



CITY OF
TALLAHASSEE

Zoning Handbook

version 1.0

Growth Management Department, Nov. 2022

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credits

- ▶ prepared by Growth Management Department

- ▶ graphics
 - figures 22, 25, & 38 - Google Earth
 - figures 5, 7, 10, 18, 21, & 26 - Planning Department
 - all other figures and photographs - Growth Management Department



▲
The mixed use Four Forty project is on North Monroe Street. It's zoned Central Core, which allows both residential up to 150 dwelling units per acre and a range of commercial uses. The Zoning Code allows this diversity of uses to support an active and vibrant downtown where residents can live, work, and play.

1 introduction

Welcome to the Growth Management Department's Zoning Handbook! As with most cities, Tallahassee's Zoning Code can be complicated if you don't work with it regularly. That's where this Zoning Handbook enters the picture. Think of it as a user's manual for the Zoning Code. If you're interested in the development process and how it works but don't know where to begin, then this document is designed for you.

You can either read it cover to cover or jump directly to selected sections. As you use the document, feel free to give us a call with any questions you might have. Just call (850) 891-7001 (option 4), and a member of our staff will be available to promptly answer questions. You can also send us your questions via email at Zoning@Talgov.com.

There are two disclaimers that apply to this report. First, we've taken great care to ensure that this Zoning Handbook is consistent with the City's Zoning Code. However, if a conflict is ever identified between the City's Zoning Code and the Zoning Handbook, the Zoning Code will control. This Zoning Handbook is intended to support and explain key principles from the Zoning Code to make it more accessible for all citizens, but it does not replace it. Second, this report includes photographs of various development projects. Such photos were included solely for educational purposes and are not intended to represent an endorsement of any particular project.



◀ This student housing project is an allowed use near the universities, but is generally not allowed further away from FSU and FAMU. Zoning concentrates student housing near the universities to minimize traffic, control noise, and preserve established neighborhoods.

What is zoning?

A good way to answer that question is to pose a question. What if a regional distribution warehouse with 24 hour operations opened in downtown Tallahassee? Dozens of semi-trucks would be a constant presence on downtown streets. As a warehouse, the building's exterior would be dominated by tall, unvaried walls that covered entire blocks without architectural detailing. From the pedestrian's perspective, there would be no human activity at the street. Instead of creating a multi-use, active downtown where people can live, work, and play, a warehouse would create a zone dominated by trucks, noise, and blank walls rather than people, varied architecture, and life. Zoning answers questions like this. The warehouse would be prohibited in the downtown area. Instead, a mix of uses like office, retail, restaurant, and residential would be allowed. Fundamentally, zoning is one of the key tools used by local governments to guide the arrangement of land uses. All zoning codes have the two key tools described below.

Zoning Districts

They have zoning districts that correspond to land use types. At a macro level, the land use types might include residential, commercial, office, industrial, and institutional. However, as you drill deeper to a more micro level, those broad land use categories typically aren't adequate. Most cities create zoning districts based on different types of residential uses according to density, meaning the number of residential units per acre. Zoning Codes also typically have a variety of commercial, office, and industrial zoning districts. For example, Tallahas-

see's Zoning Code has 21 residential districts, 19 office/commercial districts, 2 industrial districts, 4 institutional districts, and 8 mixed use districts. The multiple districts are necessary so that a zoning code reflects reality. There can be tremendous variation in the impacts created by uses from the same broad category. For example, a local high technology company like Danfoss versus a company that works with molten steel in an industrial forge are both industrial, but their land use impacts are radically different. Danfoss fits appropriately into a landscaped office park, while the industrial forge very likely would not. It is the difference between light and heavy industrial, and our zoning code has a district for each.

Development Standards

The second key tool in a zoning code is the development standards that can accompany each district. While many development standards apply across all zoning districts, each individual district may have development standards unique to it. Those standards can vary based on both the unique impacts and needs of the land uses in the zoning district but also based on the location within the city. For example, a building's height, its required setbacks from the street, and the number of parking spaces would appropriately be different if it is located downtown versus in a more suburban setting.

Development standards can include features such as setbacks from street, maximum height, landscaping, parking, buffers, street trees, density (residential units per acre), intensity (floor area ratio), minimum lot dimensions, road access, interconnections with adjacent lots, architectural design review, or



This is infill residential development on vacant lots near downtown. The Zoning Code works to ensure infill development is compatible with existing development by setting minimum standards for design characteristics like height, setbacks, density, and lot coverage.

lighting. As new residential or commercial projects are proposed in Tallahassee, they are reviewed by staff to ensure that they meet the development standards in the Zoning Code.

Is Tallahassee unique by having a zoning code?

No, not at all. In fact, most cities and counties have zoning codes today, particularly those of medium to larger size. You can get a quick example of this at the Municode website [at this link](#). Municode is a service that provides online publishing for local government codes. Simply click on a state, and then click on the city that you wish to view. Some cities opt to publish their zoning

codes on their website, but the Municode site includes hundreds of examples. Note that some cities, including the City of Tallahassee, refer to their zoning code as the land development code.

Has my zoning always been what it is today?

Not necessarily. It is very possible that it has changed over time as the City evolved. Zoning isn't static. It isn't etched in stone but is meant to reflect the values and goals of a city as it changes over time. For example, many American cities followed a similar development pattern in the 1950s and 1960s.

Their character was shaped primarily by the car, which led to large areas of single use development. Residential homes were clustered in one area, and commercial uses in another. Due to that segregation of uses, cars were required to access supporting services, whether they be shopping, work, or play. Downtown districts often lost their vitality, with activity only during work hours from Monday to Friday.

More recently, cities rediscovered the charm and architecture of their downtowns. Many residents began to value walking to a restaurant or to stores. Cities also began to appreciate that there is a cost to sprawl as public infrastructure must be extended to an ever-widening area and maintained in perpetuity. In contrast, building compactly allows for more efficient use of public infrastructure.

The auto dependent trend of the 1950s and 1960s evolved to a greater appreciation of walkability with mixed uses. Tallahassee's Zoning Code experienced a similar evolu-

► **Zoning isn't static. It isn't etched in stone but is meant to reflect the values and goals of a city as it changes over time.**

tion. With the adoption of the Multi-Modal Transportation District (MMTD) in 2010, Tallahassee's zoning was updated, particularly for Downtown and the surrounding neighborhoods, to foster a land use pattern that wasn't exclusively dependent on the car but also supported cycling, walking, and public transportation.

The adoption of the MMTD is an example of a shift in the direction of the Zoning Code. The hands-on experience of implementing the Zoning Code often highlights opportunities for updates in the Code. When we discover such opportunities, we do our best to work with the community to fix it. A recent example of this is the Neighborhood Compatibility Ordinance from 2021.

All residential neighborhoods have an edge where the houses stop and some form of commercial or office uses begin. The Neighborhood Compatibility Ordinance added new development standards to the Zoning Code which address that edge between residential and nonresidential uses. They focus on issues like parking lot lighting, building height, buffers, drive throughs, and other matters. Zoning codes are meant to evolve with a community's values. If they fail to do so, they can lose their effectiveness.



The Neighborhood Compatibility Ordinance adds new development standards to the Zoning Code. For example, the Code now requires multi-family projects that are adjacent to single family homes to step back all floors above the third story. This reduces the massing of the multi-family building and allows it to better blend in with its single family neighbors.

What is the difference between zoning and the comprehensive plan?

That's an important question. Think of the development process as a pyramid, with the comprehensive plan at its base and a building permit at the top. Everything is built on and must be consistent with the comprehensive plan. The key idea behind the comprehensive plan is that it takes a 20-year look into the future and identifies what land uses are allowed where based on the availability

of public services. Public services include things like roads, potable water, central sewer, parks, and stormwater facilities. That 20-year look is called the Future Land Use Map (FLUM). A property's zoning must be consistent with the FLUM. For example, if the FLUM designation is Low Density Residential, the zoning can't allow apartments or a commercial use. While the Comprehensive Plan and the FLUM focus on the future, zoning is concerned with the nuts and bolts of what can be developed today.

What is the difference between the Growth Management and Planning Departments?

The Planning Department is a joint City of Tallahassee/Leon County department that, among other services, administers the Comprehensive Plan, reviews Zoning amendment applications, and prepares planning studies for specific areas. In short, the Planning Department focuses on the future planning of the City. In contrast, the Growth Management Department focuses on implementing the Zoning Code as new development proposals are received. That includes reviews for planning, engineering, environmental, and building. If a project meets the Code, the review by the Growth Management Department culminates in the issuance of development permits, such as a building permit and ultimately a certificate of occupancy.

What are the steps of the development process?

The development process is explained from beginning to end in both a [video](#) and a [handout](#) at the Growth Management Department's website. The planning staff's review of new development applications is defined by the standards in the Tallahassee Land Development Code (TLDC). The TLDC includes 10 chapters concerning the development of land. Collectively, they implement the City's Comprehensive Plan. This Zoning Handbook focuses on Chapters 1, 7, 9, and 10 of the TLDC. Chapter 1 defines key terms. Chapter 7 includes the sign code that identifies the size, number, and type of allowable signs. Chapter 9 discusses subdivisions, site plans, variances, deviations, design review, and inclusionary housing. The focus tends to be on the application process and the review standards. Finally, Chapter 10 is the Zoning Code. It includes a complete discussion of all the zoning districts and their associated development standards, as well as those standards which apply across all zoning districts.

The following sections explore Chapters 1, 7, 9, and 10 of the TLDC. Chapter 5 of the TLDC provides the City's environmental standards. It also plays an important role in the development process but will be addressed separately in its own handbook.



Zoning is the road map that guides where each land use can be located to ensure that it is consistent with its neighbors.



2 definitions

Chapter 1 of the Tallahassee Land Development Code provides a variety of key definitions. The average reader might find some of the definitions easier to follow with graphics that depict what the definition is describing. That's what this section is intended to do. It provides graphic examples for some of the definitions in Chapter 1. Also, please keep in mind that the graphics are only examples. In all cases, the Zoning Code controls in the event of any conflict between the Code and the graphics.

Before diving into the definitions, keep in mind that Chapter 1 is a key section of the Zoning Code. Within the body of the Code, a wide array of terms are used. In order for the Code to make sense, there needs to be a common understanding of what words mean. Chapter 1 provides that common understanding. At first glance, it may seem very detailed and precise, but it's really the heart of the Zoning Code. For example, the only way you know that communication antennas on a building's roof are not counted as part of the building's height is because the definition of the word "height" makes that clear.

Likewise, let's say that you're going to build a structure that has a 3-foot eave. (The eave is the part of the roof structure that extends beyond the wall.) Since the eave is bigger than 2 feet, the setback must be measured from the outer edge of the eave, not the building wall. You would learn that detail from the definition of the word "setback" in Chapter 1. The key message is that Chapter 1 of the Code provides information that is critical to the correct understanding of what the Zoning Code requires.

Abutting, Adjoining, and Contiguous

The Code definitions are as follows:

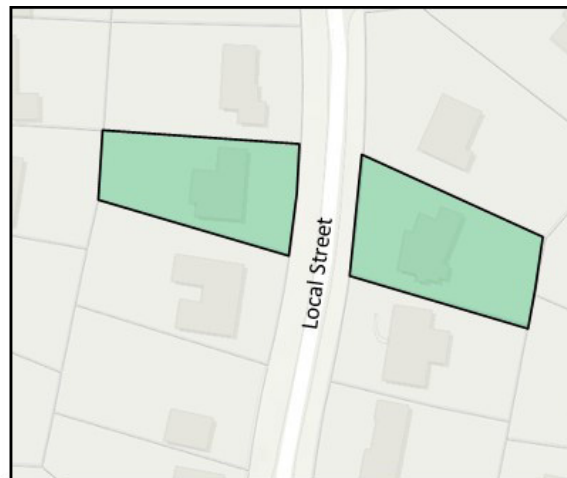
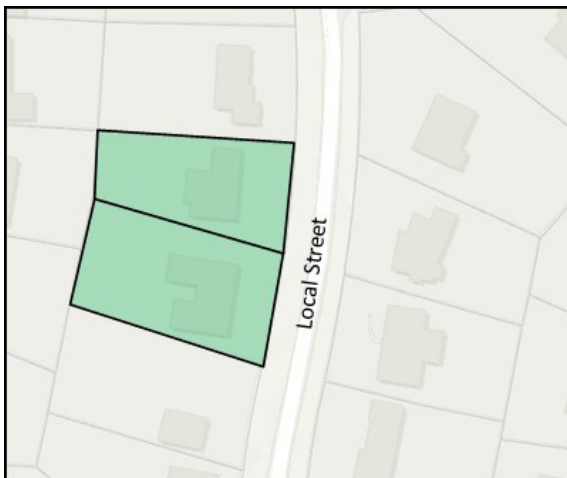
- “Abutting property means property that is contiguous to another property, thus sharing a property boundary line. If separated by a public street or right-of-way, the properties are not considered abutting.”
- “Adjoining means parcels which are touching or contiguous to each other, as distinguished from lying near to or adjacent. Parcels that are separated from each other by a local or a minor collector street or roadway shall also be considered adjoining; parcels that are separated by a major collector or an arterial street or roadway or by a railroad right-of-way shall not be considered adjoining. Notwithstanding the foregoing, within the planned development future land use category, property divided by a major collector or arterial

street or roadway that was created by the dedication from a landowner of right-of-way to a governmental entity, or created through the amicable resolution of a condemnation proceeding by a governmental entity, shall be considered adjoining.”

- “Lands are contiguous if they have a common boundary or if a property line between them is common. Synonymous with Abutting.”

The lots highlighted at the left side of Figure 1 are abutting, contiguous, and adjoining. In contrast, the lots highlighted at the right side of Figure 1 are not abutting or contiguous since they do not share a common property boundary, but they are adjoining since they are only separated by a local street. Note that they would still be adjoining if separated by a minor collector, but they would no longer be adjoining if separated by a major collector, an arterial, or a railroad right-of-way.

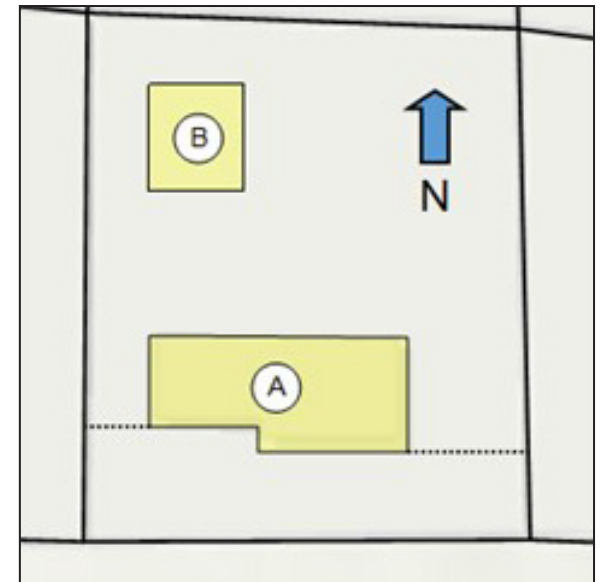
Figure 1



Accessory Dwelling Units

The Code definition is as follows: “Accessory dwelling unit (ADU) means a single dwelling unit sharing ownership and utility connections with a principal structure on a single property. The inclusion of a single ADU on a lot shall not be included in density calculations or defined as a multi-family residential development.”

Figure 2



In Figure 2, Building A is the principal structure, and Building B is the accessory dwelling unit (ADU). The ADU must be located in the side or rear yard, which is the area north of the dotted line. The ADU can't be more than 40% of the principal use. If they meet other development standards for the zoning district, all ADUs may be a minimum of 500 square feet, but are limited to no more than 800 square feet if accessory to a residential

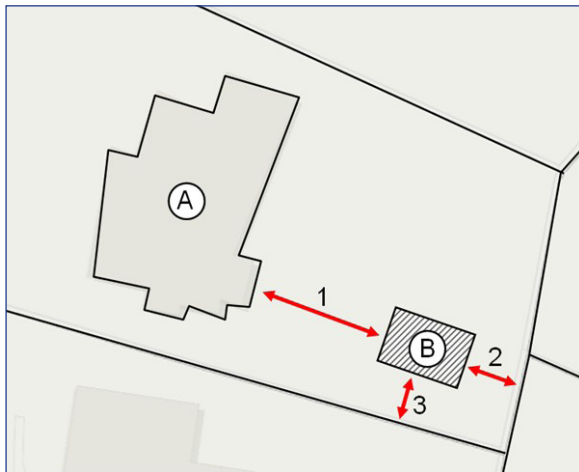
use or 1,000 square feet if accessory to a non-residential use. ADUs must meet the same rear and side yard setbacks as the principal structure.

Also, an ADU can't be taller than a principal structure unless it is the 2nd story above a garage. Please see Sec. 10-280.7(b), TLDC (for land inside the Multi-Modal Transportation District) and Sec. 10-412(1), TLDC (for land outside the MMTD) for a complete description of ADU development standards.

Accessory Use or Structure

The Code's definition is as follows: "Accessory use or structure means a use or structure on the same lot with, and of a nature customarily incidental and subordinate to, the principal use or structure and which comprises no more than 33 percent of the floor area or cubic volume of the principal use or structure except as otherwise permitted in this Code." As depicted in Figure 3, the total area of accessory structures ("B") can't be

Figure 3



greater than 33% of the area of the primary structure ("A"). Also, the accessory structure must maintain a minimum separation from the primary structure ("1") of at least 6 feet. Finally, the accessory structure must meet the rear ("2") and side yard ("3") setbacks, which vary by the zoning district.

Figure 4



Alley

The Code's definition is as follows: "Alley means a dedicated right-of-way or private drive which affords a secondary means of access to the back or the side of a building site otherwise abutting on a larger street, and which is not intended or used for general traffic circulation." At Figure 4, the yellow line is an alley that provides access to garages at the rear of each house.

Arcade

The Code's definition is as follows: "Arcade means a private frontage conventionally used for retail uses wherein the facade is a series of arches supporting habitable space that overlaps the private sidewalk (no habitable space shall be located above public rights-of-way), while the facade at sidewalk level addresses the public pedestrian path." Figure 5 illustrates an arcade (highlighted yellow) and habitable space above it (highlighted green).

Architectural Planter

The Code's definition is as follows: "Architectural planter means a structure designed to support plant root growth in a contained space, generally above grade, filled with a growing medium specifically blended for such use and providing no direct path for root growth into surrounding natural soils areas." Architectural planters should be permanently installed on the ground, integrated into the overall design, and con-

Figure 5



Figure 6



structed from terra cotta, steel, concrete, brick, tile, or other acceptable commercial grade hardscape material. Architectural planters should not be constructed of material subject to substantial degradation over time, such as wood or pre-fabricated residential grade materials. The example in Figure 6 shows the architectural planters next to the Publix on Gaines Street.

Attic

The Code's definition is as follows: "Attic means the interior part of a building contained within a pitched roof structure. The habitable space shall be no taller than ten feet, or the attic is considered a separate story." As shown by Figure 7, an attic might go all the way to the eave (left side) or to a half wall (right side). Provided the habitable space is not taller than 10 feet, the space would function as an attic and would not be counted as a separate story.

Building Area and Building Envelope

According to the Code, "Building area means that portion of a site upon which a structure exists or may legally be constructed. Building envelope means an area of a parcel, excluding all required setbacks, parking areas, landscaped areas, and stormwater management facilities, in which the actual building may be constructed."

New development must meet a variety of standards such as setbacks, on-site stormwater facilities, parking, landscaping, and urban forest. For the site depicted in Figure 8, a 6,226 square foot building could be built after the Zoning Code's development standards were met, including the stormwater pond (light blue), the setbacks (red), and urban forest (green).

Figure 7

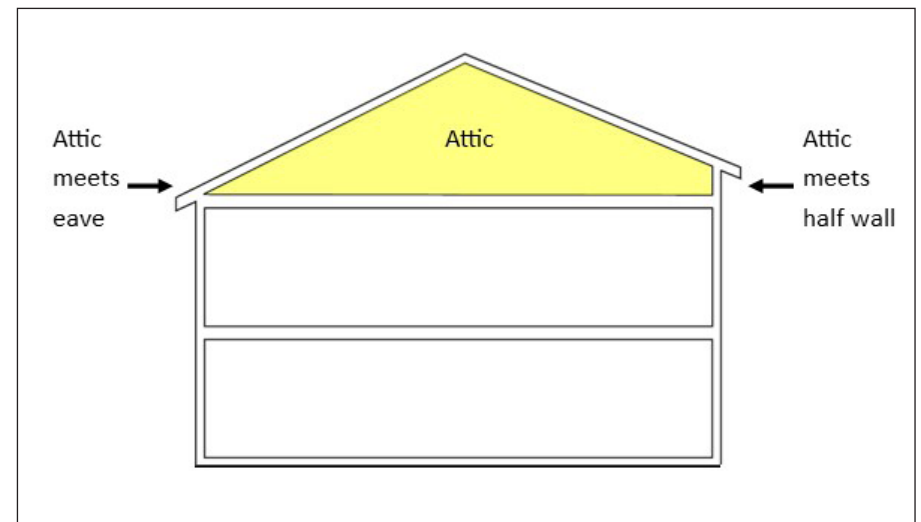
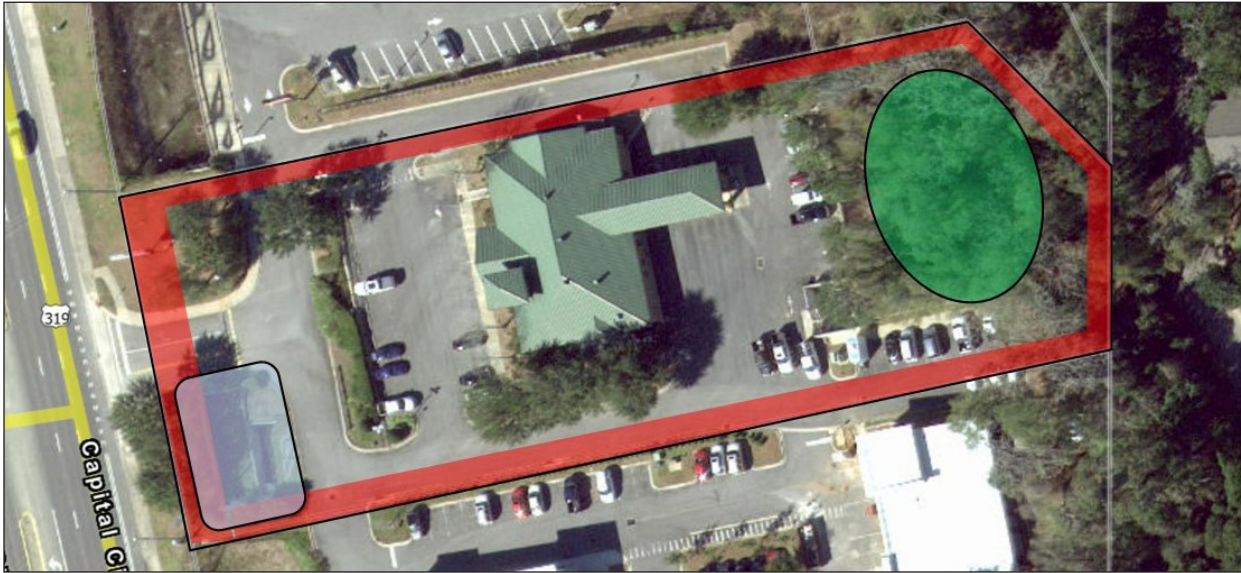


Figure 8



Cluster Development

The definition in the Code is as follows: "Cluster development means a development design technique that concentrates buildings in specific areas on a site to allow the remaining land to be used for recreation, common open space, and preservation of environmentally sensitive areas." In the example in Figure 9, the residential units are concentrated so that a majority of the site is preserved as permanent conservation land.

Colonnade

The Code's definition is as follows: "A colonnade is a roofed structure, extending over the sidewalk, open to the street except for supporting columns or piers." Figure 10 illustrates a colonnade (yellow highlight). Note that the only difference between a colonnade and an arcade is that an arcade provides habitable space on the upper floors that overhangs the sidewalk.

Critical Protection Zone

The definition in the Code is as follows: "Critical protection zone (CPZ) means that area surrounding a tree within a circle described by a radius of one foot for each inch of the tree's diameter at breast height." The example in Figure 11 at the left provides an aerial view of a tree with a diameter at breast height of 40 inches. The critical protection zone is a radius equal to 1 foot

Figure 9

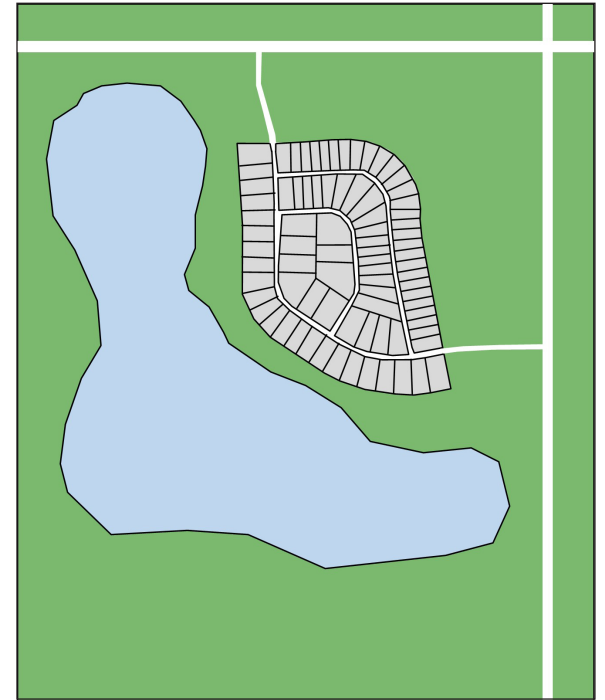
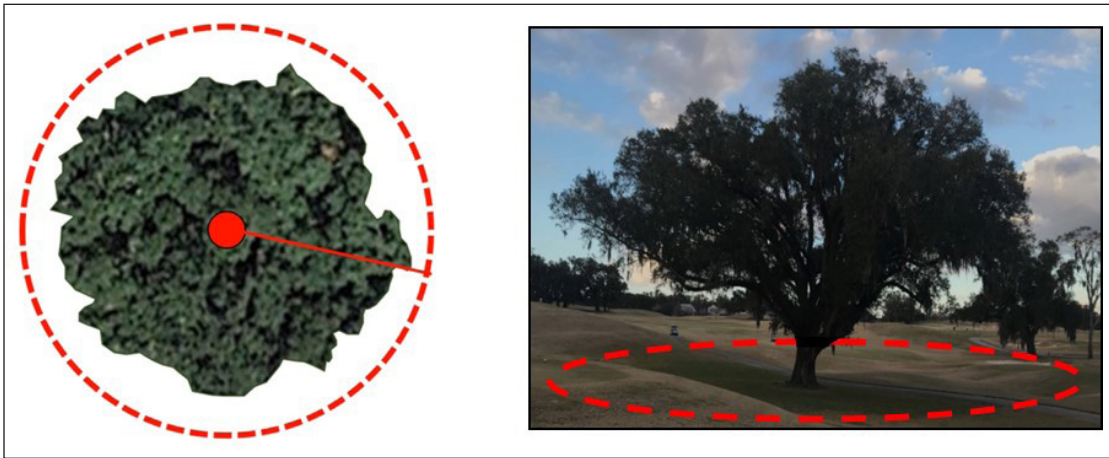


Figure 10



Figure 11



for each inch of the tree's diameter at breast height (DBH). That results in a critical protection zone defined by a 40-foot radius around the tree's trunk. The figure at the right side of Figure 11 depicts a street view of the critical protection zone.

Crown and Crown Spread

The Code's definition of these terms is as follows: "Crown means the main point of branching or foliage of a tree or plant, or the upper portion of a tree or plant. Crown spread means the distance measured across the greatest diameter of the crown of a plant or a tree." The terms "crown" and "crown spread" are depicted in Figure 12.

Drip Line

The Code's definition of this term is as follows: "Drip line means the vertical projection on the ground of the outer perimeter of the crown of a plant." In the example in Figure 13, a tree is seen from above. As noted earlier, the crown is the foliage of a tree. The aerial view shows the full area of the tree's crown, which is

Figure 12

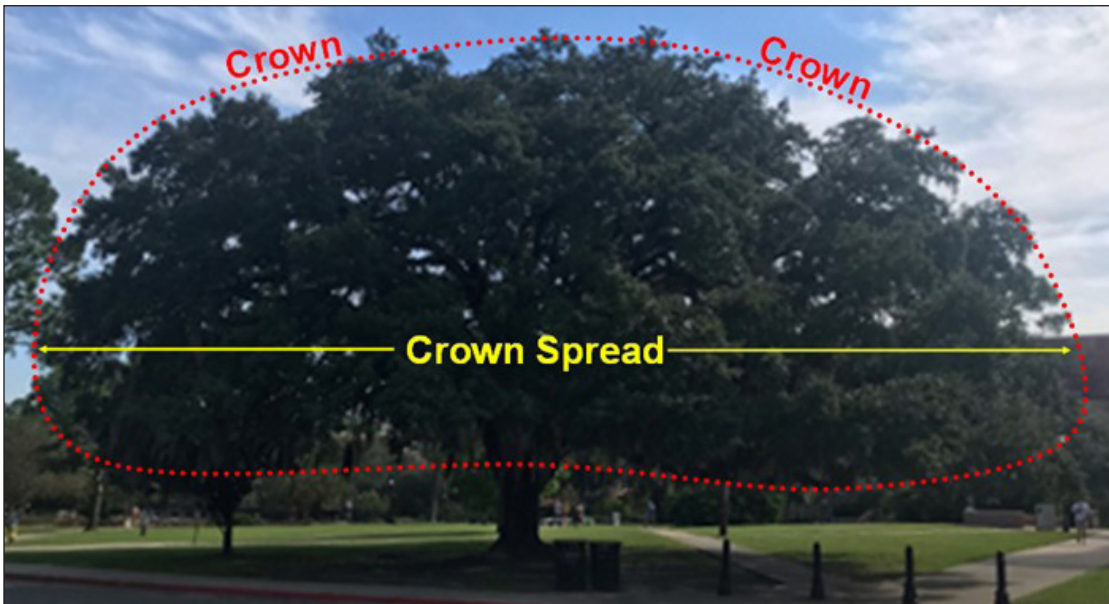


Figure 13



bordered by the red dashed line. The drip line is the area on the ground that matches the red dashed line.

Dwelling, Single Family Attached

The Code defines this term as follows: "Single-family attached dwelling means a one-family dwelling attached to two or more one-family dwellings by vertical common fire-resistant walls, with each dwelling unit located on a separate lot. Each dwelling unit and lot must meet the minimum lot size requirements for single-family attached dwellings or townhouses set forth in the applicable zoning district."

While a single-family attached dwelling might have the outward appearance of a multi-family development, the key difference is that each dwelling is on a separate lot, has fee-simple ownership of the land, and is separated by a vertical common fire-resistant wall. In the example in Figure 14, the building includes 6 one-family dwellings, each of which is located on a separate lot.

Dwelling, Two Family (Duplex)

The Code defines this term as follows: "Two-family (duplex) dwelling means a building designed with two dwelling units with accommodations for each dwelling unit independent of each other, and intended to be occupied by two families on one lot or parcel of land." The key feature of a two-family dwelling (also referred to as a duplex) is that the two independent residential dwellings must be located on a single lot. As shown in Figure 15, a single family attached dwelling might look like a duplex from the outside, but each dwelling unit in a single family attached dwelling is on an individual lot.

Figure 14

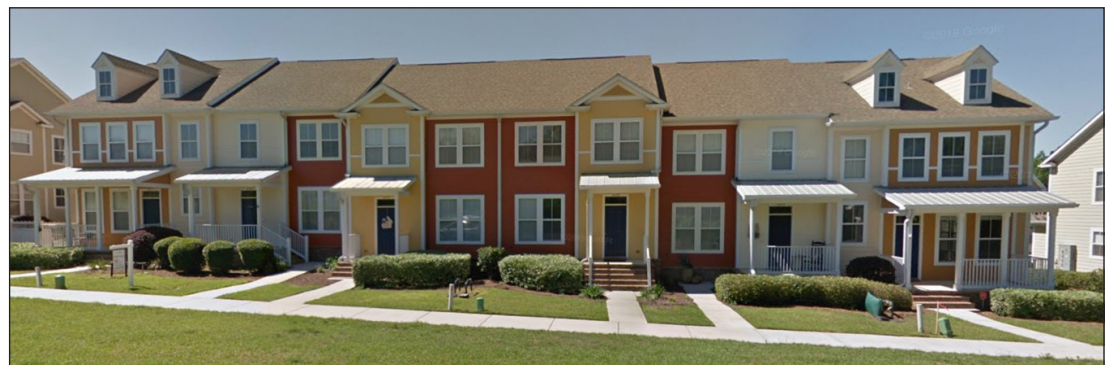
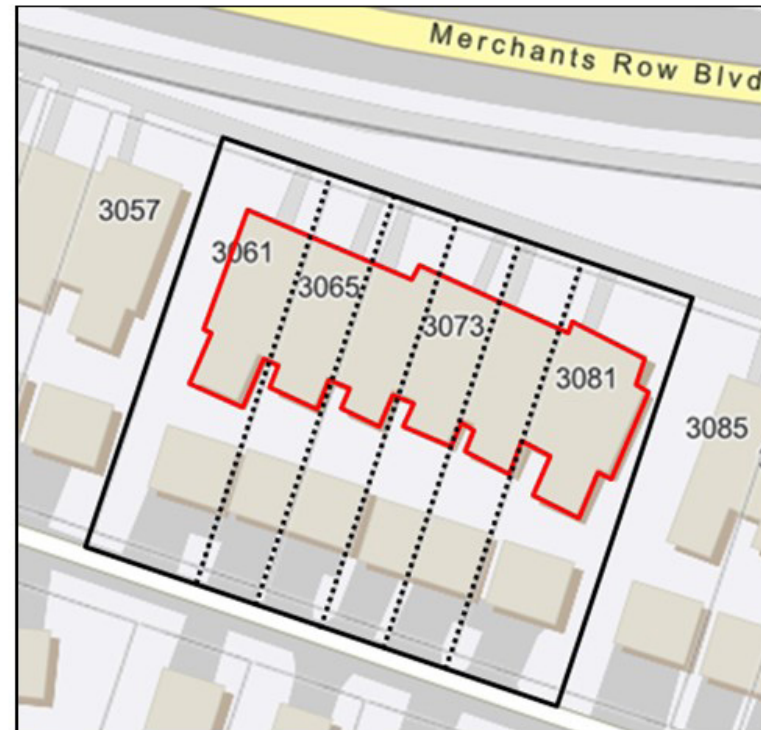


Figure 15



Floor Area Ratio

The Code defines this term as follows: “Floor area ratio means a number determined by dividing the gross floor area of all buildings on a lot by the area of that lot.” Floor area ratio is a measurement of how much development is occurring on a site. A low floor area ratio generally indicates a smaller development which likely doesn’t have multiple stories. In contrast, a higher floor area ratio generally indicates a larger development that is likely to have multiple stories. Metropolitan Boulevard is located in the southwest quadrant of the intersection of Interstate 10 and Thomasville Road. It includes a Tallahassee Memorial Healthcare emergency center, a Capital Health Plan office, and a multi-tenant office building. The floor area ratios for each building are shown in Figure 16.

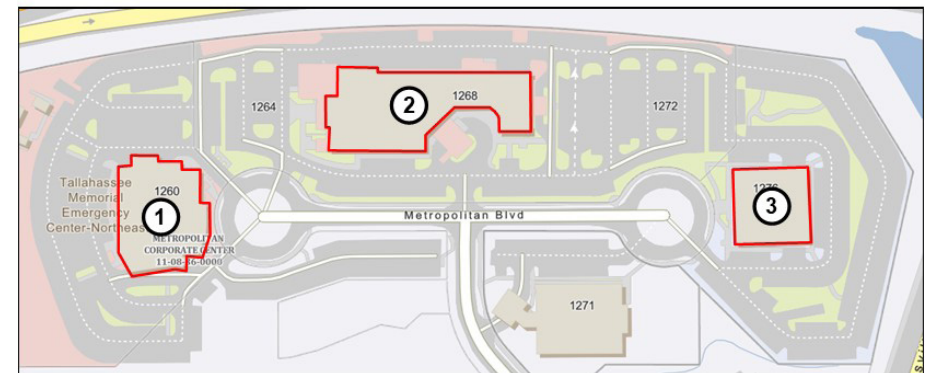
Frontage

The Code defines these terms as follows:

- “Frontage means the length of the property line of any one premise along a street on which it borders. Frontage includes public and private area between the building facade and the vehicular lanes, inclusive of its built and planted components.”
- “Building frontage means the length of an outside building wall on a street. For purposes of determining aggregate surface area of permanent on-site signs pursuant to section 7-62 of this Code for buildings that do not front on a street, the term “building frontage” may also mean the length of an outside building wall on a legal access easement recorded in the public records of Leon County.”
- “Principal frontage means the private frontage designated based on the measure of minimum lot width. Principal frontage generally

Figure 16

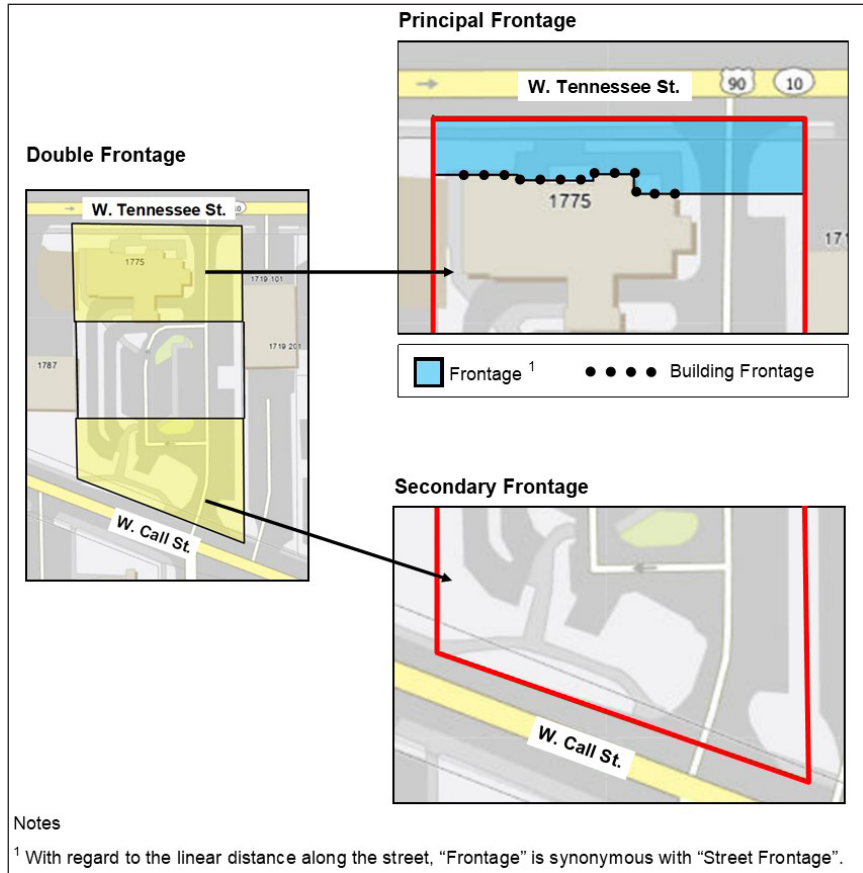
Building	Use	Building Area	Lot Area	Floor Area Ratio
1	TMH Emergency	45,500	288,285	0.16
2	Capital Health Plan	72,000	222,554	0.32
3	Office Building	52,584	131,584	0.40



shall not be a frontage which consists wholly of an entrance drive or is significantly smaller, by 20 percent or more, in linear feet, than that of another street frontage for the same parcel."

- "Double frontage means a parcel at a corner or between two roadways that has equal potential for principal frontage, due to linear feet, along the two streets, thus the parcel has "double frontage". As it affects the public realm, the first layer along both frontages shall be regulated except where not feasible due to lot size and building disposition and/or compatibility with an adjacent transect of less intensity, i.e., singular building and/or on a prohibitively small lot. See section 10-285, tables 10(a) through 10(d) and 12."

Figure 17



- "Secondary frontage means the private frontage that is not the principal frontage. As it affects the public realm, its first layer is regulated. See section 10-285, table 12."
- "Street frontage means the length of any one property line of a premises, which property line abuts a legally accessible street right-of-way."

The above definitions of frontage are illustrated in Figure 17.

Gallery

The Code definition is as follows: "Gallery means a private frontage conventional for retail use wherein the facade is aligned close to the front property line with an attached cantilevered shed or lightweight colonnade overlapping the sidewalk." Note that the key term in the definition is "cantilevered". A gallery is not supported by columns like an arcade or a colonnade. Figure 18 depicts a gallery.

Figure 18



Gross and Net Acres

The Code's definitions are as follows: "Gross acre means an area of land containing 43,560 square feet including rights-of-way, common areas, and easements. Net acre means the amount of usable land area exclusive of undevelopable areas within conservation or preservation areas." The project site in Figure 19 matches the red boundary. It is the area represented by gross acres. In this case, it totals 23.63 acres. The two areas with the yellow highlight are protected conservation lands. They total 3.63 acres. The area within the red boundary but outside of the land highlighted yellow equals the net acres. It equals 20 acres.

Gross Residential and Net Density

The Code's definition of these terms is as follows: "Gross residential density means the number of units

per gross acre of land designated for residential purposes, including land that will be devoted to street rights-of-way and designated open space after development. Gross residential density will not include area covered by permanent water bodies or area to be utilized for other nonresidential land uses."

"Net density means the number of units per acre computed after subtraction of the acres in street rights-of-way and designated open space from the gross residential area defined in the definition of gross residential density."

Gross residential density equals the number of residential units divided by the total site area, minus both permanent water bodies and areas used for other nonresidential land uses. In the example below in Figure 20, the project site totals 2.8 acres, all of which will be used for residential and none of which includes a permanent water body. Therefore, the gross residential density equals 10 units / 2.8 acres, or 3.6 units per acre. In contrast, net density equals the number of residential units divided by the total site area, minus street rights-of-way and designated open space. In the example, there are no street rights-of-way, but the western edge of the project includes a canopy road zone totaling 0.5 acres. Therefore, the net density equals 10 units / 2.3 acres, or 4.3 units per acre.

Figure 19

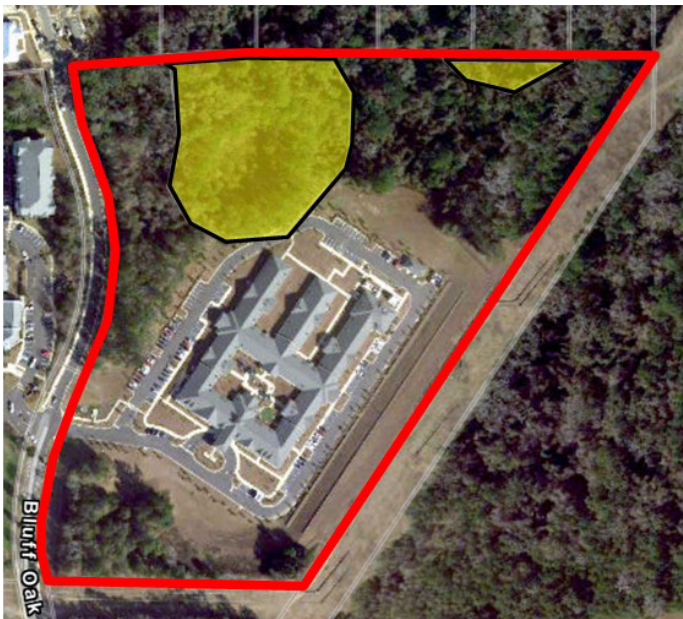
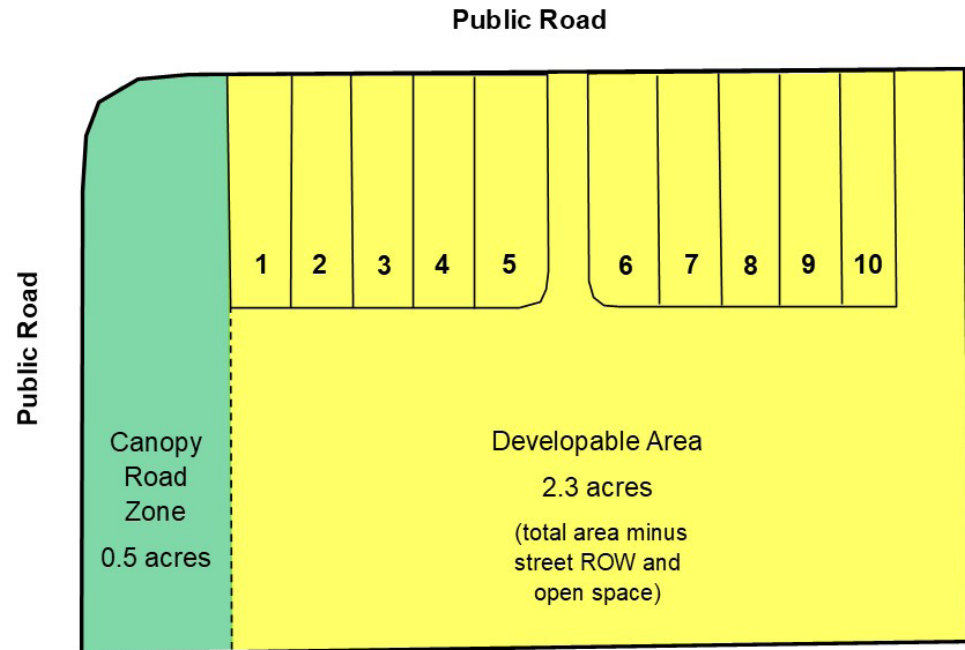


Figure 20



Marquee

The Code's definition is as follows: "The term marquee means a canopy or covered structure projecting from and supported by a building when such canopy or covered structure extends beyond the building line or property line." Figure 21 illustrates a marquee with the yellow highlight.

Figure 21



Figure 22



Source: Google Earth

Plaza

The Code defines this term as follows: "Plaza means a type of civic space designed for community purposes and commercial activities in the more urban transects, generally paved and spatially defined by building frontages and formal plantings. See section 10-285, table 9." Figure 22 provides an aerial view of Kleman Plaza in downtown Tallahassee. It is an example of a plaza.

Sight Triangle

The Code defines this term as follows: "Sight triangle means the length of road visible to

a driver on a side street or driveway to observe oncoming objects on the main street, measured from a point on the side street or driveway at least 20 feet from the edge of the major road pavement and from a height of 3.5 feet on the side street or driveway to a height of 4.25 feet on the major road. The vehicular sight distance varies by operating speed of vehicles on the roadway and the grade of the main street, as referenced in city or county driveway and street connection regulations."

In the example in Figure 23, the sides of

the triangle adjacent to the road and the driveway must measure a minimum of 20 feet. Within that triangle, landscape and hardscape features cannot be taller than 3.5 feet. Similarly, hanging branches and similar features cannot be lower than 4.25 feet. Please note that this is a minimum sight triangle standard. Other citations create more precise standards for specific circumstances. For example, Sec. 10-418, TLDC, creates a different standard. Instead of the 20-foot minimum in the definition, the pavement sides of the sight triangle must be equal to the distance of the zoning district's

Figure 23



required setback. Sec. 10-418, TLDC, also creates a clear space with no obstruction to vision between 3 and 10 feet.

Square

The Code defines this term as follows: "Square means a common open space type designed for unstructured recreation and community purposes, spatially defined by building frontages and formal plantings, and consisting of paths, lawns, and trees, formally disposed. See section 10-285, table

9." As shown by Figure 24, each of the seven parks in Tallahassee's Chain of Parks along Park Avenue functions as a square surrounded on all sides by public roads.

Stepback

The Code defines this term as follows: "Step-back means a building setback of a specified distance that occurs at a prescribed number of stories above the ground. See section 10-285, table 6." The scale and massing of a building impacts how a neighborhood is experienced. A row of very tall buildings can overpower neighbors by towering above them, and it can create a tunnel effect on a street by removing access to the sun and sky. A height stepback addresses that challenge. Above a specified floor, successive floors are required to "step-back" a required minimum number of feet. The example in Figure 25 is from Fort Collins, Colorado.

Stoop

The Code definition is as follows: "Stoop means a private frontage wherein the facade is aligned close to the front property

line with the first story elevated from the sidewalk for privacy, with an exterior stair and landing at the entrance." A typical stoop is shown in Figure 26.

Transparency

The Code defines this term as follows: "Transparency means elements of building facades—windows or doors—that are capable of transmitting light so that objects on either side of a surface are easily visible." The Code offers two standards. First, it notes that windows and doors must be "capable of transmitting light". Second, they must transmit enough light so that "objects on either side of a surface are easily visible". That standard clearly prohibits reflective or tinted glass that is completely opaque. Sec. 10-282.2(9)b.2., TLDC, applies only to the design review districts in the MMTD, but it also provides a valid goal for the rest of the MMTD. It prohibits windows with less than 70% light transmission. In other words, all windows must allow at least 70% of the light to enter the building. As shown by Figure 27, the interior of the building is easily visible. This project meets the Code's transparency requirements.

Figure 24



Zero Lot Line

The Code defines this term as follows: "Zero lot line means the location of a building on a lot in such a manner that one or more of the building's sides rests directly on a lot line." Figure 28 depicts an example zero lot line residential subdivision.

Figure 25



Source: Google Earth

Figure 26

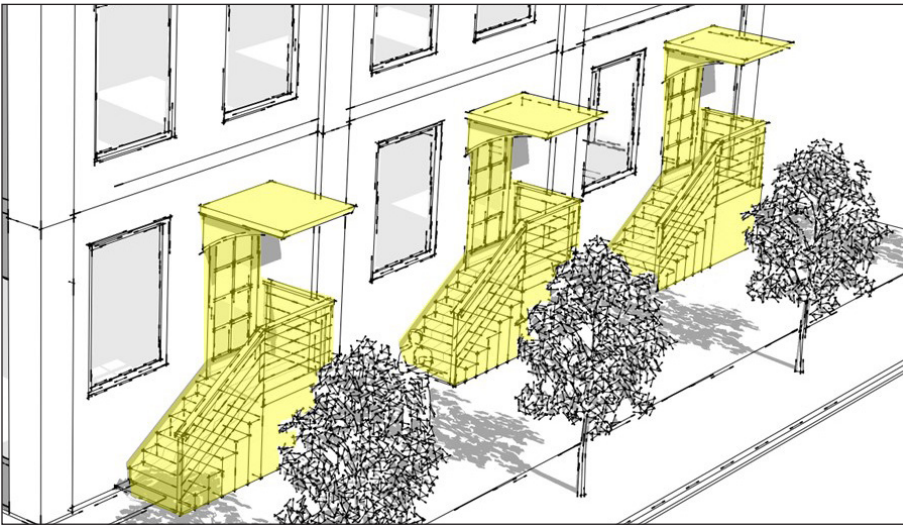


Figure 27



Figure 28





3 signs

This chapter is an overview of the sign code in Chapter 7 of the Tallahassee Land Development Code. It focuses on providing a big picture summary. In doing so, some Code provisions were not included, such as billboards (Sec. 7-64), electronic reader boards (Sec. 7-70), and others.

How are signs reviewed and approved?

If it is greater than 24 square feet, a sign requires a building permit and is reviewed for consistency with both the zoning and building codes. Zoning standards include issues such as the number of signs, sign placement, sign area, sign height, sign type, and the manner of illumination. Building standards focus on issues like the structure of the sign and its electrical connection.

How is the allowable size, number, and type of signs determined?

Figures 29 through 31 summarize several key features of the City's Sign Code from Chapter 7 of the TLDC. There are exceptions, but most uses are allowed the greater of either: a.) 2 square feet of sign area for each linear foot of building frontage; or b.) 1 square foot of sign area for each linear foot of property frontage, but not more than a maximum of 200 total square feet in either case. That standard is found in Figure 29 at rows 1 and 2, and column a. Figure 29 also summarizes a variety of other development standards concerning signs, including the maximum number of ground and wall signs, the maximum allowable sign height, and other issues.

What types of signs are regulated?

Chapter 1 of the TLDC references 42 different types of signs that are regulated by the Sign Code in Chapter 7. Please see Figure 32 for photographs of some of the types of regulated signs. Please note that Figure 32 only shows 12 of the 42 sign types that are addressed by Chapter 7. The purpose of Figure 32 isn't to depict all sign types, but to rather give a flavor of the wide variety of signs that are regulated by the Code.

Note that the sign face and the sign height are two of the key features regulated by the sign code. Chapter 1, TLDC, defines sign face as "The part of the sign, including trim and background, which contains the message or informative contents." Likewise, sign height is defined as "The vertical distance from the finished grade at the base of the supporting structure to the top of the sign, or its frame or supporting structure, whichever is higher." Both terms are illustrated by Figure 33.

What types of signs are prohibited?

Sec. 7-81, TLDC, prohibits the sign types that:

- Do not meet the Sign Code.
- Resemble a traffic control device or sign, or emergency vehicle markings.
- Obstruct free and clear vision on a street.
- Produce glare or are a hazard or a nuisance.
- Are animated, except public service signs.
- Are banners or flying paraphernalia, except specified flags.
- Produce noise or sounds capable of being heard.

- Emit visible smoke, vapor, particles, or odor.
- Cause radio, television, or communication interference.
- Include motion pictures visible from any public street or sidewalk.
- Obstruct firefighting, light, and ventilation.
- Are on public property, except signs installed by public authority.
- Are on trees, rocks, or other natural features.
- Are on a vehicle parked on a public road.
- Are sandwich signs, with exceptions.
- Are snipe signs.
- Are window signs that cover more than 20% of the window glass surface area.
- Are bench signs.
- Are flashing signs incorporated onto or attached to portable signs.
- Are tethered inflatable signs, with limited exceptions.
- Are electronic reader board signs on historic properties or historic structures.

Are there special cases?

This introduction to the Sign Code provides an overview of the standards that apply to most but not all of Tallahassee. As previously noted, the standards that apply to most of Tallahassee are summarized by Figures 29 through 31. Keep in mind that there are several areas of the City that have sign standards designed to serve their unique needs. Such special cases are summarized by Figure 34. The goal of Figure 34 isn't to exhaustively detail what the Code requires in these special cases but to rather provide a flavor of how they differ from the rest of the Code. The areas of the City that have unique sign standards are summarized below.

- All Saints neighborhood – The All Saints neighborhood is located at the east end of Gaines Street in the Multi-Modal Transportation District (MMTD).
- University Village – University Village is a zoning district generally located in the vicinity of the FSU and FAMU campuses in the MMTD.
- Multi-Modal Transportation District – The MMTD is a special planning area that includes Downtown Tallahassee and the surrounding neighborhoods. It emphasizes higher use intensities and densities to support multiple transportation options, such as cycling and walking.
- Mahan Corridor Ring and Node – The Mahan Corridor Ring and Node are zoning districts that encompass a relatively small area in the vicinity of Mahan Drive and Buck Lake Road.
- On Local Streets in Neighborhoods – In 2021, new development standards were added to Tallahassee's Zoning Code for commercial projects built next to existing residential neighborhoods. The new standards were adopted by the Neighborhood Compatibility Ordinance (No. 21-O-15). All residential neighborhoods have an edge where the residential homes stop and some form of non-residential use begins. The edge between the residential and non-residential uses must be thoughtfully designed. That's what the Neighborhood Compatibility Ordinance seeks to achieve. Its sign standards apply to non-residential development on a local road that is either adjacent or across the street from low density residential.

Figure 29

	Sign Standard	Non-Residential (Not Shopping Centers)			Shopping Centers (d)	Subdivisions (e)	Multi-Family and Mobile Home Park (f)	MMTD (g)
		Single Occupancy (a)	Multiple Occupancy ¹ (b)	Central Core and Special Character District (Single/Multi-Occupancy) (c)				
(1)	Aggregate surface area of all signs, as further limited by row (2)	2 sq. ft. / foot of building frontage, or 1 sq. ft. / foot of property frontage	Same as column (a)	Same as column (a)	See Figures 30 and 31	40 sq. ft.	32 sq. ft. (if > 16 units), OR 2 sq. ft. per unit (if < 16 units)	Same as column (a)
(2)	Max aggregate surface area per frontage	200 sq. ft.	150 sq. ft.	80 sq. ft. ²	See Figures 30 and 31	NA	NA	See columns (a) - (f)
(3)	Max # ground signs per frontage	1	1	1	See Figures 30 and 31	1 per entrance	1 ground or wall sign / frontage	See columns (a) - (f)
(4)	Max # wall ³ signs per frontage	1	1	1	See Figures 30 and 31	NA	1 ground or wall sign / frontage	See columns (a) - (f)
(5)	Transfers permitted between frontages	Yes	Yes	No	No	NA	NA	See columns (a) - (f)
(6)	Sign on rear of building w/o frontage	No	No	No	No	NA	No	Yes ⁴
(7)	Max height ground sign: - Arterial - Within 660 ft. of interchange - Other	25 ft. 100 ft. 18 ft.	25 ft. 100 ft. 18 ft.		25 ft. 100 ft. 18 ft.	10 ft. 10 ft. 10 ft.	8 ft. 8 ft. 8 ft.	25 ft. NA 10 ft.
(8)	Special conditions	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	See below. ⁵

Notes:

¹ Individual establishments in multiple-occupancy buildings shall be permitted wall signs and wall sign area as though each were located in an individual building with individual street frontage.

² Lettering on awnings and canopies and permanent lettering on windows shall be included in the maximum signage allowed.

³ Wall signs include wall, mansard, marquee, canopy, projecting, and roof signs.

⁴ Each establishment is allowed an additional wall sign on the rear of the building, the maximum size of which is limited to the greater of 24 square feet or 50% of the allowable sign area on the front of the building.

⁵ The following additional standards apply in the MMTD: a.) Pole mounted (pylon) signs are prohibited except along arterial roadways; b.) All other freestanding signs except along arterial roadways shall be monument types and shall not exceed ten feet in height; c.) Signage shall utilize the building materials of the primary structure; d.) Window signs shall only be permitted on the first story; e.) Externally illuminated signs shall be lighted from the top of the signs, with light directed downward by means of a fully shielded fixture; and f.) Internally illuminated signs attached to or part of awnings and canopies are prohibited.

Figure 30				
	Base Sign Allowance for Shopping Centers (a)	If use in shopping center has $\geq 100,000$ sq. ft. and if max distance to ROW line of street is within range of columns (b) to (d), wall signs are allowed per below.		
		≥ 100 ft. but < 400 ft. (b)	≥ 400 ft. but < 600 ft. (c)	≥ 600 ft. (d)
Aggregate surface area of wall signs, as further limited by row (2) below	One sign not to exceed 2.5 sq. ft. of surface area for each lineal foot of store frontage	Column (a) multiplied by 4	Column (a) multiplied by 5	Column (a) multiplied by 6
Max aggregate surface area of wall signs	200 sq. ft.	300 sq. ft.	600 sq. ft.	800 sq. ft.
Max # of wall signs	1	2	3	4
Additional signs	Each establishment in the shopping center shall be allowed 1 hanging marquee sign with a height of 1 foot, and a width of either 6 feet or the width of the canopy, whichever is less.			
Signs cannot be on rear or sides of a shopping center if oriented to a residential neighborhood.				

Figure 31			
	Neighborhood Shopping Center $\geq 25,000$ but $< 100,000$ sq. ft. (a)	Community Shopping Center $\geq 100,000$ but $< 300,000$ sq. ft. (b)	Regional Shopping Center $\geq 300,000$ sq. ft. (c)
Max aggregate surface area of ground signs	175 sq. ft.	200 sq. ft.	300 sq. ft.
Max # of ground signs	One ground sign for the first 500 lineal feet of frontage adjacent to a street and one additional ground sign for each additional 500 lineal feet of frontage or major fraction thereof.		
Signs cannot be on rear or sides of a shopping center if oriented to a residential neighborhood.			

Figure 32



Banner Sign



Changeable Copy Sign



Construction Sign



Electronic Reader Board Sign



Monument Sign



Pole Sign



Roof Sign



Sandwich Sign



Subdivision Sign



Temporary Sign



Wall Sign



Window Sign

Figure 33



Figure 34

	All Saints, Sec. 7-68(a)	University Village, Sec. 7-68(b)	MMTD, Sec. 7-71	Mahan Corridor Ring and Node, Sec. 7-69	On Local Streets in Neighborhoods, Sec. 7-72
Limits type or size of signs	X	X	X	X	X
Preserves historic signs	X	X			
Provides infill standards	X	X			
Requires design review	X	X			
Prohibits additional signs	X	X	X	X	X
Regulates illumination source			X	X	X
Regulates building materials			X		
Limits window signs			X		
Regulates sign placement					X



4 process

Chapter 9 of the Tallahassee Land Development Code creates a review process and development standards for subdivisions and site plans. When a new development is proposed, Chapter 9 provides the road map that defines what must be included in the application and how it will be reviewed.

This Zoning Handbook doesn't document the steps in the development process because that's already explained in detail in both a [video](#) and a [handout](#) at the Growth Management Department's website. Instead, the Zoning Handbook focuses on the project submittal standards. The discussion below provides an overview of key features of Chapter 9.

Broadly speaking, development applications typically fall into one of two categories. First, a subdivision is exactly what the name suggests. A larger parcel is divided into multiple smaller residential or non-residential lots. An approved subdivision doesn't allow the construction of a new building. Rather, it only allows for the legal division of larger parcels into smaller lots. Second, a site plan is a proposal to build a new structure, along with its supporting parking, stormwater facilities, and similar features. Chapter 9 of the Tallahassee Land Development Code defines how both types of applications are reviewed.

Limited Partitions

A limited partition is a streamlined process for residential subdivisions with 10 or fewer lots. It is particularly appropriate for small infill subdivisions that are already zoned for the intended density. To qualify for the limited partition process, a proposal must:

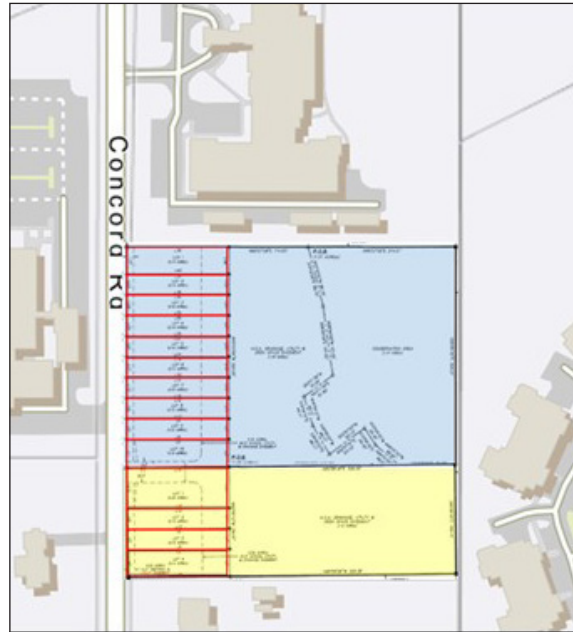
- Be an unrecorded residential lot or parcel on an existing public or private street;
- Propose 10 single family or duplex dwelling units;
- Propose a density allowed by the Zoning Code;
- Not propose a lot with new driveway access to an arterial or major collector road;
- Ensure subdivision of existing dwelling units meets building codes;
- Not create a new street for legal access (see discussion below concerning legal access);
- Not require the extension of water and sewer mains; and
- Not include land previously subdivided by a limited partition.

The limited partition in Figure 35 is east of Concord Road and south of Mahan Drive. The parcel highlighted blue has 10 lots, and the parcel highlighted yellow has 4 lots. This project met the criteria noted above.

Preliminary and Final Plats

Chapter 1, TLDC, defines a plat as “A map or delineated representation of the subdivision of lands, being a complete exact representation of the subdivision and including other information as required by the applicable laws of the state and chapter

Figure 35



9, pertaining to subdivisions, and which has been placed in the official records of the county.” In other words, a plat is the official document that shows the exact surveyed boundaries of the subdivision. The official records are maintained by the Leon County Clerk of Courts. You can find the recorded plat for all subdivisions at the Clerk’s website by searching based on the plat book number and page number.

Note that all subdivisions require a preliminary plat and a final plat. An approved preliminary plat is reviewed by the Development Review Committee and meets the following standards:

- Chapter 5, TLDC (grading, stormwater, and environmental protection);
- Chapter 9, TLDC (subdivision design);

- Chapter 10, TLDC (zoning); and
- Other applicable regulations.

In contrast, a final plat is approved by the City Commission after the developer installs all improvements required by the subdivision (roads, water, sewer, and so forth). It is the document that is recorded with the Leon County Clerk of Courts.

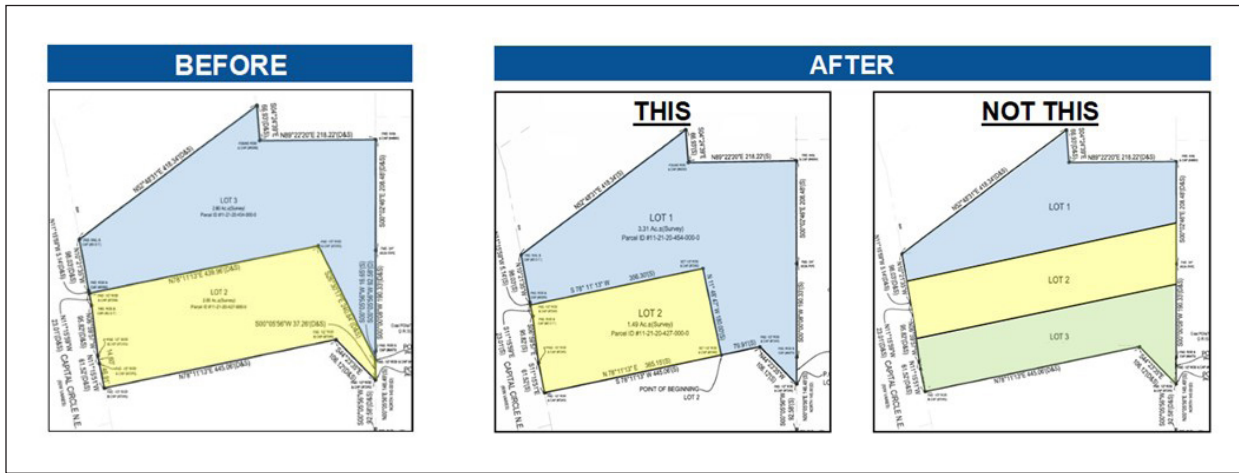
Technical Amendments

There are valid reasons for doing minor lot boundary adjustments. A technical amendment is a streamlined process for making such minor adjustments, but it is only available if the lot isn’t platted, if no new lots are created, if the lots continue to meet the Code, and if the orientation to the street is the same.

The “Before” diagram in Figure 36 shows the configuration of two adjacent lots prior to a technical amendment. The “After” diagram in Figure 36 depicts two technical amendment applications. The figure on the left labeled “This” was approved because it isn’t part of a recorded plat, because no additional lots or streets were created, because the revised lot boundaries meet the Code’s standards, because the orientation of the lots to Capital Circle NE does not change, and because no streets are vacated.

However, the figure at the right labeled “Not This” could not be approved as a technical amendment because it does create an additional lot. Please note that the “Not This” figure below represents only one possible application that is ineligible for a technical amendment. A technical amendment application must meet all the criteria at Sec. 9-97, TLDC.

Figure 36



Subdivision Design Standards

Subdivision design standards are discussed at length in the Code at Sec. 9-111 and Sec. 9-112, TLDC. Sec. 9-111, TLDC, focuses on required improvements like grading, streets, curbs, gutter, sidewalks, bikeways, drainage, potable water, sewer, electric, fire protection, street lighting, traffic control, and any required dedications of land. Sec. 9-112, TLDC, on the other hand, identifies the subdivision design standards, including pavement widths, street connectivity, street design speeds, street intersection design, dead end streets, stub-out streets, pedestrian and emergency access, bicycle/pedestrian connection, signage, and similar matters. The key point is that Chapter 9, TLDC, establishes the minimum standards for how a subdivision must be designed. The following discussion highlights several issues from Chapter 9, TLDC.

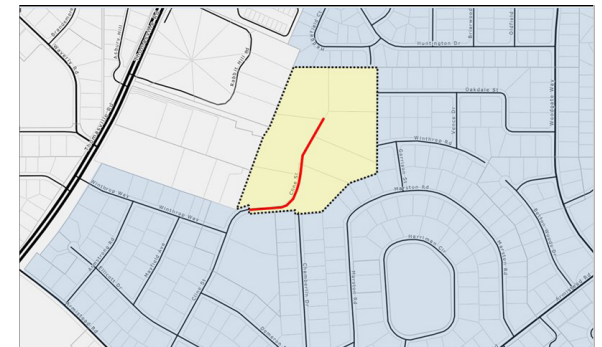
Legal Access for Lots in a Subdivision

Chapter 1, TLDC, defines the term "legal access". For residential subdivisions, it means the right, created by fee simple ownership, for an owner or proposed owner to ingress and egress via automobile or other motorized vehicle from the premises to a public street or to a private street so long as the private street was built prior to June 1, 1984, built pursuant to Ordinance No. 84-O-2252AA, or built pursuant to chapter 9. For nonresidential subdivisions, it means the right, created by fee simple ownership, deed, license, easement, or other insurable right of access, recorded in the public records of the county, and for perpetual ingress to and egress from the premises to a public or private street.

In Figure 37, each lot in the light blue area has legal access to a publicly dedicated

street. However, the lots in the yellow area do not have access to a publicly dedicated street. The road that serves those lots (highlighted red) is an access easement that is privately maintained. Sec. 9-112(c) (1), TLDC, provides that "A subdivision and every lot within it shall have legal access to a publicly dedicated street. Easements are not recognized as providing legal access to new residential parcels proposed for creation as a result of a residential subdivision." Per current standards, all newly created lots must have legal access to a publicly dedicated street. To be built today, the portion of the road highlighted red would have to

Figure 37



be built to public street standards. It isn't sufficient for it to simply be an access easement that is privately maintained.

Continuation of Arterials and Collectors in Subdivisions

A residential subdivision shouldn't be a difficult to navigate maze. To avoid that, the Code requires that arterial and collec-

for roads must connect both internally and externally. That's important for neighbors, but also for the police and fire departments, which may need to get to a site quickly. Sec. 9-112, TLDC, requires that arterial and collector streets in proposed subdivisions be connected both internally and also with the surrounding road network. Figure 38 illustrates a subdivision design prohibited by Sec. 9-112, TLDC. The collector roads highlighted yellow connect at the north and east with major arterials. At examples 1 and 2, both collector roads are not connected internally. At example 3, the north/south collector only serves the subdivision to the north and provides no connectivity to the adjacent subdivision at the south.

Driveway Access for New Subdivisions

Sec. 9-112(c)(3), TLDC, notes that "No new direct driveway access shall be permitted to a canopy road or inside the urban service area to a major collector or arterial roadway from any newly created subdivision lot." The two commercial examples shown in Figure 39 illustrate this citation. Example #1 shows a three lot commercial subdivision along a canopy road. It depicts one possible solution to meeting Sec. 9-112(c)(3), TLDC, in which the three lots are accessed from behind the buildings along the two secondary roads.

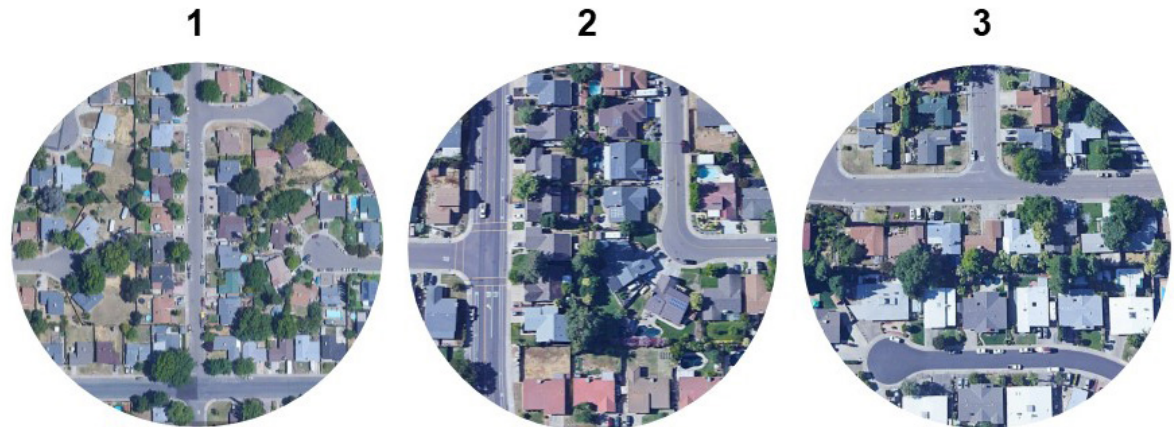
Likewise, Example #2 depicts a three lot commercial subdivision that is not on a canopy road or in the Multi-Modal Transportation District. In this example, the parcel had one driveway prior to being subdivided, and it has one driveway after the subdivision occurred. Access to each of the three lots would be achieved by an access easement.

Minimum Depth of Buildable Area

Sec. 9-112(c)(7), TLDC, creates minimum dimension standards for newly subdivided lots. One of the key requirements from this citation is that the minimum buildable area between the front and rear setbacks is set at

35 feet. Figure 40 uses the RP-1 zoning district to explain this standard. The RP-1 district requires a minimum front and rear yard of 25 feet. Given that the depth of the buildable area must be at least 35 feet, the overall minimum depth of RP-1 lots is therefore 85 feet (25 + 35 + 25).

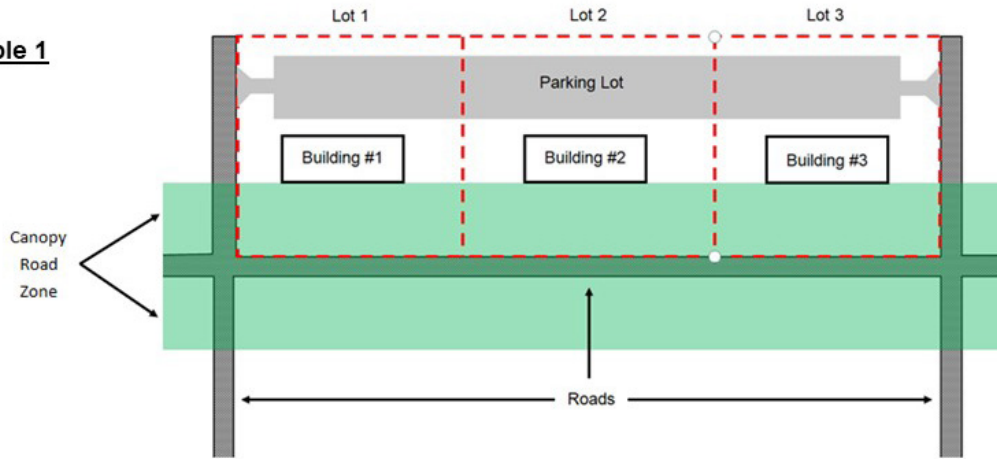
Figure 38



Source: Google Earth

Figure 39

Example 1



Example 2

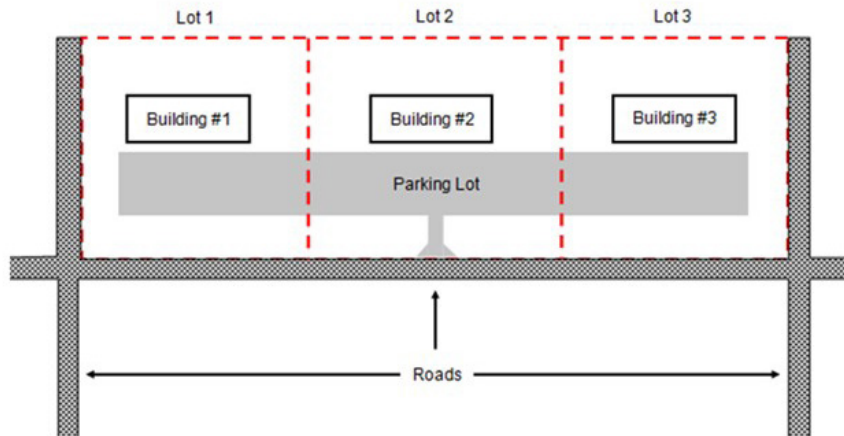
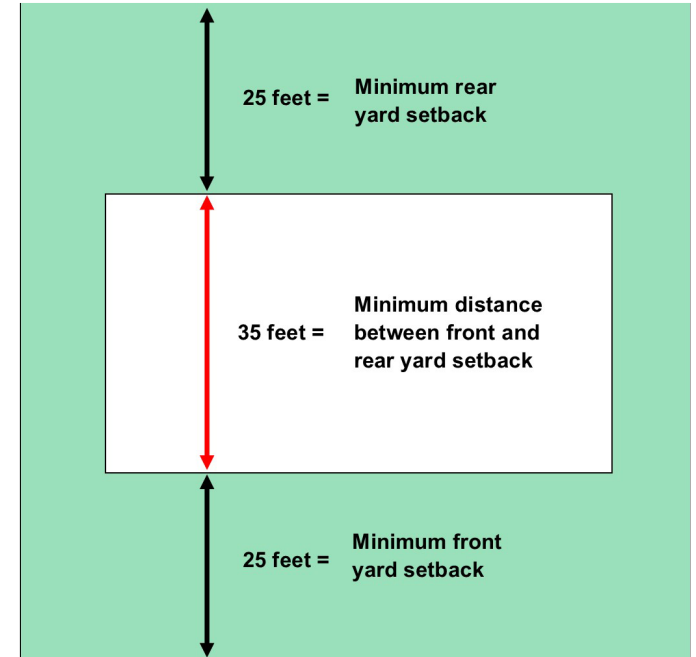


Figure 40



Residential Flag Lots

The goal of the Code's flag lot standards is to assure consistent neighborhood design, as well as access to public services like police and fire protection. Flag lot driveways are not paved roads maintained to public standards. They must be accessible to public safety vehicles (like fire trucks) and provide space on site to safely turn around. Sec. 9-112(c) (7)d., TLDC, provides standards for residential flag lots as follows: 1.) Minimum area of the lot (less the driveway) must be 1.5 times the required area in the zoning; 2.) The setbacks must be met on the lot, less the driveway; 3.) The driveway width must be at least 14 feet, with a frontage of at least 20 feet; 4.)

The driveway can't be longer than 150 feet; 5.) There may be no more than 2 adjacent flag lots; and 6.) Nonresidential and multi-family flag lots are prohibited. The lots shown in Figure 41 were subdivided in the 1990s and don't meet the current standards.

In the example, the land is zoned R-3. The minimum lot size in the R-3 district is 5,000 square feet for detached single family. The flag lots easily exceed 7,500 sq. ft. (5,000 X 1.5). There are 2 reasons these flag lots don't meet current standards. First, the frontage of the eastern most flag lot is less than 20 feet. Second, the driveway of all 3 flag lots is significantly longer than the 150 foot maximum.

Lot Drainage

Sec. 9-112(c)(8), TLDC, requires lots to be designed to provide positive drainage away from all buildings, to be coordinated with the general stream drainage pattern for the area, and to avoid unnecessary concentration of storm drainage water from each lot to other lots or parcels. This citation prevents flooding by requiring that lots are graded so that drainage is directed away from buildings. Figure 42 illustrates a single-family residence (highlighted yellow) on a platted residential lot. The drainage flow arrows (highlighted by the green ellipses) demonstrate how the lot is to be graded in the building plans.

Further Subdivision of Existing Lots

The goal of this citation is to preserve the residential character of the neighborhood by preventing the further subdivision of an existing neighborhood from creating an excessively small lot.

- Step 1 - Confirm that the exception at Sec. 9-62(e), doesn't apply to the project. Specifically, steps 2-6 only apply in an RP-2 zoning district if a majority (50% plus one) of developed lots contain only one single family detached dwelling unit.
- Step 2 - Identify the plat or phase of the plat for the lot in question. The example below and in Figure 43 is the Dellwood plat at Plat Book 3, page 26. Copies of plats can be obtained as follows: a.) Go to the Leon County Property Appraiser's website, which lists the plat book and page number in its description of individual lots; and b.) Enter the plat book and page number at the searchable records of the Leon County Clerk of the Courts.

- Step 3 - Confirm that the property is zoned either RP-1, RP-2, R-1, R-2, or PUD.
- Step 4 - In ascending order, list the acres for each lot. Acres can be determined through the Leon County Property Appraiser's website.
- Step 5 - From the ascending order list, identify the median acres, which is the middle figure. If you have an even number of lots, the

Figure 41

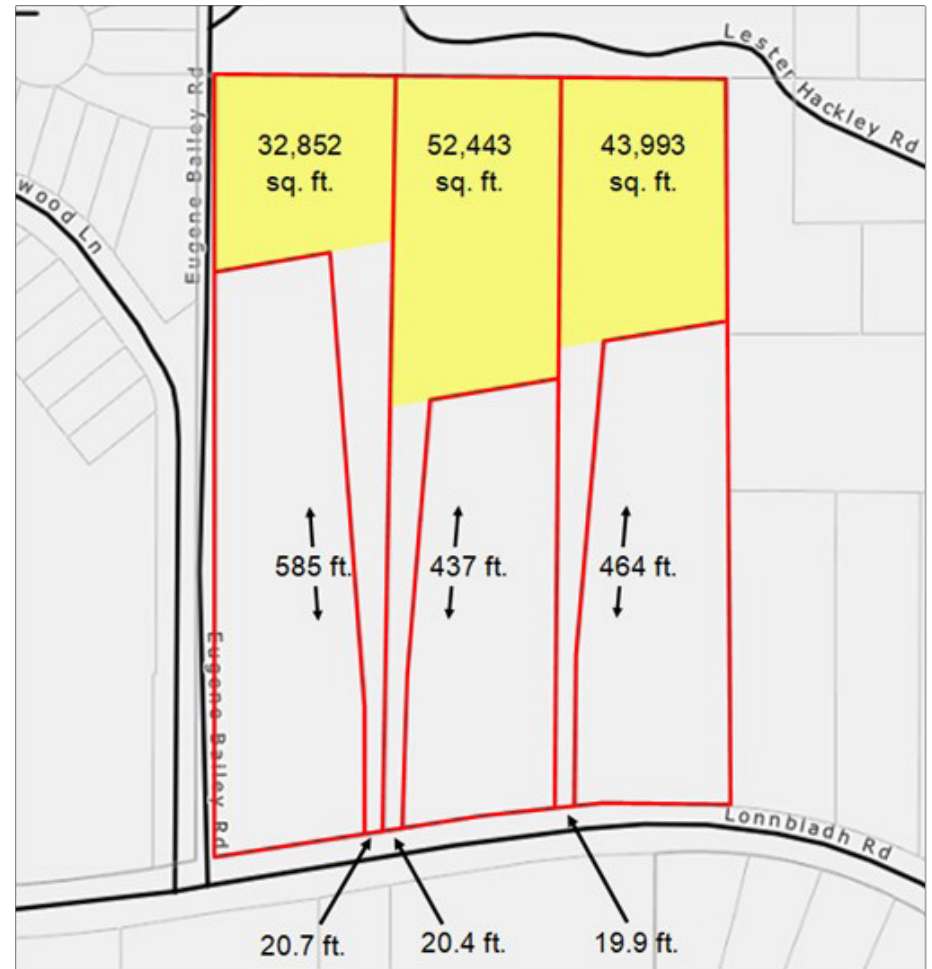


Figure 42

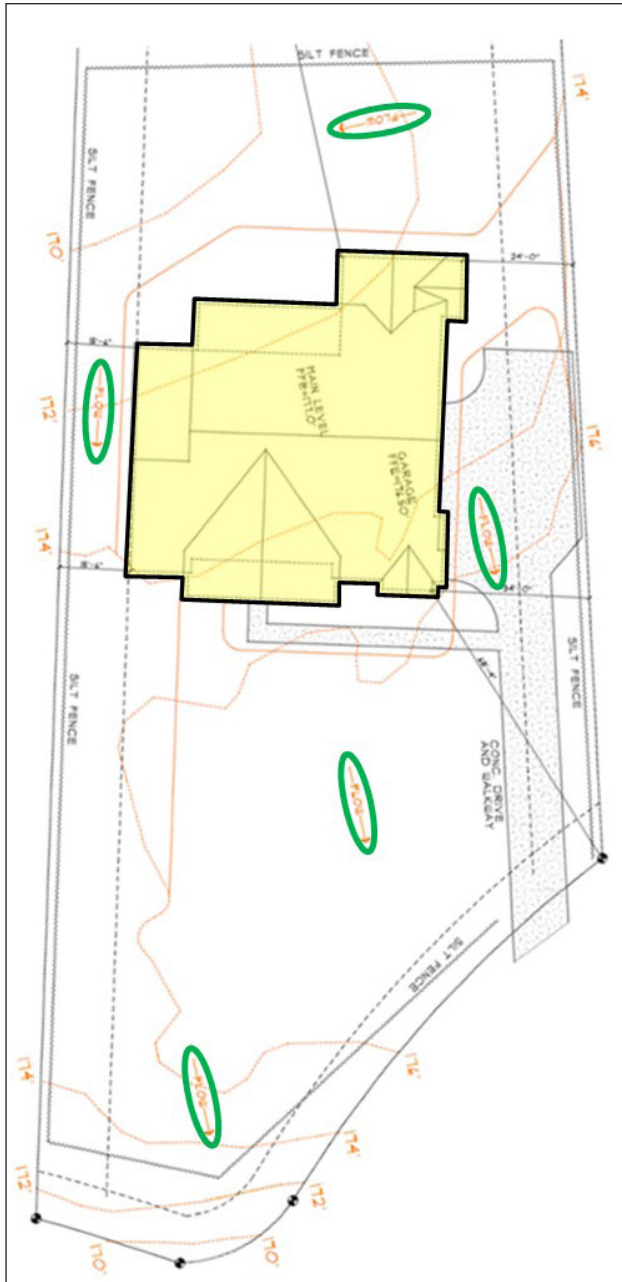


Figure 43



median would be the average of the middle two acreage values. For the Dellwood plat, the median lot size is 0.27 acres.

- Step 6 - Multiply the median lot size by 0.9, which results in the smallest allowable size of any newly subdivided lot. For the Dellwood subdivision, the smallest allowable size for any newly subdivided lot is 0.27 acres (the median) multiplied by 0.9, or 0.243 acres. Please note that each zoning district's minimum lot size must always be met. Therefore, if the median multiplied by 0.9 is less than the minimum lot size required by zoning, then the minimum lot size from the zoning district controls. On the other hand, if the median multiplied by 0.9 is more than the minimum lot size allowed by zoning, then the calculated lot size controls.

Site Plans

An approved site plan is required for both multi-family projects (greater than or equal to 4 dwelling units) and all non-residential development greater than 2,500 square feet. The site

plan documents how a building and its supporting uses will be arranged on a site consistent with the Zoning Code. The site plan describes features of the proposed building, such as its setback from the street, the building height, and architectural details. It also documents the facilities needed to support the building, including parking, stormwater facilities, landscaping, and buffers. The site plan must be approved before the building permit can be issued. The 4 types of site plans are summarized in Figure 44.

Inclusionary Housing

Housing affordability is a challenge throughout the country. Tallahassee's Code seeks to address that challenge through inclusionary housing provisions at Sec. 9-240 through Sec. 9-250, TLDC. The inclusionary housing standards apply to new development in specified census tracts, in Planned Unit Developments, and in Developments of Regional Impact with 50 or more residential dwelling units intended for owner occupancy. Such projects must provide at least 10% of the total number of residential dwelling units as affordable owner-occupied units, as defined by the Code. In lieu of providing the required affordable owner-occupied units, the Code provides the option of either a fee in-lieu, affordable multi-family rental housing, or residential lots. Developments that provide the required number of inclusionary housing units are eligible for incentives, including additional density, design flexibility, expedited review, deviations, transportation concurrency exemption, and other incentives.

Figure 44				
	Type A	Type B	Type C	Type D
Pertinent land uses	MFR and nonresidential ¹	MFR and nonresidential ¹	New public or private schools ²	See footnote. ³
Deviation or variance allowed?	No	Yes	NA	NA
Dwelling units	≥ 4 units	≥ 4 units	NA	NA
Square feet	> 2,500 sq. ft.	> 2,500 sq. ft.	NA	NA
Review authority	Staff committee	Development Review Committee (DRC)	DRC and Planning Commission	Planning Commission and City Commission
<p>Notes:</p> <p>1 The following types of development must always apply for a Type B site plan: 1.) All development in the Government Operational-1 (GO-1) and all development except for new heavy infrastructure in Government Operational-2 (GO-2) zoning districts; 2.) Land uses listed as a special exception in the design review districts; 3.) New transitional residential facilities and expansions to existing transitional residential facilities; 4.) Sites with proximity to low density residential development; and 5.) Sites with ≥ 40% coverage by conservation or preservation areas.</p> <p>2 Site plans for the expansion of existing public or private schools are subject to the site plan review thresholds for Type A or Type B site plans.</p> <p>3 Creation of historic preservation or canopy road overlays, DRIs, and new heavy infrastructure development in the Government Operational-2 (GO-2) zoning district.</p>				



5 zoning

Chapter 10 of the Tallahassee Land Development Code provides the Zoning Code. The two key features of Chapter 10 are the zoning districts and the associated development standards that apply to new projects in each zone.

Tallahassee's Zoning Code has 54 separate zoning districts. Figure 45 provides a brief overview of those districts at a very high level. For example, Figure 45 notes whether each zoning district allows residential, office, commercial, institutional, and industrial uses. The Code's definition of the allowable uses in each district is far more precise. For example, Figure 45 references commercial uses, while some districts list dozens of different types of retail uses. The goal of Figure 45 is to provide a big picture summary of the zoning districts and their allowable uses.

The allowable uses are only half of what is provided by Chapter 10. It also identifies the pertinent development standards for each zoning district, which includes criteria like setbacks, building height, parking requirements, landscaping, buffers, and a variety of other design issues. Please refer to Chapter 10 to determine whether a specific use is allowed and what development standards apply in a given zoning district.

Figure 45

		Residential	Office	Commercial	Institutional	Industrial	Density (units/acre)
AC	Activity Center	X	X	X	X	X	16-45
ASN-A	All Saints A	X	X	X			8-50
ASN-B	All Saints B	X	X	X	X		16-50
ASN-C	All Saints C		X	X	X		16-75
ASN-D	All Saints D		X	X	X		16-100
C-1	Neighborhood Commercial	X	X	X	X		8-16
C-2	General Commercial		X	X	X		8-16
CM	Medical Arts Commercial	X	X	X	X		6-20
CC	Central Core	X	X	X	X		150 max
CP	Commercial Parkway	X	X	X	X		6-16
CU-12	Central Urban 12	X			X		4-12
CU-18	Central Urban 18	X	X	X	X		4-18
CU-26	Central Urban 26	X	X	X	X		4-26
CU-45	Central Urban 45	X	X	X	X		4-45
DRI	Development of Regional Impact	Uses and standards defined in development order.					
GO-1	Government Operational 1				X		----
GO-2	Government Operational 2				X		----
I	Industrial					X	----
IC	Interchange Commercial	X	X	X	X	X	6-16
LP	Lake Protection	X			X		0.5 max
M-1	Light Industrial		X		X	X	----
MCR	Mahan Corridor Ring	X			X		4-10
MCN	Mahan Corridor Node	X	X	X			6-16
MH	Manufactured Home Park	X			X		8 max
MR	Medium Density Residential District	X			X		6-16
MR-1	Medium Density Residential	X			X		8-20
NBO	Neighborhood Boundary Office	X	X				8 max
NB-1	Neighborhood Boundary 1	X	X	X	X		18 max
OA-1	Airport Vicinity		X	X	X		----
OR-1	Office Residential 1	X	X		X		8 max

Figure 45

		Residential	Office	Commercial	Institutional	Industrial	Density (units/acre)
OR-2	Office Residential 2	X	X	X	X		8-16
OR-3	Office Residential 3	X	X		X		8-20
OS	Open Space				X		----
PD	Planned Development	Uses and standards are defined by the project.					
PUD	Planned Unit Development	Uses and standards are defined by the project.					
R	Rural	X		X	X		0.1 max
R-1	Single Family Detached 1	X			X		3.63 max
R-2	Single Family Detached 2	X			X		4.84 max
R-3	Single Family Detached, Attached 2 Family	X			X		4-8
R-4	Single, 2 Family & Multi Family Residential	X			X		4-10
R-5	Manufactured Home & Single Family Detached	X			X		8 max
RA	Residential Acre	X			X		1 max
RP-1	Residential Preservation - 1	X			X		3.6 max
RP-2	Residential Preservation - 2	X			X		6 max
RP-MH	Residential Preservation Mobile Home Single Family	X			X		6 max
RP-R	Residential Preservation Rural	X			X		Varies ¹
RP-UF	Residential Preservation - Urban Fringe	X			X		Varies ²
SCD	Special Character District	X	X	X	X		----
UF	Urban Fringe	X		X	X	X	Varies ³
UP-1	Urban Pedestrian 1	X	X	X	X		6-16
UP-2	Urban Pedestrian 2	X	X	X	X		6-16
U-PUD	Urban Planned Unit Development	Any use consistent with FLUM and district intent.					
UT	University Transition	X	X	X	X		50 max
UV	University Village	X	X	X	X		16-100

Notes:

¹ 3.6 dwelling units per acre in platted subdivisions, or 1.0 dwelling unit per 10 acres on unplatted lots.

² 3.6 dwelling units per acre in platted subdivisions, 1.0 dwelling unit per acre (net) for clustered developments on unplatted lots, or 1.0 unit per 3 acres, for all other developments.

³ ≤ 1 unit per 3 acres. Also allows a net density of 1 unit per acre if clustered on 25% or less of the site (allowing a gross density of up to 4 units per acre on the developable portion of the site).



6 conclusion

New development has a big impact on a City. Think of Cascades Park. It was a wilderness with a 30-foot waterfall when the City was founded in the early 1800s. Fast forward about a hundred years, and it was home to Centennial Field and minor league baseball. However, the 20th century also brought a gas plant, a landfill, and a waste incinerator which caused serious environmental damage. But the 21st century ushered in a new chapter. The City cleaned the environmental damage and redeveloped Cascades Park as we know it today. The site evolved from wilderness to a baseball field to an environmental superfund site to the award-winning park that it is today.

According to the Urban Land Institute, the average life span of a commercial building is 60 years¹. Consequently, what is built today will be experienced by future generations. Given its potential impact, the development process should ideally include participation from all stakeholder groups, including neighborhood, environmental, and civic organizations, but also business owners. Some stakeholders want to keep track of what is built in their immediate neighborhood, while others want to monitor new development throughout the City. We'll conclude this Zoning Handbook with our top ten tools that will help you stay involved in what we do.

¹ Diana Schoder. [Greening Buildings for Healthier People](#). Washington, DC: Urban Land Institute, 2022.

1. Attend Meetings

All of our meetings for review of development applications are open to the public and we encourage you to attend. Please see our website at www.talgov.com/growth/growth-meetagenda for details. There are 3 meetings for different types of applications, including the Development Review Committee, the Board of Adjustments and Appeals, and a weekly multi-departmental staff committee.

2. Email Lists

Agendas for all of our meetings are published in advance, and you can have them delivered to your email. Please see <https://www.talgov.com/cotnews/subscribe> to sign up. At that link, please choose all of the Growth Management Agendas when you subscribe.

3. Electronic Plan Review

All development applications are filed electronically. That saves time in the application process, but it also makes applications more accessible to interested persons (see "7" below).

4. Geographic Information System (GIS)

If you aren't familiar with GIS, think of it as an electronic map that allows multiple layers of information to be added as may be needed. We're using GIS to make the development process more accessible at www.talgov.com/growth/growth-meetagenda. At the preceding link, scroll down about half way to an interactive map that lists all development applications that are in the review process. Note that the

projects are coded by colored dots according to their type. By clicking on one of the project specific dots, you can also review the project documents by clicking on "View Plan Drawings". Finally, a wealth of land use information is available for any parcel in the City at <https://tlcgis.leon-countyfl.gov/LandInfoPublic/>.

5. Planner of the Day

Some questions are best answered by talking through the details. When that's the case, we encourage you to contact us directly at either (850) 891-7001, option 4, or by email at Zoning@Talgov.com. A member of our planning staff is always available. We look forward to hearing from you!

6. Public Notice

Before we begin reviewing a new development application, some types of projects are required to post signs on site to alert the public of the pending request. The Growth Management Department also sends a notice in the U.S. Mail to all property owners and residents within 1,000 feet of the project site. In response to a community request, we recently increased the size of the public notice signs, required that they be displayed in a more sturdy metal frame, and doubled the mailing radius from 500 feet to 1,000 feet around the project site.

7. Records Requests

You may want to review the application for a project. We can help with that. Please see our website at www.talgov.com/growth/growth-reports. Scroll down

to the very bottom of that page to the blue bar with the title, "Online Records Requests". Click on that bar, and then complete the brief form that appears that will allow us to find the right records for you. Most requests are fulfilled in the same day. You'll receive a PDF of your requested records by a return email from us.

8. Videos

We understand that the Zoning Code can seem complicated if you don't work with it everyday. We're working to address that challenge with a series of videos that we've posted to our website at www.talgov.com/growth/growth-videos. For example, our first video explained each step of the development process from beginning to end. One of our more recent videos detailed the City Code's tree preservation standards.

9. Website

As you've seen from the above discussion, the Department's website at www.talgov.com/growth/growth has a wide range of tools. Our goal is to be transparent in all that we do, and our website has extensive information on our work.

10. Write letters

We work hard to understand and analyze how a proposed development will fit in, but a neighborhood's perspective is always welcomed. Any email or letter that we receive about a project becomes part of the public record and is given careful consideration by the review body. Our mailing address is on the last page of this report.



**CITY OF
TALLAHASSEE**

Growth Management Department

Location: Renaissance Building, 435 N. Macomb Street, Tallahassee, FL 32301
Mail: City Hall, 300 S. Adams St. Box B-28, Tallahassee, FL 32301