

ZONING DIGEST

**City of Alexandria, Virginia
January 2005**



ZONING DIGEST

January 2005

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Please Note:

THIS DIGEST HAS BEEN PREPARED AS A GUIDE AND IS NOT INTENDED TO BE NOR SHOULD IT BE USED AS A FINAL AUTHORITY. REFERENCE SHOULD BE MADE TO THE ALEXANDRIA ZONING ORDINANCE.

THE INFORMATION CONTAINED IN THIS DOCUMENT IS BASED ON THE ZONING ORDINANCE WITH AMENDMENTS ADOPTED BY CITY COUNCIL AS OF JANUARY 24, 2003, ORDINANCE #4328.

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Introduction

This Zoning Digest contains a brief summary of some of the most frequently used zoning regulations, and is intended to be of assistance to the public.

An index of the uses allowed in each City zone is included here, along with general summaries, illustrations, and maps. **Please refer to the Zoning Ordinance** for specific, zone-by-zone regulations on minimum lot size, frontage, setbacks, and open space; and information on maximum floor area ratio, residential density, and building heights. The Zoning Ordinance should also be consulted for information on: rezonings and zoning ordinance changes, master plan changes, site plan approval, subdivisions, residential cluster developments, Coordinated Development District approval, special use permits, variance requests, and Old and Historic Alexandria District and Parker-Gray District plan reviews.

Questions on these topics should be addressed to Planning and Zoning staff in the divisions listed at right.

Zoning Services

301 King Street, Room 2100
Alexandria, Virginia 22314
703.838.4688
Fax: 703.838.6393

For questions regarding general zoning and subdivision regulations, use of land, zoning complaints, zoning inspections, signs, fences, sheds, variances, and special exceptions for fences and additions

Historic Preservation

301 King Street, Room 2100
Alexandria, Virginia 22314
703.838.4666
Fax: 703.838.6393

For questions regarding Old & Historic Alexandria District plan review, Parker-Gray District plan review, and the Boards of Architectural Review (BAR)

Development

301 King Street, Room 2100
Alexandria, Virginia 22314
703.838.4666
Fax: 703.838.6393

For questions regarding Master Plan changes, zoning map changes (rezonings), Zoning Ordinance changes, Special Use Permits, Development Special Use Permits, subdivisions, Coordinated Development Districts, and Transportation Management Plans

Related City agencies

Code Enforcement Bureau: 703.838.4360
Office of Business Assistance: 703.838.4227
Health Department: 703.823.7333
Police Department: 703.838.4444
Transportation and Environmental Services: 703.838.4324



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Use
Index**

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ZONING USE INDEX—Residential

USES PERMITTED

RESIDENTIAL ZONES

	R-20	R-12	R-8	R-5	R-2-5	RA	RB	RCX	RC	RD	RM	RS	RT
Apartment Hotel									S	S			
Banks, Savings and Loans, etc.								S*	P*/S*				
Barber/Beauty Shop								S*	P*/S*	P*			
Bed and Breakfast											P*		
Cemetery	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S
Child or Elder Care Home	P*	P*	P*	P*	P*	P*	P*	P*	P*		P*	P*	P*
Church	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P		P		
Community/Rec. Center (non-commercial)		S	S	S	S	S	S						
Convenience Store								S*	S*				
Drug Store								S*	P*/S*				
Dwelling, Multi-Family						P		P	P	P			
Dwelling, Single Family	P	P	P	P	P	P	P				P		
Dwelling, Townhouse						P	P	P	P		P	P	P
Dwelling, Two Family (Semi-detached & Duplex)					P	P	P				P		
Florist									P*	P*			
Fraternal or Private Club										S*			
Gift Shop								S*	P*/S*				
Grocery Store								S*	P*/S*				
Health and Athletic Club								S*	S*				
Home for the Elderly						S	S	S	S				
Home Occupation	P*	P*	P*	P*	P*	P*	P*	P*	P*		P*	P*	P*
Laundry & Dry Cleaning Pick-up Station									P*/S*	P*			
Nursery School						S	S	S	S		S		

KEY:

P = PERMITTED

S = SPECIAL USE PERMIT REQUIRED

*** = REFER TO ZONING ORDINANCE FOR SPECIFIC LIMITATIONS**

ZONING USE INDEX—Residential

USES PERMITTED

RESIDENTIAL ZONES

	R-20	R-12	R-8	R-5	R-2-5	RA	RB	RCX	RC	RD	RM	RS	RT
Nursery School (Church or School Bldg.)	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S		S		
Nursing or Conv. Home or Hospice						S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S
Office, Business								S*	P*/S*	P*			
Office, Professional								S*	P*/S*				
Parking or Storage, Motor Vehicle											S*		
Photographic Studio										P*			
Public Park/Playground	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P		P	P	P
Restaurant								S*	S*	S*			
Retail Shopping Establishment (see definition on pg. 12)									S*				
Rooming House						S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S
School, Private (Academic only)	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S		S		
School, Public	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P		P		
Seminary, Convent and Monastery	S					S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S
Stationery Store										P*			

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ZONING USE INDEX—Commercial/Office/Industrial

USES PERMITTED

COMMERCIAL, OFFICE, AND INDUSTRIAL ZONES

	CL	CC	CSL	CG	CD	CD-X	CR	OC	OCM (50)	OCM (100)	OCH	I	UT	NR
Ambulance Service												P		
Amusement Enterprise				S	S	S	P	S	S	S	S			S
Animal Shelter/Kennel												P		
Apartment Hotel				S	S	S		S	S	S	S			
Asphalt Plant												S		
Auto Repair (General)												S		
Auto Repair (Light)		S	S	S			P*	S	S	S	S	P		
Auto and Trailer Rental or Sales			S	S								S		
Auto Service Station		S	S	S			S	S	S	S	S	P		
Bank, Barber Shop, Beauty Shop: see "personal service establishment"														
Bed and Breakfast					S*									
Bottling Plant												P		
Building Material Storage and Sales			S									P		
Bus Station (Interstate)							S	S	S	S	S	S	S	
Bus Shelter (Private Property)	S	S	S	S	S	S		S	S	S	S	S		S
Catering Operation			S		S	S		S	S	S				
Cemetery	P	P	P	P	P			P	P	P				
Church	P	P	P	P	P	P		P	P	P				P*
Concrete Mixing and Batching												S		
Congregate Housing Facility	S	S	S	S	S	S		S	S	S	S			
Convenience Store		S	S	S				S	S	S	S	S		S
Day Care Center	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S			S
Day Nursery	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S			S

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ZONING USE INDEX—Commercial/Office/Industrial

USES PERMITTED

COMMERCIAL, OFFICE, AND INDUSTRIAL ZONES

	CL	CC	CSL	CG	CD	CD-X	CR	OC	OCM (50)	OCM (100)	OCH	I	UT	NR
Drive-Through Facility (see definition on pg. 12)		S	S	S	S*		S	S	S	S	S	P		
Dwelling, Multi-Family	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	S*/P*	S*/P*			
Dwelling, Single Family	P	P	P	P	P	P		P	P	S*/P*	S*/P*			
Dwelling, Townhouse	P	P	P	P	P	P		P	P	S*/P*	S*/P*			
Dwelling, Two Family	P	P	P	P	P	P		P	P	S*/P*	S*/P*			
Electric Power Generating Plant													S	
Electric Substation/Switching Station													P	
Farmers' Market (city-sponsored)														P
Fraternal or Private Club	S	S	S	S	S	S		S	S	S	S			S
Freight Distribution Center												S		
Fuel Yard												S		
Funeral Home	S	S	S	S	S	S		S	S	S	S	P		
Glass Shop			S									P		
Health and Athletic Club				S	S	S	P	S	S	S	S			
Helistop												S	S	
Home for the Elderly	S	S	S	S	S	S		S	S	S	S			
Homeless Shelter					S	S		S	S	S	S	S		
Hospital				S	S	S		S	S	S	P	S		
Hotel				S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S			
Ice and Cold Storage												P		
Junk Yard												S		
Laundry & Dry Cleaning Operation		S	S	S								P		
Laundry & Dry Cleaning Pick-up Station	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P			P*

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ZONING USE INDEX—Commercial/Office/Industrial

USES PERMITTED

COMMERCIAL, OFFICE, AND INDUSTRIAL ZONES

	CL	CC	CSL	CG	CD	CD-X	CR	OC	OCM (50)	OCM (100)	OCH	I	UT	NR
Light Assembly, Service and Crafts			S											
Machine Shop												P		
Manufacturing												P		
Medical Care Facility				S	S	S		S	S	S	P	S		
Medical Laboratory	P	P	P	P	P	P		P	P	P	P	P		S
Newspaper Office (incl. Printing/Publishing)					S	S								
Nursery School	S	S	S	S	S	S		S	S	S				
Nursing/Convalescent Home or Hospice	S	S	S	S	S	S		S	S	S				S
Office, Business	P	P	P	P	P	P		P	P	P	P	S*/P*		P
Office, Medical	P	P	P	P	P	P		P	P	P	P			S
Office, Professional	P	P	P	P	P	P		P	P	P	P			P*
Office, Public Utility Company												P		
Outdoor Food and Crafts Market	S	S	S	S	S	S		S	S	S	S			P
Parcel Delivery			S									P		
Parking or Storage, Motor Vehicle	S*	S*	S*	S*	P*	P*	P	S*	S*	S*	S*	P*		
Personal Service Establishment (see definition on pg. 12)	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P				P
Pet Supplies, Grooming & Training (no overnight boarding)	P	S	S	P*	P	P		P	P	P	P	P		
Photographic Studio (see "personal service establishment")														
Printing or Publishing Facilities												P		
Public Building	S	S	S	S	S	S		S	S	S	S	S		S

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ZONING USE INDEX—Commercial/Office/Industrial

USES PERMITTED

COMMERCIAL, OFFICE, AND INDUSTRIAL ZONES

	CL	CC	CSL	CG	CD	CD-X	CR	OC	OCM (50)	OCM (100)	OCH	I	UT	NR
Radio or TV Broadcasting Facility					P	P		P	P	P	P	P		
Railroad, Bus and Rail Transit Passenger Stations													P	
Railroad, Bus and Rail Transit Maintenance and Repair Operations													S	
Railroad Tracks													P	
Railroad Switching Yard													P	
Railroad Engine Service Operations													S	
Railroad Car Assembly Operations													S	
Railroad Repair Yards													S	
Research and Testing Laboratory			S					S	S	S		P		
Restaurant	S	S	S	S	S	S	P	S	S	S	S	S		P
Retail Shopping Establishment (see definition on pg. 12)	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	S*/P*	P
Recycling/Materials Recovery Facility												S		
Rooming House	S	S	S	S	S	S		S	S	S	S			
School, Private (Academic or Commercial)	S	S	S	S	S	S	P*	S	S	S	S			
School, Public	P	P	P	P	P	P								
Seminary, Convent and Monastery	P	P	P	P	P	P		P	P	P	P			
Sheet Metal Shop												P		
Social Service Use	S	S	S	S	S	S		S	S	S	S			S
Stone Crushing Operation												S		
Stone Monument Works												P		

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ZONING USE INDEX—Commercial/Office/Industrial

USES PERMITTED

COMMERCIAL, OFFICE, AND INDUSTRIAL ZONES

	CL	CC	CSL	CG	CD	CD-X	CR	OC	OCM (50)	OCM (100)	OCH	I	UT	NR
Storage Buildings/Warehouses			S*									P		
Telephone Co. Dial Center													P	
Theatre [live]														P
Tourist Home					S	S								
Utility (Public) Service Yard													S	
Utility/Transp. Equipment Outdoor Storage													S	
Vehicle Towing & Impound Lot												S		
Waste-to-Energy Plant												S		
Water Pumping Station, Tower or Reservoir													P	
Wholesale Business			S		S	S		S	S	S	S	P		
WMATA Transit Station and Facilities													P	
Uses Not Listed in Code												S		

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ZONING USE INDEX—Mixed/POS/WPR

USES PERMITTED

MIXED USE, POS, AND WPR ZONES

	CRMU (L)	CRMU (M)	CRMU (H)	CRMU-X	W-1	CDD	POS	WPR
Amusement Enterprise	S	S	S	S				
Apartment Hotel	S	S	S	S				
Bike Rental								S
Boat Docking Facility, Marina					S*			S
Bus Shelter (Private Property)	S	S	S	S				
Commercial Shipping/Freight Terminal					S			
Congregate Housing Facility	S	S	S	S				
Convenience Store	S	S	S	S				
Day Care Center	S	S	S	S				
Drive-Through Facility (see definition on pg. 12)	S	S	S					
Dwelling, Multi-Family	P	P	P	S	P			
Dwelling, Single Family	P	P	P	P	P			
Dwelling, Townhouse	P	P	P	P	P			
Dwelling, Two-Family	P	P	P	P	P			
Electric Substation/Switching Station					P*			
Fraternal or Private Club				S				
Health and Athletic Club	S	S	S	S	S			
Home for the Elderly	S	S	S	S	S			
Hotel	S	S	S	S				
Medical Care Facility				S				
Medical Laboratory	P	P	P	S				
Nursery School					S			
Nursing/Convalescent Home, Hospice	S	S	S	S				

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ZONING USE INDEX—Mixed/POS/WPR

USES PERMITTED

MIXED USE, POS, AND WPR ZONES

	CRMU (L)	CRMU (M)	CRMU (H)	CRMU-X	W-1	CDD	POS	WPR
Office, Business	P	P	P	S	P			
Office, Medical	P	P	P	S				
Office, Professional	P	P	P	S	P			
Outdoor Rec. Facility (Commercial)					P			S
Outdoor Food and Crafts Market		S	S	S	S		S	S
Parking or Storage, Motor Vehicle	S*	S*	S*					
Personal Service Establishment (see definition on pg. 12)	P	P	P	S	S			
Pet Supplies, Grooming & Training				S				
Public Building				S	P			P
Public Use Building (Privately Owned, incl. Auditorium, Perf. Arts Ctr, etc.)					S			S
Public Park/Playground								P
Public Park/Athletic Field, Outdoor Recreational Facility					P			P
Radio or TV Broadcasting Facility	P	P	P	S				
Restaurant	S	S	S	S	S			S
Retail Shopping Establishment (see definition on pg. 12)	P	P	P	S	S			P*
Rooming House					S			
School, Private (Academic or Comm.)	S	S	S	S				
Social Service Use				S				
Tourist Home					S			
Utility (Public) Service Yard					P*			

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DEFINITIONS REFERENCED IN ZONE USE TABLES

Drive-Through Facility. Any use of land which provides goods or services to customers while the customer remains in his/her car, such as a drive-through bank, restaurant, or car wash.

Personal Service Establishment. A store or shop providing personal, financial, technical, or repair services, assistance, or advice to individual consumers, including but not limited to:

- Arts and crafts studio or store
- Appliance repair or rental
- Bank, savings and loan, or credit union
- Bicycle repair
- Barbershop or beauty shop
- Contractors' office, without accessory storage
- Dressmaker or tailor
- Dry-cleaning or laundry pickup station
- Laundromat
- Locksmith
- Musical instrument repair
- Optical center
- Pawnshop
- Professional photography studio
- Shoe repair
- Furniture upholstery shop
- Watch repair
- Printing or photocopy service shop

Personal service establishments do not include (as either a primary or accessory use): automobile-oriented uses; the sale, rental, storage, service or repair of any motor vehicles, including automobiles, trucks, buses, trailers, recreational vehicles and motorcycles; or any use separately listed in a zone.

Retail Shopping Establishment. A store or shop engaged in the sale of commodities or goods to individual consumers for personal use rather than for resale, including but not limited to:

- Antiques or secondhand articles store
- Appliance store
- Art gallery, commercial
- Art supply store
- Auto parts shop, without service or installation on premises
- Bakery (limited to a maximum of 3500 square feet)
- Book store
- Candy store
- Clothing, clothing accessories, or dry goods store
- Department store
- Drugstore
- Floor covering store
- Florist shop
- Furniture store
- Grocery store
- Hardware, paint, and wallpaper stores
- Household goods store
- Jewelry, leather goods, or luggage store
- Lawn and garden supply store
- Musical instruments store
- Photographic equipment or supply store
- Sporting goods store
- Tobacco shop
- Toy store
- Variety goods store
- Video rental or sales store

Retail shopping establishments do not include (as either a primary or accessory use): automobile-oriented uses; the sale, rental, storage, service or repair of any motor vehicles, including automobiles, trucks, buses, trailers, recreational vehicles and motorcycles; or any use separately listed in a zone.

DEFINITIONS REFERENCED IN ZONE USE TABLES

Home occupations - permitted occupations. Home occupations which have the general characteristics of the following uses are permitted:

- Dressmaker, seamstress, and tailor
- Teacher
- Artist, photographer, sculptor
- Author, composer, editor, translator, writer
- Home crafts, such as model making, rug weaving, lapidary work, macrame, cabinet making, and weaving
- Office of an ordained minister of religion
- Office of an accountant, architect, bookkeeper, clerical service, computer programmer, consultant, dentist, arts and crafts instructor, lawyer, land surveyor, landscape architect, musician, physician, engineer, realtor, or insurance agent or broker
- Office of a salesperson, sales representative, or manufacturer's representative
- Repair services for such items as musical instruments, watches, clocks, small household appliances, toys, or models
- Contractor or service business, provided that all the requirements of section 7-300 of the Zoning Ordinance are met, and that no employees, other than persons legally residing on the premises, shall report to work at a residential location other than a job site.

Home occupations - use limitations. Each home occupation shall be subject to the following use limitations, each of which shall be applied equally and no one of which shall be interpreted as relaxing another:

Only those persons who are bona fide residents of the premises may participate in the home occupation. There shall be no on site employment or use of labor from persons who are not bona fide residents of the dwelling.

No mechanical or electrical equipment shall be employed on the premises other than machinery or equipment customarily found in a home, associated with a hobby or avocation not conducted for gain or profit, or customary for a small business, professional, or medical office.

No outside display of goods or outside storage of equipment or material used in the home occupation shall be permitted.

There shall be no customers or clients permitted except in the case of instruction to students, in which case the number of students shall be limited to a total of 12 per day, with no more than two students present at any one time.

No sign shall advertise the presence or conduct of the home occupation.

All parking required for the home occupation shall be accommodated in permissible driveway and garage areas on the lot.

There shall be no evidence that will indicate from the exterior of the premises that the building is being utilized in whole or in part for any purpose other than as a dwelling.

There shall be no audible noise, detectable vibration, or odor beyond the confines of the subject dwelling unit or accessory building, including transmittal through vertical or horizontal party walls.

The total floor area which may be used for a home occupation shall not exceed 25 percent of the total floor area of the dwelling unit in which it is located, less any attached garages. As part of such home occupation floor area, no more than two percent of the total floor area of the dwelling unit or maximum of 20 cubic feet, whichever is less, shall be used for storage of stock-in-trade. The storage of hazardous materials not otherwise and customarily associated with home use is prohibited.

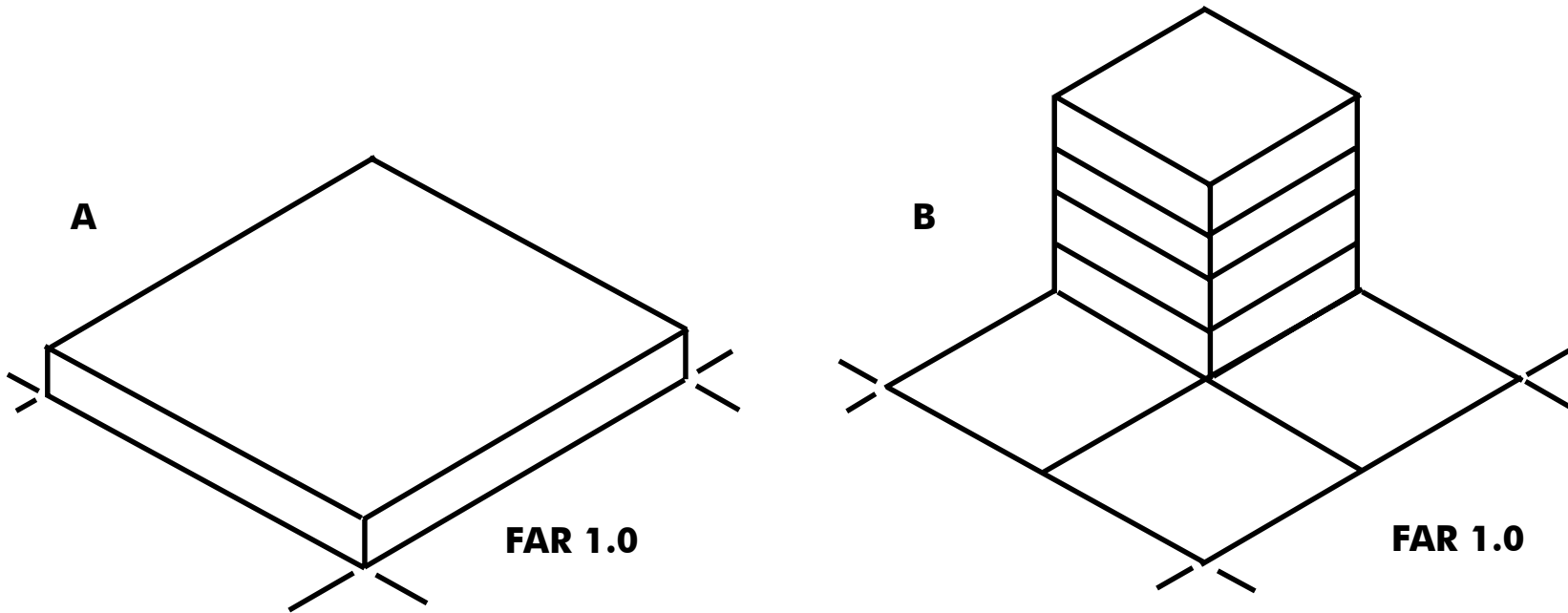
The lot or property on which the home occupation is conducted shall not have any parking space added to it during the time the home occupation is being conducted; nor shall any parking space be used that was not customarily used prior to that time.



Illustrations

Floor Area Ratio	15
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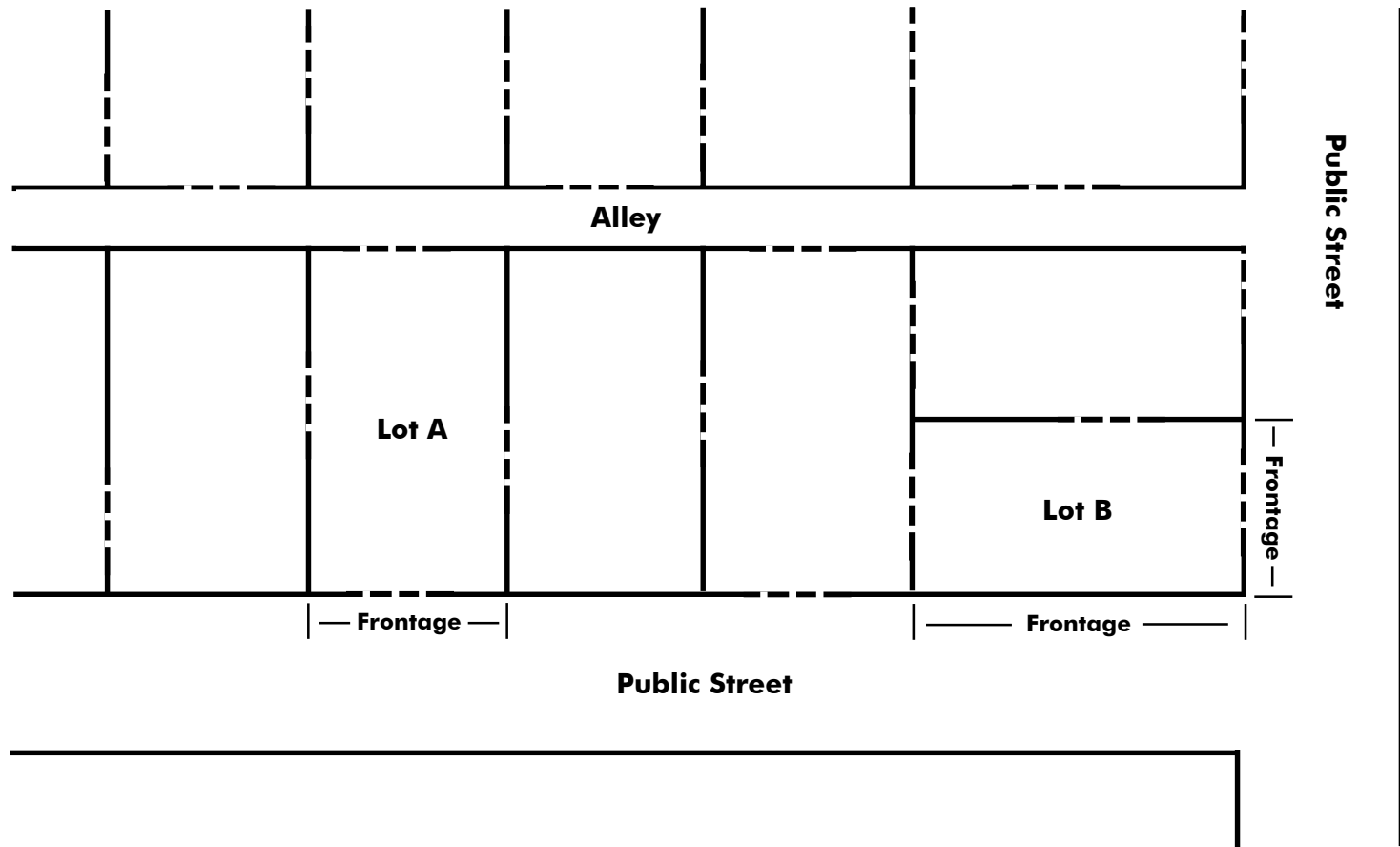
FLOOR AREA RATIO



The floor area ratio (FAR) is the ratio of the total building floor area to lot area.

The above examples show two identical lots with different building configurations but the same FAR. Building A is one story and covers the entire lot, while B is four stories on one quarter of the lot.

FRONTAGE



Frontage is the measurement in feet of the portion of a lot which abuts a public street.

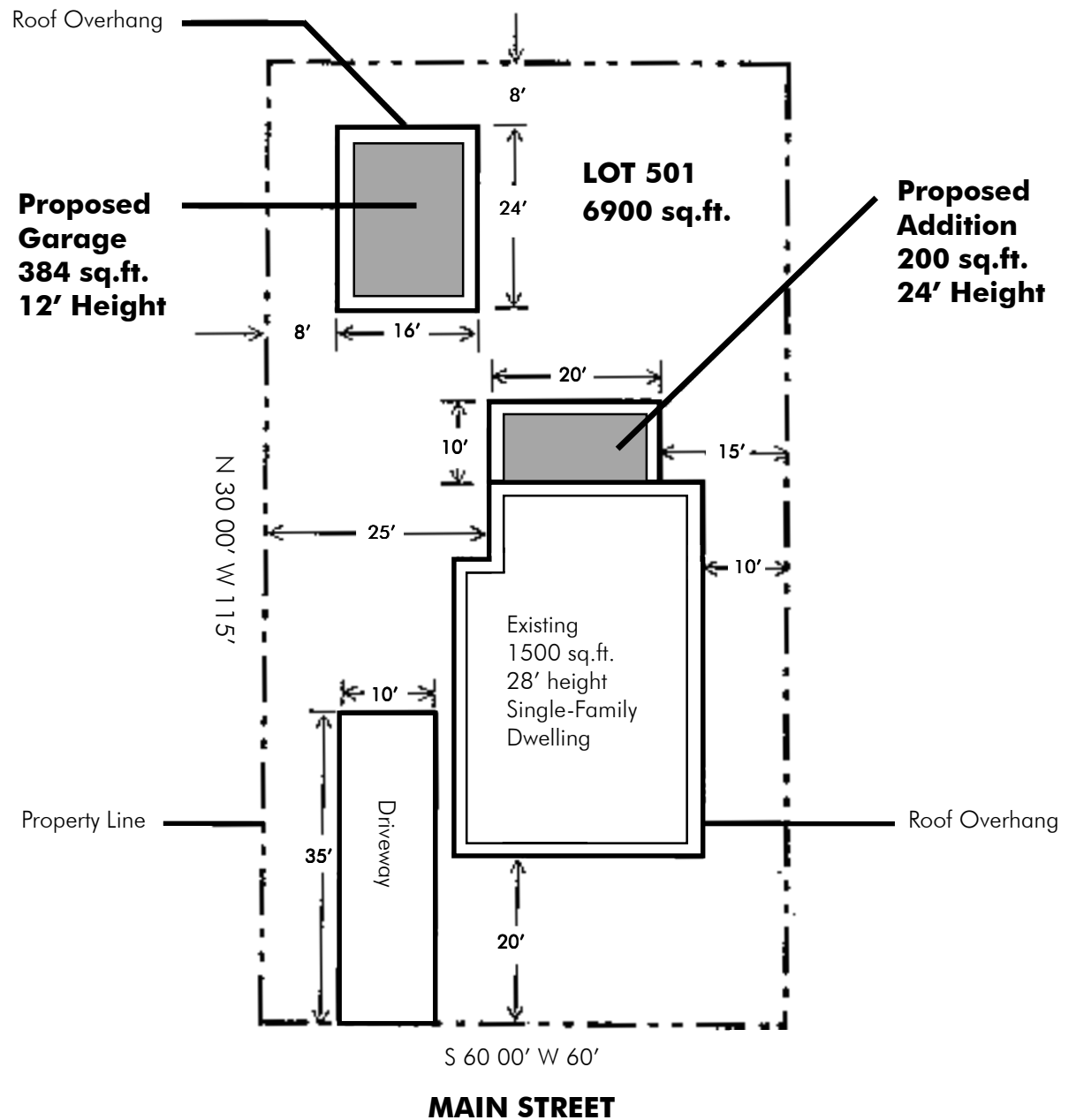
In the above illustration, Lot A has one frontage, while lot B has frontages on two streets. Alleys are not considered to be public streets when determining frontage requirements.

SAMPLE SURVEY PLAT and SETBACKS FOR INTERIOR LOT

A survey plat is required to be submitted to the Planning & Zoning Department for the approval of any addition, alteration, or new residential building under a certain size.

The example here shows the format and information required to be shown on a survey plat. All yard distances shall be measured from the furthest projecting point of the building, including roof overhang, to the nearest lot line.

Please contact the Zoning Counter at 703-838-4666 for information on applicable property line setback distances or for any other questions.

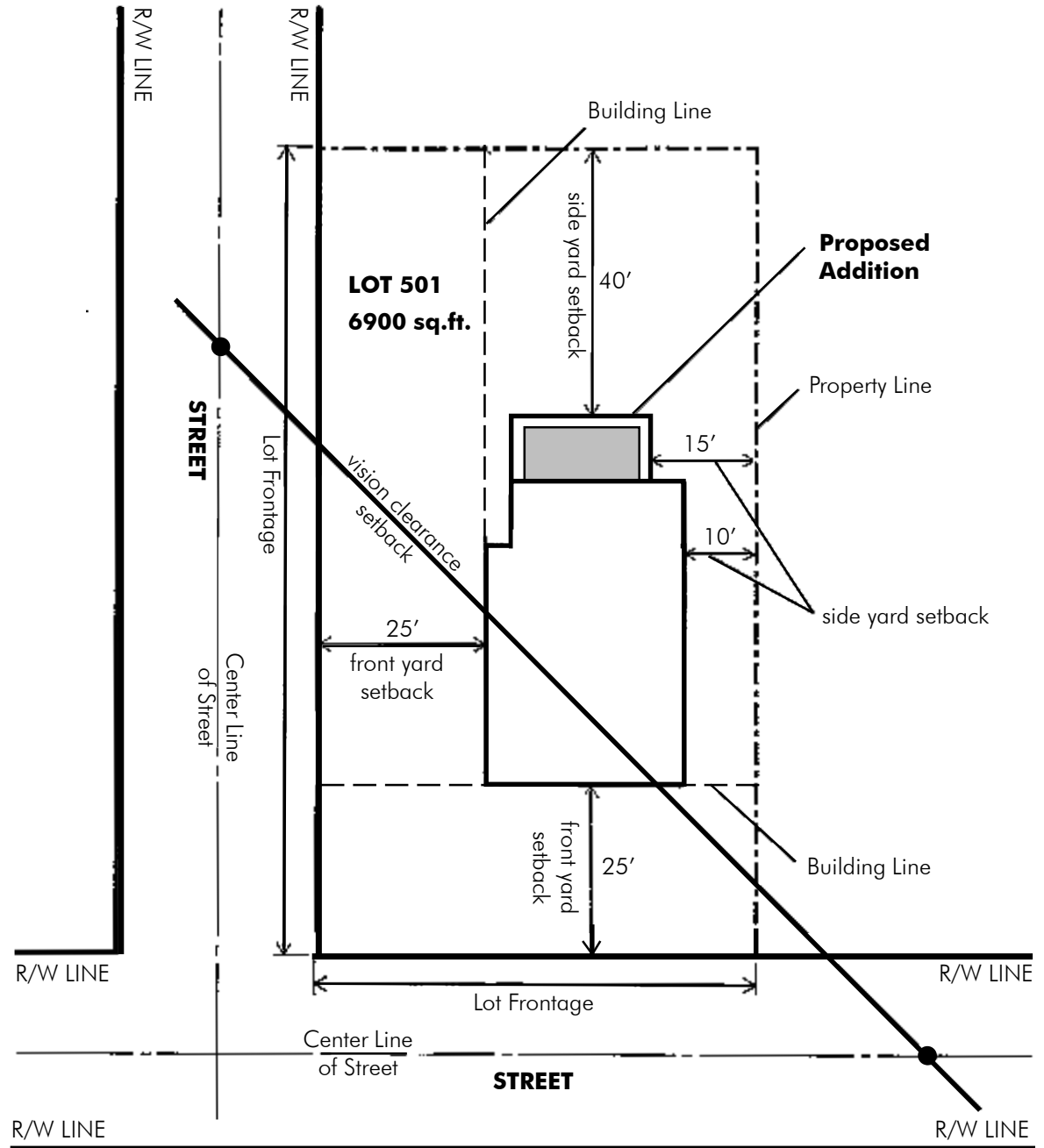


Scale: 1"=20'

SAMPLE SETBACKS FOR CORNER LOT

The example at right illustrates the types of setbacks applicable for a corner lot.

Please contact the Zoning Counter at 703-838-4666 for information on applicable property line setback distances, or for any other questions.



OLD AND HISTORIC ALEXANDRIA DISTRICT

The Old and Historic Alexandria District was established in 1946 to preserve residential and non-residential buildings with a significant architectural and cultural history. Any building proposed for construction, reconstruction, alteration, or restoration within the District must be approved by the Board of Architectural Review (BAR). The BAR also has authority over the moving, removing, encapsulation, and demolition of building in the District, as well as the approval of signs.



PARKER-GRAY DISTRICT

The Parker-Gray District was established in Alexandria in 1984 to preserve and protect the architectural and cultural character of the approximately 40-block predominantly residential neighborhood.

New construction and renovation, as well as the moving, removing, capsulating, or razing of buildings in the District, must be approved by the Parker-Gray Board of Architectural Review (BAR).



GENERAL SIGN TYPES AND LIMITATIONS—COMMERCIAL USES

Wall Signs

Signs may be displayed on a building wall that faces a street, alley, or parking area. The total size of all signs shall not exceed one square foot for each foot of building wall along the frontage.

Window Signs

Signs in windows are permitted, but are limited to a maximum of 20 percent of the area of the window. Window signs are included in the total area of all signs displayed on the building.

Freestanding Signs

If a lot qualifies to erect a freestanding sign, a monument-style sign is generally preferred.

Canopy Signs

Canopies can be used as a sign backdrop. The dimension of the canopy panels are included as part of the sign. The canopy sign is included in the total area of all signs displayed on the building.

Temporary Signs, Portable A-Frame Signs

Placing a sign on a public right-of-way or sidewalk is prohibited. Hanging a temporary sign on building wall is also prohibited, except for a “grand opening” or “going out of business” sign, which may be hung for up to 30 days.

Sign Removal

After a business has been permanently closed for 30 days, all signs must be removed. A sign box, frame, or supporting standard that has not been used for one year must also be removed.

For full details on sign regulations, please refer to the Zoning Ordinance or contact the Planning & Zoning Department at 703.838.4666.

Prohibited signs

- Animated signs
- Banners (except those specially authorized by the City Council or City Manager)
- Billboards
- Flashing signs
- Freestanding sign advertising a business, located within 200 ft. of Washington Street
- Home occupation signs
- Illuminated signs (in excess of 35 ft. above ground and more than 2000 ft. from U.S. Route 95)
- Mobile and portable signs
- Motor vehicle signs
- Moving or windblown signs
- Remote signs (advertising a business at another location)
- Roof signs
- Signs affixed to natural features
- Signs which interfere with traffic, distract or confuse motorists, or are otherwise potentially hazardous

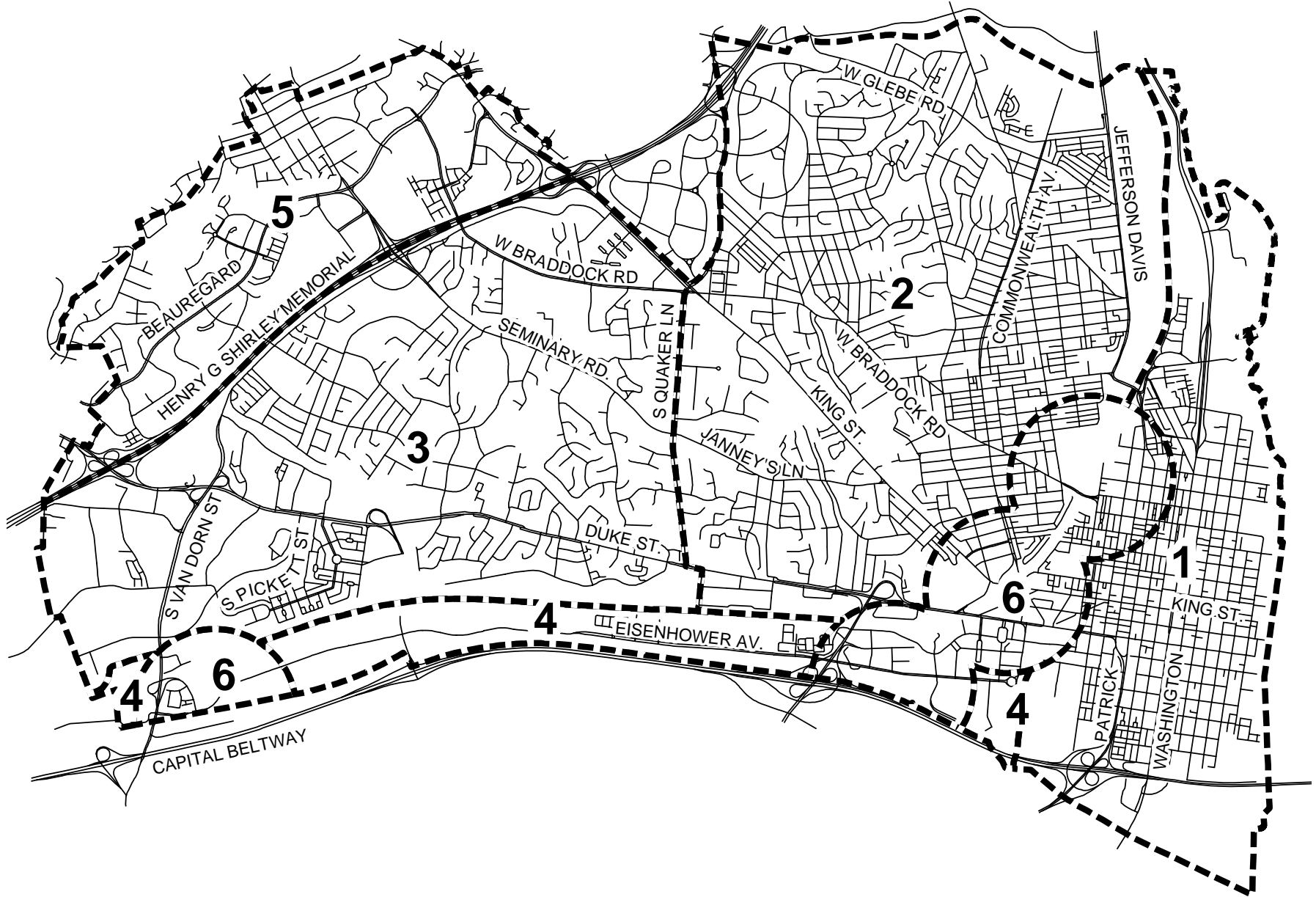
**Parking
District
Maps**

City Parking Districts 23

Central Business District 24

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CITY OF ALEXANDRIA PARKING DISTRICTS

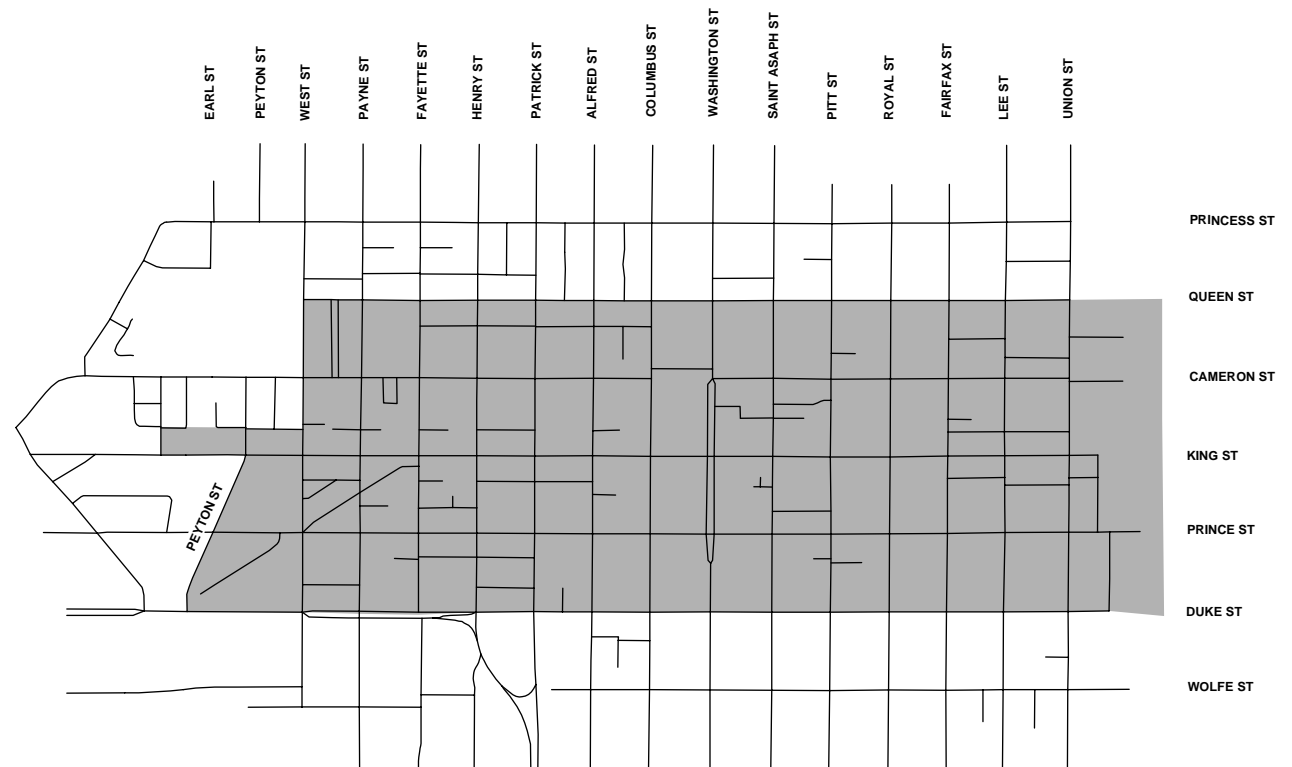


CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT

Within the Central Business District (CBD), parking and loading areas are not required for the following uses when located on a parcel or contiguous parcels of land of 10,000 square feet or less which existed on or before June 28, 1983:

- automobile service stations
- industrial warehouse buildings
- medical or dental clinics
- non-retail uses (including personal service establishments)
- office buildings
- retail uses
- schools

Restaurants in the CBD located within the area of the Old Town Small Area Plan are subject to the "Old Town Restaurant Policy" (Council Resolution #1672). Restaurants in the CBD not located within this area are currently exempt from required parking; however, special use permit approval for a restaurant may require the provision of adequate off-street parking.



Valet parking to an off-street parking facility is permitted in the CBD, with special use permit approval. Valet parking as required parking permitted, subject to provisions in Sec. 8-400 (C) of the Zoning Ordinance.

See Zoning Ordinance Sec. 8-400 for a full description of the parking requirements for this area.

KING STREET METRO PARKING DISTRICT

See Zoning Ordinance Sec. 8-400 for a full description of the parking requirements for this area.

