

Article 6. Zoning Districts

30-6-1 Establishment of Districts

30-6-1.1 General Zoning Districts and Overlay Districts

The following zoning districts are hereby established, and are intended to implement the City of Greensboro Comprehensive Plan. District titles are intended to convey general land use, maximum density, or development intensity, but the dimensional standards for each district determine the actual regulations applicable to a particular site.

Map Symbol	New District Title	Former District Title
Residential Districts		
R-3	Residential Single-family 3	RS-40, Single-family
		RS-30, Single-family
		RS-20, Single-family
		RS-15, Single-family
		RS-12, Single-family
R-5	Residential Single-family 5	RS-9, Single-family
		RS-7, Single-family
R-7	Residential Single-family 7	RS-5, Single-family
RM-5	Residential Multi-family 5	RM-5, Multi-family
RM-8	Residential Multi-family 8	RM-8, Multi-family
RM-12	Residential Multi-family 12	RM-12, Multi-family
RM-18	Residential Multi-family 18	RM-18, Multi-family
RM-26	Residential Multi-family 26	RM-26, Multi-family
RM-40	Residential Multi-family 40	New district
Mixed Use Districts		
MU-L	Mixed Use-Low	New district
MU-M	Mixed Use-Medium	New district
MU-H	Mixed Use-High	New district
AO	Auto Oriented	New district
UMU	University Mixed Use	New district
NS	Neighborhood Support	New district
Public and Institutional		
PI	Public and Institutional	PI, Public and Institutional
PNR	Parkland and Natural Resource Areas	New district
Commercial Districts		
C-N	Commercial-Neighborhood	NB, Neighborhood Business
C-L	Commercial-Low	LB, Limited Business
C-M	Commercial-Medium	GB, General Business
		HB, Highway Business
C-H	Commercial-High	SC, Shopping Center
CB	Central Business	CB, Central Business
O	Office	LO, Limited Office
		GO-M, General Office Moderate-Intensity
		GO-H, General Office High-Intensity
Industrial Districts		
BP	Business Park	CP, Corporate Park
LI	Light Industrial	LI, Light Industrial

Map Symbol	New District Title	Former District Title
HI	Heavy Industrial	HI, Heavy Industrial
Special Districts		
AG	Agricultural	AG, Agricultural
PUD	Planned Unit Development	Planned Unit Development–Residential Planned Unit Development–Mixed Planned Unit Development–Infill
TN	Traditional Neighborhood	TN-1, Traditional Neighborhood
Overlay Districts (Suffix appended to base district)		
-ACO	-Activity Center Overlay	New district
-AO	-Airport Overlay	AO, Airport Overlay
-CBO	-Central Business Overlay	Central Business Overlay
-DDO	-Downtown Design Overlay	New district
-GO	-Greenway Overlay	New District
-HDO	-Historic District Overlay	HO, Historic Overlay
-MHO	-Manufactured Housing Overlay	MH, Manufactured Housing Overlay
-NCO	-Neighborhood Conservation Overlay	Neighborhood Conservation Overlay
-PSO	-Pedestrian Scale Overlay	PSOD, Pedestrian Scale Overlay
-SCO -SCO-1 -SCO-2 -SCO-3 -SCO-4	-Scenic Corridor Overlay	SCOD, Scenic Corridor Overlay SCOD-1 SCOD-2
-VCO	Visual Corridor Overlay	Visual Corridor Overlay

30-6-1.2 Parallel Conditional Districts

A parallel Conditional district is a zoning district in which the potential permitted use or uses are, except as limited by the conditions imposed on the district, of the same character or type as the use or uses permitted in a General Zoning district having a parallel designation or name (see 30-6-8, Conditional District Intent Statement). A Conditional district, bearing the designation CD, is hereby established as a parallel district for every district established in the table above. The review process established in 30-4-5.5 (Zoning Map Amendments-Conditional Districts) provides for reclassification of property into a Conditional district, subject to specific conditions, which ensure compatibility of the use with the neighboring properties. All regulations that apply to a General Zoning district also apply to the parallel Conditional district.

(Amended by Ord. 10-156 on 10/19/10, Ord. 11-143 on 7/19/11 and Ord. 14-13 on 1/21/14)

30-6-2 Residential District Intent Statements

30-6-2.1 R, Residential Single-Family Districts

The general intent of the R, Residential Single-family districts is to accommodate single-family detached dwellings with compatible design standards. The number in the district title represents the approximate density per acre, however, actual development densities will vary based on district dimensional standards (and other ordinance requirements) and the unique characteristics of the development site.

A. R-3, Residential Single-family 3 District

The R-3, Residential Single-family district is primarily intended to accommodate low density single-family detached residential development. The overall gross density in R-3 will typically be 3 units per acre or less.

B. R-5, Residential Single-family 5 District

The R-5, Residential Single-family district is primarily intended to accommodate low-density single-family detached residential development. The overall gross density in R-5 will typically be 5.0 units per acre or less.

C. R-7, Residential Single-family 7 District

The R-7, Residential Single-family district is primarily intended to accommodate low-to-moderate single-family detached residential developments. The overall gross density in R-7 will typically be 7.0 units per acre or less.

30-6-2.2 RM, Residential Multi-family Districts

The primary intent of the RM, Residential Multi-family districts is to accommodate multi-family residential development (i.e., duplex, triplex, townhouse, multi-family). The number in the district title represents the approximate density per acre, however, actual development densities will vary based on district dimensional standards (and other ordinance requirements) and the unique characteristics of the development site.

A. RM-5, Residential Multi-family 5 District

The RM-5, Residential Multi-family district is primarily intended to accommodate duplexes, twin homes, townhouses, cluster housing, and other residential uses at a density of 5.0 units per acre or less.

B. RM-8, Residential Multi-family 8 District

The RM-8, Residential Multi-family district is primarily intended to accommodate duplexes, twin homes, townhouses, cluster housing, and other residential uses at a density of 8.0 units per acre or less.

C. RM-12, Residential Multi-family 12 District

The RM-12, Residential Multi-family district is primarily intended to accommodate multi-family and other residential uses at a density of 12.0 units per acre or less.

D. RM-18, Residential Multi-family 18 District

The RM-18, Residential Multi-family district is primarily intended to accommodate multi-family and other residential uses at a density of 18.0 units per acre or less.

E. RM-26, Residential Multi-family 26 District

The RM-26, Residential Multi-family district is primarily intended to accommodate multi-family and other residential uses at a density of 26.0 units per acre or less.

F. RM-40, Residential Multi-family 40 District

The RM-40, Residential Multi-family district is intended to accommodate multi-family and other residential development, only in Activity Centers (see Generalized Future Land Use Map), or along major thoroughfares. Single-family homes and duplexes, and twin homes are not permitted.

30-6-3 Mixed Use District Intent Statements

The MU districts are intended to accommodate a rich mixture of complimentary land uses that include housing, retail, offices, commercial services, and civic uses, to create economic vitality, encourage the linking of trips, and emphasize pedestrian travel. Individual buildings, as well as overall developments should be designed to provide commercial and mixed use areas that are safe, comfortable, and attractive to pedestrians and include an integrated network of sidewalks, trails, and other paths. The district is intended to include buildings oriented toward the street to encourage transit, pedestrian and bicycle travel; parking lots that are secondary on the site; and reduced parking requirements if certain criteria are met. Uses and developments oriented primarily towards the automobile are discouraged. Mixed use zoning should provide transitions between areas of higher intensity and traffic and lower intensity residential neighborhoods.

30-6-3.1 MU-L, Mixed Use Low-intensity District

The MU-L, Mixed Use Low-intensity district is primarily intended to accommodate low- to moderate-intensity office and institutional uses, moderate-density residential uses, and supporting service and retail uses.

30-6-3.2 MU-M, Mixed Use Medium-intensity District

The MU-M, Mixed Use Medium-intensity district is primarily intended to accommodate moderate- to high-intensity office and institutional uses, moderate-intensity retail and service uses, and moderate density residential uses, and supporting service and retail uses.

30-6-3.3 MU-H, Mixed Use High-intensity District

The MU-H, Mixed Use High-intensity district is primarily intended to accommodate a rich mixture of high-intensity office and institutional uses, high-intensity retail and service uses, and high-density residential uses. The MU-H district is intended to be applied in Activity Centers and other areas with excellent public transportation access and a full range of public facilities and infrastructure.

30-6-3.4 AO, Auto Oriented District

The AO, Auto Oriented district is solely intended for application in designated reinvestment corridors with an adopted plan. The district is established to accommodate and support quality, high-intensity, mixed-use and auto-oriented development with an emphasis on retail, service, convention, sports-recreation, entertainment, and lodging uses. In addition, development should provide a more pedestrian-friendly environment achieved through strategic building placement, enhanced connectivity, and landscape enhancements. Transitions shall be required between higher-intensity development and adjacent single-family neighborhoods to ensure compatibility.

30-6-3.5 UMU, University Mixed Use District

The UMU, University Mixed Use district is solely intended for application in designated reinvestment corridors with an adopted plan. The district is established to promote a mix of retail, office, residential, civic, and institutional uses in a compact, pedestrian-oriented environment in close proximity to a college or university. Development should address appropriate and compatible transitions to existing single-family residential neighborhoods. The adaptive re-use of existing historic structures will be encouraged along with new development.

30-6-3.6 NS, Neighborhood Support District

The NS, Neighborhood Support district is solely intended for application in designated reinvestment corridors with an adopted plan. The district is established to provide a transition between the more intense auto-oriented pattern of development and neighborhoods. A mix of pedestrian-oriented retail, office, residential, civic, and institutional uses will be encouraged. The scale of development will be limited by the sub-district's small, shallow pattern of lots and by transitions required between higher-intensity development and adjacent single-family neighborhoods to ensure compatibility. The adaptive re-use of existing historic structures will be encouraged along with new development.

(Amended by Ord. 14-13 on 1/21/14)

30-6-4 Public and Institutional District Intent Statements

30-6-4.1 PI, Public and Institutional District

The PI, Public and Institutional district is intended to accommodate mid- and large-sized (over 5 acres) public, quasi-public, and institutional uses which have a substantial land use impact or traffic generation potential. It is not intended for smaller public and institutional uses customarily found within residential areas.

30-6-4.2 PNR, Parkland and Natural Resource Areas District

The PNR, Parkland and Natural Resource Areas district is intended to accommodate large size (over 10 acres) public and quasi-public lands such as major regional parks and recreation areas, conservation or natural areas, shore land, urban wilderness areas, and waterfront access areas, open space owned by a governmental or nonprofit (or similar) entity for land conservation, and associated ancillary uses such as operational facilities, recreational facilities designed to accommodate intermittent activities (such as ball fields or amphitheaters), and concessions operating under the purview of the Parks and Recreation Department. It is not intended to accommodate outdoor recreation areas that are more commercial and permanent in nature, such as amusement parks or go-kart tracks. Nor is it intended to accommodate smaller neighborhood parks or recreation areas.

30-6-5 Commercial District Intent Statements

30-6-5.1 C-N, Commercial-Neighborhood District

The C-N, Commercial-Neighborhood district is primarily intended to accommodate a mix of low intensity office, retail, and personal service and upper story residential uses within or abutting residential areas. The district is established to provide convenient locations for businesses on small to mid-sized sites which serve the needs of surrounding residents without disrupting the character of the neighborhood. It is not intended to accommodate retail uses which primarily attract passing motorists. Compatibility with nearby residences is reflected in design standards for both site layout and buildings.

30-6-5.2 C-L, Commercial-Low District

The C-L, Commercial-Low district is primarily intended to accommodate low-intensity shopping and services close to residential areas. The district is established to provide locations for businesses which serve nearby neighborhoods. The district is typically located near the intersection of collectors or thoroughfares in areas which are otherwise developed with residences.

30-6-5.3 C-M, Commercial-Medium District

The C-M, Commercial-Medium district is primarily intended to accommodate a wide range of retail, service, office and multi-family residential uses in a mixed-use environment. The district is typically located along thoroughfares in areas which have developed with minimal front setbacks.

30-6-5.4 C-H, Commercial-High District

The C-H, Commercial-High district is primarily intended to accommodate a wide range of high intensity retail and service developments meeting the shopping and distributive needs of the community and the region, and other uses. The district is established on large sites which are typically located along thoroughfares to provide locations for major developments which contain multiple uses, shared parking and drives, and coordinated signs and landscaping.

30-6-5.5 CB, Central Business District

The CB, Central Business district is solely intended for application in the central core of the city. The district is established to encourage high-intensity, compact urban development. The district is intended to accommodate a wide range of uses including office, retail, service, institutional, and high-density residential developments in a pedestrian-oriented mixed-use setting (often, multiple uses may be located in the same building).

30-6-5.6 O, Office District

The O, Office district is primarily intended to accommodate office, institutional, supporting service and other uses.

(Amended by Ord. 10-156 on 10/19/10 and Ord. 11-12 on 1/18/11)

30-6-6 Industrial District Intent Statements

30-6-6.1 BP, Business Park District

The BP, Business Park district is primarily intended to accommodate office, warehouse, research and development, assembly and other uses on larger sites in a planned, setting that emphasizes natural characteristics and landscaping. The district may also contain retail, service and higher density residential uses which customarily locate within or adjacent to planned employment centers. Design and the orientation and operation of uses should ensure compatibility with adjacent residential uses. Standards are intended to foster originality and flexibility.

30-6-6.2 LI, Light Industrial District

The LI, Light Industrial district is primarily intended to accommodate limited manufacturing, wholesaling, warehousing, research and development, and related commercial/service activities which in their normal operations, have little or no adverse effect upon adjoining properties.

30-6-6.3 HI, Heavy Industrial District

The HI, Heavy Industrial district is primarily intended to accommodate a wide range of assembling, fabricating, and manufacturing activities. The district is established for the purpose of providing appropriate locations and development regulations for uses which may have significant environmental impacts or require special measures to ensure compatibility with adjoining properties.

30-6-7 Special District Intent Statements

30-6-7.1 AG, Agricultural District

The AG, Agricultural District is primarily intended to accommodate uses of an agricultural nature including farm residences and farm tenant housing. It also accommodates scattered non-farm residences on large tracts of land. It is not intended for major residential subdivisions. The district is established for the following purposes:

- A. To preserve the use of land for agricultural, forest, and open space purposes until urban development is enabled by the extension of essential urban services;
- B. To provide for the orderly transition to urban uses by preventing premature conversion of farmland;

- C. To discourage any use that would create premature or extraordinary public infrastructure and service demands; and
- D. To discourage scattered agricultural related commercial and industrial land uses.

30-6-7.2 PUD, Planned Unit Development Districts

- A. PUD, Planned Unit Development districts are intended to allow a diverse mixture of residential and/or nonresidential uses and structures that function as cohesive and unified projects. The districts encourage innovation by allowing flexibility in permitted use, design, and layout requirements in accordance with a Unified Development Plan. This should provide benefits by providing opportunities for employment and services closer to residences.
- B. Planned Unit Development districts are intended to reduce housing and infrastructure costs by promoting smaller lot sizes and the corresponding linear footage of streets, water lines, and sanitary and storm sewers. This should reduce the amount of site preparation grading.
- C. Planned Unit Development districts are primarily intended in areas which have underutilized or vacant land near major streets and utility lines, or where the applicant proposes a development that is compatible with the surrounding area (natural and built) but may require modifications to the basic standards of the underlying zoning district. This should protect water quality and preserve wildlife habitats and other natural features such as streams, lakes, wetlands, and trees.

30-6-7.3 TN, Traditional Neighborhood District

The TN, Traditional Neighborhood district is intended to establish or strengthen compact neighborhoods with a distinct sense of place and character that are limited in size and oriented toward pedestrian activity. Projects should encourage a desirable mix of residential, commercial, and civic uses that are built in close proximity to each other along a network of interconnecting streets and blocks; resulting in a coordinated transportation system with appropriately designed facilities for pedestrian, bicycle, public transportation, and conventional vehicles.

30-6-8 Conditional District Intent Statement

Conditional districts are primarily intended to allow for the zoning and development of property, subject to both underlying district standards and additional conditions, to help development fit better with the site and surrounding properties.

30-6-9 Overlay District Intent Statements

Overlay district regulations contain standards applicable to certain areas in addition to base district zoning standards in order to help development fit better with the site and surrounding properties. Where specified, overlay district standards modify base district standards.

30-6-9.1 –ACO, Activity Center Overlay

- A. Activity centers are existing or anticipated future concentrations of uses that function as destinations or hubs of activity for the surrounding area. Typically located in areas of mixed use shown on the Generalized Future Land Use Map, activity centers are intended to include features such as a mix of higher intensity uses (residential, retail, office, etc.), compact development patterns, urban open spaces, pedestrian and transit linkages. Activity centers must be served by a network of alternative transportation options, including walking routes, bike lanes, and rail (if available).

- B. The purpose of the –ACO, Activity Center Overlay district is to promote the development of lands in areas designated as activity centers on the Generalized Future Land Use Map in accordance with the Comprehensive Plan and the adopted activity center master plan if one has been developed for the specific activity center. The regulations allow for greater variety of uses, flexibility in site planning and development regulations, and intensity of land use than may be allowed in the underlying zoning district.

30-6-9.2 –AO, Airport Overlay

The -AO **Airport overlay district** is intended to be limited to industrial and other uses that are compatible with airport operations, and to limit residential uses to very low densities near the Piedmont Triad International Airport in order to minimize the negative effects of aircraft noise on homes. The overlay district also prohibits the erection of structures which would, by virtue of their height, interfere with operations at the airport.

30-6-9.3 –CBO, Central Business Overlay

The –CB, Central Business overlay district is intended to protect and preserve the appearance of gateways into the center city area and to promote traffic safety in those areas of the city that are especially congested with local traffic entering and leaving the central business district area of the city.

30-6-9.4 –DDO, Downtown Design Overlay

The –DDO, Downtown Design Overlay is established to provide for compatibility throughout downtown and between higher intensity development in the central business district and lower intensity development surrounding the downtown. It is the intent of the -DDO to encourage intense development and pedestrian activity in the downtown area that enhances, respects and builds upon historic contexts and promotes visual harmony, and provides for appropriate transitions to surrounding neighborhoods through clear, flexible guidance.

(Amended by Ord. 10-133 on 9/7/10)

30-6-9.5 –HDO, Historic District Overlay

The -HDO, Historic district overlay is intended to protect, safeguard, and conserve the heritage of the community; promote the sound and orderly preservation of historic areas as a whole, and of the individual properties therein, which embody important elements of social, economic, political, or architectural history for the education, pleasure, and enrichment of all citizens; and stabilize and increase property values within historic areas.

30-6-9.6 –MHO, Manufactured Housing Overlay

The -MHO, Manufactured Housing overlay district is intended to help provide affordable housing opportunities for residents in residential areas by allowing for the use of manufactured dwellings; establish requirements designed to insure compatibility in exterior appearance between manufactured dwellings and other single-family dwellings that have been or might be constructed on adjacent or nearby lots; and protect property values and preserve the character and integrity of the community or individual neighborhoods within the community.

30-6-9.7 –NCO-Neighborhood Conservation Overlay

The NCO, Neighborhood Conservation overlay district establishes regulations to enhance natural, economic, and architectural resources unique to specific areas of the city while protecting neighborhoods from incompatible development. The overlay district regulations are intended to:

- A. encourage development, redevelopment, and/or public projects that are consistent with a neighborhood's livability, architectural character, and reinvestment potential; and
- B. provide a means to modify zoning regulations and establish design standards for specific areas of the city while facilitating compatible development or redevelopment and protecting neighborhoods from incompatible development.

30-6-9.8 –PSO, Pedestrian Scale Overlay

The PSO, Pedestrian Scale overlay district is intended to accommodate neighborhood serving commercial, office and residential uses as infill development along the thoroughfares. Standards encourage consistency between new development and existing development within built up areas and help provide safe, walkable, attractive, pedestrian-oriented areas.

30-6-9.9 –SCO, Scenic Corridor Overlay

The -SCO, Scenic Corridor overlay district is intended to preserve and enhance the appearance and operational characteristics of certain designated roadways; and address development issues of special concern with specific requirements which relate to land use, traffic movement, access, environment, signs, preservation of vegetation, landscaping, visual quality, and aesthetics.

30-6-9.10 –VCO, Visual Corridor Overlay

The –VCO, **Visual Corridor overlay district** is intended to protect and preserve the appearance of gateways and to promote traffic safety in those areas of the city that are especially congested with traffic entering and leaving the city.

30-6-9.11 –OWAO, Other Watershed Area Overlay

See [30-12-3.2](#) for purpose and intent, [30-6-1.1](#) for table of districts and [30-4-8](#) and [30-12-3.3](#) for establishment procedures.

30-6-9.12 –WCA, Watershed Critical Area Overlay

See [30-12-3.2](#) for purpose and intent, [30-6-1.1](#) for table of districts and [30-4-8](#) and [30-12-3.3](#) for establishment procedures.

30-6-9.13 –GWA, General Watershed Area Overlay

See [30-12-3.2](#) for purpose and intent, [30-6-1.1](#) for table of districts and [30-4-8](#) and [30-12-3.3](#) for establishment procedures.

30-6-9.14 -GO, Greenway Overlay

The –GO, Greenway overlay district is intended to preserve and enhance the natural features of shared-use paths on independent corridors while providing increased access to destinations along its path. Standards or guidelines will encourage adjacent uses to recognize greenways as a significant transportation route in addition to recreational use. The Overlay will generally extend sufficiently beyond the right-of-way of the greenway to include adjacent properties for the purposes of providing appropriate screening, signage, connections and safety features.

(Amended by Ord. 11-143 on 7/19/11)