

COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS

CITY OF INDEPENDENCE



COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS

Commercial Development Standards

The Commercial Development Standards seek to establish a framework for the future growth of Independence in keeping with Vision 2020 while also responding to the context of the strong existing built fabric. Standards within the Downtown Overlay, for example, seek to emulate but not imitate the profile of buildings of high-architectural quality along Main Street. Standards within the larger Mixed Use Pedestrian Friendly Commercial zone (MUPC) seek to encourage a similar pedestrian orientation as that found downtown while remaining accessible to automobiles.

The standards are the outcome of a comprehensive code audit, a detailed analysis of existing conditions, and a careful study of successful standards throughout the region and the nation. In addition to the TAC, the PAC, City staff, and members of the public, stakeholders (including architects, builders, and developers) provided input on the content of the standards.

Through this process, it was determined that the existing Commercial Office (CO), Commercial Highway (CH), and Commercial Retail (CR) zones were sufficiently redundant to warrant the creation of a single-stand alone commercial zone. The Mixed Use Pedestrian Friendly Commercial Zone (MUPC) will replace these three commercial zones. The downtown core will fall under a Downtown Overlay Zone that requires meeting more stringent design standards.

Throughout the Vision 2020 planning process, the public has advocated for reinforcing and expanding a vibrant downtown and improving the environment of other commercial areas within Independence. The Development Standards provide a tool to accomplish this objective.

How to Use This Document

The following document is organized into two sections. Section One focuses on Commercial Development Standards. These Standards are mandatory in the MUPC zone. Section Two presents Design Standards and Guidelines that apply only to the Downtown Overlay zone, as indicated on the Framework Plan.

Development Standards: Required land use regulations that guide how sites and buildings can be developed. These essential “building blocks” deal with such things as building height, setbacks, lot coverage, ground floor windows and landscaping.

Design Standards and Guidelines: A palette of objective, design-oriented elements that overlay the required Development Standards and ensure that proposed development conserves and enhances the recognized value of the site, building, and surrounding amenities of downtown.

Each standard is presented using the following elements:

- **Standard:** A description of the standard
- **Explanation/Rationale:** A description of the reasoning behind the standard
- **Further Approaches:** Where applicable, a description of additional approaches applicants may want to pursue to meet the City’s long-term vision

Standards are illustrated with clear, easy to understand diagrams that graphically explain the standard. Diagrams are accompanied by photographs, where applicable. Given their graphic nature, the standards are easier to understand and more accessible to users than a standard zoning code, which is primarily text. A clear code will help articulate the community’s vision for a vibrant and attractive city and reduce staff time for plan review.

A summary of the standards is found in the Development Standard table, which follows this section. In instances where a more stringent standard applies to the Downtown Overlay, it will be indicated.

Existing City Development Standards that were determined to be in compliance with the 2020 Vision are not addressed as part of the Development Standards but can be found in a table following the summary of the Development Standards. A glossary of terms and building and facade elements can be found in Appendix A. Additional methods for sustainable building can be found in Appendix B.

When Development Standards Apply

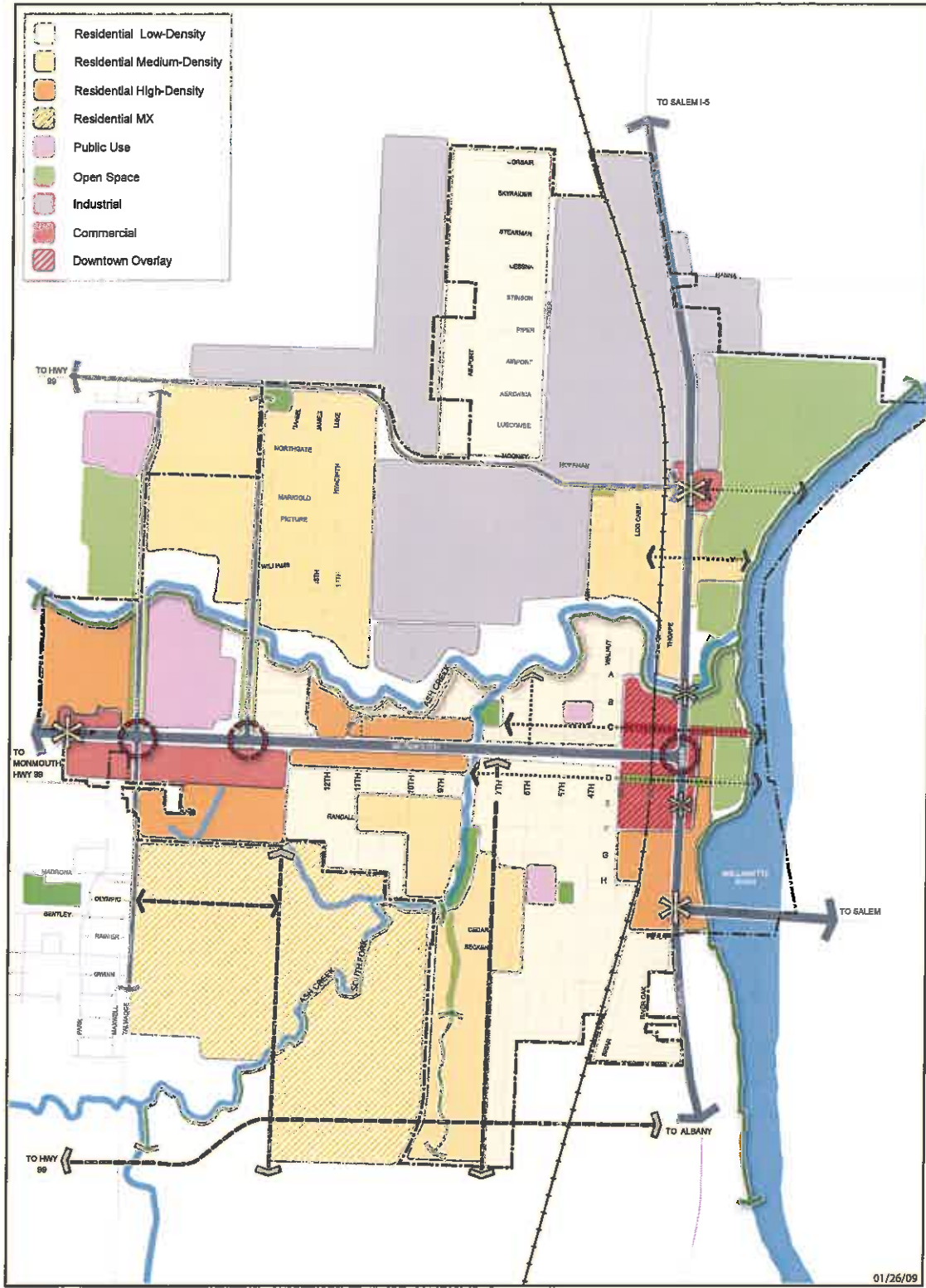
All development that requires a building permit or consists of a change of use is required to meet the Commercial Development Standards.

As described in Sub-Chapter 10, General Provisions, expansion of existing nonconforming lots, parcels, structures, and uses is strongly discouraged. However, non-conforming uses are allowed to continue to operate provided that their hours of business do not impact the goals and objectives of the established base zone.

Changes of use are to be determined by the Community Development Director.

COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS

INDEPENDENCE FRAMEWORK PLAN



01/26/09

Source: Polk County GIS Department



Vision 2020 Plan

The Commercial Development Standards were developed through the Independence 2020 Vision planning process and reflect input from citizens, the Project Advisory Committee (PAC), the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), members of the public, and City staff. Participants in public meetings and other outreach efforts (including the Vision 2020 web site) articulated the following themes for future growth. These themes represent the voice of the community and what they would like to see in the City of Independence.

- *Enhance historic character:* Expand and strengthen the downtown commercial core while maintaining and enhancing the historic character of Independence.
- *Develop a vibrant downtown:* Encourage and promote the redevelopment of downtown, including housing, as a vibrant and successful mixed-use district.
- *Create an accessible community:* Emphasize bicycle and pedestrian connections along natural amenities, such as Ash Creek and the Willamette River, as a way of moving residents and visitors across town and improving connections to downtown.
- *Improve and promote community assets:* Create a strong link from the commercial core along Main Street to the amphitheater and the recreational land uses along the river and recognize key intersections as gateways and nodes of commercial activity.
- *Focus on youth:* Develop more facilities and programs for youth that ensure Independence is a place for people of all ages.
- *Sustainability at work:* Maintain and improve natural areas as resources where possible and target environmental initiatives such as recycling programs and green building techniques.
- *Promote economic vitality:* Support the continued growth of local and living wage jobs and develop tools to market opportunities.

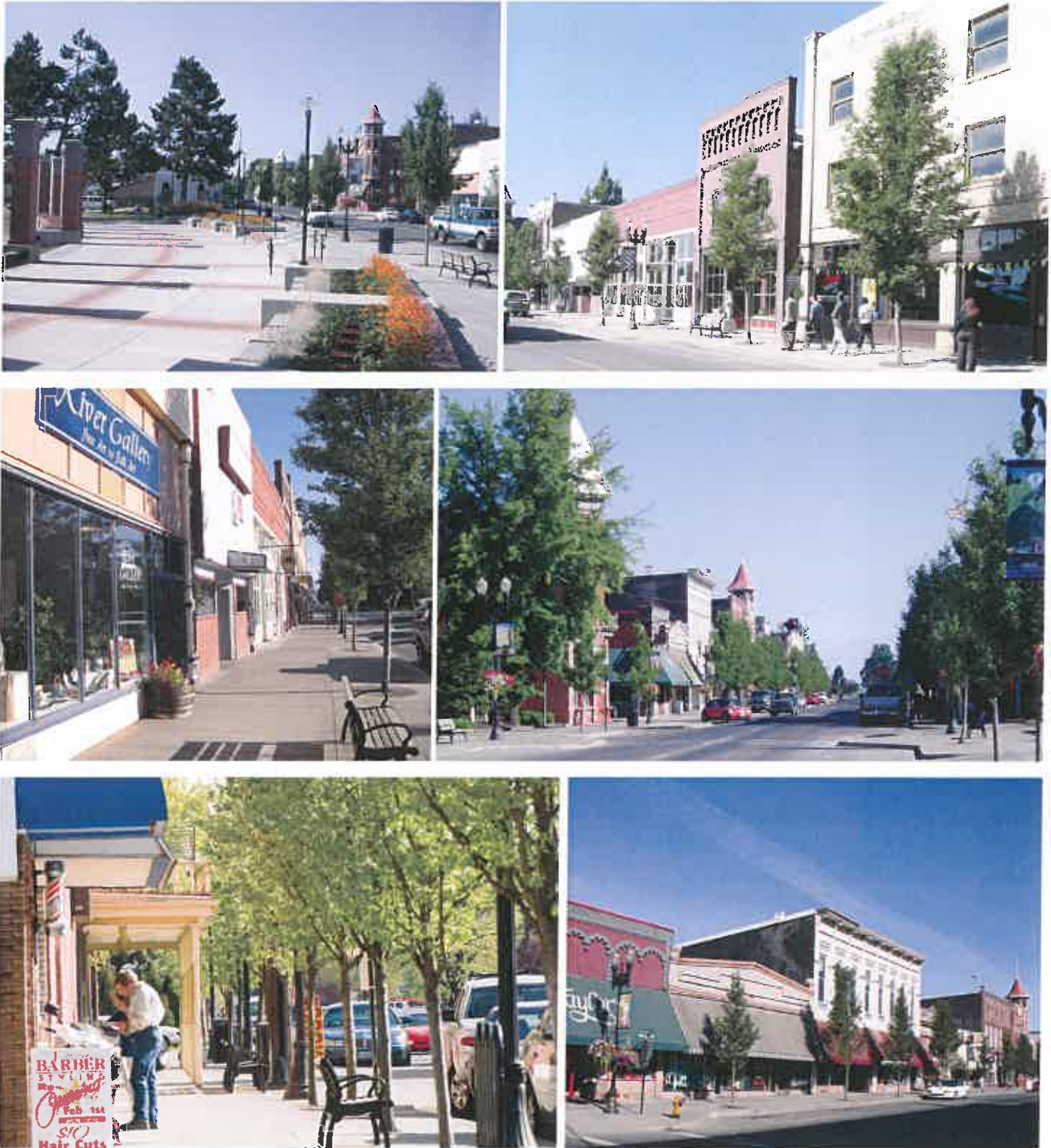
Through a public outreach process that included multiple open houses and town hall meetings, these themes were translated into a vision for the City's future in the year 2020. As part of this visioning process, participants brainstormed about what they would like to keep the same about Independence and what they would like to see change. Participants, for example, expressed a desire to expand and strengthen the downtown commercial core and maintain its historic character.

Historically accurate restorations can infill along Main Street while residential uses on the second floors of existing buildings activate the downtown throughout the day and into the night. Additional housing and commercial space can be developed on the gravel site with new access points to the Willamette River. This commercial and residential activity can be supported by expanding festivals and events, the farmers market, and other community activities along key streets downtown.

These ideas were then translated into a Framework Plan (see the left hand page) that graphically depicts the vision for future growth in Independence as translated into the City's built environment. The Framework Plan indicates that commercial development will be focused within three areas in the City of Independence. These three areas will be defined as a new Mixed Use Pedestrian Oriented Commercial Zone (MUPC). The downtown core (extending from the waterfront to 3rd Street and from A Street to F Street) will fall under a Downtown Overlay Zone and be subject to more stringent development and design standards.

The existing commercial along Monmouth Street by Gun Club Road and 16th Street will be expanded and reconfigured with more retail. Commercial uses will have a pedestrian orientation and foster increased pedestrian and bicycle use along Monmouth Street. Retail uses will continue to develop along Highway 51 that support the new ball fields being developed at North Riverside Park without competing with specialty retail downtown. Finally, the downtown core will expand by several blocks. Mixed-use buildings will be reconfigured to emphasize pedestrian activity and support improvements to the public realm.

COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS



Existing Strengths. A rich collection of historic buildings and attractive streets already exist along Main Street. The existing built fabric and values articulated by the community through the public outreach process of the Vision 2020 Plan serve as the basis for the content of the Commercial Development Standards. The Standards seek to reinforce and create additional pedestrian-friendly commercial neighborhoods.

Existing Strengths

At the heart of Independence is a historic downtown focused along Main Street. With the majority of development built at the turn of the century, this outstanding collection of historic buildings frames both sides of Main Street. The recent addition of an amphitheater on the east side of Main Street, further emphasizes the gateway into town and connects the downtown to the Willamette River. Main Street serves as an example for the potential redevelopment of other commercial areas that currently are primarily auto-oriented.

In addition to the height and orientation of buildings, Main Street is successful due to the treatment of its corner buildings, which serve as transition and orientation elements in the downtown. This is most clearly realized at the corner of Main and Monmouth where the Sterling Bank Building — with its iconic cupola, cornice, column supported balcony, and large front door — frame the corner. These architectural elements, in addition to the large pedestrian friendly storefronts, engage the eye and help to animate the street.

This collection of buildings and open space framing the Willamette River tell the story of the City's history as a trading center in the valley and are physical reminders of the vitality of the former "Hop Capital of the World."

Vision

Building off these existing strengths, the Development Standards provide a tool to accomplish the Vision for Independence's future growth. With these Development Standards in place, one can imagine how Independence might look in 2020.

With new Development Standards in place, buildings are built up to the front property line all along Main Street and are at least 30 feet in height, framing the street and providing a sense of enclosure to pedestrians. Architectural elements — including cupolas, turrets, cornices, parapets, columns, and a palette of high-quality materials — provide a rich pedestrian experience. These details in the built environment catch and hold the eye while large storefront windows animate the street.

Wide sidewalks furnished with street trees, benches, lighting, and other street furnishings such as trash cans and bike racks are comfortable to walk along and provide spaces for the paths of residents of Independence to intersect with one another. The large sidewalks allow people to stop and linger on the sidewalk and discuss the latest planning for the annual Fourth of July celebration.

Friends sit at cafe tables along the sidewalk and chat about the upcoming outdoor movie series at the amphitheater while their kids play along the banks of the Willamette in the newly built universally accessible playground. While locals gather in the mornings at Andy's Cafe to hash over the logistics for the Hops and Heritage Festival, visitors to town grab a bite to eat along Highway 51 and then walk back across the street to finish their softball games at a tournament. Kids wait for the signal at improved intersections at 16th and Gun Club Road and cross Monmouth safely after school to meet friends at the redeveloped Central Plaza shopping center.

COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS

Development Standards Summary

Below are summary tables that organize the proposed Development Standards by topic. These three topics reflect the manner in which buildings are designed and developed. The first summary table outlines key Development Standards that impact the potential use and dimensions of the site. The second summary table outlines Development Standards that impact the potential height and building massing. The last table outlines Development Standards that require architectural details to the building. Within each topic, if there is a different development standard applicable in the Downtown Overlay District, it is indicated. Where a different standard applies to only Main Street within the Downtown Overlay (defined as the portion running from A Street to F Street), it will be indicated.

PROPOSED STANDARD	DEVELOPMENT STANDARD	DOWNTOWN OVERLAY	PG
--------------------------	-----------------------------	-------------------------	-----------

Site			
Prohibited Uses	Prohibited uses are listed with definitions found in the glossary in Appendix A.	Drive through, entertainment/major event, and vehicle storage and repair facilities are not allowed.	7
Drive-Throughs	Drive-through facilities shall minimize impact on pedestrians and traffic.	Drive-through facilities shall be prohibited.	8
Yards	Minimum front setback of 10 feet and maximum front setback of 15 feet.	Maximum setback of 0 feet <i>only along Main Street</i> . Otherwise, a minimum front setback of 0 feet and a maximum setback of 10 feet	9
Lot Coverage	Minimum lot coverage of 50%.		10
Build-to-Line	50% of overall development length shall be placed along the build-to-line. Multiple pads may be provided at the corners.	<i>Only along Main Street</i> , 100% of building shall meet the build-to-line on the front property line.	11
Site Landscaping	15% of site area shall be landscaped. 30% of the landscaped area can be dedicated to hardscape.	No minimum landscaping requirements.	12
Parking and Access	<p>Parking prohibited between the front of the building and the street. Parking may be allowed to the side if it is setback 6 feet from the property line and does not exceed 50% of the total frontage of the site. It may not extend beyond the front of the building</p> <p>Minimum parking ratio of 1 space per 500 SF for commercial uses and 1 space per 250 SF for restaurants/bars.</p> <p>Internal pedestrian connections shall be provided through parking lots. Heavy trucks on Main Street and Monmouth must access the building from a side street or alley where possible.</p>	Parking prohibited to the side of the building.	13
Off-Street Parking Lot Landscaping	<p>Minimum 6' of perimeter landscaping around all surface parking lots within the front and side yard setbacks planted with approved materials.</p> <p>Parking lots with more than 10 spaces shall provide a minimum of 90 square feet of landscaping as interior landscaping, including 2 shade tree for every 10 spaces. The landscaping strip between rows of parking shall be at a minimum 8 feet wide.</p>		14

PROPOSED STANDARD	DEVELOPMENT STANDARD	DOWNTOWN OVERLAY	PG
Height/Building Massing			
Building Height	Maximum height of 45 feet. A maximum of 55 feet achievable through density bonuses by providing amenities. Minimum ground-floor height of 15 feet.	Minimum of 2 stories in height.	16
Main Entrance/Front Door	Direct connection shall be provided from the front door of the building to the sidewalk.		17
Ground-Floor Windows	Transparent windows shall be provided along minimum of 60% of the length of ground-floor wall facing the street and 60% of the overall street facing wall area. On side facades facing an alley or side street, transparent windows shall be provided along 50% of alley length or 25% of side street walls.		18
Exterior Display/Storage	Exterior display shall be prohibited on the street and allowed on sidewalks for outdoor eating, plants and produce, and temporary displays that allow for 5 feet of clear passage for pedestrians.		19

PROPOSED STANDARD	DEVELOPMENT STANDARD	DOWNTOWN OVERLAY	PG
Architectural Features			
Roof Forms	Flat roofed buildings shall have a parapet that is a minimum of 3 feet high. Cornice heights vary based on overall building height. Cornices shall be a minimum of 6 inches away from the building face at the top and 2 inches away at the base. Pitched roof residential buildings shall follow Residential Standards for roof forms.		20
Bicycle Parking	Bike parking shall be provided within 50 feet of the main entrance at a rate of 2 spaces per business.		21
Building and Parking Lot Lighting	Colored lighting and internally lit awnings/canopies shall be prohibited. Building lighting shall be integrated with the architecture. Minimum to maximum ratios range based on the nature of the street. Parking lot lighting shall emit on average 0.6 to 0.8 foot candles and not exceed 30 feet in height. Pedestrian lighting shall not emit more than 1.1 foot candles and not exceed 20 feet in height. Interior display windows shall be designed to be illuminated at night Outdoor lighting shall not exceed a maximum of 5% of lamp lumens above the horizontal.		22

COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS

Existing Development Standards

Below is a table indicated the existing City of Independence Development Standards that will not be impacted by the proposed Commercial Development Standards. These Development Standards will continue to be enforced as indicated in the existing zoning code. Any items in the existing code that are not included below were recommended for elimination through the code audit process.

COMMERCIAL OFFICE	EXISTING STANDARD
30.030 Yards	No main building shall be constructed within a required yard. Side yards will have a minimum depth of 5 feet. Rear yards shall have a minimum depth of 10 feet.
30.035 Height	No building shall exceed 45 feet in height.
30.050 Development Standards	All development standards with the exception of A. Off-Street Parking and C. Landscaping will still apply. These include Signs (Sub-chapter 58), Subdivisions and Partitions (Sub-chapter 90), Design Review (Sub-chapter 80), Stormwater Facilities (Sub-chapter 55), and Access.

COMMERCIAL HIGHWAY	EXISTING STANDARD
31.030 Yards	No main building shall be constructed within a required yard. Side yards will have a minimum depth of 5 feet. Rear yards shall have a minimum depth of 10 feet.
31.035 Height	No building shall exceed 45 feet in height.
31.045 Development Standards	All development standards with the exception of A. Off-Street Parking and C. Landscaping will still apply. These include Signs (Sub-chapter 58), Subdivisions and Partitions (Sub-chapter 90), Design Review (Sub-chapter 80), Stormwater Facilities (Sub-chapter 55), and Access.

COMMERCIAL RETAIL	EXISTING STANDARD
32.030 Yards	No main building shall be constructed within a required yard. Side yards will have a minimum depth of 5 feet. Rear yards shall have a minimum depth of 10 feet.
32.035 Height	No building shall exceed 45 feet in height.
32.050 Development Standards	All development standards with the exception of A. Off-Street Parking and C. Landscaping will still apply. These include Signs (Sub-chapter 58), Subdivisions and Partitions (Sub-chapter 90), Design Review (Sub-chapter 80), Stormwater Facilities (Sub-chapter 55), and Access.

Prohibited Uses

Guideline

The following uses shall be prohibited in the Mixed-Use Pedestrian Commercial Zone (MUPC). Changes of use shall be determined by the Community Development Director.

PROHIBITED USES	MUPC	Downtown Overlay
Drive-Through Facility		X
Entertainment/Major Event		X
Self-Service Storage	X	X
Vehicle Servicing/Repair		X
Wholesale Retail	X	X
Heavy Industrial	X	X
Light Industrial		X
Manufacturing and Production	X	X
Warehouse and Freight	X	X
Waste-Related	X	X
Agriculture	X	X
Mining	X	X
Commercial Parking	X	X
Commercial Outdoor Recreation	X	X
Railroad Yards	X	X
Detention Facilities	X	X

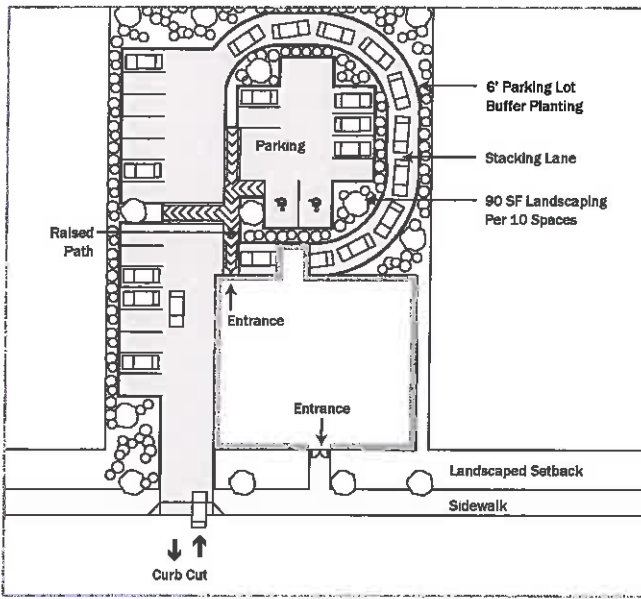
Explanation/Rationale

Listing permitted and conditional uses focuses regulation on the character of the use inside the building. Listing prohibited uses instead places the emphasis on the built environment and the impact of the building on the public realm rather than on the character of the uses taking place inside the building. Uses, unless they are noxious or dangerous, should be allowed outright.

This list of prohibited uses will protect the health and well being of citizens while the development and design standards and guidelines address the building form and its impact on the public realm. A further description of these uses can be found in the Glossary in Appendix A that outlines any exceptions. For example, arts production is not included in the definition of Manufacturing and Production and therefore would be allowed.

Prohibited uses were chosen based on potential negative impacts to the pedestrian environment in the Mixed Use Pedestrian Commercial zone (MUPC), as well as potential noxious or dangerous impacts that would negatively impact the health, safety, and welfare of citizens of Independence.

COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS



[1]

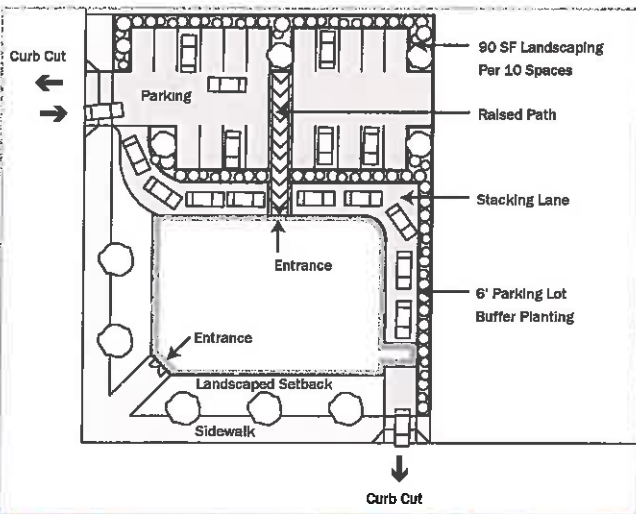
Drive-Through Facilities

Standard

Drive-in and drive-through facilities shall be prohibited within the Downtown Overlay.

In the base Mixed-Use Pedestrian Commercial Zone (MUPC), drive-in and drive-through facilities shall meet the following standards:

- Stacking areas may not be located between the building and the street.
- Stacking areas must be a minimum of 150 feet long for a single lane and 80 feet long for multiple stacking lanes.
- The stacking area may not interfere with parking and vehicular circulation.
- Stacking lanes must be clearly identified with striping, signage, and changes in materials to avoid conflicts between automobiles and pedestrians.



[2]

Explanation/Rationale

Drive-in or drive-through facilities result in additional curb cuts that detract from the safety and comfort of pedestrians. Furthermore, these facilities serve as a deterrent to getting people out of their car and walking. For these reasons, drive-in and drive-through uses are prohibited in the Downtown Overlay as the emphasis downtown is on pedestrian-friendly design and uses.

Outside the downtown, there is still some need for convenient drive-through access. However, the impact of these uses on the public realm, pedestrian safety and comfort, and traffic conditions should be minimized.



[3]

Further Approaches

The City may want to consider requiring the consolidation of curb cuts or other vehicle access points and recording reciprocal access easements for shared driveways in order to limit the amount of curb cuts that interfere with comfortable pedestrian movement.

Drive Through Facilities. The impact of drive-ins and drive-throughs can be mitigated through [1] placing building at the front build-to line and separating stacking lanes and parking or [2] orienting the building to the corner and [3] providing entrances oriented to pedestrians.

Yards

Standard

In the Mixed-Use Pedestrian Commercial Zone (MUPC), the minimum depth of a front yard setback shall be 10 feet. The maximum depth of a front yard setback shall be 15 feet.

Setbacks in the MUPC Zone shall be landscaped with a combination of ground cover, shrubs, and trees that are approved by the City of Independence. See the Site Landscaping Standard for more detail on approved plantings.

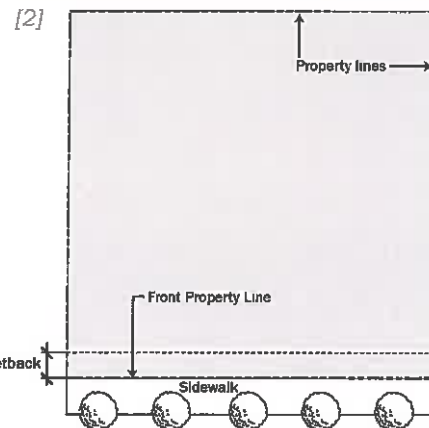
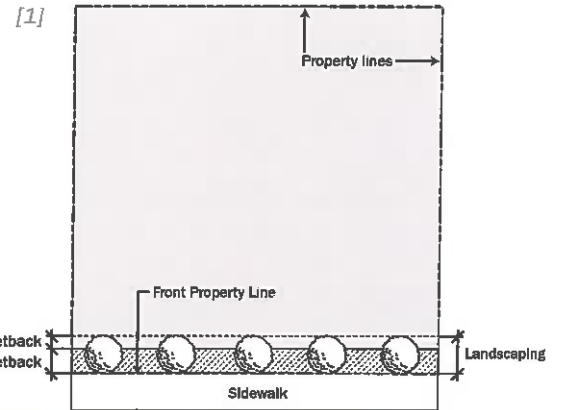
In the Downtown Overlay *along Main Street only*, the maximum depth of a front yard setback shall be 0 feet. In the remainder of the Downtown Overlay, the minimum depth of a front yard setback shall be 0 feet and the maximum depth shall be 10 feet.

Explanation/Rationale

Requiring a minimum front setback of 10 feet and a maximum setback of 15 feet in the MUPC Zone softens the impact of the adjacent state highway. This is especially important given that sidewalks along Monmouth are either curb-tight or do not exist. The proposed setback allows for additional landscaping and the creation of sidewalks between the building and the street to foster pedestrian activity.

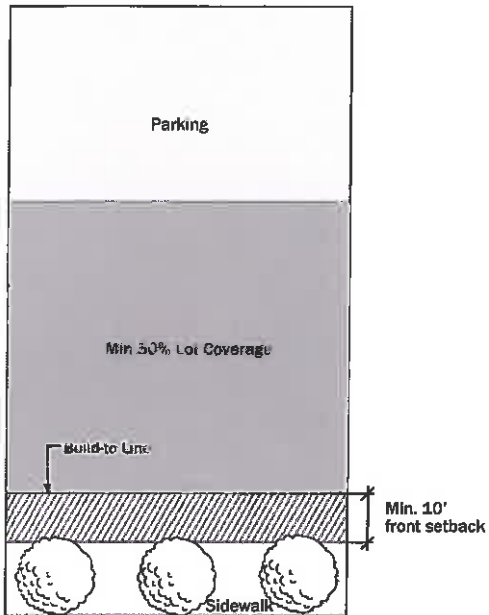
Eliminating or reducing the setbacks in the Downtown Overlay and creating maximum setbacks accomplishes the following:

- Creates a more continuous built up edge condition that fosters a more interesting pedestrian environment.
- Eliminates vehicle areas between the building and the street.
- Creates opportunities for outside seating.



Yards. [1] Larger front setbacks in the MUPC Zone soften the edge by allowing for more landscaping while still creating a more built-up edge, especially along Monmouth Street, that provides an attractive pedestrian environment [2] In the Downtown Overlay, lower maximum setbacks encourage a more urban, built-up condition that translates into a more uninterrupted pedestrian environment.

COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS



Lot Coverage

Standard

In the Mixed-Use Pedestrian Commercial Zone (MUPC), the minimum lot coverage for buildings shall be 50%

Explanation/Rationale

A lot coverage standard helps control the overall scale of development. Requiring a minimum 50% lot coverage creates a more built-up, urban character associated with pedestrian oriented commercial districts while still providing space for on-site parking.

Further Approaches

Lot coverage — used in tandem with setbacks, building height, and parking requirements — controls the form of the building.



[1]

Lot Coverage. [1] A minimum lot coverage promotes a more built-up urban character that is associated with pedestrian-oriented commercial districts while still providing space for on-site parking.

Build-to Line

Standard

In the Mixed-Use Pedestrian Commercial Zone (MUPC), 50% of the overall development length of a building shall be placed along a build-to line located at the front edge of the setback.

In the Downtown Overlay *along Main Street only*, 100% of the overall development length shall be placed along the build-to-line located at the front property line. The remainder of the Downtown Overlay shall follow the base MUPC build-to-line requirements.

Explanation/Rationale

Requiring that a minimum of 50% of the building in the MUPC Zone be brought to the build-to line (front setback line) helps to create a more contiguous and cohesive pedestrian environment with an adequate edge to the sidewalk.

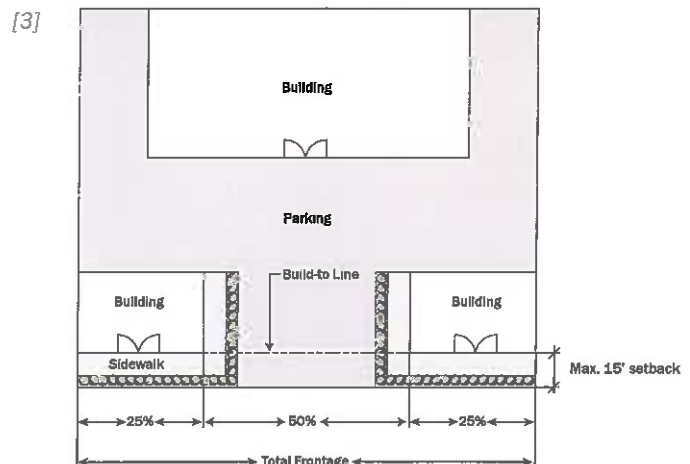
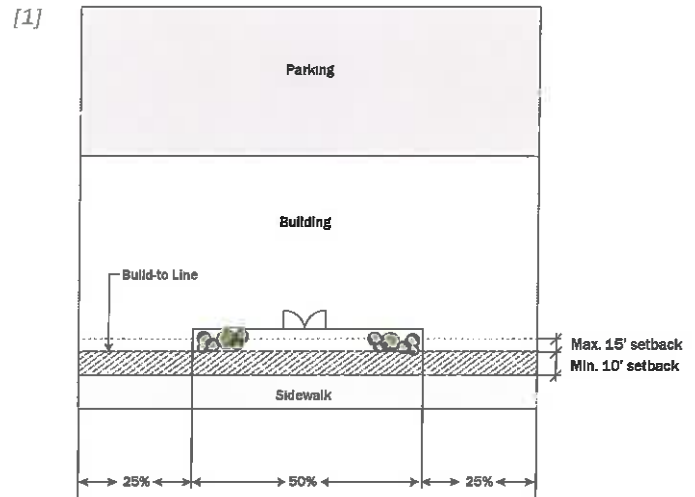
Allowing larger retail buildings to locate at the back of the site in the base MUPC zone while still maintaining a street presence as part of a multi-pad development provides a pedestrian model. This model stands in contrast to a traditional auto-oriented development pattern with a single large building setback with parking in front.

The 100% requirement along Main Street promotes development of a similar scale and character to existing development.

Further Approaches

If more than one pad is proposed, ideally pads would be located at the front corners of the site at the build-to-line in order to anchor the edges of the property.

In addition to bringing the buildings up to the street, it is important that the street facing wall not exceed 100 feet without incorporating, at a minimum, changes in wall planes to modulate the façade.



Build-to Line. [1] Placing 50% of the total development length of the building at the front edge of the property creates a contiguous, cohesive pedestrian environment [2] 100% of the development length must be brought to the front edge of the property along Main Street in order to promote development that is of a similar scale and character as the existing context [3] If more than one pad is proposed, pads shall be located at the front corners of the lot in order to anchor the edges of the property.

COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS



[1]

Site Landscaping

Standard

A minimum of 15% of the site shall be landscaped. Interior parking lot landscaping may be applied to meet this minimum. No minimum landscaping shall be required in the Downtown Overlay.

Landscaping shall be provided in the form of a dedicated landscape zone that has, at a minimum, a rate of 1 tree and 3 shrubs per every 400 square feet of contiguous open space. Remaining area within the 400 square foot open space area shall be planted with ground cover, including grass, that fills the area after 3 years.



[2]

Up to 30% of the landscaping requirement for the site may be dedicated to hardscape – walkways, plazas and small gathering areas. Every attempt shall be made to use permeable materials such as grasscrete, gravel or pervious asphalt.

Explanation/Rationale

Landscaping softens the effects of built and paved areas. If the landscaping is pervious, it also helps reduce stormwater runoff by providing a surface into which stormwater can percolate.



[3]

Further Approaches

Look for opportunities within the public right-of-way to incorporate urban storm water detention and retention facilities. These facilities can reduce storm water run-off and, depending upon how they are detailed, serve as an amenity to the built environment.

Site Landscaping. [1] A minimum of 15% of the site should be landscaped [2] Up to one-third of the landscape may be hardscape such as a walkway, plaza, or small gathering area [3] Whenever possible, stormwater detention and retention facilities should be incorporated into the landscape.

Parking and Access

Standard

Parking shall be prohibited between the front of the building and the street. Except along Main Street, parking may be allowed on the side of the building provided that:

- Parking is set back a minimum of 10 feet and a maximum of 15 feet from the front property line, corresponding with the front setback. In no instance shall parking extend in front of the building setback.
- Parking area does not exceed 50% of the total frontage of the site

Parking must be landscaped per the Off-Street Parking Lot Landscaping Standard.

Internal pedestrian connections shall be provided in parking lots with greater than 10 spaces. These connections shall be a minimum of 6 feet wide and distinguished from vehicular areas through changes in elevation or materials.

For all retail and service oriented commercial uses, the minimum parking ratio shall be 1 space per 500 square feet. The minimum parking ratio for all restaurants and bars shall be 1 space per 250 square feet. There is no parking minimum in the Downtown Overlay zone.

Heavy trucks shall be allowed along Main Street and Monmouth Street provided that they service the business from the alley or side street where possible.

Explanation/Rationale

Requiring that parking be located behind the building or adjacent to the building, coupled with placing 50% of the street facing-façade on the property line, creates a more continuous and cohesive pedestrian experience.

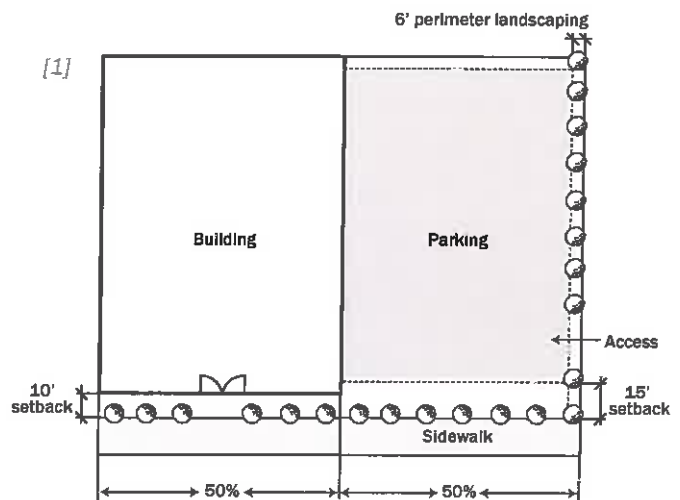
Parking requirements often provide an excess of parking supply. Large lots of empty parking spaces have a negative impact on the pedestrian environment. Eliminating parking minimums downtown and reducing them outside of the downtown is intended to create a more realistic supply of parking that more accurately meets the potential need.

Further Approaches

By increasing minimum lot coverage — therefore decreasing the space available for on-site parking — and reducing parking minimums, the City may increase the perception of a lack of parking, especially downtown. In order to counter this concern, the City should develop a comprehensive parking strategy that identifies current supply and projected demand and develops corresponding policy recommendations.

As part of this parking strategy, the City should promote shared parking/parking access among adjacent businesses. The ideal situation is a shared parking arrangement between an evening and morning/afternoon use. For example, the movie theater leases space from the City. Its ample supply of parking, which is empty during the morning and afternoon, is used by the City as a public parking lot for other commercial uses during the day. Spaces are still available for patrons in the evening.

Finally, the City could also consolidate driveways to parking lots as a means of reducing the number of curb cuts to avoid potential conflicts with pedestrians. If possible, access to parking areas should be via side streets and alleyways.

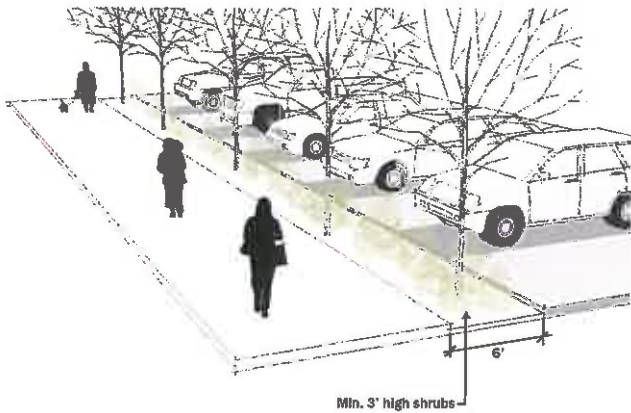


[2]



Parking and Access. Parking is prohibited between the front of the building and the street in order to create a more cohesive and continuous pedestrian experience [1] Parking may be located to the side if it does not exceed 50% of the total site frontage [2] Clearly marked, attractive, safe pedestrian paths through parking lots should be provided to reduce conflicts with automobiles.

COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS



[1] **Off-Street Parking Lot Landscaping**

Standard

In regulating off-street parking lots, the following landscape standards shall apply:

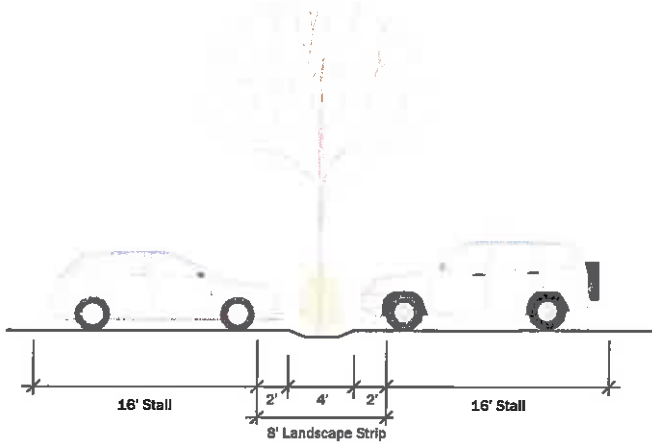
Perimeter landscaping

- In all parking lots a minimum perimeter of 6 feet shall be landscaped within the front and side yard setbacks in order to buffer the parking lot. This 6 foot wide strip shall be landscaped with noninvasive ground cover (including grass), shrubs that are a minimum of 3 feet high after 2 years and form a continuous screen, and approved street trees that are a minimum a 2.5" caliper and planted at a rate of 1 every 25 feet.
- A 3 foot high wall or planter constructed of either concrete or masonry may be substituted for ground cover or shrubs to screen the sidewalk from parking.

Interior landscaping

- In parking lots that have more than 10 parking spaces, there shall be a minimum of 200 square feet of landscaping per every 10 spaces that includes 2 shade trees for every 10 spaces.

All planting must be approved by the City of Independence.



[2]



[3]

Note: Perimeter landscaping may not serve as a substitute for interior landscaping.

Note: Landscaping strips between parking spaces should be a minimum of 8 feet wide and consist of continuous ground cover, drought tolerant shrubs at a rate of 1.5 shrubs per space, and at least two trees per every 10 spaces. Landscaping strips may take up to 2 feet of the front of each parking space, allowing the car to overhang the planted area.

Note: Wherever possible, parking surfaces should reduce stormwater run-off and direct drainage toward planting areas. Pervious materials are highly recommended for parking surfaces. Such materials include grasscrete, modular pavers, and pervious asphalt.

Off-Street Parking Lot Landscaping. Parking lot appearance and functionality can be improved by [1] a minimum perimeter setback of 6 feet with ground cover, shade trees, and shrubs that are a minimum of 3 feet high [2] internal landscaping strips that are a minimum of 8 feet wide [3] and stormwater detention and retention landscaping that reduces run-off while also providing a buffer between parking and pedestrians.

Explanation/Rationale

Landscaping has the following benefits:

- Reduces the visual impact of the parking area from the street and the sidewalk
- Helps organize the design and layout of the parking lot and directs traffic
- Provides shade
- Reduces the rate and amount of stormwater run-off
- Reduces carbon dioxide
- Reduces the heat island effect.

Further Approaches

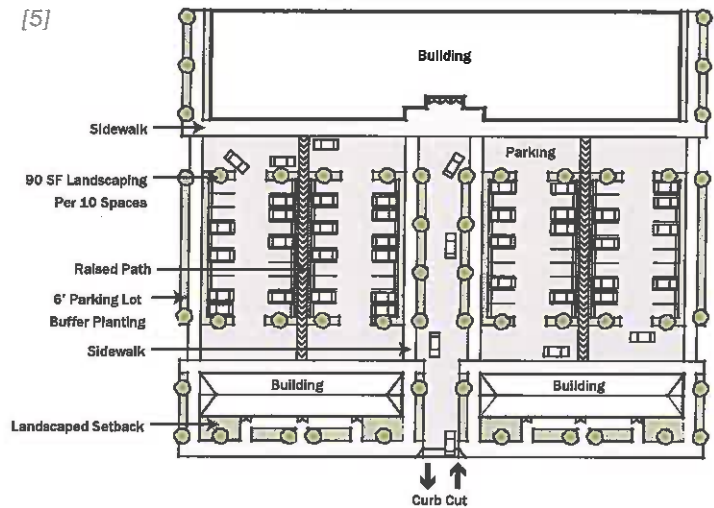
For the purpose of reducing stormwater run-off, the replacement of continuous front curbs with tire stops is encouraged in order to create a minimum two foot ground cover zone per automobile that can be overhung by the automobile.

The required 200 square feet for every 10 parking spaces translates into islands throughout the parking lot with two trees per every 10 spaces. Although it goes beyond the minimum parking lot landscaping required, the ideal landscaping is a center median that helps to manage stormwater and islands on either end that provide shade. This configuration improves the aesthetic of parking lots by increasing the amount of landscaping while also managing stormwater internally.

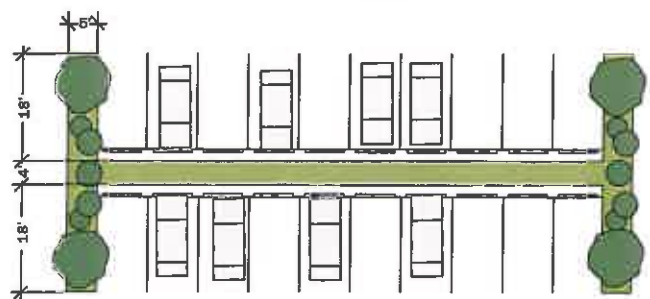
[4]



[5]

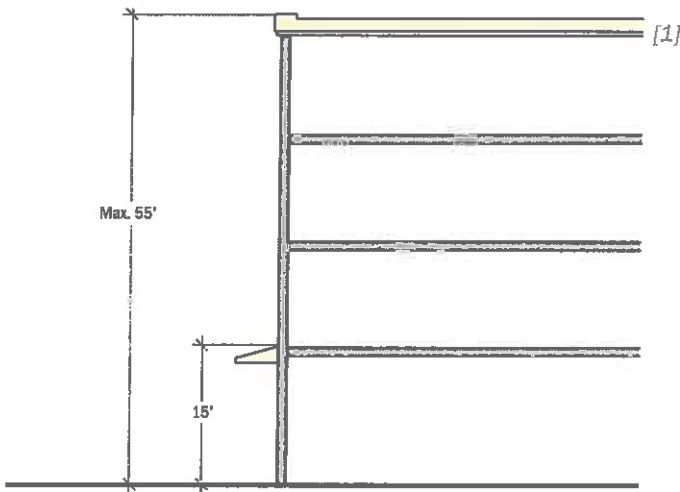


[6]



Off-Street Parking Lot Landscaping. [4] Parking lot landscaping should be drought tolerant in order to reduce water use [5] Perimeter and interior parking lot landscaping should use approved planting materials and accommodate raised pedestrian paths to improve the safety and appearance of parking lots [6] In parking lots with more than 10 parking spots, there should be 200 square feet of landscaping, including 2 shade trees per every 10 spaces.

COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS



Height

Standard

In the Mixed-Use Pedestrian Commercial Zone (MUPC), the maximum height is 45 feet. Height bonuses may be applied to extend the height of buildings to a maximum of 55 feet (measured to the top of the parapet or the midpoint of the gable) if amenities are provided. Bonuses will typically be applied only to residential buildings.

Height bonuses may be applied if any one of the following amenities are provided in a development:

- Outdoor recreation facilities including things like basketball courts, tennis courts, swimming pools
- Common open or green spaces for community gathering
- Children's play areas with play structures
- Three bedroom units
- Solar Panels for solar water heating and electricity.

Buildings in the MUPC zone shall have a minimum ground floor to ceiling height of 15 feet. There shall be a minimum of 2 stories in the Downtown Overlay.

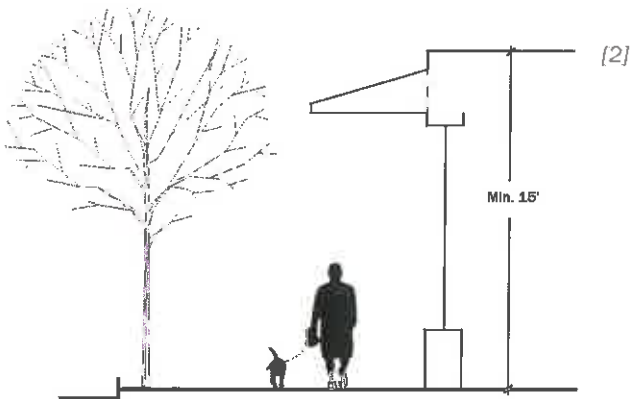
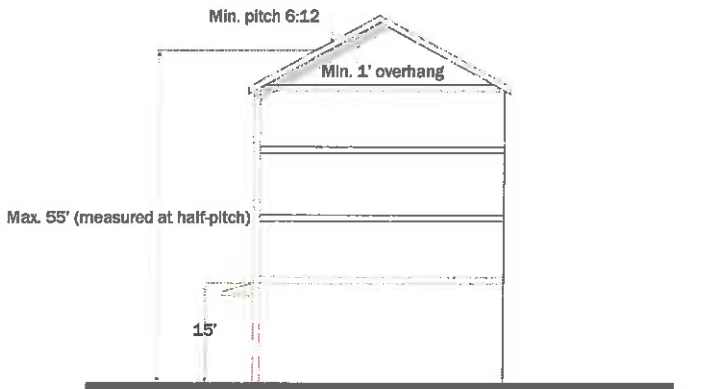
Explanation/Rationale

The increase in overall building height maximizes the opportunities associated with wood frame construction and potentially increases density. Additional density within the proposed commercial zone, achieved through taller buildings, supports existing and proposed commercial uses and promotes a vibrant downtown.

Offering height bonuses also translates into amenities that improve the quality of life for residents. For example, buildings designed with three bedroom units offer families affordable housing alternatives while outdoor recreation facilities and common open spaces will promote a healthy lifestyle and foster interaction among residents.

Increasing the height limit to 55 feet is compatible with the 52 foot height of the Independence Station building.

The minimum higher ground floor height emphasizes the ground floor and focuses building activity on the pedestrian realm. Higher ground floor spaces are necessary to accommodate retail and commercial activities along the sidewalk. A minimum number of stories in the Downtown Overlay increases activity downtown and creates a more defined street edge that frames the pedestrian environment.



Height. [1] Buildings with height bonuses should not exceed 55 feet in height measured to the top of the parapet or the midpoint of the gable [2] The ground floor should be 15 feet tall and transparent in order to foster an attractive pedestrian realm and promote more flexible building spaces.

Main Entrance/Front Door

Standard

A direct pedestrian connection shall be provided from the main entrance on the front facade of the building to the sidewalk.

Explanation/Rationale

Fostering interaction between activities within buildings and activities within the public realm (the sidewalk) is crucial to creating a vibrant and interesting built environment. A high degree of transparency between the two realms creates visual interest for pedestrians on the sidewalk. Siting the main entrance of buildings along the street, as opposed to behind the building oriented to parking, helps create this transparency and activates the sidewalk as patrons come and go.

Further Approaches

Accentuate the front of the building by incorporating the following types of elements: recessed entry that is a minimum of 3 feet deep, overhangs, canopies and porticos that are a minimum of 5 feet deep, clerestory windows, or large entry doors. Highlight the entry with tile, stone, masonry, or etched concrete.

Consider orienting the main entrance/front door of corner buildings to the corner. To accentuate the corner, the building corner can be chamfered and, where possible, the roof further articulated through a cupola, turret, or pitched roof.



Main Entrance/Front Door. [1] Buildings should have a direct pedestrian connection from the front door of the building to the sidewalk [2] Storefront entries can be designed with overhangs, canopies, porticos, clerestory windows, or large entry doors [3] Building entries can be oriented to the corner and chamfered to create visual interest and places for people to gather.

COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS



Ground Floor Windows

Standard

Transparent windows shall be required along a minimum of 60% of the length of the ground-level street facing facade and 60% of the overall ground floor street-facing wall area, defined as the first floor of a building that is used and directly accessible from the exterior finished grade.

On side facades facing an alleyway or side street, facades shall provide windows along 50% of the alley length or side street facing facade and 25% of the overall facade. The back of the building has no windows requirement.

Doors facing the street shall consist of a minimum of 40% transparent glazing.

Explanation/Rationale

Transparent ground floor windows enhance the pedestrian experience by connecting activities inside the building to the sidewalk and the public realm. Beyond fostering a dialogue between the inside and outside of a building, ground floor windows are essential in creating a safe and interesting pedestrian realm. Windows along alleys help illuminate and provide additional opportunities for eyes on the street.

Further Approaches

Incorporate ground floor windows that emphasize a human scale. This can be achieved by creating a ground floor with storefront windows and doors that include a combination of horizontal and vertical elements, such as window mullions, that relate to the scale of the pedestrian. This can also be accomplished by incorporating elements such as bulkheads, projected or articulated window sills, and signage (especially blade signage) to establish a rhythm and a sense of human scale.



Ground-Floor Windows. [1] Using transparent windows along a minimum of 60% of the length of the ground-level street-facing facade and 60% of the overall ground-floor area provides transparency so that [2] pedestrians can see inside the building [3] Ground floor windows that incorporate vertical and horizontal elements help the ground-floor of the building relate to the scale of a pedestrian.

Exterior Display

Standard

The following exterior activities shall be allowed in the proposed Mixed-Use Pedestrian Commercial Zone (MUPC) Zone, provided that they leave a five foot clear pedestrian path for unrestricted movement and are an extension of the interior use:

- Outdoor eating
- Outdoor produce markets and flower stands
Temporary displays of merchandise or wares (limited in duration to one week)

Explanation/Rationale

The exterior storage of merchandise and materials can detract from the overall desired character of the district as these exterior functions often create a cluttered environment. The allowed uses, however, animate the pedestrian environment and provide opportunities for people to gather. These uses support the street character of the pedestrian-oriented commercial zone and articulate a transition between activities on the sidewalk and activities within the building.



Exterior Display. The exterior display of merchandise and materials is prohibited except when it adds to the intrigue of the public realm without detracting from the overall character of the district by creating a cluttered environment. The following uses are permitted [1] outdoor eating [2] outdoor produce markets and flower stands [3] temporary displays of merchandise or wares.

COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS



[2]

Roof Forms

Standard

For flat roofed buildings:

- Parapets shall be a minimum of 3 feet in height.
- Cornices shall meet the following requirements:
 - The top of the cornice is a minimum of 6 inches from the face of the building and the base of the cornice is a minimum of 2 inches from the face of the building
 - The total height of the cornice on buildings 15 feet or less is a minimum of 12 inches, on buildings between 15 and 30 feet is a minimum of 18 inches, and on buildings taller than 30 feet is a minimum of 24 inches.

Pitched roofed residential buildings shall follow the Residential Development Standards Roof Forms Standard.

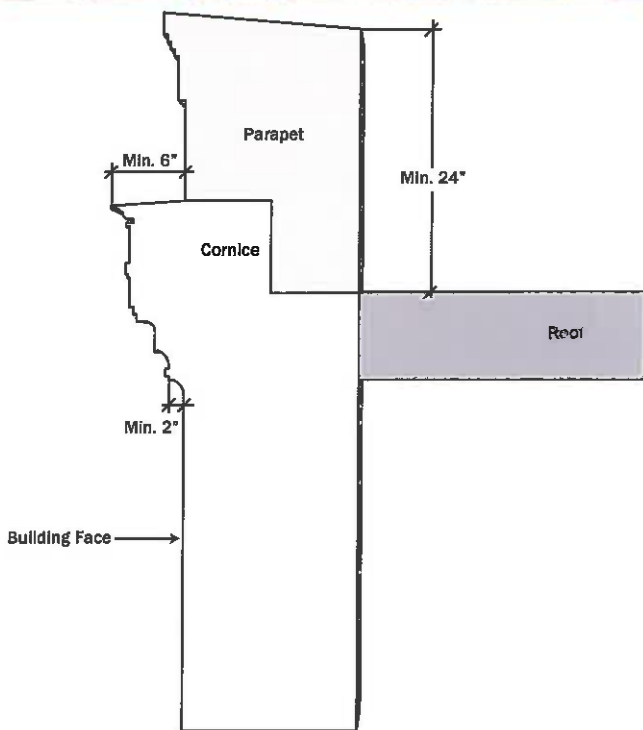
Explanation/Rationale

Well designed rooftops are integrated into the overall facade of the building while still defining the termination of the roof line.

Further Approaches

Ensure that rooftop mechanical equipment is adequately screened from the street from the ground floor of the building through the incorporation of parapets.

Explore the use of roof top gardens in order to reduce stormwater runoff and lower temperatures within the building.



[1]

Roof Forms. [1] Roof forms should distinguish buildings in commercial districts [2] Cornices should have a top that is a minimum of 6 inches and a base that is a minimum of 2 inches from the face of the building.

Bicycle Parking

Standard

Bicycle parking (racks) shall be provided within 50 feet of the main entry of a building. Parking shall be provided at a minimum rate of 2 spaces per business.

Explanation/Rationale

Bicycle parking is an important tool for getting people out of their cars and reducing the community's dependence upon fossil fuels, especially in the downtown area. A mix of uses that allows living and working within close proximity to one another coupled with an attractive pedestrian and bicycle facilities increases the potential for a pedestrian-oriented zone.

Further Approaches

Bike parking that is creatively designed adds to the appearance of the public realm and can help to define a district. Covered parking allows bicycle parking to be used year round.



Bicycle Parking. Attractive bicycle parking facilities promote alternative transportation [1] Short-term bicycle parking can be a design feature within a district [2] Covered parking allows year round use.

COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS

Building and Parking Lot Lighting

Standard

Colored light bulbs and internally lit awnings or canopies shall be prohibited for buildings and within parking lots, except for temporary holiday displays.

In addition, the following standards shall apply to lighting on buildings and within parking lots:

- Building lighting shall be integrated with the architecture. If it is applied to the facade, goose neck fixtures or wall sconces are preferred.
- Maintain the following minimum to maximum ratios:

Downtown Overlay Streets:	3 to 1
Residential Streets:	6 to 1
Residential Walkways/Rural Areas:	10 to 1
- Parking lot lighting shall emit on average 0.6 to 0.8 foot candles and shall not exceed an average height of 30 feet.
- Pedestrian lighting shall not emit more than 1.1 foot candles and shall not exceed an average height of 20 feet.
- Interior display windows shall be designed to be illuminated in evening hours, with provisions for reduced illumination late in the evening.
- Outdoor lighting, including parking lot lighting and public street and pedestrian lighting, shall allow a maximum of 5% of the lamp lumens above the horizontal.

Explanation/Rationale

Lighting should contribute to the sense that the Mixed-Use Pedestrian Commercial Zone (MUPC) is a vital district. Therefore lighting should help promote the patronage of evening businesses by increasing pedestrians' sense of safety. Exterior building lighting should be both utilitarian and attractive and serve as a distinct architectural component of the larger building facade. Parking lot lighting should provide a safe and secure pedestrian environment while preventing light trespass to reduce light pollution.

The purpose of outdoor lighting at night is to provide quick accurate, comfortable sight for identification, information, safety, and security. The design of an outdoor lighting system involves many variables for optimal effectiveness including visibility, economics, and aesthetics, as well as equipment and material usage. A smaller scale system with more lighting elements in the line of view to create either a more traditional environment or a sense of festivity may improve the appearance and use of an area.

[1]



[2]



Building and Parking Lot Lighting. Building lighting should be in the form of [1] goose neck fixtures or sconces [2] Outdoor lighting, including parking lot, public street, and pedestrian lighting, should allow a maximum of 5% of the lamp lumens above the horizontal.

This page left blank intentionally.