



TO: Knoxville-Knox County Planning Commission  
FROM: Amy Brooks, AICP, Executive Director  
DATE: 8/01/2022 Agenda Item #37 8-A-22-OA  
SUBJECT: Proposed Updates to Knoxville City Code Appendix B, Zoning Code

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### **Recommendation**

Staff recommends approval of an amendment to the Knoxville City Code, Appendix B, Zoning Code, Article 5.3, to refine the application of build-to percentages and build-to zones in the C-G General Commercial Zoning Districts (C-G-2 and C-G-3).

### **Background**

A request was made during the Public Stakeholder Committee process for Planning staff to review and make recommendations to address challenges to meeting the build-to percentage and build-to zones for properties zoned C-G-2 and C-G-3 along major corridors in the City.

#### C-G General Commercial Zoning District

The purpose of the C-G General Commercial Zoning District is "to provide for a heterogeneous mix of retail, personal service, office, and residential uses within and along Knoxville's commercial nodes and corridors. The C-G District is intended to promote mixed-use development in a pedestrian-oriented environment that recalls the City's traditional business districts, and offers flexibility in the creation of integrated commercial, office and residential spaces. The C-G District is divided into three levels of intensity related to the overall form and design of the development; however, uses are the same across all levels."

Build-to zones and build-to percentages identify where buildings can be located on the property and are utilized to encourage a certain form along a street frontage. In the case of the C-G zones, they are intended to help create a more pedestrian friendly environment along Knoxville's main corridors.

#### Build-to zone

A build-to zone (BTZ) is the area on a lot, measured parallel from the front and/or corner side lot line, where a structure must locate within the minimum and maximum range of setback provided. The building façade must be located within the build-to zone. Façade articulation, such as window or wall recesses and projections are not counted as the building façade line, which begins at the applicable façade wall.

### Build-to percentage

A build-to percentage specifies the percentage of the building façade that must be located within a build-to line or build-to zone. Façade articulation, such as window or wall recesses and projections, do not count against the required build-to percentage. Plazas and other open space features are counted as meeting the build-to percentage. Build-to percentage is calculated by building façade, not lot width.

Most of the primary corridors in Knoxville are classified as major arterials. Per the [2018 Major Road Plan](#), major arterials are streets that are intended to “provide major movement within the area, provide intercommunity connections to the local street system and move through traffic between activity centers. Access control is desirable.”

### **ANALYSIS**

Given the length of several of Knoxville’s primary corridors, the major arterial classification, and the existing constraints of certain sections of these corridors, the application of build-to-zones and build-to-percentages alone will not promote a pedestrian oriented environment for properties zoned C-G-2 and C-G-3. Key elements of a walkable district include:

- Space – is there a greenway or sidewalk that allows for adequate walking paths?
- Safety – does the space feel safe to walk?
- Attractiveness – is the space clean and shaded?
- Connectivity – is there a good mix of uses and is it connected to other walkable areas?

While the C-G uses may be appropriate along portions of the major arterials in the city, the dimensional standards for C-G-2 and C-G-3 may unduly constrain redevelopment and implemented alone will fall short of creating an environment that fosters pedestrian activity.

In addition to reviewing the Major Road Plan, staff reviewed previously approved land use plans, and the existing land use pattern along major collectors with C-G-2 and C-G-3 zoning.

Staff proposes amendments to the code that refine the application of build-to zones and built-to-percentages in the C-G-2 and C-G-3 zoning districts to encourage a development form in areas with the highest potential for pedestrian oriented activity while not inhibiting redevelopment along sections of the major arterials that are anticipated to remain primarily auto oriented.

Attachment 1: Proposed amendments to Knoxville City Code Appendix B, Zoning Code, Article 5.3



### 5.3 DIMENSIONAL STANDARDS

- A. Table 5-1: Commercial and Office Districts Dimensional Standards establishes the dimensional standards for the office and commercial districts, with the exception of the DK District. The dimensional standards for development for the DK District are found in Sections 5.5 below. These regulations apply to all uses within each district unless a different standard is listed for a specific use.
- B. In the C-N District, and in the O District when the lot abuts a single-family residential district, nonresidential development is limited to the maximum gross floor area indicated in Table 5-1. Additional gross floor area may be permitted if, during site plan review, it is found that the development meets all of the following standards. If the development is being approved in conjunction with a special use, then a request for increased floor area will be reviewed as part of the special use, rather than site plan review.
1. The development maintains the privacy of adjacent residential lots through techniques such as decreased height, additional landscape and screening measures, building massing and design to mitigate adverse impacts of noise and lighting, and increased setbacks above those required from adjacent residential lots.
  2. Building design elements incorporate pedestrian-scale features, such as awnings and storefront windows.
  3. The design of the site's circulation system provides adequate and safe access for both motor vehicles and alternate modes of transportation, including pedestrians and bicyclists. The design must minimize potentially dangerous traffic movements and points of conflict between vehicles and pedestrians or bicyclists.
- C. In the C-G-2 and C-G-3 districts along the following sections of major arterials and as shown in the map below, build-to-percentages and build-to zones do not apply:
1. N. Broadway – north of Ridgewood Road
  2. Chapman Highway – south of Young High Pike
  3. Asheville Highway – east of Prosser
  4. Kingston Pike – west of Westwood Road
  5. S. Northshore Drive – east of Whitower Drive

#### Application of build-to percentages and build-to zones in CG-2 and CG-3

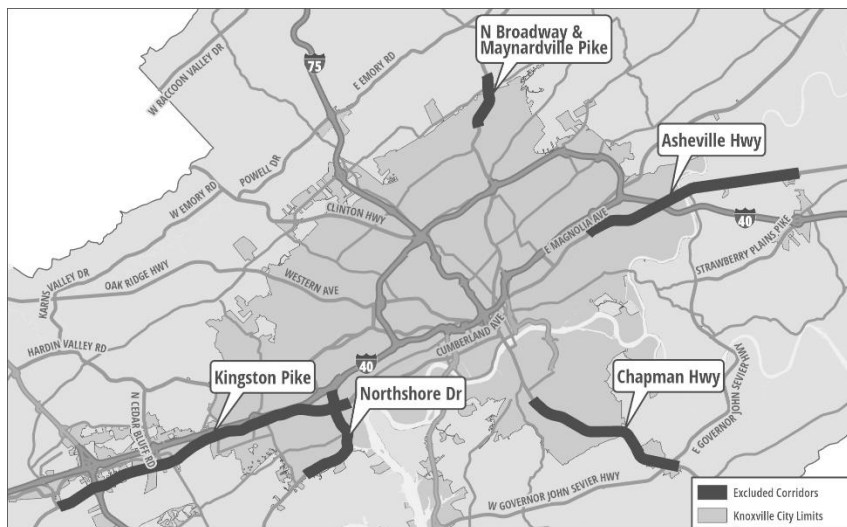


Table 5-1: Commercial and Office Districts Dimensional Standards				
	C-N	C-G-1	C-G-2	C-G-3
<b>Bulk</b>				
Minimum Lot Area	None	None	None	None
Minimum Lot Width	None	None	None	None
Maximum Gross Floor Area (Nonresidential Uses Only)	5,000 sf unless meeting the standards of 5.3.B	N/A	N/A	N/A
Maximum Building Height	45'	45'	70'; however, structures must set back an additional 1' for every 2' of height over 45' from any required setback abutting a residential district lot line	Unlimited; however, structures must set back an additional 1' for every 2' of height over 45' from any required setback abutting a residential district lot line
<b>Setbacks</b>				
Minimum Front Setback	None, unless average of adjacent lots is 15' or greater, then 15'	None	Build-To Zone: 0' to 20'	Build-To Zone: 0' to 20'
Minimum Build-To Percentage	N/A	N/A	50%	70%
Minimum Interior Side Setback	None, unless abutting a residential district, then 20'	None, unless abutting a residential district, then 20'	None, unless abutting a residential district, then 20'	None, unless abutting a residential district, then 20'
Minimum Corner Side Setback	15'	None	Build-To Zone: 0' to 10'	Build-To Zone: 0' to 15'
Minimum Build-To Percentage	N/A	N/A	30%	60%
Minimum Rear Setback	20', unless abutting a residential district, then 30' or 20% of lot	None, unless abutting a residential district, then 20'	None, unless abutting a residential district, then 20'	None, unless abutting a residential district, then 25'

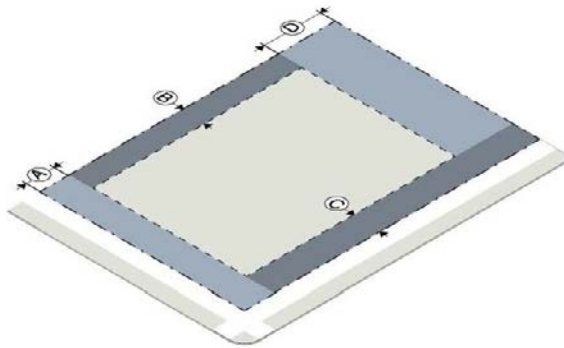
	depth, whichever is less			
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Table 5-1: Commercial and Office Districts Dimensional Standards				
	C-H-1	C-H-2	C-R-1	C-R-2
<b>Bulk</b>				
Minimum Lot Area	10,000 sf	10,000 sf	15,000 sf	15,000 sf
Minimum Lot Width	60'	60'	80'	80'
Maximum Gross Floor Area (Nonresidential Uses Only)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Maximum Building Height	45'	90'; however, structures must set back an additional 1' for every 2' of height over 45' from any required setback abutting a residential district lot line	50'	90'; however, structures must set back an additional 1' for every 2' of height over 45' from any required setback abutting a residential district lot line
<b>Setbacks</b>				
Minimum Front Setback	20'	20'	20'	20'
Minimum Interior Side Setback	10', unless abutting a residential district, then 30'	10', unless abutting a residential district, then 35'	10', unless abutting a residential district, then 30'	10', unless abutting a residential district, then 35'
Minimum Corner Side Setback	20'	20'	20'	20'
Minimum Rear Setback	10', unless abutting a residential district, then 30'	10', unless abutting a residential district, then 30'	10', unless abutting a residential district, then 30'	10', unless abutting a residential district, then 30'

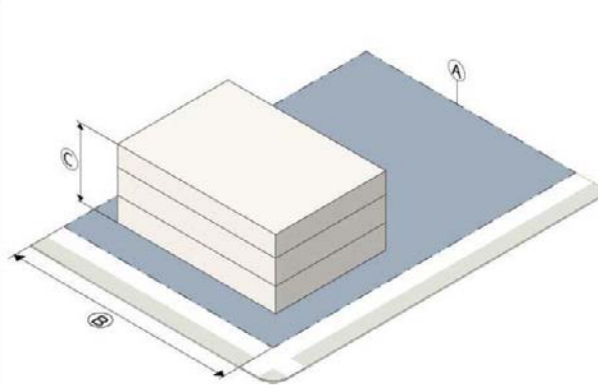
Table 5-1: Commercial and Office Districts Dimensional Standards	
	O
	OP
<b>Bulk</b>	

Minimum Lot Area	10,000 sf TH: 3,000 sf/du MF—Up to 6 du: 2,000 sf/du	20,000 sf
Minimum Lot Width	60'	80'
Maximum Gross Floor Area (Nonresidential Uses Only)	5,000 sf when the lot abuts a single-family district unless meeting the standards of 5.3.B	N/A
Maximum Building Height	45'	50'
<b>Setbacks</b>		
Minimum Front Setback	15'	25'
Minimum Interior Side Setback	15', unless abutting a residential district, then 20'	20', unless abutting a residential district, then 35'
Minimum Corner Side Setback	15'	25'
Minimum Rear Setback	20', unless abutting a residential district, then 30' or 20% of lot depth, whichever is less	20', unless abutting a residential district, then 35'

**COMMERCIAL DISTRICT DIMENSIONAL STANDARDS**



*A - Front Setback  
B - Interior Side Setback  
C - Corner Side Setback  
D - Rear Setback*



*A - Lot Area  
B - Lot Width  
C - Building Height*