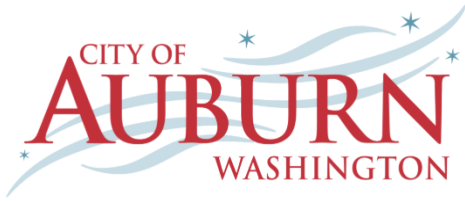
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**The Auburn City Code is current through Ordinance 7008, passed November 17, 2025.**

Disclaimer: The city clerk's office has the official version of the Auburn City Code. Users should contact the city clerk's office for ordinances passed subsequent to the ordinance cited above.

[City Website: www.auburnwa.gov](http://www.auburnwa.gov)

[Hosted by General Code.](#)



**AGENDA BILL APPROVAL FORM**

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**Agenda Subject:**

**Nonconforming Code Update  
Staff Introduction/Presentation (Teague)**

Staff to discuss an update to Chapter 18.54 "Nonconforming Structures, Land And Uses".

**Meeting Date:**

May 5, 2026

**Department:**

Community Development

**Attachments:**

Memorandum, Exhibit 1  
PowerPoint Presentation, Exhibit  
2 Chapter 18.54 ACC Text  
Amendment, Exhibit 3 ACC  
Section 18.70.020 Text  
Amendment

**Budget Impact:**

**Administrative Recommendation:**

**Background for Motion:**

**Background Summary:**

See attached Memorandum

**Councilmember:**

**Staff:** Jason Krum

## PLANNING COMMISSION MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Judi Roland, Chair, Planning Commission  
Bill Stewart, Vice Chair Planning Commission  
Planning Commission Members

**FROM:** Alexandria Teague, Planning Services Manager  
Dept. of Community Development

**DATE:** April 14, 2026

**RE:** Nonconforming Code Update – Chapter 18.54 Auburn City Code

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### I. BACKGROUND & PURPOSE

A nonconforming use is one that when originally established complied with the categories of uses established<sup>1</sup>, development standards, and other applicable regulations at the time but no longer conforms. A structure, land, and use may become nonconforming when either it 1) becomes prohibited (i.e. is no longer allowed), 2) the applicable development standards change, or 3) the zoning district of which it resides changes.

Washington State law does not contain specific standards or regulations governing nonconforming uses. In 1998 under “*Rhod-A-Zalea v. Snohomish County*” the State Supreme Court stated,

*“While some states’ authority to terminate, alter, or extend nonconforming uses is expressly granted or withheld in zoning enabling acts, Washington’s enabling acts are silent regarding the regulation of nonconforming uses. See R. Settle, Washington Land Use § 2.7(d). Instead, the state Legislature has deferred to local governments to seek solutions to the nonconforming use problem according to local circumstances. In Washington, local governments are free to preserve, limit or terminate nonconforming uses subject only to the broad limits of applicable enabling acts and the constitution.”*

Further, the Washington Administrative Code (WAC) related to shorelines and shoreline master programs (Chapter 173-27 WAC) states, “*Local governments typically develop their own approaches to addressing nonconforming use and development. This section is intended to apply if a shoreline master program does not contain locally adopted nonconforming use and development standards.*”

A *legal* (or *legally established*) nonconforming structure, land, or use means it was *legal* or *lawful* when it was established. This often means it was permitted outright or obtained a land use approval, such as an administrative use permit or conditional use permit, and obtained other applicable permits, such as a building permit. Note – some structures, such as a small shed (under 120 square feet), do not require a permit, yet still must meet the setbacks and building height of the zoning district in which is it placed. In

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<sup>1</sup> Per ACC 18.02.120 Chapters 18.07 through 18.44 ACC establish permitted, administrative, conditional, and prohibited uses, by zone, for all properties within the Auburn city limits. All principal uses in a given zone are one of four types: 1. Permitted use; 2. Administrative use; 3. Conditional use; and 4. Prohibited use; each of these are defined under IV DEFINITIONS.

this case, if the small shed met setbacks and the building height of the zoning district, it would be considered legally established. If for example, the shed needed to be closer to the property line than what is permissible in the zoning district, relief through a variance may be obtained. If the variance was obtained, then the shed may be closer to the property line, and it would again be considered legally established. Finally, if the zoning district changed and the small shed was no longer allowed or the setbacks changed, since it was legally established, it would be considered a legally established nonconforming use.

There have been numerous court cases determining that legally established nonconforming structures, land, and uses may continue to exist or operate, and inform City regulations. Court case “*Rhod-A-Zalea v. Snohomish County*” (1998) states “*These rulings are consistent with the principle that a nonconforming use has a "vested" or "protected" right to continue without being subject to immediate termination.*”

A vested right is related to the concept of vesting. In short, vesting means that a structure, land, or use is subject to use controls, development, and regulations in effect at the time of a complete application. Per Revised Code of Washington (RCW) 19.27.095(1),

*“A valid and fully complete building permit application for a structure, that is permitted under the zoning or other land use control ordinances in effect on the date of the application shall be considered under the building permit ordinance in effect at the time of application, and the zoning or other land use control ordinances in effect on the date of application.”*

Vested rights are important because if the categories of uses established, development standards, or zoning district changes, the use is still allowed to continue under its vested rights. That is, as long as it is continued and maintained in conformance with the regulations of Chapter 18.54 ACC.

Nonconforming structures, land, and uses are governed by the development regulations contained in Chapter 18.54 of the Auburn City Code. The purpose of this Chapter is to allow for the continuance and maintenance of legally established nonconforming structures, land, and uses. The development regulations in Chapter 18.54 ACC have remained largely unchanged since 1987 (Ord. No. 4229). The intent of this code update is to provide greater flexibility in the continuation and maintenance of legally established nonconforming structures, land, and uses, particularly in light of recent and ongoing changes to the City’s zoning development standards.

During the last Periodic Comprehensive Plan update<sup>2</sup>, completed at the end of 2024, the City made major adjustments or changes to the Zoning Ordinance (Title 18) and the Zoning Map (the City’s official map depicting all zones within the city). These changes were completed such that the Zoning Ordinance and Zoning Map would be consistent with changes to the City’s Comprehensive Plan and Comprehensive Land Use Map. Since 2024, the City has also updated the Downtown Subarea Plan and all zones within the downtown subarea. New State legislation, such as House Bill (HB) 1491<sup>3</sup> related to

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<sup>2</sup> Per RCW 36.70A.130 (the Growth Management Act) each city and county in Washington state is required to conduct a periodic update of its comprehensive plan and development regulations. In general, the purpose is to ensure consistency with the Puget Sound Regional Council Vision 2050, the Countywide Planning Policies (for Auburn this means both Pierce and King County), any changes in state laws over the intervening time, and to respond to changing conditions within the local community.

<sup>3</sup> [HB 1491](#), passed in 2025, requires cities to plan for transit-oriented development (TOD) and increased density near “station areas”. A station area may be either a rail station area or a bus station area. A rail station area is comprised of all lots within that are fully or partially within 0.5 miles walking distance of an entrance to a train station. A bus station area is comprised of all lots within that are fully or partially within 0.25 miles walking distance of a stop on a fixed route bus system that is designated as a bus rapid transit stop in a transit development plan. A full summary is provided in the Final bill report: <https://lawfilesexternal.wa.gov/biennium/2025-26/Pdf/Bill%20Reports/House/1491-S3%20HBR%20FBR%2025.pdf?q=20260407114627>.

Transit Oriented Development within “station areas”, will further result in changes to the Zoning Ordinance and Zoning Map. As a result of rapid changes within such a short time frame, the City is proposing to provide more flexibility for the continuance and maintenance of legal nonconforming structures, land, and uses. These changes aim to reduce unintended hardships on property owners and businesses while maintaining the City’s long-term vision and consistency with the Comprehensive Plan.

The significant changes are summarized below.

## II. SUMMARY OF PROPOSED CODE CHANGES

### ***SECTION 18.54.060 Maintenance, damage repairs and restorations, additions, enlargements, moving or relocation of nonconforming structures, and residential structures.***

(G) – Revises the tracking period for cumulative improvements from “the lifetime of the nonconforming use” “to within five years of the date of permit issuance”. This provides more clarity and administrative consistency when tracking of the total value of improvements.

(I) – Allows for a legal nonconforming structure or use to expand the existing use or structure up to 10% administratively by the Community Development Director or designee or more than 10% (not to exceed 25%) through a special exception<sup>4</sup>. Administratively approval approved expansion will make it easier for nonconforming uses and structures to expand by a modest amount.

(K) – Allows for the rebuild of middle housing and apartments, in addition to single family residences. The rebuild/replacement relief afforded to single family residences is expanded to more housing types – middle housing (up six units) and apartments (seven units and above).

### ***SECTION 18.54.070 Abatement of nonconforming structures and uses.***

(B) – Increases the period of which a nonconforming use is discontinued or becomes vacant from 180 days to one year. This allows uses and structures, including existing businesses, a more reasonable amount of time to find new tenants or occupants for their use, before losing their nonconforming status and vested rights.

(C) – Allows for administrative approval of extensions for discontinued nonconforming uses or structures for a maximum of three years, through one-year increments, where warranted. This new regulation authorizes the Community Development Director or designee to administratively approve of extensions. This will help discontinued uses and structures that need more time finding new tenants or occupants.

### ***SECTION 18.54.080 Amortization and abatement of outdoor storage.***

Revised requirements for outdoor storage yards, in the M-1, Light Industrial Zone. Rather than requiring compliance with the landscape and screening requirements of Chapter 18.50 ACC “Landscaping and Screening”, within a fixed timeframe, compliance is now triggered only when improvements are made under ACC Section 18.54.060.

## III. TEXT AMENDMENT

Draft text amendments are shown by strikeout/underline and are attached to this memo as Attachments 2 and 3.

## IV. DEFINITIONS (in alphabetical order)

- 1) Administrative use means a use permitted in a zone only after review and approval by the planning director or designee. Administrative uses are those which typically have some potential for impacts to

<sup>4</sup> Special exception are specific deviations from development regulations granted by the Hearing Examiner following a public hearing and are provided in Chapter 18.70 “Variances, Special Exceptions, and Administrative Appeals”.

neighboring properties, but which may be permitted within a zone following review by the city to establish conditions mitigating impacts of the use and to assure compatibility with other uses in the zone.<sup>i</sup>

- 2) A building means any structure having a roof supported by columns or walls used or intended to be used for the shelter or enclosure of persons, animals or property of any kind.<sup>ii</sup>
- 3) Conditional use means a use permitted in a zone only after review and approval by the hearing examiner. Conditional uses are such that they may be compatible only on certain conditions in specific locations in a zone, or if the site is regulated in a certain manner in order to achieve the purposes of this title.<sup>iii</sup>
- 4) Density is a measure of population, housing units, or building area related to land area, and is expressed as a ratio, e.g., units per acre or square feet of lot area per unit. See ACC 18.02.065 for the methodology for calculating density.<sup>iv</sup>
- 5) Development standards means regulations pertaining to setbacks, landscaping, height, site coverage, signs, building layout, site design and related features of land use.<sup>v</sup>
- 6) Development regulations means the controls placed on development or land use activities by the city, including, but not limited to, zoning ordinances, critical areas ordinances, shoreline master programs, official controls, planned unit development ordinances (if permitted by city code) and subdivision ordinances together with any amendments thereto. A development regulation does not include a decision to approve a project permit application, as defined in ACC 14.02.070, even though the decision may be expressed in a resolution or ordinance of the city.<sup>vi</sup>
- 7) Intensity refers to the level of development or activity on a site, in terms of both the nature of uses and the concentration of those uses as indicated by residential density (dwelling units per acre) or floor area ratio. For example, a site with a mixed-use complex with a commercial retail component and a high density multifamily residential component would display a higher level of intensity than the same sized property with a low density, single-family residential development.<sup>vii</sup>
- 8) Nonconforming use means a use which when commenced, complied with use regulations applicable at the time when such use was commenced, and which does not conform to the existing use regulations of the zone where the use is now being conducted or carried on. The term “nonconforming use” shall be applicable to uses of buildings, structures, and land. This definition does not include those uses existing in the zone, prior to the adoption of this title, which would now require an administrative or conditional use permit to operate in the zone. Any expansion of the space, volume or area of the use would then require an administrative or conditional use permit as this title may require.<sup>viii</sup>
- 9) Nonconforming lot is one that, at the time of its establishment, met the minimum lots size requirements for the zone in which it is located, but which, because of subsequent changes to the minimum lot size applicable to that zone, is now smaller than that minimum lot size.<sup>ix</sup>
- 10) Nonconforming structure is a structure that complied with zoning and development regulations at the time it was built, but which, because of subsequent changes to the zoning and/or development regulations, no longer fully complies with those regulations.<sup>x</sup>
- 11) Permitted use means a land use that is allowed outright within a zone.<sup>xi</sup>
- 12) Prohibited use means any use which is not specifically enumerated or interpreted by the city as allowable in that zone. Any use not specifically listed as a permitted, administrative, conditional, or accessory use is prohibited, except those determined to be unclassified and permitted by the planning director pursuant to ACC 18.02.120(C)(6). Any prohibited use is illegal.<sup>xii</sup>
- 13) Setback means the distance between a lot line and the corresponding parallel setback line.<sup>xiii</sup>
- 14) Setback line means a line which defines a setback as required by this title, which is parallel to but other than a lot line, between which no building, structure, or portion thereof shall be permitted, erected, constructed, or placed unless specifically permitted by this title.<sup>xiv</sup>
- 15) Site is an area comprised of one or more legally created lots or parcels used for a development proposal in order to calculate compliance with the standards and regulations of this title.<sup>xv</sup>
- 16) Structure is that which is built or constructed, an edifice or building of any kind, or any piece of work artificially built up or composed of parts joined together in some definite manner, except benches,

statuary, planter boxes less than 42 inches in height, and fences 72 inches or under in height, or paved areas.<sup>xvi</sup>

17) Use means an activity or purpose for which land or premises or a building thereon is designed, arranged, intended, or for which it is occupied or maintained, let or leased.<sup>xvii</sup>

18) Variance means an adjustment in the application of the specific regulations of this title to a particular piece of property.<sup>xviii</sup>

19) Zone means an area accurately defined as to boundaries and location on an official map to which a uniform set of regulations applies controlling the types and intensities of land uses, as set forth in this title.<sup>xix</sup>

20) Zoning Ordinance. The purpose of this title [The Zoning Ordinance] is to implement the city’s comprehensive plan. This title will be used to further the growth and development of the city consistent with the adopted comprehensive plan and its implementing elements. This title will also further the purpose of promoting the health, safety, morals, convenience, comfort, prosperity, and general welfare of the city’s population and to prevent and abate public nuisances.<sup>xx</sup>

**V. ATTACHMENTS**

- 1) PowerPoint Presentation
- 2) Chapter 18.54 ACC Text Amendment
- 3) ACC Section 18.70.020 Text Amendment

<sup>i</sup> Auburn City Code (ACC) 18.04.025

<sup>ii</sup> ACC 18.04.190

<sup>iii</sup> ACC 18.04.260

<sup>iv</sup> ACC 18.04.300

<sup>v</sup> ACC 18.04.310

<sup>vivi</sup> ACC 14.02.040

<sup>vii</sup> ACC 18.04.499

<sup>viii</sup> ACC 18.04.650

<sup>ix</sup> Municipal Research and Services Center of Washington (MRSC), <https://mrsc.org/explore-topics/planning/administration/nonconforming-uses> (accessed 4/2/26).

<sup>x</sup> MRSC, <https://mrsc.org/explore-topics/planning/administration/nonconforming-uses> (accessed 4/2/26).

<sup>xi</sup> ACC 18.04.696

<sup>xii</sup> ACC 18.04.752

<sup>xiii</sup> ACC 18.04.810

<sup>xiv</sup> ACC 18.04.815

<sup>xv</sup> ACC 18.04.821

<sup>xvi</sup> ACC 18.04.890

<sup>xvii</sup> ACC 18.04.900

<sup>xviii</sup> ACC 18.04.910

<sup>xix</sup> ACC18.04.960

<sup>xx</sup> ACC 18.02.030

**PLANNING COMMISSION**

**NONCONFORMING  
CODE UPDATE**

**PRESENTED BY  
ALEXANDRIA TEAGUE,  
PLANNING SERVICES MANAGER  
MAY 5, 2026**

Department of Community Development  
Planning • Building • Development Engineering • Permit Center  
Economic Development • Code Enforcement

AUBURN  
VALUES

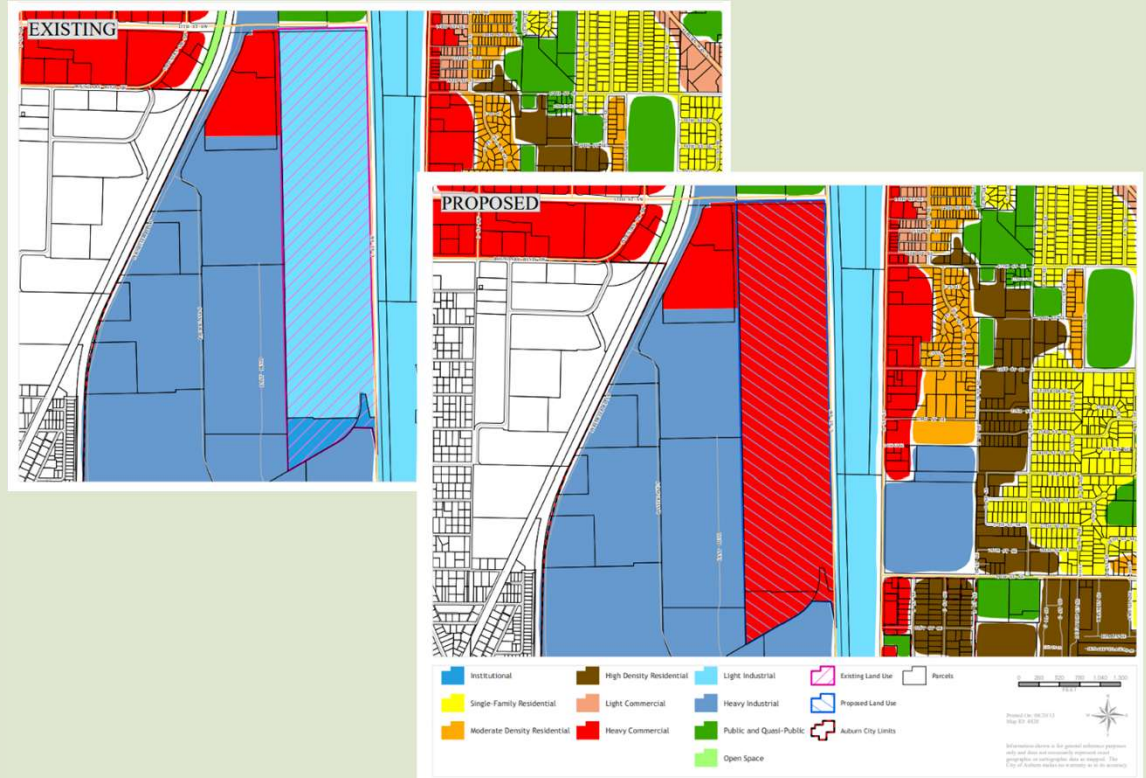
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W E L L N E S S  
C E L E B R A T I O N

# WHAT ARE NONCONFORMING USES?

Table 18.23.030. Permitted, Administrative, Conditional and Prohibited Uses by Zone, Commercial and Industrial Zones

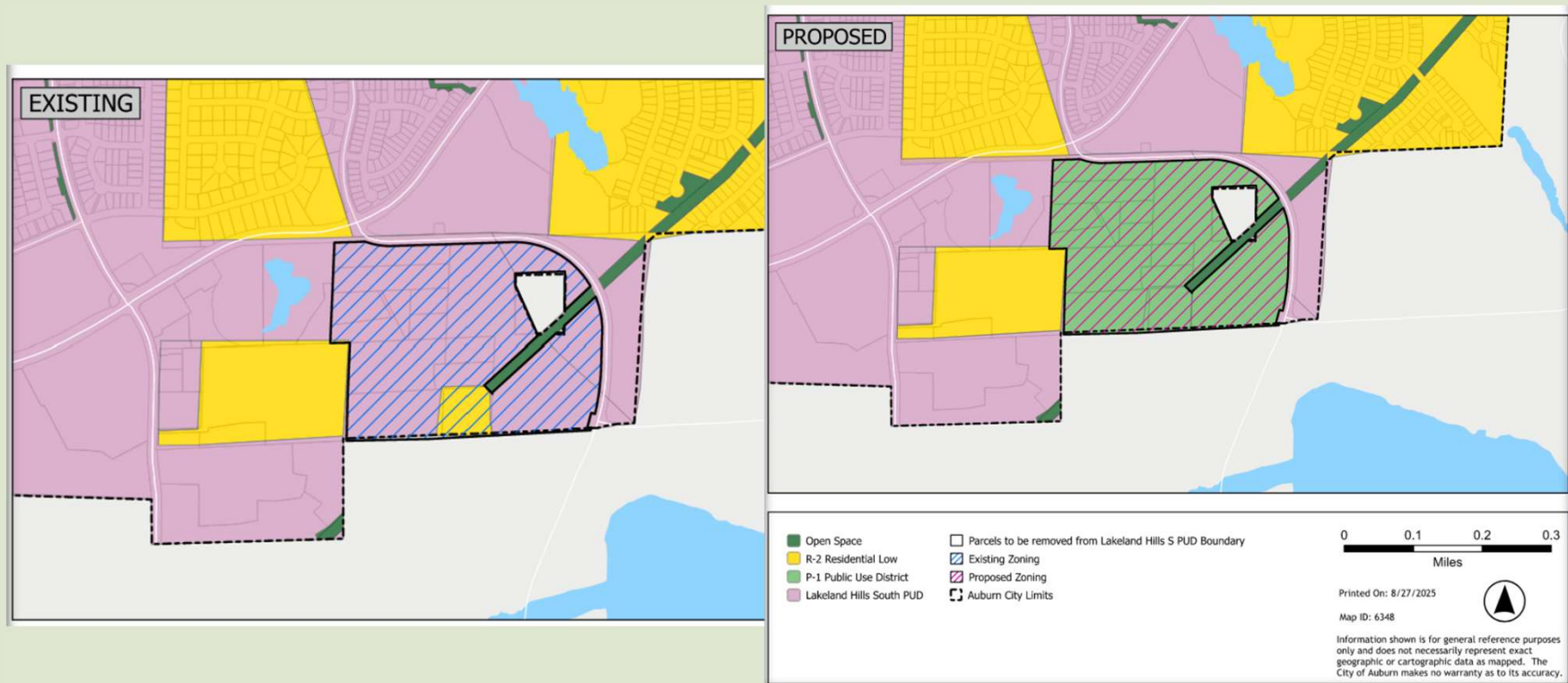
LAND USE	Zoning Designation					Standards for Specific Land Uses
	C-1	C-2	C-AG	M-1	M-2	
<b>INDUSTRIAL, MANUFACTURING AND PROCESSING, WHOLESALING</b>						
Building contractor, light	X	P	X	P	P	
Building contractor, heavy	X	X	X	A	P	
Manufacturing, assembling and packaging – Light intensity	X	P	X	P	P	ACC 18.31.180
Manufacturing, assembling and packaging – Medium intensity	X	A	X	P	P	ACC 18.31.180
Manufacturing, assembling and packaging – Heavy intensity	X	X	X	X	A	ACC 18.31.180

P – Permitted  
 C – Conditional  
 A – Administrative  
 X – Prohibited



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# WHAT ARE NONCONFORMING USES CONTINUED...



SERVICE • ENVIRONMENT • ECONOMY • CHARACTER • SUSTAINABILITY • WELLNESS • CELEBRATION

# WHICH STANDARDS GOVERN? CHAPTER 18.54 ACC

- 18.54.010
- 18.54.020
- 18.54.030
- 18.54.040
- 18.54.050
- 18.54.060
- 18.54.070
- 18.54.080
- Intent
- Continuance
- Use of nonconforming land
- Nonconforming signs
- Changes of use...
- Maintenance...
- Abatement
- Amortization of outdoor storage

# PROPOSED CODE CHANGES

## 18.54.060(G)

G. This chapter shall not prevent the following provided the total value of the improvements, ~~over the lifetime of the nonconforming use within five years of the date of permit issuance,~~ does not exceed 50 percent of the assessed value of the nonconforming use as established by the most current county assessor's tax roll, ~~except for the following items: ; and, the nonconforming use or structure is not expanded except as allowed by subsection H of this section; provided further, that any replacement of a nonconforming structure, or parts thereof, must comply with the appropriate development standards unless a special exception is granted pursuant to ACC 18.70.020:~~

# PROPOSED CODE CHANGES

## 18.54.060(I)

~~I.H.~~ A nonresidential structure or use which becomes a legal nonconforming structure or use ~~after the effective date of the ordinance codified in this title may~~ may expand the existing use or structure subject to the requirements of this chapter. ~~be permitted by means of a special~~  
~~exception~~A legal nonconforming structure or use may be expanded administratively up to 10% by the director or designee. Expansions of a legal nonconforming structure or use by more than 10%, not to exceed 25%, may be permitted by means of a special exception issued by the hearing examiner pursuant to ACC [18.70.020](#) ~~to expand the existing use or structure up to 25 percent of the use or structure existing at the time of the adoption of the ordinance codified in this title~~; provided further, that the addition otherwise meets the standards of this title and other requirements of the city.

# PROPOSED CODE CHANGES

## 18.54.060(K)

KJ. Nonconforming ~~single-unit detached, middle housing, and apartments~~ ~~single-family residential homes~~ and their accessory structures may be replaced and the new structure shall either meet the development standards of the district in which the ~~home is~~ dwelling unit is or are located or the new structure shall not be more nonconforming than the previous use. All other applicable building and fire code requirements must be complied with. (Ord. 6269 § 21, 2009; Ord. 5170 § 1, 1998; Ord. 4705 § 2, 1994; Ord. 4304 § 1(43), 1988; Ord. 4229 § 2, 1987.)

# PROPOSED CODE CHANGES

## 18.54.070(B)

B. ~~If a nonconforming use or structure is discontinuedAny structure or portion of a nonresidential structure, or parcel of land occupied by a nonconforming use which or becomes vacant and remains unoccupied for a continuous period of 180 days more than one year, it shall not thereafter be reestablished or occupied except by a use which conforms to the use regulations of the district in which it is located. The one-year time period may be granted an extension of up to two additional years, one-year at a time. Extensions may be granted if the subject property has no open code enforcement violations and if the property, including structures, landscaping, and amenities, is maintained so as to not appear degraded relative to the previous condition of the property nor detract from the surrounding neighborhood. A nonconforming use time extension must be requested by the property owner within 90-days of the expiration through a miscellaneous administrative decision application process demonstrating compliance with the above stated maintenance criteria. Residential uses in commercial or industrial zones which are unoccupied for more than 180 days may be allowed to reoccupy if a special exception is issued pursuant to ACC 18.70.020;~~

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# PROPOSED CODE CHANGES

## 18.54.070(C)

C. The director or designee may administratively authorize the extension of a discontinued nonconforming use or structure through as a Type I decision. Extensions shall be issued in one-year increments up to a maximum of three years, subject to the following criteria and conditions:

1. An applicant for an extension shall make a written request for the extension a minimum of 90 calendar days prior to expiration of the discontinued nonconforming use.

2. The director or designee shall in consideration of granting an extension find:

a. The property has no open code enforcement violations; and

b. The property, including structures, landscaping, and amenities, is maintained so as to not appear degraded relative to the previous condition of the property nor detract from the surrounding neighborhood.

# PROPOSED CODE CHANGES

## 18.54.080

### **18.54.080 Amortization and abatement of outdoor storage.**

All outdoor storage yards that do not comply with the landscape and screening requirements of Chapter [18.50](#) ACC which are located within an M-1 zone that are adjacent to a residential zone or are visible from a public street ~~shall, within three years of the adoption of this title and make any improvements included in ACC 18.54.060, shall~~ screen and landscape the outdoor storage pursuant to the requirements of Chapter [18.50](#) ACC, or the use shall be abated. (Ord. 6885 § 1 (Ex. A), 2022; Ord. 4229 § 2, 1987.)

# QUESTIONS?

Department of Community Development  
Planning • Building • Development Engineering • Permit Center  
Economic Development • Code Enforcement

## AUBURN VALUES

S E R V I C E  
E N V I R O N M E N T  
E C O N O M Y  
C H A R A C T E R  
S U S T A I N A B I L I T Y  
W E L L N E S S  
C E L E B R A T I O N

## Chapter 18.54

### NONCONFORMING STRUCTURES, LAND AND USES

Sections:

- 18.54.010**            **Intent.**
- 18.54.020**            **Continuance of nonconforming structures and uses.**
- 18.54.030**            **Use of nonconforming land.**
- 18.54.040**            **Nonconforming signs.**
- 18.54.050**            **Changes of use, tenancy, ownership or management.**
- 18.54.060**            **Maintenance, damage repairs and restorations, additions, enlargements, moving or relocation of nonconforming structures, and residential structures.**
- 18.54.070**            **Abatement of nonconforming structures and uses.**
- 18.54.080**            **Amortization and abatement of outdoor storage.**

#### **18.54.010    Intent.**

Amendments over time to regulatory authority provided within this title may result in structures, land and uses which no longer conform with the provisions set forth for the district in which they are situated. Therefore it is the intent of this chapter to allow for the continuance and maintenance of legally established nonconforming uses subject to standards and provisions prescribed within this chapter. (Ord. 4229 § 2, 1987.)

#### **18.54.020    Continuance of nonconforming structures and uses.**

Any nonconforming structure or use lawfully existing on the effective date of this title, or any subsequent amendments to this title, may be continued and maintained in conformance with provisions of this chapter, provided no enlargement of area, space or volume occupied by the nonconforming use occurs. Any nonconforming structure authorized by a valid building permit prior to the effective date of the ordinance codified in this title, or any subsequent amendments to this title, may be completed and used in accordance with the plans, specifications and

regulations under which such permit was issued. Expiration of authorized permits will result in a loss of vested right for construction and use of such structure. (Ord. 4229 § 2, 1987.)

### **18.54.030 Use of nonconforming land.**

If any parcel of land with a minimum lot size or lot dimension which is less than that prescribed for by the district in which such parcel is located, was subdivided into lots according to a plat of record on or before the effective date of the ordinance codified in this title, or any subsequent amendments to this title, then the fact that the parcel of land does not meet the minimum lot size or lot dimension requirements as set forth in this title shall not prohibit the property from being utilized; provided, that all other regulations prescribed for that district by this title are complied with, except as provided for in Chapter [18.31](#) ACC. (Ord. 4229 § 2, 1987.)

### **18.54.040 Nonconforming signs.**

Nonconforming signs shall be subject to provisions of Chapter [18.56](#) ACC. (Ord. 4229 § 2, 1987.)

### **18.54.050 Changes of use, tenancy, ownership or management.**

Changes of use, tenancy, ownership or management may occur to any existing legally established and continued nonconforming use under one or more of the following circumstances:

- A. Any part of a structure occupied by an existing legally established and continued nonconforming use may be changed to a use which, in the opinion of the ~~planning d~~Director of Community Development or designee, is of the same or of a more restrictive nature. When the use of a nonconforming structure is hereafter changed to a more restrictive use, the structure shall not thereafter be used for a less restrictive use.
- B. There may be a change of tenancy, ownership or management of any existing legally established and continued nonconforming use provided there is no change in the nature or

character of such nonconforming use except as authorized within this chapter. (Ord. 4229 § 2, 1987.)

### **18.54.060 Maintenance, damage repairs and restorations, additions, enlargements, moving or relocation of nonconforming structures, and residential structures.**

- A. Ordinary maintenance of a nonconforming structure which includes minor interior and exterior repairs and incidental alterations is permitted. Minor maintenance and repair may include but is not limited to painting, roof repair and replacement, plumbing, wiring, mechanical equipment replacement, and weatherization. Incidental alterations may include construction of nonbearing walls or partitions.
- B. No structural alterations, as defined by the [Uniform-International Building Codes](#), shall be made except as required by law or ordinance; provided, that the cost of such work shall not exceed 50 percent of the assessed valuation of such structure as established by the most current county assessor's tax roll.
- C. A nonconforming structure having been damaged or partially destroyed to an extent not exceeding 50 percent of the assessed valuation of such structure as established by the most current county assessor's tax roll, may be restored to its original condition, as authorized by the city's building official, and its immediately preceding or existing use at the time of partial destruction may be continued or resumed. Restoration shall begin within one year and be completed within two years of the date of partial destruction. If restoration is not started within one year, then the reuse and occupancy of the structure shall conform to all the regulations of the district in which the use is located.
- D. Structures or lands which are nonconforming as to use regulations shall not be enlarged or intensified in any manner unless the enlargement within such structures or lands conforms to all regulations of the district in which it is located, [except for expansion permitted under ACC 18.54.060\(H\)](#). ~~A nonconforming use, within a nonconforming structure, shall not expand into any portion of the nonconforming structure.~~

E. Structures which are nonconforming as to percentage of site coverage, setbacks, building height or density shall not be enlarged unless such enlargement conforms to the regulations of the district in which it is located.

F. Nonconforming residential structures are allowed to provide maintenance, alterations and additions which may exceed the requirements of this chapter; provided the total number of dwelling units does not increase and all other development standards of the district are complied with.

G. This chapter shall not prevent the following provided the total value of the improvements, ~~over the lifetime of the nonconforming use within five years of the date of permit issuance,~~ does not exceed 50 percent of the assessed value of the nonconforming use as established by the most current county assessor's tax roll, ~~except for the following items: ; and, the nonconforming use or structure is not expanded except as allowed by subsection H of this section; provided further, that any replacement of a nonconforming structure, or parts thereof, must comply with the appropriate development standards unless a special exception is granted pursuant to ACC 18.70.020:~~

1. Strengthening or restoring to a safe condition any nonconforming structure or part thereof which is declared to be unsafe or a hazard to the public by the order of the Community Development Director or designee ~~a city official charged with protecting the public safety;~~
2. Lessening a hazardous situation, nuisance or other adverse environmental impact;
3. Bringing the structure or use into more conformance with this title;
4. Adapting the structure to new technologies or equipment; or
5. Improvements which do not increase the intensity of the nonconforming use.

H. Any replacement of a nonconforming structure, or parts thereof, must comply with the appropriate development standards unless a special exception is granted pursuant to ACC 18.70.020.

I.H. A nonresidential structure or use which becomes a legal nonconforming structure or use after the effective date of the ordinance codified in this title may ~~may expand the existing use or structure subject to the requirements of this chapter. be permitted by means of a special~~

~~exception~~A legal nonconforming structure or use may be expanded administratively up to 10% by the director or designee. Expansions of a legal nonconforming structure or use by more than 10%, not to exceed 25%, may be permitted by means of a special exception issued by the hearing examiner pursuant to ACC [18.70.020](#)~~to expand the existing use or structure up to 25 percent of the use or structure existing at the time of the adoption of the ordinance codified in this title~~; provided further, that the addition otherwise meets the standards of this title and other requirements of the city.

This section does not allow the expansion of a use or structure which would be inconsistent with a previously authorized administrative use permit, conditional use permit, special property use permit, contract rezone, or binding agreement between the city and the property owner.

This section also does not allow the expansion of any nonconforming hazardous material storage.

**J.** When a building or structure is moved to another location it must then be made to conform to the requirements of the district to which it is moved, unless specifically allowed elsewhere by this title.

**KJ.** Nonconforming ~~single-unit detached, middle housing, and apartments~~ single-family residential homes and their accessory structures may be replaced and the new structure shall either meet the development standards of the district in which the ~~home is~~ dwelling unit is or are located or the new structure shall not be more nonconforming than the previous use. All other applicable building and fire code requirements must be complied with. (Ord. 6269 § 21, 2009; Ord. 5170 § 1, 1998; Ord. 4705 § 2, 1994; Ord. 4304 § 1(43), 1988; Ord. 4229 § 2, 1987.)

### **18.54.070 Abatement of nonconforming structures and uses.**

Nonconforming structures and uses shall be abated if one or more of the following circumstances exist:

A. If a nonconforming use is discontinued and changed to a conforming use, any future use of the structure or land shall be in conformity to the regulations of the district in which structure or land is located.

~~B. If a nonconforming use or structure is discontinuedAny structure or portion of a nonresidential structure, or parcel of land occupied by a nonconforming use which or becomes vacant and remains unoccupied for a continuous period of 180 days more than one year, it shall not thereafter be reestablished or occupied except by a use which conforms to the use regulations of the district in which it is located.The one-year time period may be granted an extension of up to two additional years, one year at a time. Extensions may be granted if the subject property has no open code enforcement violations and if the property, including structures, landscaping, and amenities, is maintained so as to not appear degraded relative to the previous condition of the property nor detract from the surrounding neighborhood. A nonconforming use time extension must be requested by the property owner within 90 days of the expiration through a miscellaneous administrative decision application process demonstrating compliance with the above stated maintenance criteria. Residential uses in commercial or industrial zones which are unoccupied for more than 180 days may be allowed to reoccupy if a special exception is issued pursuant to ACC 18.70.020;~~

~~C. The director or designee may administratively authorize the extension of a discontinued nonconforming use or structure through as a Type I decision. Extensions shall be issued in one-year increments up to a maximum of three years, subject to the following criteria and conditions:~~

~~1. An applicant for an extension shall make a written request for the extension a minimum of 90 calendar days prior to expiration of the discontinued nonconforming use.~~

~~2. The director or designee shall in consideration of granting an extension find:~~

~~a. The property has no open code enforcement violations; and~~

~~b. The property, including structures, landscaping, and amenities, is maintained so as to not appear degraded relative to the previous condition of the property nor detract from the surrounding neighborhood.~~

~~CD. If a nonconforming structure sustains damage or destruction which exceeds 50 percent of the current assessed valuation of the structure as established by the county assessor's office. Reconstruction of such damaged structure or reuse of occupancy shall conform to all regulations of the district in which it is located and it shall be treated as a new building. This subsection shall not apply to single-unit detached, middle housingfamily dwellings units, and apartments. (Ord. 5170 § 1, 1998; Ord. 4229 § 2, 1987.)~~

**18.54.080 Amortization and abatement of outdoor storage.**

All outdoor storage yards that do not comply with the landscape and screening requirements of Chapter [18.50](#) ACC which are located within an M-1 zone that are adjacent to a residential zone or are visible from a public street ~~shall, within three years of the adoption of this title and make any improvements included in ACC 18.54.060, shall~~ screen and landscape the outdoor storage pursuant to the requirements of Chapter [18.50](#) ACC, or the use shall be abated. (Ord. 6885 § 1 (Exh. A), 2022; Ord. 4229 § 2, 1987.)

## 18.70.020 Special exceptions.

A. Only the following special exceptions may be granted by the hearing examiner after a public hearing is held pursuant to ACC [18.70.040](#):

1. Platted lots within the same block and same zone, but separated by a public alley, may be used as a single building site for the purpose of calculating the number of dwelling units permitted in a structure to be erected on one side of the alley, subject to the following requirements:

- a. Each portion of the property shall abut a minimum of 100 feet upon the alley.
- b. The two portions of the property shall be directly opposite for a distance representing at least 50 percent of the width of the portion of the property not to be occupied by the proposed building.
- c. The portion of the property not occupied by the building shall not be sold, segregated or used for building purposes so long as the building remains on the portion of property on the opposite side of the alley.

~~2. Whenever there is a change from a residential use to a nonresidential use in an existing building a special exception may be issued to exclude the floor area within the building, that cannot be effectively utilized by the proposed use, from the off-street parking requirements.~~

3. A nonresidential structure or use which becomes a legal nonconforming structure or use ~~after may expand the existing use or structure subject to the requirements of this chapter. the effective date of the ordinance codified in this title may be permitted, by means of a special exception, Expansions of a legal nonconforming structure or use by more than 10%, not to exceed 25%, may be permitted by means of a special exception to expand the existing use or structure up to 25 percent of the use or structure existing at the time of the adoption of this title;~~ provided further, that the addition otherwise meets the standards of this title and other requirements of the city.

This section does not allow the expansion of a use or structure which would be inconsistent with a previously authorized administrative use permit, conditional use permit, special property use permit, contract rezone, or binding agreement between the city and

the property owner. This section also does not allow the expansion of any nonconforming hazardous material storage.

4. Pursuant to ACC [18.54.060\(G\)](#), a special exception may be issued for the replacement of a nonconforming structure or part thereof which does not comply with the appropriate development standards.

~~5. Pursuant to ACC [18.54.070\(B\)](#), a special exception may be issued for residential uses, in commercial or industrial zones, to reoccupy if unoccupied for longer than 180 days.~~

B. In considering applications for special exceptions, the hearing examiner shall consider the nature and condition of all adjacent uses and structures, and no such special exception shall be authorized by the hearing examiner unless the hearing examiner finds that the authorizing of such special exception will not be materially detrimental to the public welfare or injurious to property in the zone or vicinity in which the property is located, and that the authorization of such special exception will be consistent with the spirit and purpose of this title. In authorizing a special exception, the hearing examiner may impose such requirements and conditions with respect to location, installation, construction, maintenance and operation and extent of open spaces in addition to those expressly set forth in this title as may be deemed necessary for the protection of other properties in the zone or vicinity and the public interest. (Ord. 6269 § 24, 2009; Ord. 4840 § 1, 1996; Ord. 4229 § 2, 1987.)