

VC Village Center District

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A. INTENT

The intent of the VC Village Center District is to create a compact and unique downtown district for the City by encouraging the redevelopment of property where buildings feature a mix of residential, retail and office uses and are laid out in a pedestrian-oriented manner that reflects a traditional small town urban form. There will be two types of roads in the VC District: Primary roads that function as the main streets and other roads that support the grid network. Parking will be provided on-street and in shared parking areas. Alleys will provide service and parking access.

i User Note: For uses listed in **bold blue**, refer to Article 4, or click on use, for use-specific standards

B. VILLAGE CENTER DISTRICT USES

Use	Floor	
	Ground Floor	Upper Floor
Commercial Uses		
Restaurant, bar, tavern, live entertainment	P	P
Personal Services [□]	P	P
Bed & Breakfast, inn, hotel	P	P
Retail commercial uses [□] up to 6,000 sq. ft.	P	S
Grocery store up to 10,000 sq. ft.	P	
Post office and other government services	P	P
Professional & administrative offices [□]		P
Business service uses [□]	P	P
Establishments involving the manufacture or sale of any alcoholic beverages regulated by the Michigan Liquor Control Act, MCL 436.1101 et seq.	S	S
Banks and other financial institutions	P	P
Outdoor cafes	P	P
Temporary outdoor display and sales §36-4.14	A	A
Adult day care centers [□] §36-4.15	S	S
Recreation, Education & Assembly		
Library, museum	S	P
Child care centers [□] §36-4.15	S	S
Theater, cinema, performing arts, places of worship §36-6.2	S	S
Instruction centers for academic and fine arts purposes	P	P
Health/Fitness facility	P	P
Residential Uses		
Home occupations/Live-Work	P	A
Single family attached		P
Multiple family		P
Accessory uses, customarily incidental to permitted uses	A	A
Uses similar to the above uses, as determined by the Planning Commission	P*/S**	P*/S**
Publicly owned and operated parks and parkways		

P = Permitted S = Special Land Use A = Accessory use
 * If similar to a permitted use on this level, as determined by the Planning Commission
 ** If similar to a special land use permitted on this level, as determined by the Planning Commission, and subject to reasonable conditions to address impacts of similar special land uses.



C. DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS

Lot Size

Minimum lot area[☒]: 5,000 sq ft
 Minimum lot width[☒]: 20 ft

Setbacks[☒]

Minimum front yard setback: 0 ft
 Minimum rear yard setback: 5 ft
 Buildings w/ rear façade on California Drive: 20 ft
 Minimum side yard setback: 0 ft
 Build-to-line coverage[☒]:
 Primary Roads: 90%
 All other roads: 75%

Building Height[☒]

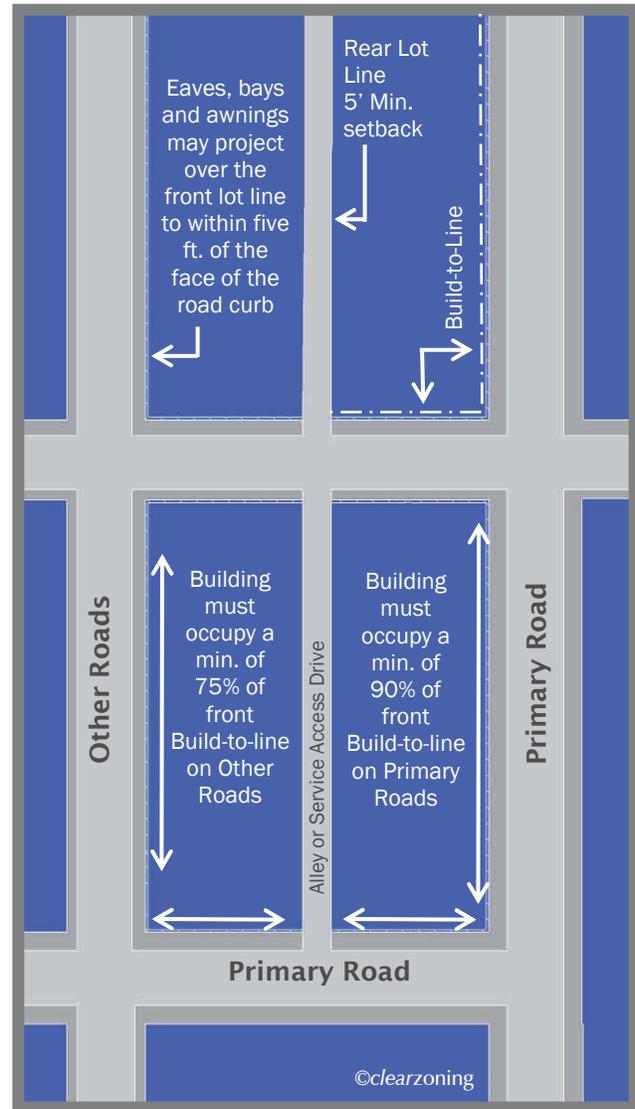
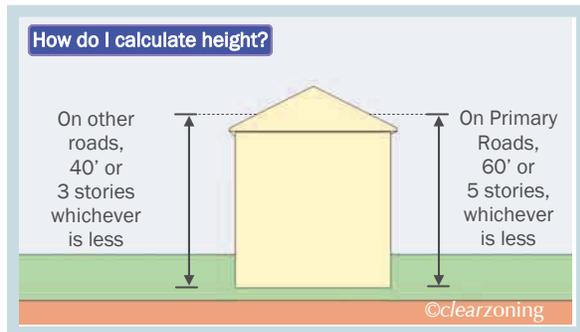
Maximum building height:
 Primary Roads: 5 stories, 60 ft, whichever is less, when setback ten (10) ft from all building sides
 All other roads: 3 stories, 40 ft, whichever is less

Minimum Floor Height

First/ground floor: 14 ft
 Upper floors: 10 ft

Parking Setbacks

Minimum setback: 5 ft; 0 ft from interior lot line



The above drawings are not to scale.

SELECTED REFERENCES

3. Zoning Districts

- **Standards for the VC District** §36-3.1.8

4. Use Standards

- **Hours of operation for businesses** §36-4.7
- **Wireless Communication Facilities**[☒] §36-4.6
- **Mixed Use Building** §36-4.13

5. Site Standards

- **Off-street parking** §36-5.13
- **Building Materials** §36-5.4
- **Grades and Drainage** §36-5.9
- **Waste & Rubbish** §36-5.3

6. Development Procedures

- **Site Plan Review** §36-6.1
- **Mobile Food Vending** §36-6.1.1.B.xii
- **Special Land Uses** §36-6.2

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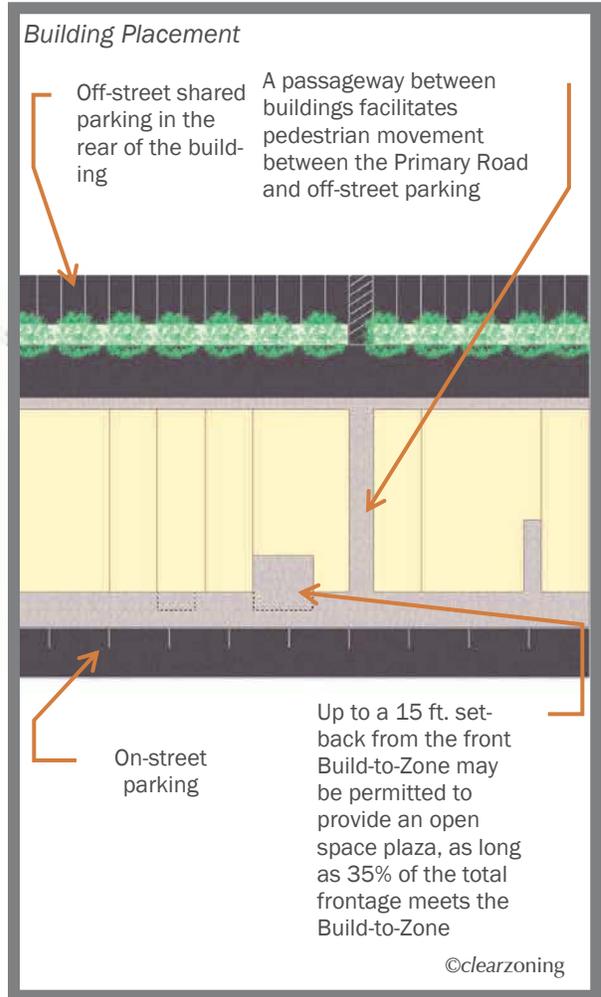


D. BUILDING PLACEMENT

1. Primary Roads: Buildings shall be constructed to the Build-to-Line and occupy 90 percent or more of the full width of the parcel, subject to the following:
 - A. Build-to-Zone⁶: To allow variation and design flexibility, portions of the building façade may include jogs up to five (5') feet from the property line. Additional variations in setback for architectural features that meet the intent and spirit of this ordinance may be permitted at the discretion of the Planning Commission.
 - B. Building Entrances: Recessed areas from three (3) to five (5) feet from the Build-to-Zone shall be provided for primary building entrances.
 - C. Forecourts: The Planning Commission may grant an exception for a building façade to retreat up to fifteen (15') feet from to the Build-to-Zone, into the building mass, to provide an open space plaza or courtyard provided that at least thirty-five percent (35%) of the total frontage meets the Build-to Zone.
 - D. Paved areas: All areas located between the building and the street shall be paved for pedestrians unless specific landscaped areas within the paved sections are approved.
2. Other Roads: Buildings that abut other roads shall be constructed to the Build-to-Zone and occupy 75% or more of the full frontage of the parcel and must meet 3.1.8.E.1 above. The Planning Commission may reduce the 75% frontage requirement to 50% when it determines that development of the site will be phased and that it is not reasonable to meet the 75% requirement at the time of site plan approval.
3. Interior Side Setbacks—None required

E. BUILDING ELEMENTS

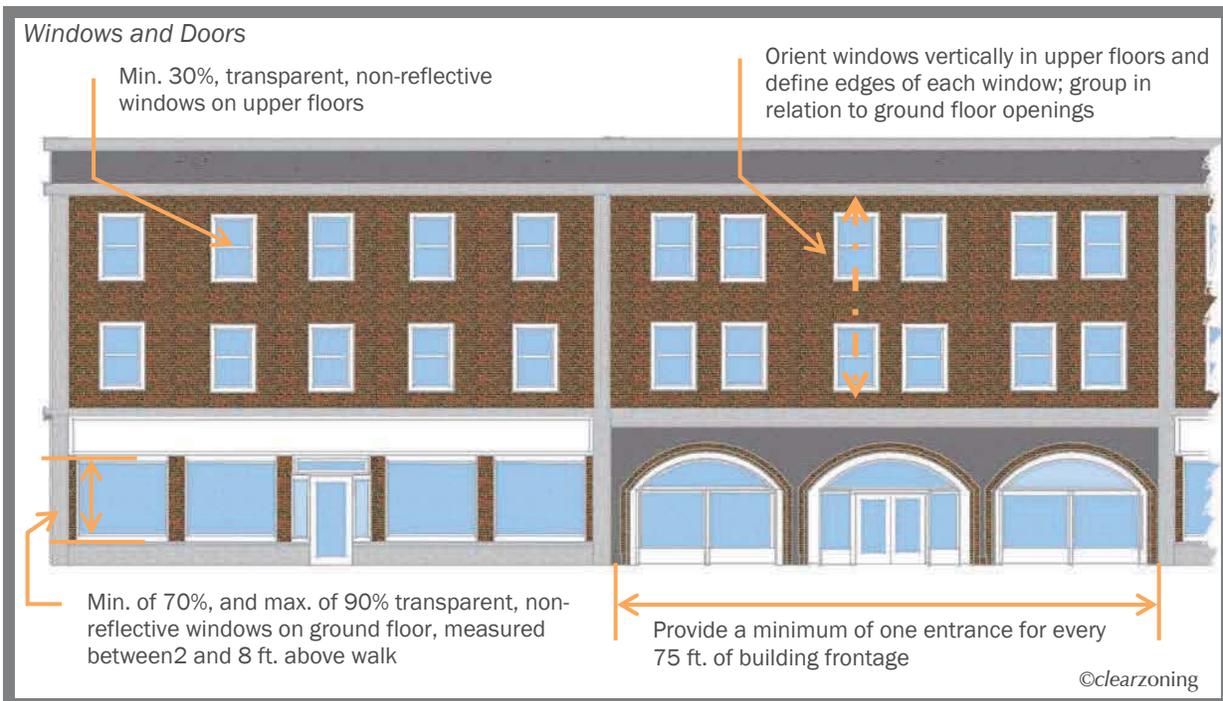
The requirements listed in this subsection, shall apply to all front-facing and exterior-side facing facades as well as facades that directly face a park or plaza. Walls shall not be blank. Walls shall include windows and architectural features customarily found on the front of a building in a traditional downtown setting such as awnings, edge detailing, cornice work, decorative materials, and decorative lighting. The following additional requirements shall apply:



1. Building Composition: Building facades shall be comprised of three distinct components: a base or ground floor, a middle, and a top.
 - A. Base: The base of a building shall be designed to clearly define where the building begins. It shall enhance the pedestrian experience by providing quality durable materials as well as ample windows that encourage views into a ground floor space. Frontage base types shall be one of the following on Primary Roads:
 - i. Arcade: A façade featuring a series of arches and columns.
 - ii. Storefront: The front façade build-to line is at or near the edge of the right-of-way (within the build-to-zone). The entrance to the building, which may be recessed, is at the grade of the sidewalk.

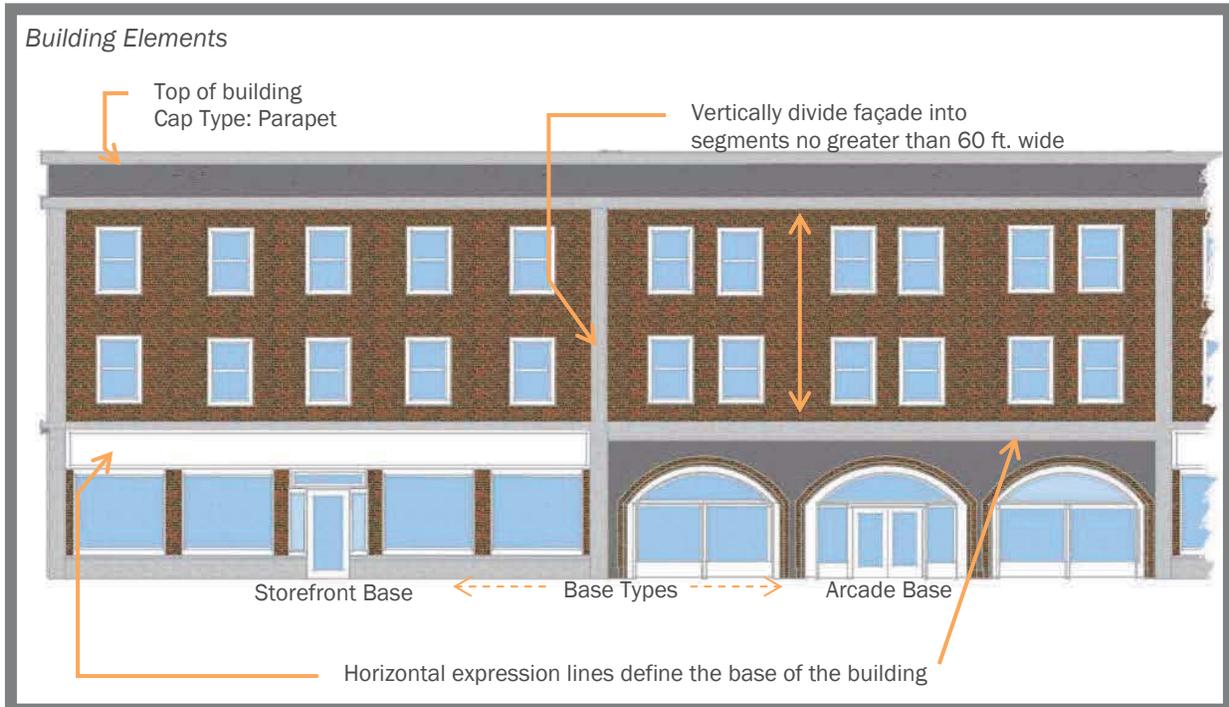
- B. Middle: For buildings with more than one story, the middle of a building, which begins above the ground floor, shall be separated from the ground floor by a visible break that may include a change of color, material, or window pattern. This break may include the sign band area. Upper floor windows shall be inset and grouped to reflect the rhythm of the ground floor openings.
 - C. Top: The top of the building will distinguish the building with a cornice or noticeable roof edge. Flat roofs shall be enclosed with parapets.
 - i. Equipment: Rooftop mechanical and other equipment shall be positioned and screened to minimize views from adjacent properties and obscure views from the public rights-of-way.
 - ii. Accessibility: Roofs may be accessible and may be used as balconies or terraces. Vegetated roofs are encouraged to cool buildings and limit stormwater runoff.
2. Windows and Doors
- A. Generally
- i. Materials: Structural elements to support canopies or signage, along with mullion and frame systems for windows and doors shall be painted,

- powder-coated or stained (or the equivalent). Glass shall be clear or lightly tinted. Reflective glass is not permitted. Glass block windows shall not be permitted unless the Planning Commission grants an exception for use as an accent.
 - ii. Shutters: When shutters are used, whether operating or decorative, they shall be equal to the width of one half of the adjacent window opening
 - iii. Façade Openings: All porches, doors, colonnades, and upper floor windows, shall be vertically proportioned.
- B. Ground Floor windows and doors:
- i. Integral Design: All storefronts shall have doorways, windows, and signage that are integrally designed.
 - ii. Transparency: Each storefront shall have transparent or lightly tinted areas, equal to at least 70 percent, but not more than 90 percent of its portion of the façade, between two (2) and eight (8) feet from the ground. These required window areas shall be either windows that allow views into retail space, dining areas, office work areas, lobbies, pedestrian entrances, merchandise display windows or other windows consistent with encouraging



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an active pedestrian environment along the storefront.

- iii. Entry: At least one functioning doorway shall be provided for every street-facing storefront, with the primary entrance on the street. As applicable for a single ground floor use, one doorway shall be provided for every 75 feet in horizontal building length.
 - C. Upper Floor windows and doors—Glazing: The glazed area of a façade above the first floor shall be between 30 and 50 percent, with each façade being calculated separately, floor to floor. Sill height: All windows shall maintain a consistent sill height, unless the Planning Commission grants an exception for a decorative window element or similar feature.
3. Building Materials
 - A. Facing Street, park or plaza: At least 90% of all exterior building façades facing a street, park, or plaza shall be finished with a combination of two or more of the following: Glass, brick, cut or cast stone, wood, cementitious board (e.g., Hardie Plank), integrally colored concrete units with brick proportions (e.g., half-high “C” brick), and textured stucco.
 - B. Facing other buildings: at least 70% of the exterior façade shall consist of the materials specified in 3.A. above and may also include split-faced, scored, or fluted block.
 - C. Variation: There shall be a change in the vertical or horizontal building plane when there is a change in color or material. Street facing facades shall be divided vertically into segments no greater than sixty (60) feet wide.
 4. Corner Buildings. Buildings located at a street corner shall have appropriate architectural features and details that accentuate its prominent corner location through additional building height and /or adding a building peak or tower element at the corner. Other creative techniques may be used, subject to the acceptance of the Planning Commission. Special architectural corner features may be permitted to exceed the maximum building height by up to ten (10) feet if deemed appropriate by the Planning Commission.
 5. Canopies and Awnings: Facades may be supplemented with awnings that do not serve as signage, but meet the following:
 - A. Style & Height: Straight sheds shall be used. Awnings shall be at least 8 feet above sidewalk grade at the lower drip edge.

- B. Encroachment: Awnings may encroach beyond the Front or Street-side Build-to-Zone and into the street right-of-way or easement, but must avoid the canopy area of street trees (based on tree maturity); and be set back a minimum of five (5) feet from the face of the road curb. Awnings shall be positioned immediately above the ground floor window, in scale with the window and overall building façade.
 - C. Colors: Awnings shall be complementary to the building façade.
 - D. Materials: Awnings shall be constructed of a durable material such as canvas or other material approved by the Building Official that will not fade or tear easily. Plastic and vinyl awnings are not permitted.
 - E. Signage: The vertical drip of an awning may be stenciled with signage a maximum of 8 inches by a horizontal length not to exceed 80 percent of the awning width.
6. Balconies and Overhangs: Balconies and overhangs may be added to facades with the following conditions:
- A. Balconies and overhangs shall not extend more than six feet from the building face.
 - B. Materials shall be compatible with the building and be integrally designed.
8. Building Lighting
- A. Height: For building fronts, exterior lights must be mounted between six and fourteen feet above adjacent grade.
 - B. Alley lighting: Fixtures in alleys shall illuminate the alley, be between 9 and 14 feet in height, have a shield to prevent uplighting, and not cause glare onto adjacent lots.
 - C. Floodlights or directional lights: Such lighting may be used to illuminate alleys or parking garages, but must be shielded to prevent light spills upward, or into adjacent lots, the street, or area outside of the District. Floodlights shall not be used for uplighting.
 - D. Contained illumination: Site lighting shall be of a design and height and shall be located so as to illuminate only the lot. An exterior lighting plan must be submitted and approved with each site plan.

- E. Flashing, traveling, animated or intermittent lighting: Such lighting is not permitted, whether of a permanent or temporary nature.

F. OFF-STREET PARKING

1. Location:
 - A. Primary Roads: Surface parking lots shall have a minimum setback of 60 feet from the sidewalk and be located behind a building. Structured parking is permitted internally, but must be located behind occupied uses on the ground floor.
 - B. Other Roads: Surface parking lots are permitted in the rear or side of any lot and in structures and shall be setback a minimum of 5 feet from the sidewalk. Off-street parking is not permitted in front of a building.
2. Driveways and Access: Driveway access shall not be permitted off a Primary Road.
3. Screening and Landscaping: Parking lots adjacent to public or private streets shall be screened by a combination of landscaping (e.g., hedge row), brick walls, and ornamental metal fencing, with the design intent of screening an area 2.5 feet high adjacent to parking lots. Unless otherwise specified here, other parking requirements found in Section 5.16.4 also apply.
4. Shared Parking: see section 5.13.5
5. Bicycle Parking: Secure, visible, and accessible parking for bicycles shall be provided.

G. FUNCTIONAL ELEMENTS:

1. Loading docks, truck parking, utility meters, HVAC equipment, trash dumpsters, trash compaction and other service functions shall be incorporated into the overall design of buildings and landscaping.
2. Areas for truck parking, trash collection and/or compaction, loading and other such uses shall not be visible from public or private rights-of-way and shall be located at least 20 feet from all street and sidewalks.

H. LANDSCAPING

1. Generally: Sites should include landscaping as an integral part of site design and should give

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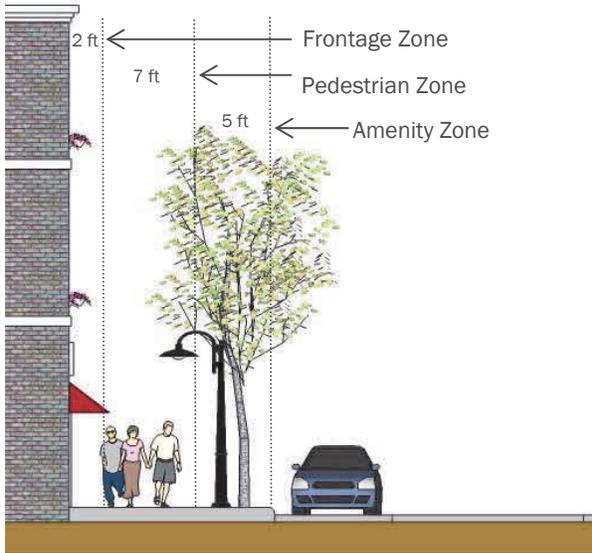
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consideration as to the use of landscaping for stormwater management.

2. Mechanical equipment: Mechanical equipment, including, but not limited to, HVAC equipment, electrical transformers, air compressors, pumps, exterior water heaters, water softeners, private garbage cans (not including public sidewalk waste bins) and storage tanks may not be stored at ground level on a front or exterior side of a building and if provided in the rear, must be screened from public view. Rooftop mechanical equipment must be screened from public view, using materials that are complementary to the overall building design.
3. Buildings, Fronts & Backs
 - A. Street opportunities: Building facades are the public 'face' of the VC district. The use of well-maintained, quality plant materials attract and engage pedestrians and shall be permitted subject to administrative review of a sidewalk permit.
 - B. Rear yards: The private, back yard portions of lots may provide opportunities for businesses to provide a semi-private space for patrons to enjoy, or allow residents to have private or semi-private (for apartments or condominiums) open spaces, gardens and courtyards.
5. Street Trees & Plantings
 - A. Spacing: Trees must be provided along the Primary Road streetscape, with a typical spacing of fifty (50) feet on center.
 - B. Tree wells: Tree wells in sidewalks must be 5 ft. by 5 feet with a 3.5 ft. minimum

depth. Perimeter fencing shall not be permitted.

- C. Clear vision: Trees shall not be placed closer than thirty feet (30') from intersections, nor be placed in the clear vision triangle.
 - D. Irrigation: Irrigation systems must be installed at the time of development.
 - E. Maintenance of public realm: The owner shall maintain the portion of the street between the lot line and back-of-curb and, if applicable, the portion of the alley between the lot line and the edge of pavement.
 - F. Plant Selections: Plants should be chosen for specific locations based on size and mass at maturation as well as ease of maintenance.
6. Street Lighting
 - A. Pedestrian-scaled lighting shall provide a minimum of one foot candle of warm light between the building face and the curb.
 - B. Street lights are required with any new development or redevelopment and must be of the type identified by The City.
 7. Street Furniture
 - A. Street furnishings must be placed within the Amenity Zone, which is defined as the five (5) feet between the curb face and the pedestrian zone.
 - B. Street furnishing shall be placed at least 2.5 feet from the curb face where on-street parking occurs, and 5 feet where travel lanes adjoin the curb, subject to road commission approval, where required.
 - C. Planter walls, where proposed, shall be a minimum width of ten inches (10") and two and one-half feet (2.5') in height, and brick to match pavers. Planter walls shall be located at intersections and placed at evenly spaced intervals along the block.
 - D. Street furnishings must be those identified by The City.
 8. Open Space Standards: Public spaces are meant to provide a means for social interaction. There are two general classifications of public spaces in the VC district: those that are part of a development and those that are to be developed by The City. Generally:



- A. Location: Public open spaces should be practically located so that the public is aware of their location
- B. Function: All open spaces should be functional and purposeful, yet flexible to provide for a variety of uses.
- C. Amenities: Outdoor furniture (benches and tables), art or sculptures, landscaping, change in the type of pavement, semi-enclosure to define the space, drinking fountains, trash receptacles should be added to defined open spaces.
- D. Awareness: Wayfinding signs should be used to direct the public to the location of open spaces, municipal parks or trailheads.
- E. Security: Open spaces shall be well-lit, well-maintained and allow for clear views to create a safe environment.

I. FIRST FLOOR USES ON PRIMARY STREETS

The following regulations apply to all first floor uses:

- 1. Retail and restaurant uses facing a primary street shall be at least twenty (20') feet deep, as measured from the street-facing facade.
- 2. In order to promote a walkable downtown area as described in the intent of this zoning district and the City's Master Plan, Banks, financial institutions, professional, medical, administrative offices, and day care centers shall not comprise more than twenty-five (25%) percent of the street facing façade of the same side of a single block along a primary street.

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