

5 HIGH-RISE DISTRICTS

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5.1 HIGH-RISE (HR)

1. Character Description

The High-Rise district is characterized by a variety of moderate to large floor plate high-rise buildings. Buildings are set close to the sidewalk and have an upper stories stepped back to define a mid-rise street wall that supports pedestrian activity and a sense of place. The district is primarily commercial, with a variety of employment opportunities. Ground floor uses typically address the needs of residents and employees from the immediate neighborhood, but can also provide goods and services to the larger Somerville community and visitors from the broader Boston metropolitan area.



5. HIGH-RISE DISTRICTS

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2. Intent

- a. To implement the Urban Mixed Use context from the Future Land Context Map of SomerVision.
- b. To accommodate the development of areas appropriate for an intense mix of multi-story multi-unit, mixed-use, and commercial buildings; neighborhood-, community-, and region-serving uses; and a wide variety of employment opportunities.

3. Purpose

- a. To permit the development of multi-unit, mixed-use, and commercial high-rise buildings.
- b. To provide quality commercial spaces and permit small and medium-scale, neighborhood-, community-, and region-serving commercial uses.
- c. To provide upper story residential unit types, sizes, bedroom counts, and affordability for smaller households.

4. Applicability

- a. The section is applicable to all real property within the High-Rise district as shown on the maps of the Official Zoning Atlas of the City of Somerville.

5. Development Review

- a. All development, excluding normal maintenance, requires the submittal of a development review application to the Building Official and the issuance of a Certificate of Zoning Compliance prior to the issuance of a Building Permit or Certificate of Occupancy.
- b. Proposed development may or may not necessitate the need for Site Plan Approval, a Special Permit, or a Variance based on the nature of the proposal. In such cases, additional development review is required in accordance with Article 15: Administration.
 - i. The Planning Board is the decision making authority for all development that requires Site Plan Approval or a Special Permit.
 - ii. The Zoning Board of Appeals is the Review Board for all Variances.
- c. Upon verification that no additional development review is necessary or completion of the required development review, a Zoning Compliance Certificate shall be issued by the Building Official to certify

compliance with the provisions and procedures of this Ordinance.

6. Building Types

- a. One (1) principal building type may be built on each lot.
- b. The following building types are permitted by Site Plan Approval in the High-Rise district:
 - i. General Building
 - ii. Commercial Building
 - iii. Lab Building
 - iv. Mid-Rise Podium Tower
 - v. Block Building
- c. Apartment Buildings are prohibited on any lot fronting a pedestrian street.
- d. Accessory structures are regulated according to Article 10.0 Development Standards of this Ordinance.

7. General Building

A multi-story principal building type with ground floor commercial uses and no limitations or restrictions on the use of upper stories. The upper stories of a general building are typically residential, but a large variety exists. As the number of stories increases, it becomes more likely for the upper stories of a general building to host commercial uses as well as residential.

The following images are examples of the general building type and are intended only for illustrative purposes.

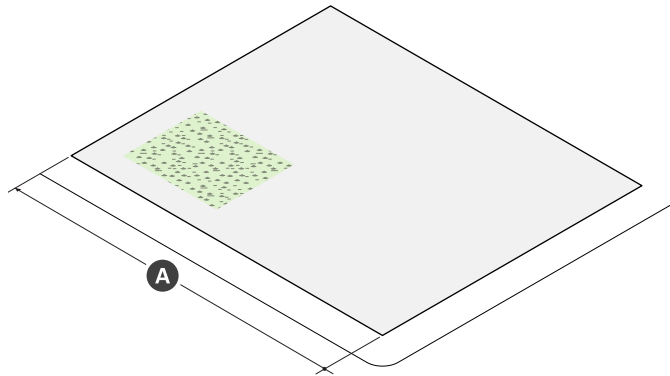


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7. General Building (continued)

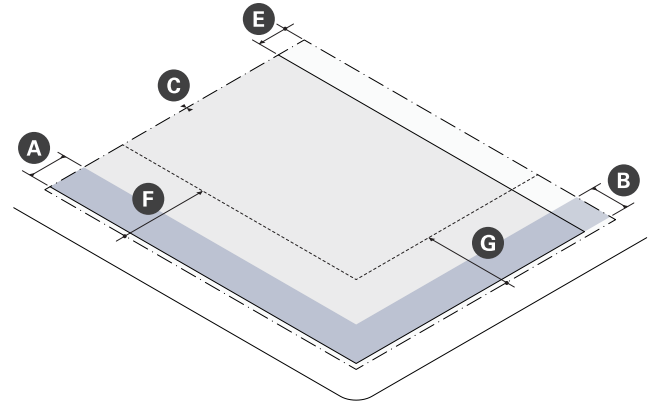
a. Lot Standards



Lot Dimensions	
A Width (min)	30 ft

Lot Development	
B Lot Coverage (max)	100%
C Green Score	--
Minimum	0.20
Ideal	0.25

b. Building Placement

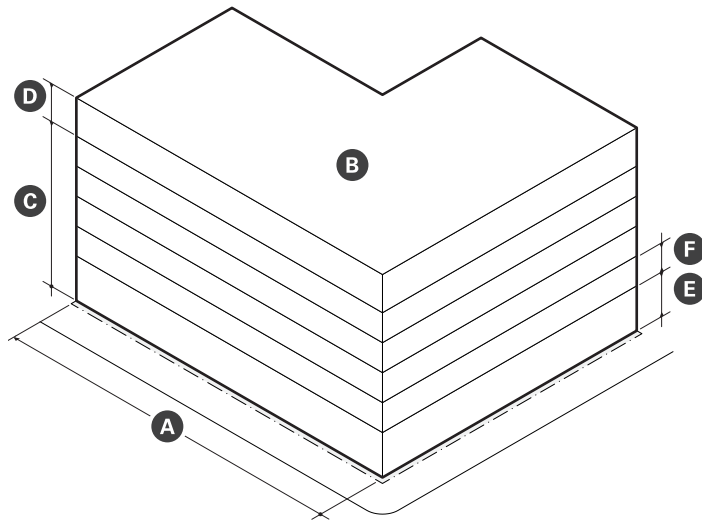


Building Setbacks		
A Primary Front Setback (min/max)	2 ft	15 ft
B Secondary Front Setback (min/max)	2 ft	15 ft
C Side Setback (min)	0 ft	
Side Setback Abutting NR or LHD (min)	5 ft	
D Rear Setback (min)	10 ft	
Rear Setback Abutting NR or LHD (min)	15 ft	

Parking Setbacks	
E Primary Front Setback (min)	30 ft
F Secondary Front Setback (min)	30 ft

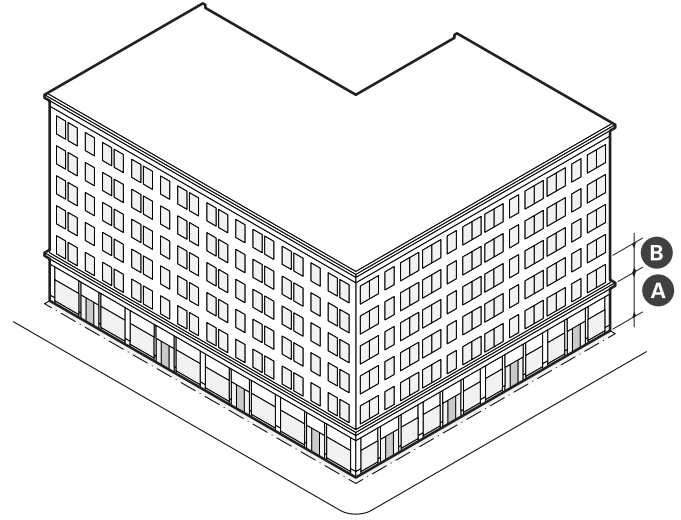
7. General Building (continued)

c. Massing & Height



Main Body	
A Building Width (max)	200 ft
Facade Build Out (min)	--
Front Street	80%
Side Street	65%
B Floor Plate (max)	30,000 sf
C Building Height, Stories (min)	3 stories
D Building Height, Stories (max)	6 stories
E Ground Story Height (min)	14 ft
F Upper Story Height (min)	10 ft
Building Height, Feet (max)	80 ft
Roof Type	Flat

d. Uses & Features



Facade Composition	
A Ground Story Fenestration (min)	70%
B Upper Story Fenestration (min/max)	20% 50%
Blank Wall (max)	20 ft

Use & Occupancy	
Ground Story Entrance Spacing (max)	30 ft
Commercial Space Depth (min)	30 ft
Gross Floor Area per DU (min)	--
Lot Area < 7,000 sf	1,125
Lot Area >= 7,000 sf	875
Net Zero Building	650
100% Affordable Building	650
Outdoor Amenity Space (min)	1/DU

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- e. Housing
 - i. A general building with six (6) or more dwelling units, whether established through new construction or the conversion of any other existing building type, must provide affordable housing in accordance with Article 12: Development Benefits.
- f. Design Guidelines
 - i. Fenestration patterns and window configurations should break the direct line of sight between neighboring properties to every extent practicable. Translucent glass on the bottom half of windows or strategically placed landscape elements should be utilized if it is not practical to off-set windows in ways that minimize privacy impacts.
 - ii. Outdoor amenity spaces that are elevated such as roof decks, fully projecting balconies, and upper story rear porches should provide sight obscuring visual screening at the sides to increase privacy, security, and limit views of abutting properties from elevated vantage points.

8. Commercial Building

A multi-story principal building type limited to commercial uses on all floors. Ground floor space is primarily occupied by retail or eating & drinking establishment uses with narrow lobby entrances for upper floor uses. Floor space on upper floors is sometimes occupied by retail uses that do not rely on the visibility of storefronts at sidewalk level.

The following images are examples of the commercial building type and are intended only for illustrative purposes.

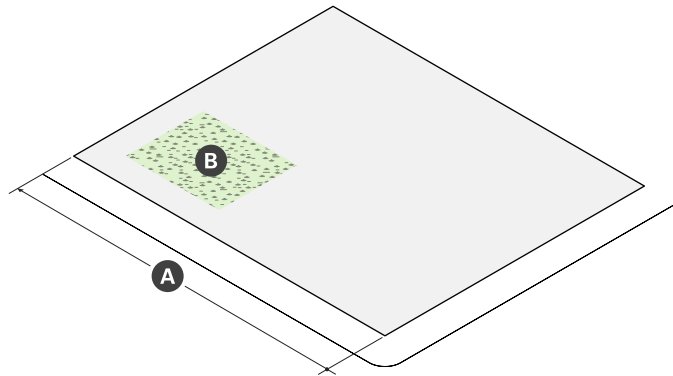


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8. Commercial Building (continued)

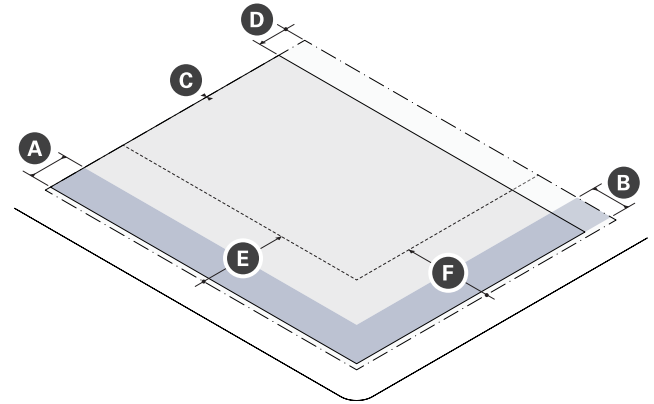
a. Lot Standards



Lot Dimensions	
A Width (min)	30 ft

Lot Development	
B Lot Coverage (max)	100%
C Green Score	--
Minimum	0.20
Ideal	0.25

b. Building Placement

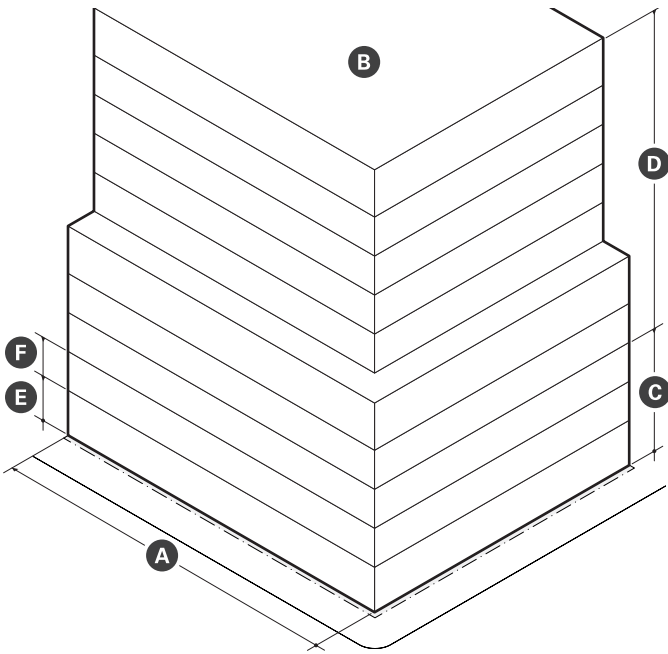


Building Setbacks		
A Primary Front Setback (min/max)	2 ft	15 ft
B Secondary Front Setback (min/max)	2 ft	15 ft
C Side Setback (min)	0 ft	
Side Setback Abutting NR or LHD (min)	5 ft	
D Rear Setback (min)	10 ft	
Rear Setback Abutting NR or LHD (min)	15 ft	

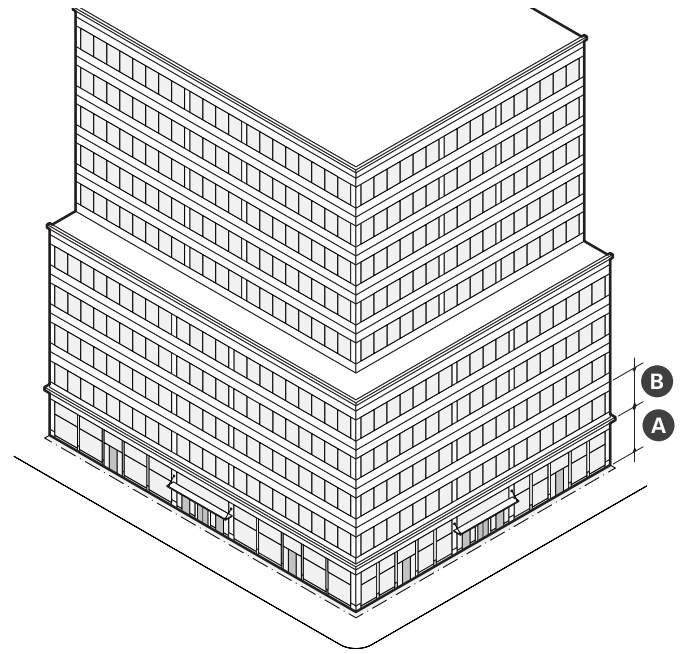
Parking Setbacks	
E Primary Front Setback (min)	30 ft
F Secondary Front Setback (min)	30 ft

8. Commercial Building (continued)

c. Massing & Height



d. Uses & Features



Main Body	
A Building Width (max)	200 ft
Facade Build Out (min)	--
Front Street	80%
Side Street	65%
B Floor Plate (max)	30,000 sf
C Building Height, Stories (min)	3 stories
D Building Height, Stories (max)	10 stories
E Ground Story Height (min)	14 ft
F Upper Story Height (min)	10 ft
Building Height, Feet (max)	145 ft
Roof Type	Flat

Facade Composition	
A Ground Story Fenestration (min)	70%
B Upper Story Fenestration (min/max)	20% 70%
Blank Wall (max)	20 ft

Use & Occupancy	
Entrance Spacing (max)	30 ft
Commercial Space Depth (min)	30 ft

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e. Reserved

9. Lab Building

A multi-story building type purpose built for laboratory and research & development uses. Floor space is typically custom designed as vivariums for animal research or complex, technically sophisticated, and mechanically intensive wet or dry labs.

The following images are examples of the lab building type and are intended only for illustrative purposes.

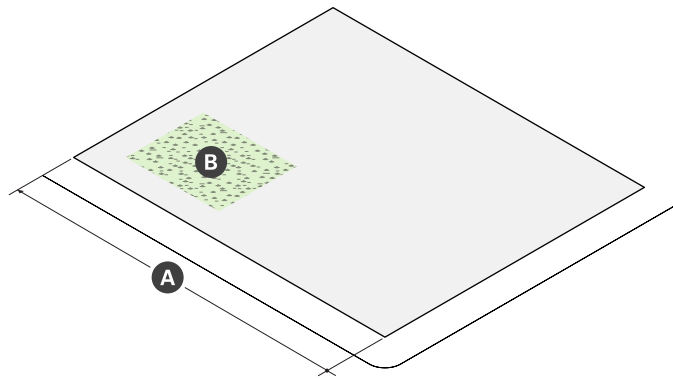


5. HIGH-RISE DISTRICTS

High-Rise (HR)

9. Lab Building (continued)

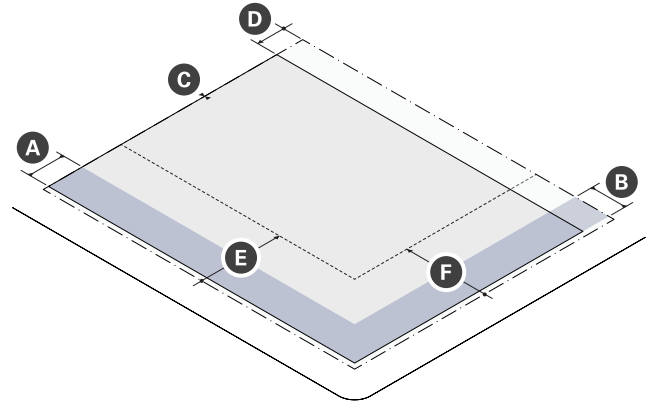
a. Lot Standards



Lot Dimensions	
A Width (min)	30 ft

Lot Coverage	
B Lot Coverage (max)	100%
C Green Score	--
Minimum	0.20
Ideal	0.25

b. Building Placement

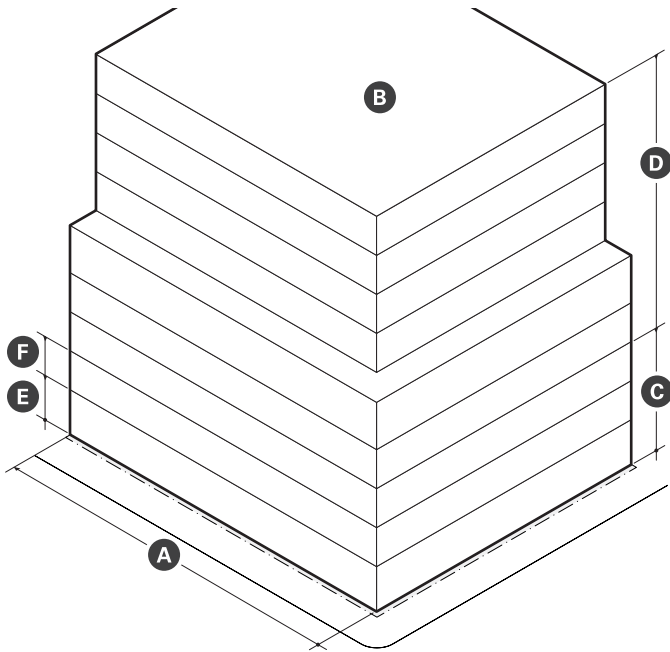


Building Setbacks		
A Primary Front Setback (min/max)	2 ft	15 ft
B Secondary Front Setback (min/max)	2 ft	15 ft
C Side Setback (min)	0 ft	
Side Setback Abutting NR or LHD (min)	5 ft	
D Rear Setback (min)	10 ft	
Rear Setback Abutting NR or LHD (min)	15 ft	

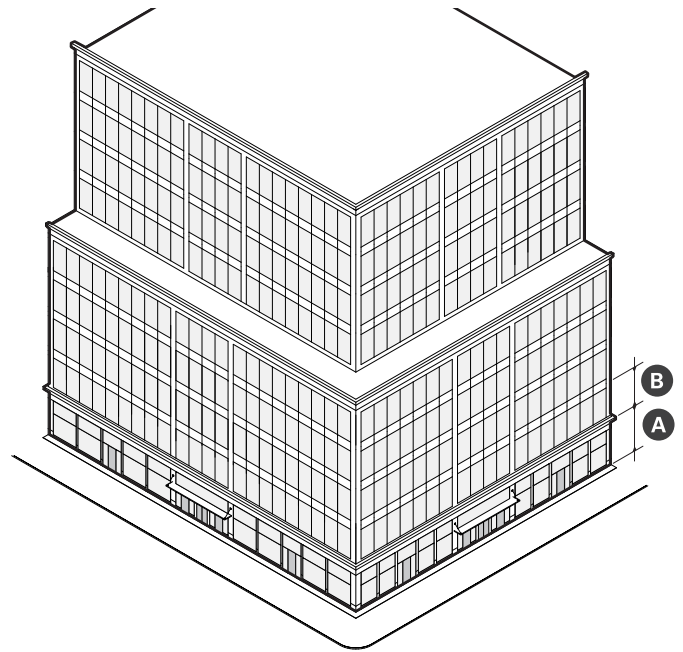
Parking Setbacks	
E Primary Front Setback (min)	30 ft
F Secondary Front Setback (min)	30 ft

9. Lab Building (continued)

c. Massing & Height



d. Uses & Features



Main Body

A Width (max)	240 ft
Facade Build Out (min)	--
Front Street	80%
Side Street	65%
B Floor Plate	35,000 sf
C Building Height, Stories (min)	4 stories
D Building Height, Stories (max)	9 stories
E Ground Story Height	14 ft
F Upper Story Height	10 ft
Building Height, Feet (max)	145 ft
Roof Type	Flat

Facade Composition

A Ground Story Fenestration (min)	70%
B Upper Story Fenestration (min/max)	20% 70%
Blank Wall (max)	20 ft

Use & Occupancy

Entrance Spacing (max)	30 ft
Commercial Space Depth (min)	30 ft

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e. Reserved

10. Mid-Rise Podium Tower

A large floor plate, multi story building type composed of a residential point tower above a mid-rise general building serving as a podium. The podium defines the public realm, provides ground story commercial space, and typically incorporates structured parking. The slender point tower provides density, access to natural light, and views of the sky while also limiting excessive shadows and reduced wind impacts at ground level.

The following images are examples of the mid-rise podium tower building type and are intended only for illustrative purposes.

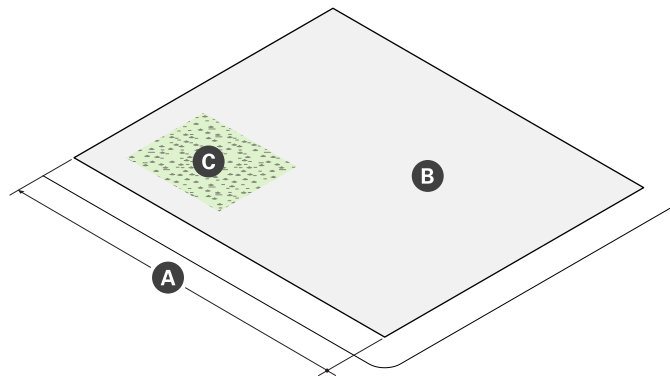


5. HIGH-RISE DISTRICTS

High-Rise (HR)

10. Mid-Rise Podium Tower (continued)

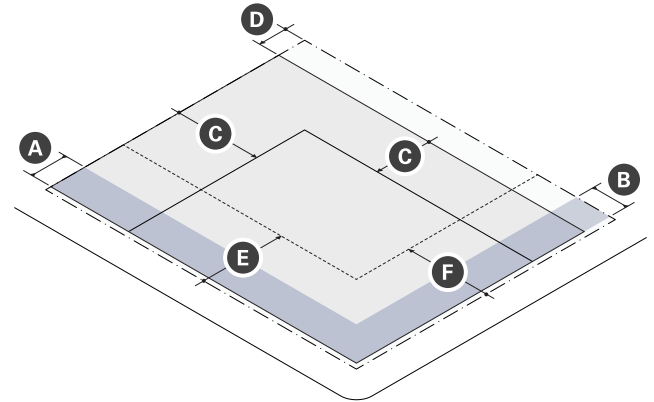
a. Lot Standards



Lot Dimensions	
A Width (min)	150 ft

Lot Development	
B Lot Coverage (max)	100%
C Green Score	--
Minimum	0.20
Ideal	0.25

b. Building Placement

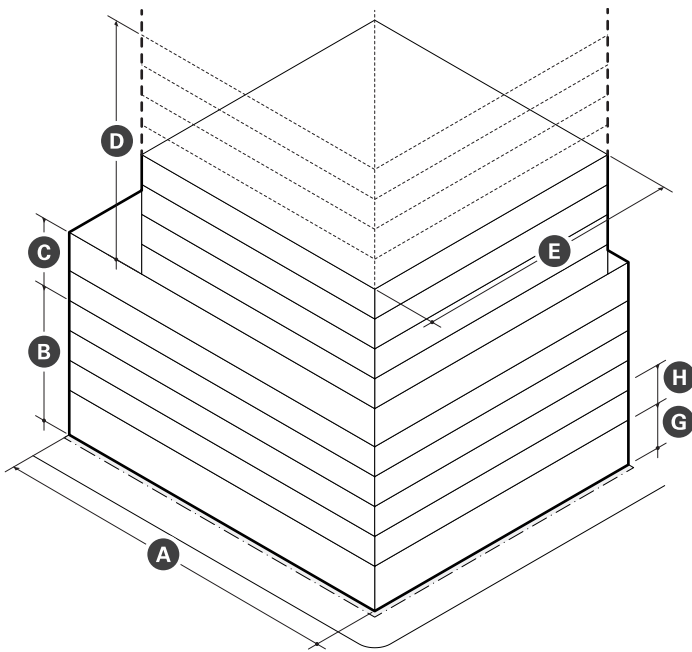


Building Setbacks		
A Primary Front Setback (min/max)	2 ft	15 ft
B Secondary Front Setback	2 ft	15 ft
C Side Setback (min)	--	
Podium	0 ft	
Podium Abutting NR or LHD	5 ft	
Point Tower	30 ft	
Point Tower Abutting NR or LHD	60 ft	
D Rear Setback (min)	--	
Podium	10 ft	
Podium Abutting NR or LHD	15 ft	
Point Tower	30 ft	
Point Tower Abutting NR or LHD	60 ft	

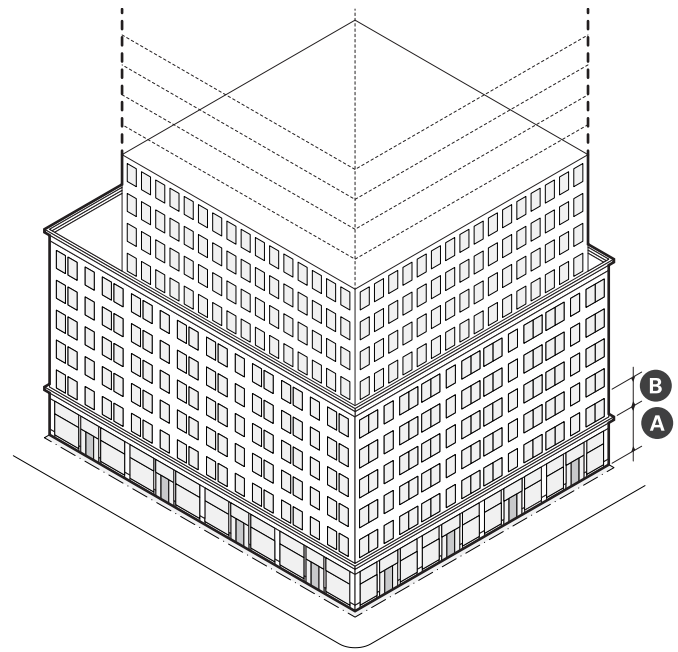
Parking Setbacks	
E Primary Front Setback (min)	30 ft
F Secondary Front Setback (min)	30 ft

10. Mid-Rise Podium Tower (continued)

c. Massing & Height



d. Uses & Features



Main Body	
A Width (max)	250 ft
Facade Build Out (min)	80%
Floor Plate (max)	--
Podium	35,000 sf
Point Tower	10,000 sf
B Building Height, Stories (min)	4 stories
Building Height, Stories (max)	--
C Podium	6 stories
D Point Tower	24 stories
Point Tower Dimensions (max)	--
E Width/Depth	100 ft
F Diagonal	145 ft
G Ground Story Height (min)	14 ft
H Upper Story Height (min)	10 ft
Building Height, Feet (max)	--
Podium	80 ft
Point Tower	275 ft
Roof Type	Flat

Facade Composition	
A Ground Story Fenestration (min)	70%
B Upper Story Fenestration (min/max)	20% 50%
Blank Wall (max)	20 ft

Use & Occupancy	
Entrance Spacing (max)	30 ft
Commercial Space Depth (min)	30 ft
Gross Floor Area per DU	--
Lot Area < 7,000 sf	1,125
Lot Area >= 7,000 sf	875
Net Zero Building	650
100% Affordable Building	650
Outdoor Amenity Space (min)	1/DU

5. HIGH-RISE DISTRICTS

High-Rise (HR)

- e. Housing
 - i. A mid-rise podium tower with six (6) or more dwelling units, whether established through new construction or the conversion of any other existing building type, must provide mandatory affordable housing in accordance with Article 12: Development Benefits.
- f. Design Guidelines
 - i. Fenestration patterns and window configurations should break the direct line of sight between neighboring properties to every extent practicable. Translucent glass on the bottom half of windows or strategically placed landscape elements should be utilized if it is not practical to off-set windows in ways that minimize privacy impacts.
 - ii. Outdoor amenity spaces that are elevated such as roof decks, fully projecting balconies, and upper story rear porches should provide sight obscuring visual screening at the sides to increase privacy, security, and limit views of abutting properties from elevated vantage points.

11. Block Building

A very large floor plate, multi-story building type composed of one (1) or more towers above a mid-rise general building serving as a podium. The podium has frontage on three (3) or more thoroughfares or civic spaces and defines the public realm, provides ground story commercial space, and lines any structured parking. Block buildings are designed to appear like multiple buildings along each block face.

The following images are examples of the block building type and are intended only for illustrative purposes.

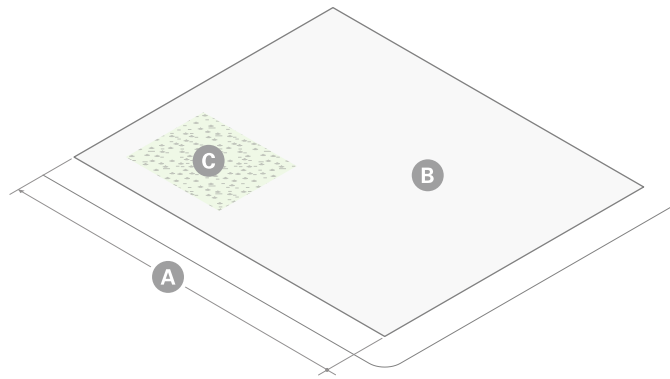


5. HIGH-RISE DISTRICTS

High-Rise (HR)

11. Block Building (continued)

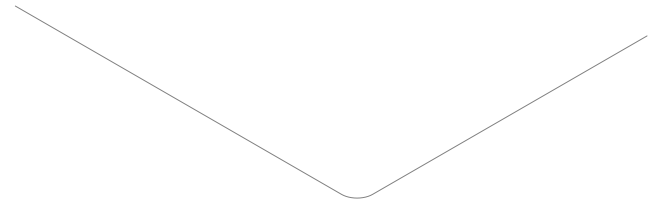
a. Lot Standards



Lot Dimensions	
A Width (min)	200 ft
Depth (min)	250 ft

Lot Development	
B Lot Coverage (max)	100%
C Green Score	--
Minimum	0.20
Ideal	0.25

b. Building Placement



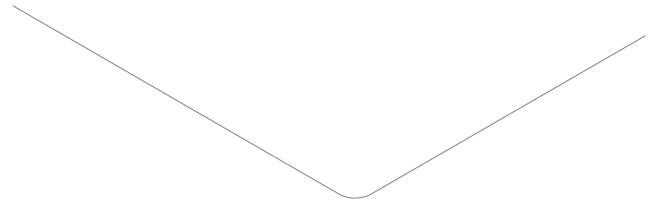
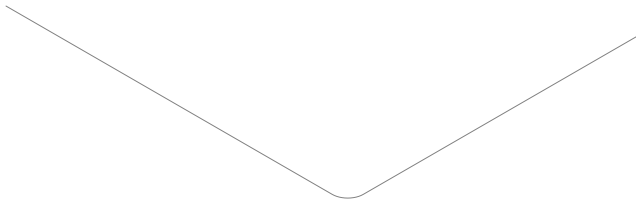
Building Setbacks		
A Primary Front Setback (min/max)	2 ft	15 ft
B Secondary Front Setback	2 ft	15 ft
C Side Setback (min)	--	
Podium	0 ft	
Podium Abutting NR or LHD	5 ft	
Tower	30 ft	
Tower Abutting NR or LHD	60 ft	
D Rear Setback (min)	--	
Podium	10 ft	
Podium Abutting NR or LHD	15 ft	
Tower	30 ft	
Tower Abutting NR or LHD	60 ft	

Parking Setbacks	
E Primary Front Setback (min)	30 ft
F Secondary Front Setback (min)	30 ft

11. Block Building (continued)

c. Massing & Height

d. Uses & Features



Main Body	
A Building Width (max)	500 ft
Facade Build Out (min)	--
Front Street	100%
Side Street	100%
Floor Plate (max)	--
Podium	n/a
Tower(s)	30,000 sf
B Building Height, Stories (min)	3 stories
Building Height, Stories (max)	--
C Podium	6 stories
D Tower(s)	10 stories
D Ground Story Height (min)	14 ft
E Upper Story Height (min)	10 ft
Podium	80 ft
Tower	145 ft
Roof Type	Flat

Facade Composition	
A Ground Story Fenestration (min)	70%
B Upper Story Fenestration (min/max)	-- --
Residential	20% 50%
Commercial	20% 70%
Blank Wall (max)	20 ft

Use & Occupancy	
Ground Story Entrance Spacing (max)	30 ft
Commercial Space Depth (min)	30 ft
Gross Floor Area per DU	--
Lot Area < 7,000 sf	1,125
Lot Area >= 7,000 sf	850
Sustainable Building	650
100% Affordable Housing	650
Outdoor Amenity Space (min)	1/DU

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- e. Housing
 - i. A general building with six (6) or more dwelling units, whether established through new construction or the conversion of any other existing building type, must provide affordable housing in accordance with Article 12: Development Benefits.
- f. Building Design Standards
 - i. Block buildings must be designed to appear like multiple buildings along each block face.
 - ii. At least eighty percent (80%) of the ground story on each block face must be designed as commercial space (active uses along the facade).
 - iii. Only one (1) lobby entrance is permitted per facade.
 - iv. No more than two (2) lobby entrances are permitted per block building.
- g. Architectural Design Standards
 - i. Reserved
- h. Site Development
 - i. The combined width of all vehicular entrances may not exceed seventy-two (72) feet in total.
 - ii. Loading & service areas (loading docks, trash rooms, etc.) must be located internal to the building and setback from any facade at least thirty (30) feet.
- i. Vehicular Parking
 - i. Motor vehicle parking may be provided as above ground structured parking or underground structured parking. Surface parking is prohibited.
 - ii. No more than two (2) vehicular entrances may be provided for access to parking.
- j. Public Realm
 - i. The combined width of all curb cuts may not exceed forty-eight (48) feet in total.

12. Building Components

- a. Building components are accessory elements attached to the main mass of a building.
- b. Building components are permitted as specified on Table 4.1 (a).
 - i. At least one (1) storefront is required for each ground floor commercial space.
- c. Building components not expressly authorized are prohibited.
- d. Unless otherwise specified, building components may attach to other building components to create assemblies of components.

TABLE 4.1 (a) Permitted Building Components

	Apartment Building	General Building	Commercial Building	Specific Standards
Awning	N	P	P	§5.1.12.e
Entry Canopy	P	P	P	§5.1.12.f
Lobby Entrance	P	P	P	§5.1.12.g
Storefront	N	P	P	§5.1.12.h
Stoop	P	N	N	§5.1.12.i
Bay Window	P	P	P	§5.1.12.j
Balcony	P	P	N	§5.1.12.k
Arcade	N	N	N	§5.1.12.l

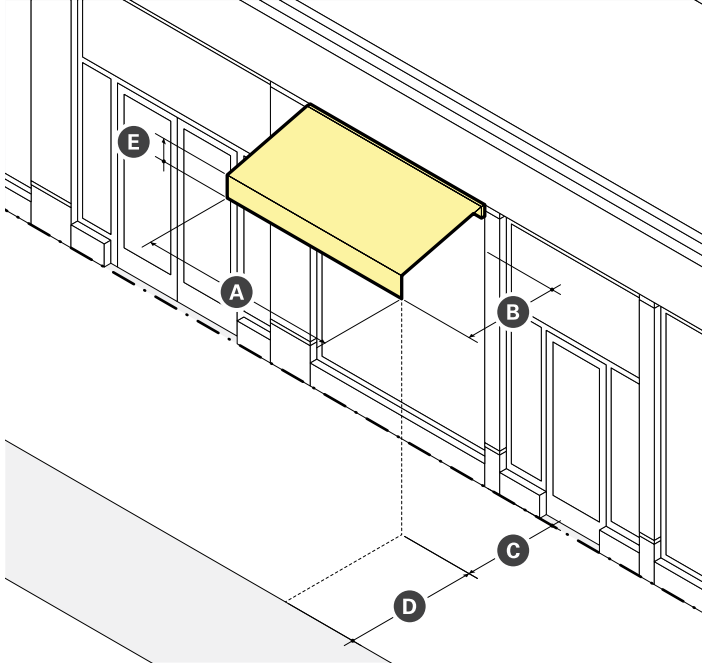
P - Permitted SP - Special Permit Required N - Not Permitted

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E. Awning

- i. An awning is a wall mounted frame covered with fabric or other material that provides shade and weather protection over a storefront or building entrance.

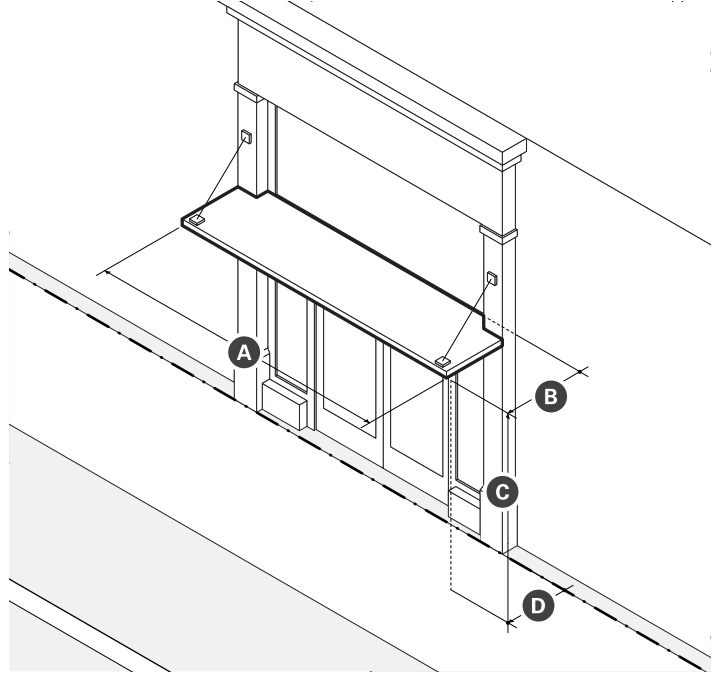


Dimensions	
A Width (min)	See §4.xxx)
B Projection (min)	3 ft
C Clearance (min)	8 ft
Front Setback Encroachment (max)	100%
D Setback from Curb (min)	2 ft
E Valance Height (max)	12 in

- ii. Standards
 - a). Awnings must be securely attached to and supported by the building and must fit the windows or doors the awning is attached to.
 - b). An awning must be made of durable, weather-resistant material that is water repellent.
 - c). Internally illuminated or back-lit awnings are prohibited.
 - d). An awning that projects over the sidewalk of a public thoroughfare requires compliance with all City Ordinances.

F. Entry Canopy

- i. An entry canopy is a wall-mounted structure that provides shade and weather protection over a storefront or building entrance.

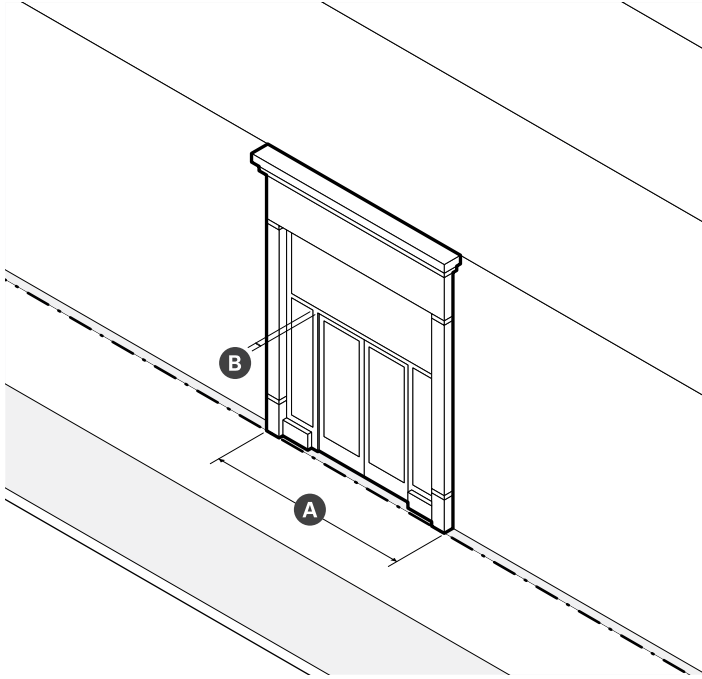


Dimensions	
A Width (min)	See §4.xxx)
B Projection (min)	3 ft
C Clearance (min)	8 ft
D Front Setback Encroachment (max)	100%
Setback from Curb (min)	2 ft

- ii. Standards
 - a). Entry canopies must be visually supported by brackets, cables, or rods.
 - b). The width of an entry canopy must be equal to or greater than the width of the doorway surround or exterior casing it is mounted over.

G. Lobby Entrance

- i. A lobby entrance is a non-load bearing assembly of entry doors and windows providing access and light to the lobby of a building.

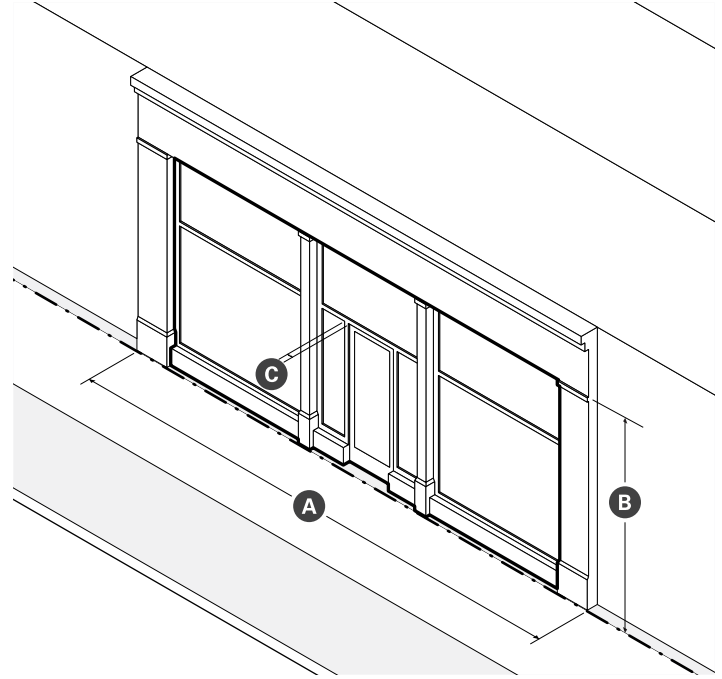


Dimensions	
A Width (max)	30 ft
B Recessed Entrance Width (max)	15 ft
Recessed Entrance Depth (max)	5 ft

- ii. Standards
 - a). When a lobby entrance is setback from the front lot line, the frontage must be paved.

H. Storefront

- i. A storefront is a non-load bearing assembly of commercial entry doors and substantial windows for the display of goods, services, and signs.



Dimensions	
A Width (max)	30 ft
B Display Window Height (min)	8 ft
C Recessed Entry Width (max)	15 ft
Recessed Entrance Depth (max)	5 ft

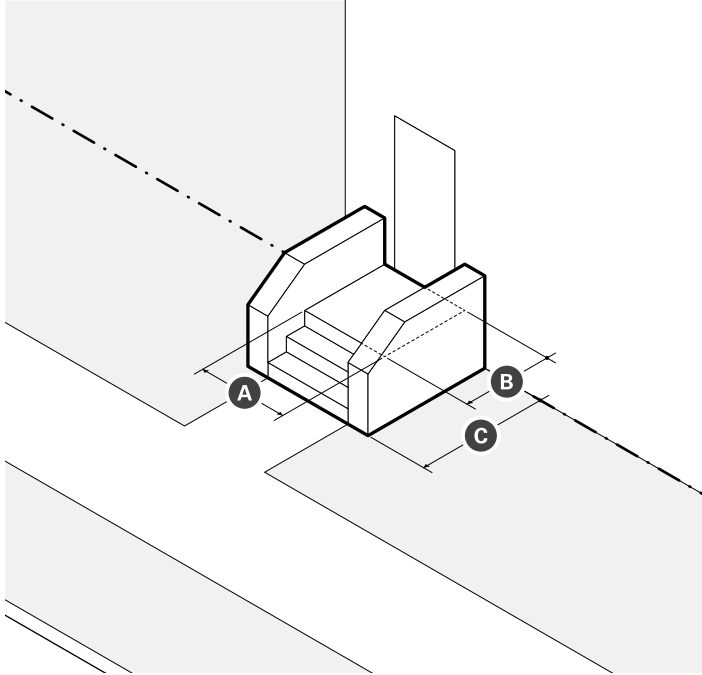
- ii. Standards
 - a). An unobstructed view of the interior space or a lighted and maintained merchandise display(s) must be provided for a depth of at least four (4) feet behind storefront display windows.
 - b). When storefronts are setback from the front lot line, the frontage area must be paved to match the abutting sidewalk.
 - c). When present, awnings and canopies must be mounted between columns, pilasters, or piers; above doorways and display windows; and below the sign band.
 - d). Exterior security grills, gates, and roll-down security doors and windows are prohibited.

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I. Stoop

- i. A stoop is a set of stairs with a landing leading to the entrance of a building.

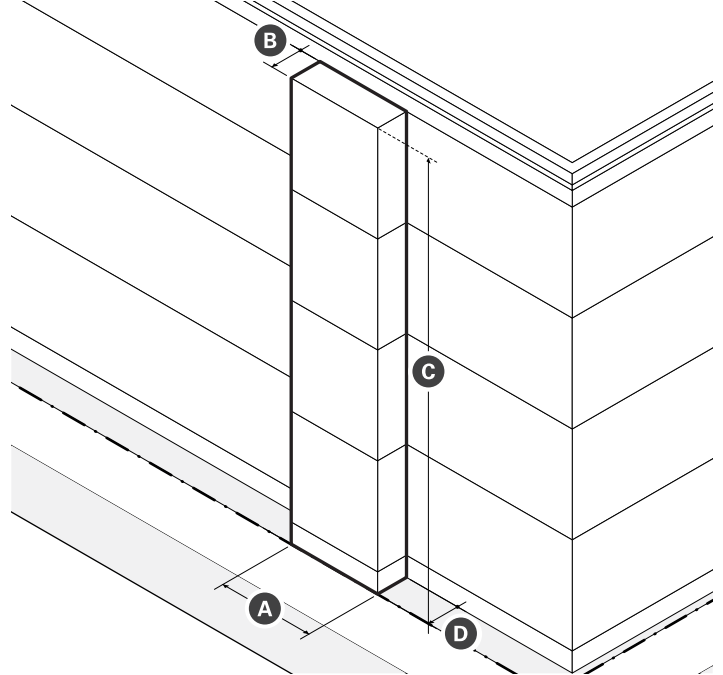


Dimensions	
A Landing Width (min)	4 ft
B Landing Depth (min)	4 ft
C Front Setback Encroachment (max)	100%

- ii. Standards
 - a). Paving, excluding driveways, must match the abutting sidewalk unless paved with pervious, porous, or permeable materials.
 - b). Stairs may be recessed into the building facade when the building is setback four (4) feet or less.
 - c). Stairs are not permitted to encroach onto any abutting sidewalk.
 - d). Stairs may be built perpendicular or parallel to the building facade, but must lead directly to ground level or an abutting sidewalk.

J. Bay Window

- i. A bay window is an assembly of multiple windows that projects from a building to provide additional habitable space, increased light, multi-directional views, and articulation to a facade.

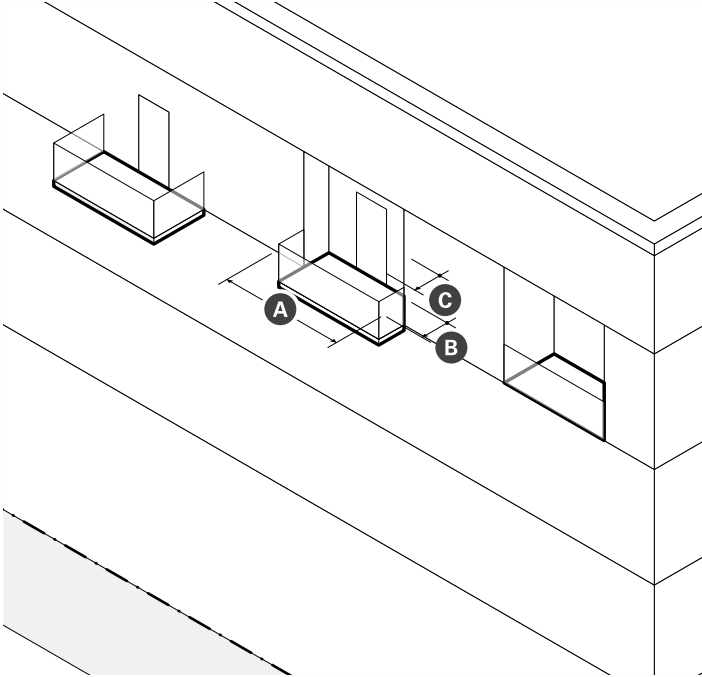


Dimensions	
A Width (max)	16 ft
B Projection (max)	3 ft
C Height (max)	Height of Building in Stories
D Front Setback Encroachment (max)	3 ft
Fenestration (min)	60%

- ii. Standards
 - a). The cumulative width of multiple bays may equal up to fifty percent (50%) of the exterior wall from which the bays project.
 - b). Bays must have a foundation extending all the way to ground level or be visually supported by brackets or other architectural supports.
 - c). Bays projecting over the sidewalk of a public thoroughfare must have at least two (2) stories of clearance and be compliant with all City Ordinances.

K. Balcony

- i. A balcony is a platform with a railing that provides outdoor amenity space.

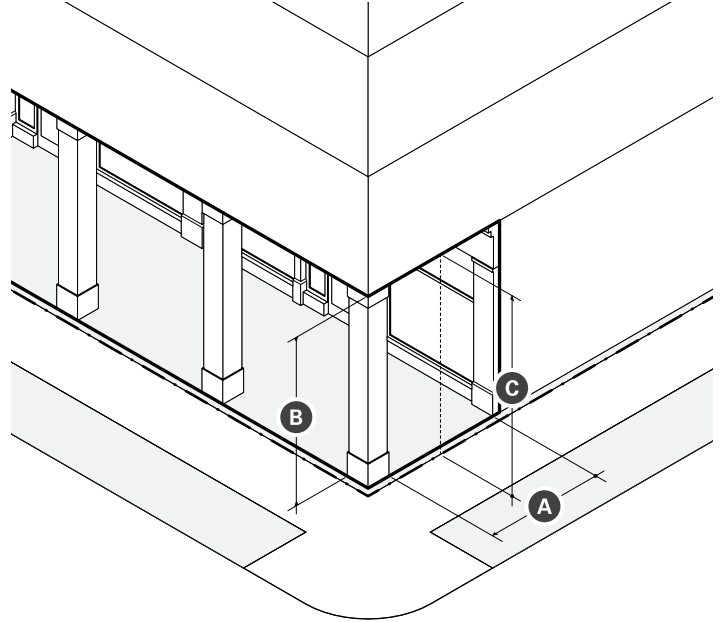


Dimensions	
A Width (min)	5 ft
B Depth (max)	5 ft
D Area (min)	50 ft
Clearance (min)	10 ft
Permitted Front Setback Encroachment (max)	6 ft

- ii. Standards
 - a). Balconies may be recessed, projecting, a combination of the two, or terraced as part of the roof of a portico, porch, or bay.
 - b). A balcony that projects over the sidewalk of a public thoroughfare requires compliance with all City Ordinances.
 - c). The guard rail of any balcony oriented toward a front lot line must permit visual supervision of the public realm through the posts and rails.
 - d). The guard rail of any balcony oriented toward a side or rear lot line abutting the NR district must include sight obscuring visual screening so that it is at least fifty percent (50%) opaque.

L. Arcade

- i. An arcade is a pedestrian walkway covered by the upper floors of a building. The ground story facade is setback and upper floors are supported by a colonnade or supports.



Dimensions		
A Depth (min/max)	10 ft	15 ft
B Height (max)	1 story	
C Clearance (min/max)	14 ft	24 ft

- ii. Standards
 - a). Arcades must extend the entire width of a building and must have a consistent depth.
 - b). Support columns or piers may be spaced no farther apart than they are tall.
 - c). Arcades are considered part of the building for the purpose of measuring facade build out.
 - d). Arcades may be combined only with storefront and lobby entrance frontages.
 - e). The finished ceiling of an arcade interior may be arched or flat, but must have a greater clearance than the openings between columns or piers.

5. HIGH-RISE DISTRICTS

High-Rise (HR)

13. Building Design Standards

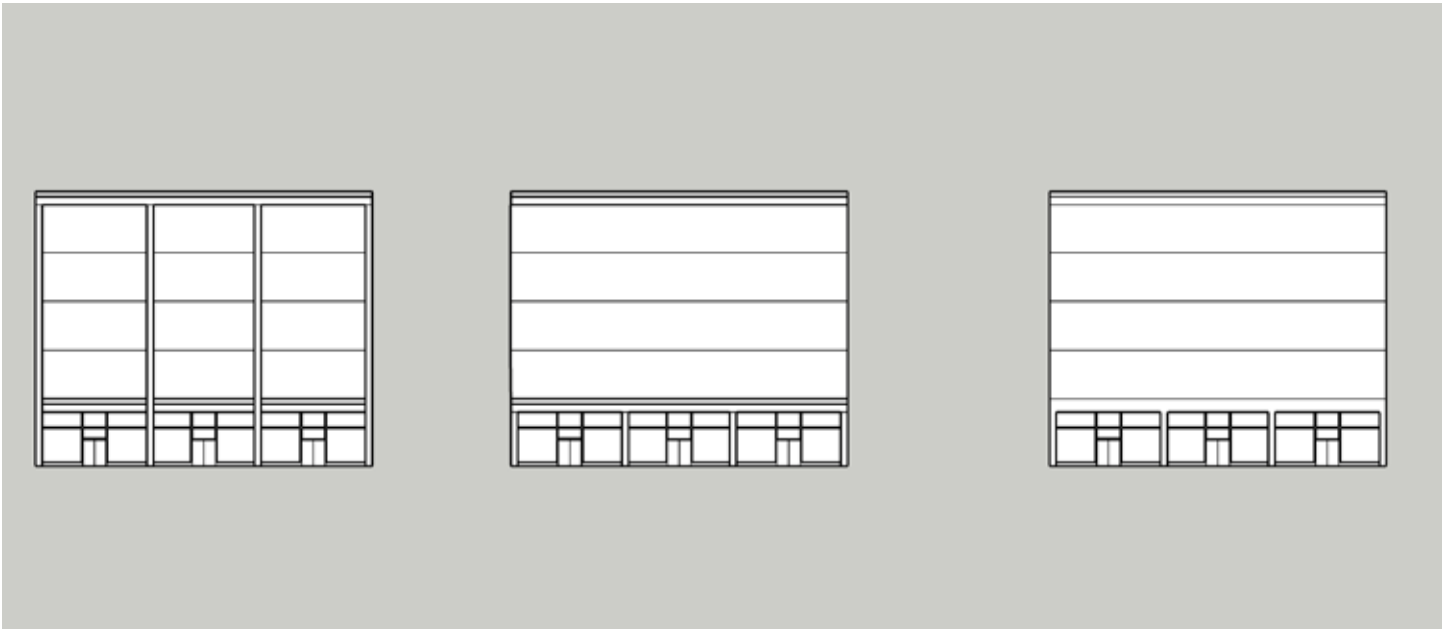
- a. Facade Design
 - i. Building facades must provide a frame for each storefront and lobby entrance of solid wall material designed as one (1) of the following:
 - a). flat wall above and to either side of a punched opening;
 - b). pilasters or columns supporting a continuous horizontal lintel (sign band) and cornice extending across the full width of the building;
 - c). a spandrel (sign band) positioned between pilasters or columns that extend from upper stories of the building to the ground.
 - ii. The required frame may be subsumed and customized into the design for individual storefronts and lobby entrances.
 - iii. Facades must be articulated to create surface relief and shadow lines that add depth to the facade through the use of architectural elements such as balconies, Bays, cladding, columns, corner boards, cornices, door surrounds, moldings, piers, pilasters, seat walls, sills, wall depth, and windows that either recess or project from the average plane of the facade by at least four (4) inches.

14. Architectural Design Guidelines

- a. Review Process
 - i. In addition to any official design guidelines adopted by the Review Boards, the Urban Design Commission shall determine if the guidelines of this Section are achieved by the proposed design of a building and provide recommendations to

- further improve the proposed design, as necessary.
- b. Purpose
 - i. To visually break down and minimize a building's apparent height and shorten the perceived length of a building.
 - ii. To provide structure to the composition and disposition of fenestration, enhance pedestrian orientation, and add visual interest to the public realm.
 - iii. To ensure building facades are multi-layered and contribute to a visually-rich pedestrian experience, encourage active public life on abutting sidewalks, and help to protect pedestrians from wind, sun, rain, sleet and snow with awnings or overhangs.
 - iv. To create memorable views that add to the character and enhance the aesthetics of the public realm.
- c. Facade Design
 - i. Facades should be vertically articulated into a series of Architectural Bays no wider than thirty (30) feet.
 - ii. Architectural bays should be derived, in general, from the building's structural bay spacing.
 - iii. Architectural bays should have piers (flat wall), pilasters, or columns that extend either all the way to the ground or to the cornice and sign band of ground level storefronts frames.
 - iv. Architectural bays should align, in general, with individual or groups of storefronts and lobby entrances.
 - v. Facades should be horizontally articulated into a contemporary tripartite division (base, middle,

FIGURE 4.1 (c) Storefront Frames



- and top). Exterior finish materials, changes in fenestration patterns, and architectural elements such as moldings, cornices, balconies, bay windows, porches, and canopies should be used to differentiate the base, middle, and top.
- vi. In most circumstances, the vertical piers (flat wall), pilasters, and columns that define Architectural Bays should always project forward and be uninterrupted by any horizontal elements of a facade, excluding any horizontal molding, cornice, or other architectural element(s) used to differentiate the tripartite division of the façade.
 - vii. Within the divisions of a facade, fenestration should align vertically within each Architectural Bay and horizontally across each story of a building.
 - viii. Upper stories should have a window to wall area proportion that is lower than that of the ground floor.
 - ix. Windows should be punched into walls with glass inset from exterior wall surfaces.
 - x. The variety of window and door sizes and proportions should be limited.
 - xi. Series of windows set side by side to form a continuous horizontal band across a facade (aka 'ribbon windows') should be avoided.
 - xii. Vents, exhausts, and other utility features on building facades should be architecturally integrated into the design of the building. Ventilation intakes/exhausts should be located to minimize adverse effects on pedestrian comfort along sidewalks and within outdoor spaces.
 - xiii. Buildings at Terminated Vistas should be articulated with design features that function as focal points.
- d. Facade Bases
- i. The base of a facade should have projecting piers, pilasters, or columns; slightly recessed storefronts; ledges, or other architectural element(s) that provide opportunities for pedestrian-oriented activities such as vending, resting, sitting, dining, or visiting along the ground floor.
 - ii. Monotonous and repetitive storefront or lobby systems, sign types, sign designs, and sign lighting should be avoided.
 - iii. Storefront doors should not obstruct pedestrians walking past or alongside a building.
 - iv. Storefronts and lobby entrances should include awnings and canopies to provide weather protection for pedestrians and reduce glare for storefront display areas. Awnings should be open-ended and operable.
 - v. Façade lighting should encourage pedestrian activity at night through layers of light that contribute to the nighttime experience.
 - vi. Lobby entrances for upper story uses should be optimally located, well defined, clearly visible, and separate from the entrance for any other ground floor uses.
 - vii. Ground floor lobby spaces should be limited in total area and width to preserve floor space and frontage for other ground floor uses. Buildings should use façade articulation, a double-height ceiling, distinctive doorway, change in wall material, change in paving material within the setback area, or some other architectural element(s) to make lobbies distinctive.
- e. Roofs
- i. Mechanical and utility equipment should be integrated into the architectural design of the building or screened from public view. Penthouses should be integrated with the buildings architectural design and not appear as foreign structures unrelated to the rest of the building.
- f. Materials
- i. The selection of materials, fenestration, and ornamentation should result in a consistent and harmonious composition that appears as a unified whole rather than a collection of unrelated parts, whatever the style.
 - ii. The type and color of materials used for a building should be kept to a minimum, preferably three (3) or less.
 - iii. Two (2) or more wall materials should be combined only one above the other.
 - iv. Wall materials appearing heavier in weight should be used below wall materials appearing lighter in weight (wood and metal above brick, and both above stone)
 - v. Horizontal or vertical board siding and shingles, whether wood, metal, plastic (vinyl), masonry, or composite materials, should be used only for smaller scale apartment buildings.
 - vi. Architectural details and finish materials for the base of a building should be constructed of architectural concrete or pre-cast cementitious panels, natural or cast stone, heavy gage metal panel, glazed or unglazed architectural terracotta, and brick.
 - vii. Exterior Insulation and Finish Systems (EIFS) should never be used for the base of a building.

5. HIGH-RISE DISTRICTS

High-Rise (HR)

15. Use Provisions

- a. Permitted Uses
 - i. The use of real property is subject to the provisions of Article 9: Use Provisions of this Ordinance. Where the provisions of this section conflict with those of Article 9, the provisions of Article 9 apply.
 - ii. Uses are permitted as specified on Table 4.1 (c). Use categories not expressly authorized are prohibited.
 - iii. All uses must comply with any use-specific standards applicable for each use in §9.2 Use Definitions & Limitations.
 - iv. Uses permitted by Special Permit require additional development review in accordance with §15.2.1 Special Permits.
- b. Use Limitations
 - i. The use of any ground story commercial space fronting a pedestrian street, excluding lobbies for upper story uses, is limited to the following principal use categories:
 - a). Arts & Creative Enterprise
 - b). Eating & Drinking Establishment
 - c). Retail
 - d). Civic & Institutional
- c. Required Uses
 - i. A minimum of five percent (5%) of the gross leasable commercial floor space in any building must be provided as leasable floor area for uses from the Arts & Creative Enterprise use category.
- d. Increases in Density
 - i. Existing structures may not be altered to conflict with number of dwelling units permitted for each building type.

TABLE 5.1 (c) HR Permitted Uses

Use Category Specific Use	HR	Use Specific Standards
Arts & Creative Enterprise		
Artisan Production	P	§9.2.2.a
Arts Exhibition	P	§9.2.2.b
Arts Sales & Services	P	§9.2.2.c
Co-working	P	§9.2.2.d
Design Services	P	§9.2.2.e
Shared Workspaces & Arts Education	P	§9.2.2.f
Civic & Institutional		
Community Center	P	§9.2.4.a
Hospital	SP	§9.2.4.b
Library	P	§9.2.4.c
Minor Utility Facility	SP	§9.2.4.d
Museum	P	§9.2.4.f
Private Non-Profit Club or Lodge	SP	§9.2.4.g
Public Service	P	§9.2.4.h
Religious & Educational Uses Protected by M.G.L. 40A. Sec. 3	P	§9.2.4.i
Commercial Services		
Animal Services (as noted below)	--	§9.2.5.a
Pet Grooming	P	§9.2.5.a.ii
Veterinarian	SP	§9.2.5.a.iv
Assembly & Entertainment	SP	§9.2.5.b
Banking & Financial Services (except as follows)	P	§9.2.5.c
Personal Credit	SP	§9.2.5.c.i
Broadcast and/or Recording Studio	P	§9.2.5.d
Building & Home Repair Services	SP	§9.2.5.e
Business Support Services	P	§9.2.5.f
Caterer/Wholesale Food Production	SP	§9.2.5.g
Day Care Service (as noted below)	--	§9.2.5.h
Adult Day Care Center	P	§9.2.5.h.i
Child Day Care Center	P	§9.2.5.h.ii
Educational Institution	P	§9.2.5.i
Maintenance & Repair of Consumer Goods	P	§9.2.5.j
Personal Services (except as follows)	P	§9.2.5.k
Body-Art Establishment	SP	§9.2.5.k.i
Gym or Health Club	P	§9.2.5.k.ii

P - Permitted SP - Special Permit Required N - Not Permitted

5. HIGH-RISE DISTRICTS

High-Rise (HR)

TABLE 5.1 (c) HR Permitted Uses (continued)

Use Category Specific Use	HR	Use Specific Standards
Funeral Home	SP	§9.2.5.k.iii
Health Care Provider	SP	§9.2.5.k.iv
Recreation Facility	SP	§9.2.5.l
Vehicle Parking, Commercial (except as follows)	--	§9.2.5.m
Bike Share Parking	P	§9.2.5.m.i
Car Share Parking (3 or less spaces)	P	§9.2.5.m.ii
Car Share Parking (4 or more spaces)	P	§9.2.5.m.ii
Commercial Parking	P	§9.2.5.m.iii
Eating and Drinking		
Bar or Tavern	P	§9.2.6.a
Bakery/Café/Coffee Shop	P	§9.2.6.b
Formula Eating & Drinking Establishment	SP	§9.2.6.c
Lodging		
Bed & Breakfast	SP	§9.2.8.a
Hotel or Hostel	SP	§9.2.8.b
Office		
General Office	P	§9.2.9.a
Research and Development and/or Laboratory	P	§9.2.9.b
Residential		
Household Living	SP	§9.2.10.a
Group Living (except as follows)	SP	§9.2.10.b
Community or Group Residence	P	§9.2.10.b.i
Dormitory or Chapter House	SP	§9.2.10.b.ii
Homeless Shelter	SP	§9.2.10.b.iii
Nursing Home/Assisted Living Facility	SP	§9.2.10.b.iv
Rooming House	SP	§9.2.10.b.v
Retail Sales		
Building/Home Supplies & Equipment	SP	§9.2.11.a
Consumer Goods (except as follows)	P	§9.2.11.b
Alcohol Sales	SP	§9.2.11.b.i
Drug Paraphernalia Store	N	§9.2.11.b.ii
Firearms Sales	N	§9.2.11.b.iii
Pet Store	SP	§9.2.11.b.v
Formula Retail	SP	§9.2.11.c

P - Permitted SP - Special Permit Required N - Not Permitted

TABLE 5.1 (c) HR Permitted Uses (continued)

Use Category Specific Use	HR	Use Specific Standards
Fresh Food Market or Grocery Store	P	§9.2.11.d
Farm/Vendor Market	P	§9.2.11.e
Urban Agriculture		
Farming (as noted below)	--	§9.2.12.a
Commercial Farm	P	§9.2.12.a.i
Community Farm	P	§9.2.12.a.ii
Community Gardening	P	§9.2.12.b
Accessory Uses		
Home Occupations (as noted below)	--	§9.2.13.c
Home Office	P	§9.2.13.c.vi
Urban Agriculture (as noted below)	--	§9.2.13.d
Apiculture	P	§9.2.13.d.i
Aviculture	P	§9.2.13.d.ii
Commercial Farming	P	§9.2.13.d.iii
Residential Gardening	P	§9.2.13.d.iv

P - Permitted SP - Special Permit Required N - Not Permitted

5. HIGH-RISE DISTRICTS

High-Rise (HR)

16. Site Development

- a. General
 - i. Development is subject the provisions of Article 10 Site Development of this Ordinance. Where the provisions of this section conflict with those of Article 10, the provisions of Article 10 apply.
- b. Signs
 - i. A sign, individual numerals or letters, or a nonelectrical nameplate identifying the property address is required for all real property as follows:
 - a). Each ground story non-residential use must identify the street address either on the principal entrance door or above or beside the principal entrance of the use.
 - b). All residential building types must identify the street address either on the principal entrance door, above or beside the principal entrance, or on a mailbox.
 - ii. Address signs must be made easily visible through the use of colors or materials that contrast with the background material they are attached to and must be conspicuously located to provide visibility from the thoroughfare that the building faces.
 - iii. Address signs must be twelve (12) inches in height or less and may include the name of the occupant.
- ii. Bicycle parking must be provided at no cost or fee to customers, visitors, employees, tenants, and residents.
- d. Driveways
 - i. New driveways require a permit from the City Engineer.
 - ii. Driveways must be compliant with all City Ordinances and constructed in accordance with all standards established by relevant City departments.
 - iii. Driveways are not permitted in the frontage area between a building and the front lot line.
 - iv. Driveways may be no wider than twelve (12) feet in the frontage area of a lot.
 - v. Driveways may provide access in whole or in part on or across an abutting lot(s), provided that an access easement exists between all property owners.
- e. Parking Design
 - i. The design of all parking is subject to §11.1 Bicycle Parking and §11.2 Motor Vehicle Parking of this Ordinance.
- f. Parking Location
 - i. Required motor vehicle parking, excluding any required handicapped parking, may be provided off-site according to the following:
 - a). The off-site parking must be located within one thousand three hundred and twenty (1,320) feet in walking distance to the lot it will serve, measured from the nearest point of the off-site parking along block faces and walkways to the principal entrance of the use served;
 - b). Pedestrian access to off-site motor vehicle parking must be via a paved sidewalk or walkway.
 - c). A lease, recorded covenant, or other comparable legal instrument guaranteeing long term use of the site must be provided to the review board or building official and executed and filed with the Registry of Deeds.
 - ii. For real property located in more than one municipality, motor vehicle parking need not be located within the City of Somerville.

17. Vehicular Parking

- a. General
 - i. Vehicular parking must be provided as specified on Table 4.1 (d), except as follows:
 - a). Non-residential uses with five thousand (5,000) square feet or less of gross leasable floor area are exempt from any minimum requirements of Table 4.1. (d).
 - b). Any change in use within a non-residential structure constructed before the effective date of this Ordinance, provided that the change is to a permitted use, is exempt from any minimum requirements of Table 4.1 (d).
 - ii. There are no parking requirements for accessory uses.
 - iii. Motor vehicle parking spaces may be shared between uses on the same lot and buildings on the same block in accordance with §11.3 Shared Parking.
- b. Type
 - i. Motor vehicle parking may be provided as above ground structured parking or underground structured parking. Surface parking is prohibited.
- c. Unbundled Parking
 - i. Motor vehicle parking spaces must be rented or leased as an option rather than a requirement of the rental, lease, or purchase of a dwelling unit, rooming unit, or non-residential floor space.
- g. Parking Relief
 - i. Relief from the parking standards of Table 4.1 (d) requires a special permit.
 - a). In its discretion to approve or deny a special permit authorizing relief from the parking standards of Table 4.1 (d), the review board shall consider, at least, the following:
 - i). The supply and demand of on-street parking in the neighborhood, as determined through a parking study.
 - ii). Mobility management programs and

TABLE 5.1 (d) Vehicular Parking

Use Category Specific Use	BICYCLE		MOTOR VEHICLE	
	Short-Term (min)	Long-Term (min)	Within a Transit Area ¹ (max)	Outside of a Transit Area ¹ (min)
Arts & Creative Enterprise				
All Permitted Uses	1 / 10,000 sf	1 / 3,000 sf	1 / 800 sf	1 / 1,000 sf
Civic & Institutional				
Community Center	1 / 10,000 sf	4 / 10,000 sf	1 / 1,800 sf	1 / 600 sf
Educational Facility	1.0 / classroom	4.0 / classroom	1.5 / classroom	3.0 / classroom
Hospital	10 per entrance	1 / 5,000 sf	1 / 200 sf	1 / 1,000 sf
Library	1 / 3,000 sf	1 / 5,000 sf	1 / 800 sf	1 / 500 sf
Minor Utility Facility	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Museum	1 / 2,000 sf	1 / 10,000 sf	1 / 800 sf	1 / 500 sf
Private Non-Profit Club or Lodge	1 / 2,000 sf	1 / 10,000 sf	1 / 200 sf	1 / 1,000 sf
Commercial Services				
Animal Services (as noted below)	1 / 2,500 sf	1 / 10,000 sf	--	--
Pet Grooming	--	--	1 / 500 sf	1 / 400 sf
Veterinarian	1 / 2,000 sf	1 / 5,000 sf	1 / 500 sf	1 / 500 sf
Assembly & Entertainment	1 / 40 seats	1 / 10,000 sf	1 / 6 seats	1 / 6 seats
Banking & Financial Services (except as noted below)	1 / 2,000 sf	1 / 10,000 sf	1 / 450 sf	1 / 400 sf
Broadcast and/or Recording Studio	1 / 2,500 sf	1 / 10,000 sf	1 / 800 sf	1 / 600 sf
Building & Home Repair Services	1 / 2,500 sf	1 / 10,000 sf	1 / 1,000 sf	1 / 2,000 sf
Business Support Services	1 / 2,500 sf	1 / 10,000 sf	1 / 900 sf	1 / 600 sf
Caterer/Wholesale Food Production	1 / 2,500 sf	1 / 10,000 sf	1 / 800 sf	1 / 1,000 sf
Day Care Service	2	1 / 10,000 sf	1 / 900 sf	1 / 600 sf
Maintenance & Repair of Consumer Goods	1 / 2,500 sf	1 / 10,000 sf	1 / 750 sf	1 / 1,000 sf
Personal Services (except as noted below)	1 / 2,500 sf	1 / 10,000 sf	1 / 750 sf	1 / 1,000 sf
Gym or Health Club	--	--	1 / 200 sf	1 / 500 sf
Funeral Home	--	--	--	--
Health Care Provider	1 / 2,000 sf	1 / 10,000 sf	1 / 500 sf	1 / 300 sf
Recreation Facility	1 / 2,500 sf	1 / 10,000 sf	--	--

sf - Gross Leasable Square Footage

DU - Dwelling Unit

RU - Rooming Unit

¹ See the Transit Area Map

5. HIGH-RISE DISTRICTS

High-Rise (HR)

TABLE 5.1 (d) Vehicular Parking (continued)

Use Category Specific Use	BICYCLE		MOTOR VEHICLE	
	Short-Term (min)	Long-Term (min)	Within a Transit Area ¹ (max)	Outside of a Transit Area ¹ (min)
Eating and Drinking				
Bar/Restaurant/Tavern	1 / 1,000 sf	1 / 5,000 sf	1 / 300 sf	1 / 500 sf
Bakery/Café/Coffee Shop	1 / 1,000 sf	1 / 5,000 sf	1 / 300 sf	1 / 500 sf
Formula Eating & Drinking Establishment	1 / 1,000 sf	1 / 5,000 sf	1 / 300 sf	1 / 500 sf
Lodging				
Bed & Breakfast	1 / 20 rooms	1 / 10 rooms	1 / DU + 1 / 4 guest rooms	1 / DU + 1 / 4 guest rooms
Hotel or Hostel	1 / 20 rooms	1 / 10 rooms	1 / 2 guest rooms	1 / 2 guest rooms
Short Term Rental	1 / 20 rooms	1 / 10 rooms	n/a	n/a
Office				
Co-Working	1 / 20,000 sf	1 / 3,000 sf	1 / 1,200 sf	1 / 800 sf
General Office	1 / 20,000 sf	1 / 3,000 sf	1 / 900 sf	1 / 650 sf
Research and Development and/or Laboratory	1 / 20,000 sf	1 / 5,000 sf	1 / 1,000 sf	1 / 1,000 sf
Residential				
Household Living	0.1 / DU	1.0 / DU	1.0 / DU	1.0 / DU
Group Living (except as follows)	0.05 / room	0.5 / room	–	–
Community or Group Residence	–	–	–	–
Dormitory or Chapter House	0.1 / room	0.5 / room	.05 / bed	1.0 / 4 beds
Homeless Shelter	–	–	4.0	4.0
Nursing Home/Assisted Living Facility	–	–	1 / 6 beds	1 / 6 beds
Single Room Occupancy Housing	–	–	1 / 6 beds	1 / 4 beds
Retail Sales				
Building/Home Supplies & Equipment	1 / 2,500 sf	1 / 10,000 sf	1 / 1,000 sf	1 / 1,000 sf
Consumer Goods (except as follows)	1 / 2,500 sf	1 / 10,000 sf	1 / 1,500 sf	1 / 750 sf
Formula Retail	1 / 2,500 sf	1 / 10,000 sf	1 / 1,500 sf	1 / 750 sf
Fresh Food Market or Grocery Store	1 / 1,000 sf	1 / 10,000 sf	1 / 500 sf	1 / 1,500 sf
Farm/Vendor Market	n/a	n/a	n/a	1 / 1,500 sf

sf - Gross Leasable Square Footage

DU - Dwelling Unit

RU - Rooming Unit

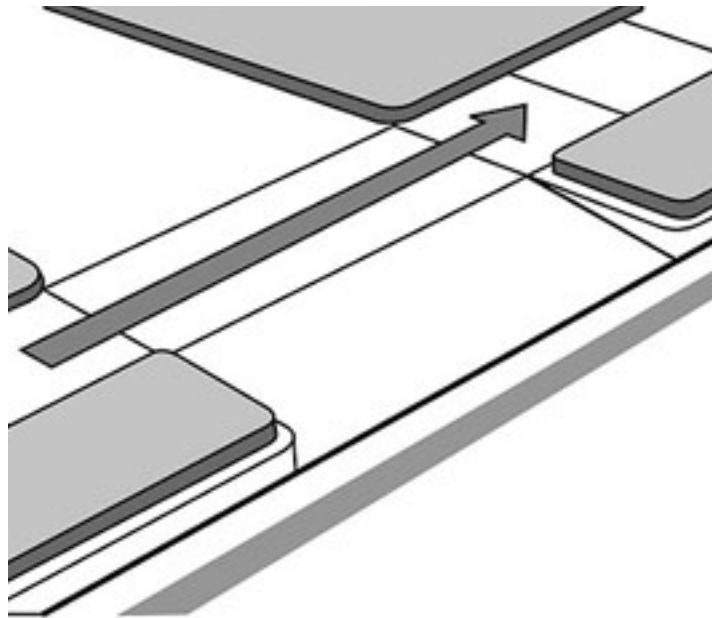
¹ See the Transit Area Map

services provided by the applicant to reduce the demand for parking.

18. Public Realm

- a. Pedestrian Circulation
 - i. When development occurs on any lot abutting a sidewalk that is less than eighteen (18) feet in total width, the building must be setback an additional distance to accommodate expansion of the abutting sidewalk to a width of at least eighteen (18) feet. The minimum and maximum front setbacks for each building type are increased accordingly.
- b. Sidewalk Curb Cuts
 - i. A curb cut requires a permit from the City Engineer and must be compliant with all City Ordinances.
 - ii. Unless otherwise specified, the City Engineer may not permit more than one (1) curb cut per front lot line, up to a maximum of two (2) curb cuts per lot.
 - iii. Curb cuts are prohibited for all thoroughfares designated as a pedestrian street
 - iv. Curb cuts must be located to minimize conflicts with pedestrians and bicyclists and must have a clear distance from fire hydrants, street trees, utility poles, and other furnishings as deemed necessary by the City Engineer.
 - a). Curb cuts for commercial or high-volume driveways should be at least one-hundred (100) feet from an unsignalized or signalized intersection.
 - b). Curb cuts for residential driveways should be at least twenty (20) feet from an unsignalized intersection and at least forty (40) feet from a signalized intersection.
 - v. The interior width of a curb cut (between curb stones) may be no wider than the driveway, vehicular entrance, or loading facility it serves.
 - vi. A driveway apron may be installed only within the furnishing zone of a sidewalk and must be constructed in accordance with all standards established by relevant City departments.
 - vii. The grade, cross slope, and clear width of the walkway of a sidewalk must be maintained between the driveway apron and the abutting driveway. The appearance of the walkway (ie. scoring pattern or paving material) must indicate that, although a vehicle may cross, the area traversed by a vehicle remains part of the sidewalk.

FIGURE X.X (x) Sidewalk Curb Cuts



5. HIGH-RISE DISTRICTS