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# ZEBULON

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NORTH CAROLINA

## TOWN OF ZEBULON PLANNING BOARD

February 8, 2021

(Following 7:00 PM Joint Public Hearing)

Due to COVID-19 we will be taking public hearing comments in writing. Comments will be read into the record at the meeting. Please get all comments of 400 words or less to the Deputy Town Clerk – Stacie Paratore (sparatore@townofzebulon.org) by 12:00pm on February 8, 2021.

### **I. CALL TO ORDER**

### **II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

A. DECEMBER 14, 2020

### **III. NEW BUSINESS**

A. *QA 2021-01 Sign Regulations.* A staff-initiated request to amend the Zebulon UDO Sections 3.5.3.E, 3.5.4.E to allow ground signs within the DTC and DTP Zoning Districts, and Table 5.11.9 of the UDO to limit sign height based on Zoning District.

### **IV. ADJOURNMENT**

**Zebulon  
Planning Board  
Minutes  
December 14, 2020**

Present: Gene Blount, Laura Johnson, Stephanie Jenkins, Michael Germano, Jessica Luther, David Lowry, Joe Moore-Town Manager, Michael Clark-Planning, Meade Bradshaw-Planning, Lisa Markland-Town Clerk, Stacie Paratore-Deputy Town Clerk, Sam Slater-Attorney

Laura Johnson called the meeting to order at 7:00pm.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Michael Germano made a motion, second by Jessica Luther to approve the agenda. There was no discussion and the motion passed unanimously.

**ADOPTION OF MINUTES**

Laura Johnson made a motion, second by Stephanie Jenkins to approve the October 26, 2020 minutes. There was no discussion and the motion passed unanimously.

**PUBLIC HEARING**

A. *RZ 2020-01 – 0, 601, 703, 705, 709 E. Gannon Ave.*

Michael Clark explained staff was proposing a rezoning request from Thurston Debnam on behalf of Providence Banks for 0, 601, 703, 705, and 709 E. Gannon Avenue from R-2 Residential to HC Heavy Commercial without conditions. The parcel size was approximately 37.44 acres. Due to a technical error the zoning designation was changed from the former HB-Heavy Business zoning classification to R-2 Residential as part of the UDO updated. The aerial map, zoning map, and pictures of the property were shown.

Staff recommended approval of the rezoning request.

Gene Blount inquired about the parcel nearby that had been cleared. Staff stated that was not part of this property but confirmed that parcel was a mechanical development and had been approved before the new UDO was in effect.

Michael Germano made a motion, second by David Lowry to recommend approval of RZ 2020-01 0, 601, 703, 705, 709 E. Gannon Avenue. There was no discussion and the motion passed unanimously.

B. *CZ 2020-04 – 201, 313, 469 Green Pace Road*

Meade Bradshaw explained staff was proposing a conditional zoning map amendment for 201, 313, 469 Green Pace Road from Heavy Commercial District (HC) to Light Industrial Conditional Zoning District (LI-C). This was a legislative case.

The applicant was Thomas Craven and the owner was Site Investments, LLC. The parcel size was approximately 34.3 acres. The aerial map, zoning map, and pictures of the site were shown. Staff recommended approval of the conditional zoning request with the following conditions:

In accordance with Section 2.2.6 of the Town of Zebulon Unified Development Ordinance and NCGS 160D-703, the following conditions are agreed upon for request CZ 2020-04.

1. Any use allowed as a Permitted Use or Special Use within the Light Industrial district, except for the uses listed below as Not Permitted. Also, among the permitted uses will be any use in the Heavy Commercial district that is listed below. Any Heavy Commercial Use not listed below is not permitted unless it is a Permitted or Special Use within the Light Industrial district.

Light Industrial Uses that are not Permitted:

- Airport and Related Facilities
- Auditorium
- Cemetery, Columbarium or Mausoleum
- College or University
- Coliseum or Arena
- Conference or Convention Center
- Drug/Alcohol Treatment Facility
- Fraternal Club or Lodge
- Helicopter Landing Pad
- Telecommunications Tower, Major
- Utility Major
- Utility Minor
- Bar, Cocktail Lounge or Private Club
- Campground
- Heavy Equipment Sales, Rental, Repair
- Parking Structure
- Pool Hall
- Race Track
- Recreational Vehicle Park
- Truck Stop
- Heavy Manufacturing
- Asphalt or Concrete Plant
- Extractive Industry
- Manufacturing, Heavy
- Recycling Center
- Salvage or Junkyard
- Waste Composting
- Wind Energy Conversion

Heavy Commercial Uses That Are Permitted

- Adult Day Care
- Child Day Care Center
- Community/Youth/Senior Center
- Cultural Facility, Library or Museum
- Post Office
- Religious Institution
- School, Elementary
- School, High/Middle
- Urgent Care Facility
- ABC Store
- Automotive Parts and Accessory Sales
- Bottle Shop (with on premises consumption)
- Clothing Rental
- Event Venue
- Financial Services Establishment
- Flea Market
- Golf Course or Driving Range
- Grocery Store
- Gymnasium/ Fitness Center
- Hair, Nails and Skin Related Care
- Laundry or Cleaning Service
- Office, Sales or Service
- Outdoor Commercial Recreation
- Package and Printing Service
- Pharmacy
- Farmers Market
- Plant Nursery

2. District Dimensional Standards

District Dimensional Standards

| Standard                             | Non-Residential Development |
|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Minimum Residential Density          | N/A                         |
| Minimum Lot Area (square feet)       | 30,000                      |
| Minimum Lot Width (linear feet)      | 200                         |
| Maximum Lot Coverage (% of lot area) | 80                          |
| Minimum Street Setback (feet)        | 30                          |

Planning Board  
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|--|--|
| Minimum Side Setback (feet)  | 5*   |
| Minimum Rear Setback (feet)  | 25   |
| Maximum Building Height (feet/stories)                             | 50; height may increase by 2 feet for each additional foot of setback up to 100 feet in height |
| Minimum Spacing Between Principal Buildings on the Same Lot (feet) | 25   |

\*5 foot Minimum Side Yard Setback shall be subject to TRC approval and fire code requirements, but in no case shall the Minimum Side Yard Setback be greater than 10 feet.

3. The constraints of the septic system design and location of suitable soils shall take precedence over setbacks, parking location, building location and other spatial constraints of the UDO. The TRC will work with the applicant regarding the site layout of the building and vehicular areas in relation to the septic system design, and the septic system design shall allow encroachment into the Type D buffer.
4. Minimum parking stem length shall be 25 feet for all parking lots.
5. Due to the variable location of suitable soils for septic tank drain fields, and since sufficient access exists to each proposed lot, the parking lot connections are encouraged where appropriate, but not required.
6. All uses within Green Pace Park shall be exempt from the Commercial Design Standards UDO Article 5.3.1.D., E, and F, however:
  - The primary customer building entrance shall be visually prominent and shall include at least two of the features listed in i through ix.
7. Metal building walls shall be allowed on all facades of all building within Green Pace Park other than facades directly facing Green Pace Road which shall provide that all of the façade directly facing Green Pace Road, exclusive of windows and doors, shall be brick, masonry, stone, stucco or EIFS; however, no EIFS shall be installed within 36” of the ground.
8. Article 5.1.8.C. states that “Parking lot connections are not required when any of the following conditions are present:”
  - 3. “Significant natural features exist in the only viable location for parking lot connections”. The suitable soils for septic disposal are a significant natural feature that warrant an exception of 5.1.8.
  - 5. “Sufficient access already exists without need for additional parking lot connections”. Each of the proposed lots with Green Pace Business Park have at least 200 feet of frontage on Green Pace Road and will apply for individual

driveway permitting from NC Department of Transportation. No additional access is necessary. Each of the proposed lots will be under separate individual ownership. Under this ownership model, there is no shared parking and interconnected parking lots are an insurance complication and a security risk.

9. The maximum illumination level at the lot line applicable to Green Pace Park will be 2.5 FC on lots lines interior to the Park, 2.0 FC on the perimeter lot lines of the Park, and 5.0 along the right of way of Green Pace Road.
10. In cases where a Type C or D perimeter buffer is required but the lot line abuts unbuildable land within a riparian buffer, the FHO, a Town designated tree save area , a reforestation area, or other Town designated conservation area where existing vegetation will not be removed, the required perimeter buffer width and amount of required landscaping material may be reduced by 50%, and the existing vegetation that is to be preserved will be credited toward the remaining required planting.
11. For a Type C Semi-Opaque or Type D Opaque Buffer - The provision of a fully opaque fence, wall, or berm; or increasing the planting requirements by an additional 25%, allows the buffer width to be reduced to 20 feet.
12. The perimeter buffers along the northern property line adjacent to the 4.25 acre parcel owned by Yellow Dog Investments, LLC and identified by Wake County PIN 1796815202 and along the southern property line adjacent to the 3.65 acre parcel owned by the Highs and identified by Wake County PIN 1795793708 shall both be a Type D Opaque Buffer, subject to the modification of buffer width with increased plantings listed above.
13. Crushed stone surfacing material will be allowed in any vehicular area other than the off street parking spaces required by the UDO and the driveway that directly connects to those required spaces. Vehicular areas surfaced with crushed stone material will be screened with a semi opaque fence such as a chain link fence with pvc slats or privacy screening and an evergreen hedge row with a minimum height of 6 feet at the time of planting.
14. No driveway shall access Green Pace Road at a point closer than 200 feet north of the existing northern corner along the right of way of Green Pace Road of the 3.65 acre parcel owned by the Highs and identified by Wake Co PIN 1795793708.
15. The driveway spacing between driveways to Green Pace Road serving these properties shall be a minimum of 200 feet from one another measured from center line of driveway to center line of driveway.

\*All other applicable Unified Development Ordinance requirements shall remain as written and the requirements by other agencies will be reviewed and regulated at the time of Technical Review Committee review process.

Jessica Luther inquired about the installation of a traffic light on Green Pace Road and Arendell Ave. Meade Bradshaw explained there was a traffic light proposed for the future.

David Lowry asked about the public meeting that was required for the rezoning request. Meade Bradshaw stated there was a neighborhood meeting and understood no residents attended the meeting.

Jessica Luther made a motion, second by Michael Germano to recommend approval of CZ 2020-04 with the proposed conditions. There was no discussion and the motion passed unanimously.

*C. Transportation Plan Amendment*

Michael Clark explained staff was proposing an amendment to the current Transportation Plan to include a two-lane median divided connector between E. Gannon Avenue and the eastern end of Innovation Way. An aerial map of the proposed connector was shown. Staff explained the connection would reduce the already occurring traffic volume and congestion. The proposed roadway cross section would be a two-lane median divided road. Staff recommended approval of the transportation plan amendment.

There was discussion about a property owner's connection requirement and the connection of the parcels.

David Lowry made a motion, second by Jessica Luther to recommend approval of the Transportation Plan Amendment. There was no discussion and the motion passed unanimously.

Michael Clark gave information about items to be presented at the January Joint Public Hearing.

Laura Johnson made a motion, second by Michael Germano to adjourn. There was no discussion and the motion passed unanimously.

Adopted this the 11<sup>th</sup> day of January 2021.

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Gene Blount—Chair

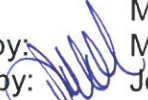
SEAL

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Stacie Paratore, CMC—Deputy Town Clerk

STAFF REPORT  
JOINT PUBLIC HEARING  
QA 2021-01 SIGN REGULATIONS  
FEBRUARY 8, 2021

**Topic: QA 2021 –01 Sign Regulations**

Speaker: Michael J. Clark, AICP, CZO, Planning Director  
From: Michael J. Clark, AICP, CZO, Planning Director  
Prepared by: Michael J. Clark, AICP, CZO, Planning Director  
Approved by:  Joseph M. Moore II, PE, Town Manager

**Executive Summary:**

The Board of Commissioners will consider a staff-initiated text amendment to UDO Sections 3.5.3.E, 3.5.4.E, and 5.11.9 to allow ground signs in the DTP and DTC districts and to amend the maximum height of ground signs.

**Background:**

A local business within the Downtown Core (DTC) zoning district submitted an inquiry to install a ground sign. During this review it was discovered that one section of the UDO permitted these signs while another section said that they were prohibited. The proposed amendments provide a correction to this conflict.

**Discussion:**

The discussion before the Board of Commissioners is whether to approve the proposed text amendments as presented.

**Policy Analysis:**

The proposed text amendments would further the Town's effort to have a vibrant downtown as indicated in the 2030 Strategic Plan by permitting signage where appropriate and regulating the height of ground signs differently based on zoning district.

**Financial Analysis:**

The proposed text amendment is unlikely to have a financial impact for the Town.

**Staff Recommendation:**

Staff Recommends the Board of Commissioners accept public comment on the proposed Text Amendments at the February 8, 2021 Joint Public Hearing and refer the matter to the Planning Board for consideration. Staff Recommends the Planning Board recommend approval of the proposed text amendments.

**Attachments:**

1. Proposed text amendments



## SECTION 3.5.3

### E. DISTRICT-SPECIFIC STANDARDS

#### 1. BOUNDARY MODIFICATIONS

Applications seeking to reduce or remove lots from the DTC boundary or amend a DTC lot designation shall be prohibited unless initiated by the Board of Commissioners.

#### 2. OFF-STREET PARKING AND LOADING

No minimum off-street vehicular parking is required, but if provided, it shall comply with the standards in Section 5.8.5, Parking Lot Configuration, except that landscaping shall not be required.

If off-street parking spaces or loading spaces are provided, they shall be at least 20 feet from a lot line and shall be either behind a building wall, screening wall meeting the standards of Level 4 (see [Table 5.10.5, Screening Methods](#)) or better, or be within a parking structure.

#### 3. LANDSCAPING

Except for the provision of street trees in accordance with [Section 5.6.13, Street Trees](#), landscaping is not required.

#### 4. SCREENING

All service areas, equipment, and similar site features shall be screened in accordance with [Section 5.10, Screening](#).

#### 5. SIGNAGE

Signage types shall be limited to wall signs, window signs, projecting signs, [ground signs](#), and suspended signs in accordance with [Section 5.11, Signage](#).

#### 6. EXTERIOR LIGHTING

Exterior lighting shall be provided in a manner necessary to illuminate building entrances and outdoor access to sidewalks and public gathering areas.

#### 7. FENCES & WALLS

Fences shall not be located between the primary entrance of a building and the front lot line.

Fencing and privacy walls may be used to screen parking and service features to the sides or rear of a building.

#### 8. STREETS

New development and redevelopment shall protect and extend mid-block and rear loaded alleys, to the maximum extent practicable.

#### 9. SIDEWALKS

Sidewalks meeting the configuration characteristics on adjacent lots shall be provided between all building walls and an abutting street right-of-way.

#### 10. BLOCK LENGTHS

The established pattern of streets and blocks shall be continued and shall not be interrupted or blocked by new buildings.

#### 11. PUBLIC UTILITIES

Public water, public sewer, and street drainage infrastructure shall be required as a part of new development and redevelopment

#### 12. DESIGN STANDARDS

All new development and redevelopment shall be configured in accordance with the following:

The first floor of building facades adjacent to sidewalks shall be occupied by fenestration for at least 50% of the ground floor façade from grade to a height of 12 feet.

Primary building entrances shall face streets and sidewalks, not parking lots.

Building facades along sidewalks shall include weather protection for pedestrians.  
Primary entrances shall be flanked by public gathering spaces, outdoor dining areas, public art, or other feature that encourages pedestrian to congregate.

## SECTION 3.5.4

### E. DISTRICT-SPECIFIC STANDARDS

#### 13. BOUNDARY MODIFICATIONS

Except for the establishment of a PD district, applications seeking to revise the DTP district boundary may only be proposed after completion of, or amendment to, a small area plan for the downtown by Town staff, unless this requirement is waived by the Board of Commissioners.

#### 14. OFF-STREET PARKING AND LOADING

- a. No minimum off-street vehicular parking is required, but if provided, it shall comply with the standards in [Section 5.8.5, Parking Lot Configuration](#), except that landscaping shall not be required.
- b. If off-street parking spaces or loading spaces are provided, they shall be at least 20 feet from a lot line and shall be either be either behind a building wall, screening wall meeting the standards of Level 4 or better (see [Table 5.10.5, Screening Methods](#)), or be within a parking structure.

#### 15. LANDSCAPING

Except for the provision of street trees in accordance with [Section 5.6.13, Street Trees](#), landscaping is not required.

Lots located in the DTP district that abut lots in different zoning district other than DTC or PD shall provide a perimeter buffer in accordance with [Table 5.6.10.F, Buffer Application](#).

#### 16. SCREENING

All service areas, equipment, and similar site features shall be screened in accordance with [Section 5.10, Screening](#).

#### 17. SIGNAGE

Signage types shall be limited to wall signs, window signs, projecting signs, [ground signs](#), and suspended signs in accordance with [Section 5.11, Signage](#).

#### 18. EXTERIOR LIGHTING

Exterior lighting shall be provided in a manner necessary to illuminate building entrances and outdoor access to sidewalks and public gathering areas.

#### 19. FENCES & WALLS

- a. Except for single-family residential development, fences or walls shall not be located between the primary entrance of a building and the front lot line.
- b. Fencing and privacy walls may be used to screen parking and service features or yards to the sides or rear of a building.

#### 20. STREETS

Development in the DTP district shall continue or establish a grid street pattern where no street segment shall extend more than 500 feet without another street intersection, alley intersection, or mid-block pedestrian accessway.

New development shall dedicate and construct new streets in the DTP district.

Private streets are prohibited within the DTP district.

Rear- or side-loaded alleys shall be provided and dedicated to the Town wherever possible.

In cases where a rear- or side-loaded vehicular alley is not feasible to construct, new development shall provide a mid-block public pedestrian accessway with a minimum width of 12 feet.

## **21. SIDEWALKS**

Sidewalks meeting the configuration characteristics on adjacent lots shall be provided between all building walls and an abutting street right-of-way.

- a. Building facades along sidewalks shall include weather protection for pedestrians.

## **22. PEDESTRIAN ACCESSWAYS**

Improved pedestrian accessways shall be provided between the primary entrance of all multi-family, non-residential, and mixed-use buildings and the adjacent public sidewalk system or public mid-block pedestrian accessways.

## **23. BLOCK LENGTHS**

The established pattern of streets and blocks shall be continued and shall not be interrupted or blocked by new buildings.

## **24. PUBLIC UTILITIES**

Public water, public sewer, and street drainage infrastructure shall be required as a part of new development and redevelopment

## **25. DESIGN STANDARDS**

All new development and redevelopment shall be configured in accordance with the applicable design standards in Section 5.3, Design Standards.

An applicant may propose development that deviates from the applicable design standards subject to special review by the TRC, who shall determine if the proposed deviations:

Maintain consistency with the Town's adopted policy guidance;

Support the purpose and intent statements of the DTP district generally,

Result in a higher quality of development than would have otherwise resulted from a strict application of the design standards; and

Mitigate any potential negative impacts that may result from the deviation.

## **COMPATIBILITY STANDARDS**

New multi-family, non-residential, and mixed-use development that abuts or is across a street from single-family detached dwelling located in a different zoning district (other than DTC or PD) shall be configured in accordance with the following standards:

The building shall maintain a maximum height of two stories or less within 150 linear feet of a lot line subject to these compatibility standards;

The use shall not include speakers that produce music or other noise that is audible beyond the lot line;

Drive throughs or other vehicular-related service area shall not be adjacent to a lot line subject to these compatibility standards;

Surface off-street parking areas that abut a lot line subject to these compatibility standards shall be screened by an opaque fence or privacy wall with a minimum height of six feet above grade;

Vending machines, service areas, mechanical equipment, loading areas, and similar functional elements shall be located as far as possible from lot lines subject to these compatibility standards, or shall be configured in a manner that prevents any negative impacts (visual, auditory, or otherwise); and

Refuse collection, recycling, and other waste-related activities shall be located as far as possible from a lot line subject to these standards.

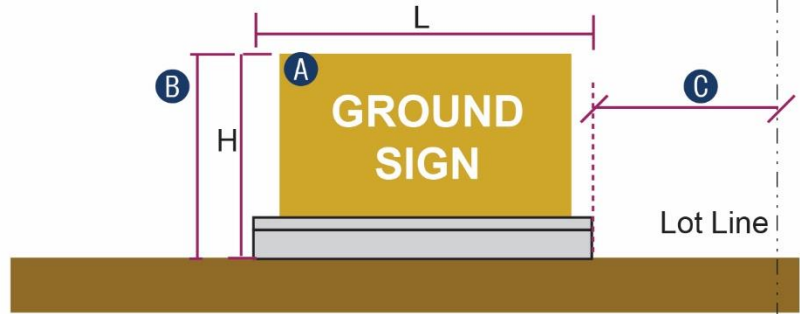
**TABLE 5.11.9: SIGN STANDARDS BY SIGN TYPE**

**E. GROUND SIGNS**



**LEGEND**

- A** Maximum Sign Face Area = 36 (LxH)
- B** 6' Max. Height in Residential District; 15' in Mixed-Use and Commercial Districts
- C** 5' Minimum Setback from Lot Line



**1. DEFINITION**

Any sign, other than a pole sign, that is attached directly to the ground by means of a supporting system comprised of a solid pedestal, or other bracing system where there is no open space between the bottom of the sign face area and the ground. Ground signs are configured so that the base of the sign support structure is at least as wide as the sign face area. Ground signs may also be referred to as “pedestal” signs or “monument” signs. Any sign with an opening between the bottom of the sign’s face area and ground or where the sign face area is wider than the sign support structure shall be considered as a pole or “freestanding” sign, which are prohibited. Ground signs are not mounted to a building wall, and are not located within a street right-of-way.

**2. WHERE PERMITTED**

| Residential | OI  | NC  | GC & HC | DTC & DTP | LI, CI, HI |
|-------------|-----|-----|---------|-----------|------------|
| Yes         | Yes | Yes | Yes     | Yes       | No         |

**3. DIMENSIONAL STANDARDS**

|  |  |           |           |                    |                      |                   |
|--|--|-----------|-----------|--------------------|----------------------|-------------------|
| Maximum Number of Ground Signs Per Lot                   | 1 [1]  |           |           |                    |                      |                   |
| Maximum Height   | 6 feet for lots in residential districts; 15 feet for lots in mixed-use and commercial districts [2] [3] [4] |           |           |                    |                      |                   |
| Maximum Height [2] [3] [4]                               | <u>Residential</u>   | <u>OI</u> | <u>NC</u> | <u>GC &amp; HC</u> | <u>DTC &amp; DTP</u> | <u>LI, CI, HI</u> |
|  | 3 feet   | 4 feet    | 4 feet    | 6 feet             | 3 feet               | 15 feet           |
| Maximum Sign Face Area [5]                               | 36   |           |           |                    |                      |                   |
| Minimum Setback from any Lot Line                        | 5 feet [6]   |           |           |                    |                      |                   |
| Minimum Separation between Ground Signs on Adjacent Lots | 50 feet [7]  |           |           |                    |                      |                   |

**NOTES:**

- [1] Developments on lots of 2 acres in size or greater and corner lots may have a ground sign for each roadway fronting the perimeter of the development.
- [2] Sign height shall be determined based on the higher of: the adjacent grade level or the grade level of the adjacent street.
- [3] In nonresidential districts, the maximum height of a ground sign may be increased by 1 foot for every 10 feet of setback beyond the minimum applicable setback to a maximum ground sign height of 25 feet.

- [4] The support structure shall be included within the measurement of the sign's maximum height.
- [5] The maximum sign face area may be increased by 4 square feet for every 10 feet of setback beyond the minimum applicable setback to a maximum ground sign face area of 175 square feet.
- [6] Except within the DTC and DTP districts, all portions of a ground sign shall be at least 5 feet from a street right-of-way.
- [7] In cases where a ground sign is proposed and it is impossible to meet the minimum separation distance requirements from an existing ground sign, the proposed sign shall maintain the minimum street setback necessary to ensure an unimpeded view of the existing ground sign on an adjacent lot.

#### **4. ADDITIONAL STANDARDS**

- a. Ground signs shall not be placed within required sight distance triangles or in locations that obstruct the safe movement of vehicles and pedestrians.
- b. Ground signs with support structures of three feet in height or more above grade shall include evergreen plantings around the base of the sign support structure in sufficient number to screen its view from off-site areas.
- c. Signage may be subject to additional standards identified in [Section 3.8.3, Gateway Corridor Overlay \(GCO\) District](#).