

Draft Medical District Overlay

TOWN OF BOONE
PLANNING AND INSPECTIONS
P.O. DRAWER 192
BOONE, NORTH CAROLINA 28607
828.268.6960
www.townofboone.net

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The *Medical District Overlay* is located along Deerfield Drive in the southeastern part of Boone just off of Blowing Rock Road (US Highway 321) in the vicinity of Watauga Medical Center. US Highway 321 is the main route between Boone and Charlotte. In Boone, the Blowing Rock Road/US 321 corridor is dominated by large scale retail, hotels, restaurants and acres of surface parking.

The end goal of the *Medical District Overlay* is to provide alternative development regulations to the developers interested in the development or redevelopment of the land included in the *Medical District Overlay*. The developer would have the choice to either follow the traditional base zoning of the property under the Unified Development Ordinance or to follow the alternative regulations as set forth in the *Medical District Overlay*.

It is important to note that the *Medical District Overlay* is not seen as a completely separate document from the UDO but more of a parallel document which varies from specific standards set forth in the UDO. These standards include but are not limited to: landscaping, parking, density, appearance, intensity standards, etc.

The goal is to incentivize the built environment that the Town wishes to see in this area. Incentives can include: by right permitting and increased density (while still having to meet watershed supply restrictions where applicable).

GUIDING PHILOSOPHY

Why a Medical District Overlay? The Town has two adopted plans which help guide growth and development within the Town of Boone's jurisdiction: the 2006 Comprehensive Plan Update and the Boone 2030 Land Use Plan. Further, it is possible to reduce vehicle miles travelled within a described, densely developed area and encourage walking when design considerations make efforts to provide incentives to encourage these behaviors.

Small towns are still the economic engines of rural America. Mini-cities. As such we need to refocus our attention on what small towns are – we need to see what small towns are all about. Small towns are places where people interact and become creative problem solvers. Density is necessary, but height is not necessarily the answer. A mix of uses, a human scale: these are the things that are desired by the people who inhabit quality small towns. The degree to which a small town can integrate the built and natural environments, become walkable and mix compatible uses determines success.

2006 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE

The Town of Boone Comprehensive Plan was updated in 2006 with the resulting plan titled "2006 Comprehensive Plan Update". This plan contains text, narratives and policies which are designed primarily to guide the physical development of the Town and its environs until 2022. The functions of the plan are:

1. To be a source of information;
2. To be a guidance for government decisions;
3. To be a preview of government actions; and
4. To use public participation if managing growth.

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The 2006 Comprehensive Plan Update contains relevant policies [below] which directly correlate to the goal of the *Medical District Overlay*.

2.1 The Economy

- A. The Town shall protect and enhance a high quality of life, image, cultural amenities, and natural beauty as the most effective, long term component of an economic development strategy.
- B. New and expanding industries and businesses shall be encouraged which: 1) diversify the local economy, 2) train and use a skilled labor force and 3) increase area residents' incomes.
- D. Economic Development efforts shall encourage the revitalization and reuse of currently unused or underutilized structures, sites and infrastructure in appropriately located areas.
- E. The Town shall encourage a public service and regulatory environment conducive to business recruitment and expansion, while at the same time enhancing the area's physical and human resources.
- F. New firms and expanding businesses that complement the natural resources and beauty of the region shall be especially recruited and encouraged.
- K. Boone shall identify and provide services consistent with the needs of the area's growing retiree population.

2.1.2 Commercial Development

- B. Commercial and office development shall be encouraged to locate in planned shopping centers, office parks, and mixed use developments to stop the proliferation of strip development.
- C. Community/commercial centers shall be located adjacent to a major street and contain or be adjacent to other appropriate community facilities.
- I. Office and institutional development may be encouraged as a transitional land use between residential areas and higher intensity commercial activities.

2.2 Infrastructure

2.2.1 Transportation

- A. Street patterns shall be designed so as to define the limits of the neighborhood, accentuate focal points and interesting vistas, allow convenient circulation within the neighborhood and provide multiple, alternative outlets from the area to adjoining neighborhoods and /or major streets. Particular attention shall be given to avoid designs that provide convenient "cut-through" traffic opportunities.
- B. Planned systems of pedestrian ways, bikeways, greenways, and similar facilities shall be encouraged as energy efficient and environmentally sound transportation alternatives. Site planning that incorporates secure bicycle storage at places of living, working or schooling, shopping, and gathering shall be required, where appropriate.
- H. Policies that have the effect of reducing automobile dependency, use and congestion in the heart of the urban area shall be supported.

2.2.2 Utilities

- E. The Town shall employ incentives to encourage a concentration of intense urban type development within the Urban Growth Area.

2.3 The Community

- A. Urban type development within the Urban Growth Area shall meet appropriate Town standards.
- B. Properly planned, mixed use developments that promote efficient provision of public services shall be encouraged within the Urban Growth Area.

2.3.1 Community Appearance

- A. Measures to improve the effectiveness of grading, landscaping and buffering standards for new and existing developments shall be encouraged. *****
- B. The significance of street trees in providing visual relief, summer cooling, improved air quality and livability shall be recognized through public policies and actions to encourage their planting and maintenance.
- C. The significance of major roadway entrances into Boone as measures of community image and quality shall be recognized through building placement, landscape, signage and other visual improvements. The Town, along with private property owners and developers, shall work to jointly improve the appearance and design of major street corridors.
- D. Sign policies and standards shall be periodically updated to enhance community identity and create a high quality business image.

2.3.2 Community Character

- A. The identification, restoration and active use of structures, buildings, monuments, and neighborhoods of historic or architectural significance shall be encouraged as a means of enhancing their economic and cultural value to the planning area
- E. New development, redevelopment and rehabilitation of structures and sites shall occur in a manner which is consistent with the neighborhood and architectural context of the immediate area, and supportive, whenever possible, of Boone's original community character as a High Country small town.

2.3.3 Housing and Neighborhoods

- D. Innovative and flexible land planning and development practices shall be encouraged to create livable developments which better safeguard land, water, energy and historic resources.
- E. Factors in determining preferred locations for high density residential development shall include: close proximity to the university, employment or shopping centers; access to major thoroughfares and the transit system; the availability of public services and facilities; and compatibility with adjacent land uses.
- G. Compact, full service neighborhoods, offering opportunities for living, working, shopping, and gathering places, shall be encouraged in newly planned developments, as well as for redeveloping areas.

- H. The overall housing unit density for proposed infill residential development or redevelopment should be compatible with the average density of existing areas.

BOONE 2030 LAND USE PLAN

In 2009, the Town of Boone adopted the *Boone 2030 Land Use Plan* after an intensive public planning process. This plan serves as a three-dimensional framework for the 2006 Comprehensive Plan Update and serves as the basis for all facility and service needs of the Town. The vision statement for the plan is as follows:

1. We will have a vibrant, attractive, walkable, bikable and transit-friendly community that is financially, socially and environmentally sustainable.
2. Our high country heritage is honored through our attention to aesthetic beauty, promotion of our culture, and protection of our natural resources.
3. We are a community of strong (and economically) diverse neighborhoods, successful and beautiful commercial corridors, a vibrant downtown, and high quality educational institutions (all levels).
4. We are a regional center for commerce, health care, and education.
5. Our vibrant downtown and the University are surrounded by strong neighborhoods, successful and beautiful commercial corridors, and an easily accessible University campus.

Fundamentals of smart growth were incorporated into the Boone 2030 Land Use Plan, including:

1. Mix land uses.
2. Take advantage of compact building design.
3. Create a range of housing opportunities and choices.
4. Create walkable communities.
5. Foster distinctive, attractive communities with a strong sense of place.
6. Preserve open space, farmland, natural beauty, and critical environmental areas.
7. Strengthen and direct development towards existing communities.
8. Provide a variety of transportation choices.
9. Make development decisions fair, predictable, and cost effective.
10. Encourage community and stakeholder collaboration in development decisions.

Following are excerpts from the Boone 2030 Land Use Plan as they relate to the Medical District Overlay (emphasis added in bold italics):

2: Introduction and Analysis, “Market Analysis”, page 18

“Opportunities exist for Boone to expand its economic base beyond tourism, retail and education by recruiting additional jobs to the County’s growing roster of white collar and knowledge-based companies. Tourism revenues for the region have grown consistently since 2001 to a record \$179,140,000 in 2006. However, data from the US Department of Transportation indicates that

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travel on North Carolina roads dropped by 4% in May of 2008, with similar national declines resulting in the third largest decline in the 66 years that the government has collected such data. The energy issues facing the nation will continue to impact tourism-dependent economies. Alternatively, targeted economic development efforts in Boone could assist in raising the projected employment, population and income growth that would drive future demand for higher quality (Class A) commercial space, together with the existing retail. Collaboration with neighboring county economic development and educational institutions on cluster-based initiatives is encouraged. **Targeted clusters for Boone might include health, technology and knowledge-based industries, benefiting from proximity to the Watauga Medical Center (centerpiece of the Appalachian Regional Healthcare System),** Appalachian State University and surrounding community technical colleges and educational institutions.

3: Civic Dialogue & Participation, “Community Survey”, page 25

Ranking of Community Priorities

Top 10 Community Objectives

...The table below lists the top 10 objectives for Boone as ranked by survey respondents.

<i>Community Objectives</i>	<i>Average Score (out of 10)</i>	<i>Rank</i>
Acknowledge the area’s natural beauty, university, and medical center presence as the Town’s greatest assets. . .	7.23	1
Blend the built environment with the natural, scenic, and historic character of a High Country small town.	7.13	2
Blend the built environment with the natural, scenic, and historic character of a High Country small town.	7.13	2
Implement the planned system of bikeways. Unify with greenways and other pedestrian facilities.	6.81	3
Discourage commercial strip development, cluttered signage, and “cheap” apartment buildings.	6.36	4
A system of sidewalks, paths, crosswalks and compact development patterns which make it easy to get around Boone on foot.	6.13	5
Preserve the countryside by discouraging suburban sprawl.	6.04	6
Support and enhance the cultural and historic significance of downtown Boone.	5.83	7
Ensure the livability of neighborhoods, especially through land use and traffic planning.	5.79	8
Avoid development in floodplains, on ridgetops, and on steep slopes.	5.66	9
Work to reduce auto dependency, use, and congestion.	5.61	10

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The Boone 2030 Land Use Plan contains several different “focus areas”, including one titled “Hospital Infill & Redevelopment”. An overview of how the “focus areas” are to be utilized is provided below (Boone 2030 Land Use Plan, page 97):

The plans shown in the “Focus Areas”:

“are intended to be conceptual build-out visions for significant and prototypical areas of Boone. The purpose of these conceptual plans is not to require strict conformance to each building or parcel as drawn, but to show general patterns and intensities and potential development/redevelopment opportunities that are consistent with the community’s goals. These conceptual plans are also meant to illustrate the desired development principles that have been articulated by residents and stakeholders. Care was taken in the design process to envision development alternatives based on property boundaries or known opportunities for parcel consolidation as well as the market feasibility for the scale, amount, and type of development.

While the illustrations shown in this section [Focus Areas] are preferred build-out alternatives created with public input and review during the charrette process, the conceptual plans are not intended to preclude site-specific modifications. It is assumed that any modifications will be the result of specific programmatic and market analysis.

Future development and redevelopment proposals for these sites should be expected to reflect the following aspects of the concept plans: the general street network; street connections and rights-of-way; open space areas and usable public spaces; general intensity of development; urban pattern (relationship of buildings to the streets and adjacent properties); building massing; street and pedestrian circulation patterns. Further, developments on these sites should mix uses both horizontally (within sites) and vertically (within buildings), where appropriate.

The conceptual development plans laid out in this plan were created with the assumption that their implementation would be accomplished primarily through private and/or institutional investment, with willing buyers and willing sellers and *not* through eminent domain. Although there will be roles for government investment in implementation of these concept plans (e.g., infrastructure improvements, public facilities, and development and enforcement of regulatory standards), the primary mechanism for accomplishing the physical vision embodied in these concepts will be the initiative of property owners, developers, and business owners in concert with the Town’s adopted policy and regulatory processes.”

HOSPITAL INFILL & REDEVELOPMENT FOCUS AREA

The following excerpt was taken from the Boone 2030 Land Use Plan (page 110):

Existing Conditions

The hospital district is located along US 321 in the southeastern part of the town. The area is dominated by big box development to the west and the existing hospital facility to the east. The core area is laden with individual medical offices with their own surface parking facilities.

Recommendations

Create a cohesive mixed use district with an emphasis on medical facilities and related uses. The goal for this area is to create a balance of uses that create an environment that is both functional and inviting to residents, visitors, patients, staff, as well as offices, services, and facilities that would benefit from proximity to the hospital.

The northern portion of the district introduces an assisted living facility and consolidates the medical offices into a configuration more conducive to shared facilities and parking. The proposed assisted living facility would house apartments, bungalows, and care suites.

Three of the core blocks are dedicated to housing with one having mixed uses of office and limited retail. A fourth block to the south is conceived as a mixture of office and retail while along US 321, mixed use with parking behind is the predominant pattern. The southeastern quadrant of the district could house offices or even a corporate headquarters such as a medical research company.

This quadrant also has a historic home and barn that are proposed for protection through this redevelopment process.”



HOSPITAL DISTRICT REDEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL

Office: 403,000 square feet

Mixed Use: 383,000 square feet (office, residential—some retail)

Residential: 428 Units

Assisted Living Facility: 149,000 square feet (apartments/bungalows/care suites)

Total Development as Drawn: 1,363,000 square feet

Please see the *Boone 2030 Land Use Plan, 8:Focus Areas, Hospital District Infill & Redevelopment*, page 110 for full graphics.

DEFINING AND EXPANDING THE FOCUS AREA

The *Boone 2030 Land Use Plan - Hospital District Focus Area* addresses an area around the existing Watauga Medical Center. The area is along Deerfield Road from approximately the intersection of Deerfield Road and State Farm Road to US 321 and includes lands west of the hospital bounded by Deerfield Road, State Farm Road, Furman Road and Blowing Rock Road.

In the early stages of planning for an overlay district, these boundaries were expanded so that overlay area affected properties in a cohesive and orderly fashion. The goal was to create visible cohesive entrances into the *Medical District Overlay* area and thus largely avoid a piecemeal approach which would have a destructive impact on the appearance and feeling of the area.

PLANNING ISSUES

When deciding on how to proceed with planning for an overlay, it is important to consider the existing built environment, as well as the potential, or need, for redevelopment. The following issues were taken into consideration:

■ LAND USES

The predominant land use in the *Medical District Overlay* is institutional (Watauga Medical Center). Other prominent uses include medical office and multi-family residential. Interspersed within the predominant uses are small office buildings and clusters of retail and restaurants primarily along US 321 between Deerfield Road and Boone Heights Drive.

■ APPEARANCE STANDARDS

Development in the *Medical District Overlay* has occurred over several decades and as a result there is a clear lack of design consistency within the area.

■ CANOPY COVERAGE AND TREE PRESERVATION

The Medical District Overlay currently contains an estimated canopy coverage of less than 10% and contains minimal Historic Trees (over 24" in dbh).

■ SITE DEVELOPMENT

Most of the structures built in the area were constructed in the 1960's and 70's and reflect the automobile and thoroughfare-oriented development standards that were predominant at the time. Many have large parking lots that front the street with the buildings set furthest away from the street. Most structures are only one or two stories high. There is no predominate style of signage or site lighting. Very few parcels share access, parking, landscaping or other amenities.

■ PEDESTRIAN ACCESS

There is currently a great deal of pedestrian use in the corridor by the students, hospital employees, hospital visitors and residents from the surrounding neighborhoods. However, pedestrians report how difficult it is to walk to destinations in the Overlay District, how unsafe they feel and how they have to cross through parking lots to access businesses. There are some public sidewalks along focus area but there is very little inter connectedness between buildings and parcels. This area is identified on the Town of Boone's Sidewalk Priority Plan.

■ LANDSCAPING

Most parcels were developed before the current landscaping standards were adopted. As a result, landscaping throughout the focus area is inconsistent - ranging from grassed front yards to the elaborate landscaping in front of Watauga Medical Center.

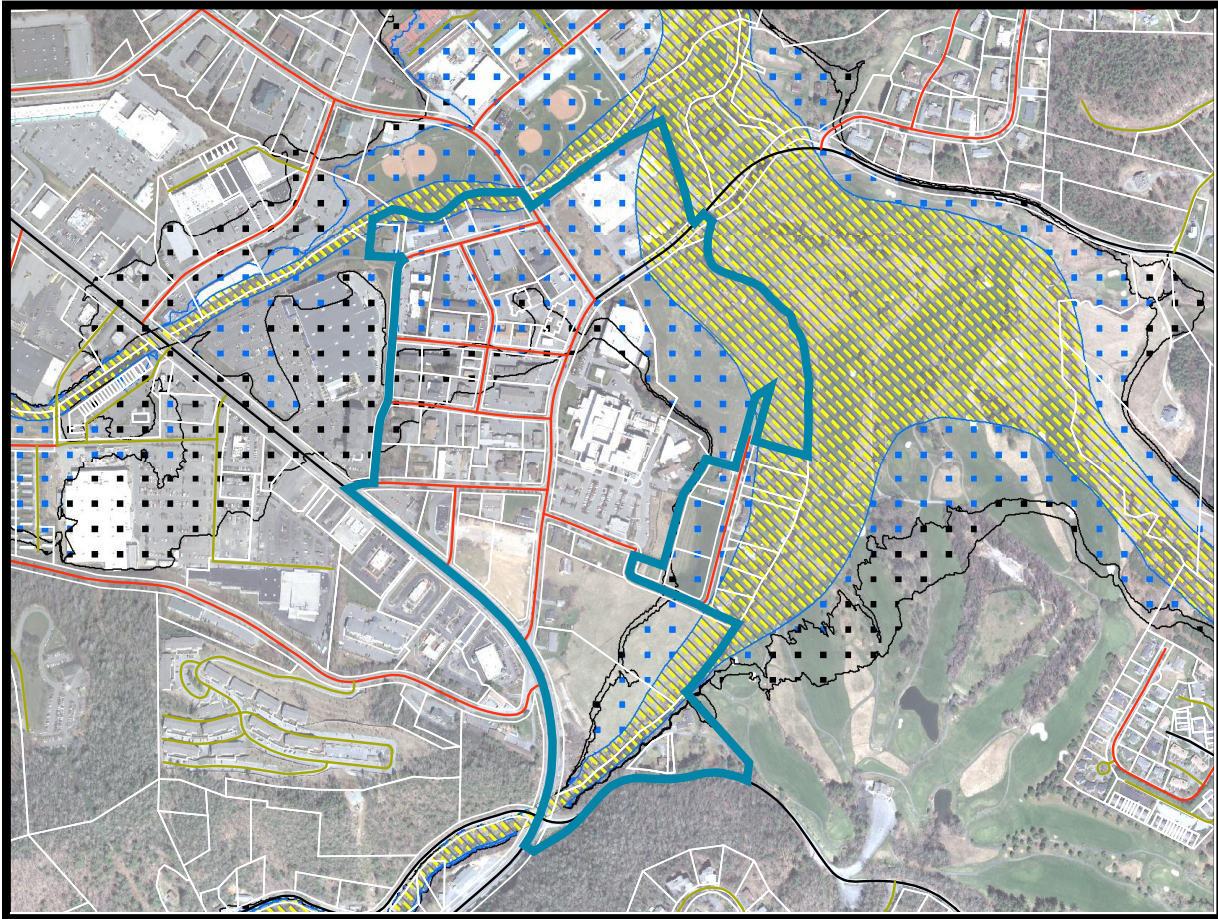
■ LIGHTING

Most of the development occurred before the current lighting standards were adopted. As a result, lighting throughout the focus area is inconsistent - often shining on adjacent parcels and resulting in bright and dark spots within a development.

■ FLOOD HAZARDS

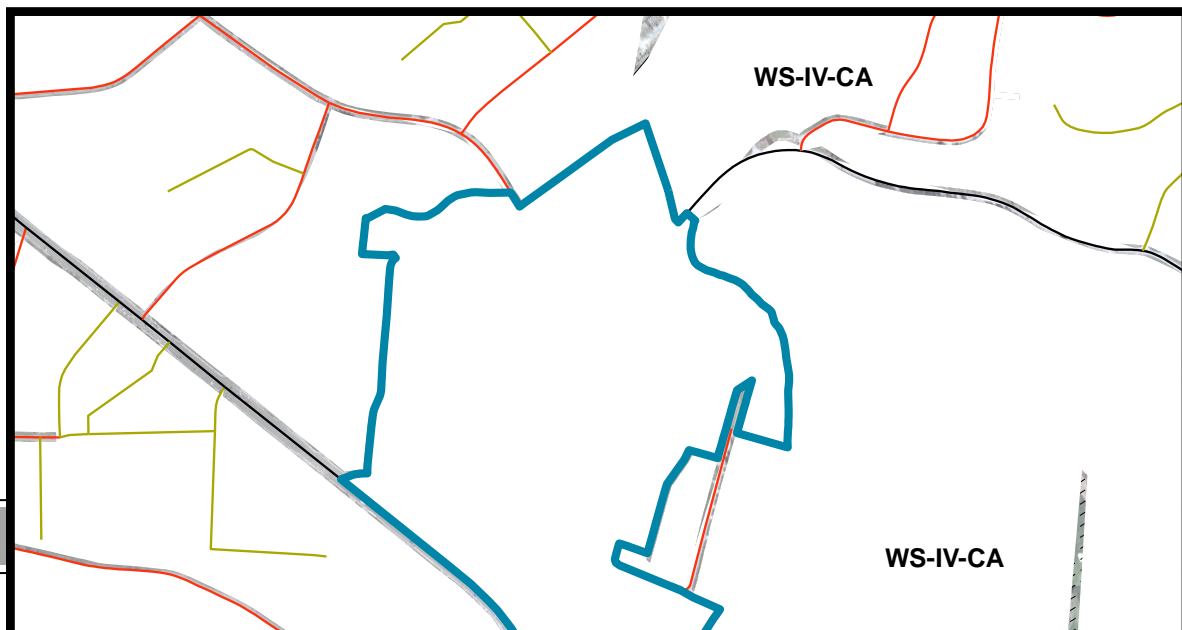
Much of the *Hospital District Focus Area* is located in the Special Flood Hazard Area as identified by FEMA. These areas will be restricted in redevelopment based upon which zone they are located.

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■ WATERSHED

The *Hospital District Focus Area* is located in the WS-IV-CA Watershed District. In order to address a moderate to high land use intensity pattern, single family residential uses are allowed at a maximum of two (2) dwelling units per acre. All other residential and non residential development shall be allowed twenty-four percent (24%) built-upon area. New sludge application sites and landfills are specifically prohibited.



MEDICAL DISTRICT OVERLAY GUIDELINES

The following development guidelines are meant to complement the overlay development requirements, meeting the following objectives:

OBJECTIVES:

- A more intimate image for the focus area, which brings buildings closer to the sidewalk.
- Interconnection between sites, suggesting and encouraging multi-purpose visits to the focus area, which builds on the proximity of office, services, residential and retail groupings, which reduces road-to-site and auto-to-pedestrian traffic conflicts; and
- Site improvements which enhance the character of the *Medical District Overlay* as a mixed-use environment; especially those that soften the nature of automobile parking lots, and those that make the site pedestrian safe and friendly through lighting, landscaping, sidewalks, and building orientation; and
- Architecture and design standards which enhance the continuity of the focus area, and which enhance the opportunity to market the focus area as a 'place.'
- Revitalize the medical center area so as to serve the needs of the community, including the adjacent university and college communities; and
- Enhance the image of the District, moving away from the existing vehicular-oriented thoroughfare-type development to an image which is attractive to pedestrian access and use; and
- Encourage a desirable and mutually supportive mix of uses in close proximity to each other so as to reduce VMT within the *Medical Overlay District*; and
- Provide commercial and employment opportunities which are easily accessible to neighborhood residents; and
- Create a district with a distinct sense of place and character; and
- Encourage high quality building and site design; and
- Encourage uses of a specific character, type; and market; and
- Encourage a district character that is both attractive and compatible between public and private spaces; and
- Implement the Boone 2030 Land Use Plan.

PURPOSE

The guidelines are the precursor to actual regulations. Any regulations adopted with this plan will be created with the objectives of the *Medical District Overlay* in mind. The regulations will be written to achieve the guideline objectives.

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OVERALL GUIDELINES

The following guidelines apply to the *Medical District Overlay*.

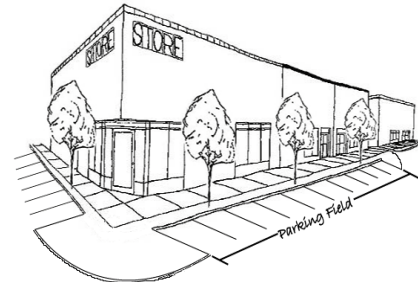
- Encourage and implement low impact best management practices.
- Maintenance of on site improvements should be required for all developments.
- The Community Appearance Commission shall be utilized in reviewing guidelines and proposed regulations for the *Medical District Overlay*.

BUILDING LAYOUT AND APPEARANCE GUIDELINES

The following guidelines should be used to guide site planning, building design and building orientation toward the goal of focus area compatibility:

1. Details, Fenestrations, Context Sensitivity Guidelines

- Blank, undifferentiated exterior walls are unattractive and should not be visible from the street. **(Graphic 1.1)**
- Building exteriors facing the streets and parking lots should be designed so as to present more glazing (or windows) for safety. **(Graphic 1.2)**
- All rooftop mechanical equipment should be screened from view from adjacent properties and adjacent rights-of-way by use of parapet walls or screens designed to be compatible with building architecture.
- Building heights should be limited to no more than four (4) stories for mixed use buildings and no more than two stories for single use buildings.
- Building heights should not include gable or other roof structures.



Graphic 1.1
Blank, undifferentiated walls like these should not be visible from the street.



Graphic 1.2
Example depicting first floor storefronts with 70% of the first floor wall area as a glazed display or window.

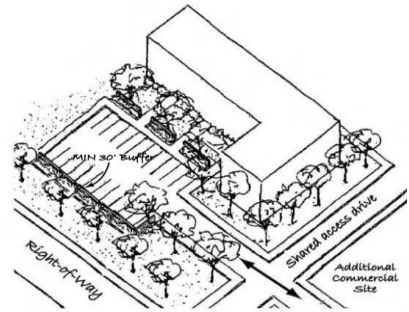
2. Building Materials Guidelines

- Building materials should be uniform throughout the overlay district.
- The use of concrete block (with the exception of architectural split face block) or corrugated metal should be discouraged; **(use as an accent material only)**
- Primary materials for walls and facades visible from the right-of-way shall be limited to brick, **stone**, masonry units, glass, and metal accents.
- Trim **or accent** materials should complement the field materials and be limited to stone, wood, faux stone, copper, non-silver metals. **(use masonry block as an accent material only)**

(add percentages for accents)

3. Building Siting and Orientation Guidelines

- a. Buildings, and their principal entry points, should be oriented to, and visible from the street-front property line.
(Graphic 1.3)
- b. Wherever possible, buildings, and their principal entry points, should be sited in proximity to the sidewalk except for areas contiguous with the structures or areas used for outdoor dining or courtyards.
- c. Whenever a building is set back from the sidewalk or street right-of-way, an uninterrupted, hard surface sidewalk should connect the public sidewalk with the principal entry to the building.



Graphic 1.3
Entry points should be visible from the right-of-way.

4. Building Setback Guidelines

- a. **Street Setbacks:** Maximum building setbacks from the public right-of-way should reflect a pedestrian orientation.
 - I. Buildings should front the public sidewalk at the public right-of-way;
 - II. Where existing buildings along a block face between two intersecting streets establish a uniform building setback line, new buildings should conform to that established setback.
 - III. Exceptions should be allowed for the installation of dining areas, pocket parks or other pedestrian oriented amenities, for geologic necessity or for parking spaces as approved by the Community Appearance Commission.
 - IV. In no case should the front setback exceed 30 feet.
- b. **Rear Setbacks:** Maximum building setback from the rear property line shall be flexible enough to encourage maximum usage of properties within the Hospital Overlay District.
 - I. Larger setbacks should be required when lots are adjacent to especially sensitive land uses (R-1, R1-A) outside the Hospital Overlay District while smaller setbacks should be allowed within the overlay district to encourage walking;
- c. **Interior Setbacks:** Minimum building setbacks from interior property lines should encourage walking and bicycling between buildings.
 - I. In no case should buildings be closer than twelve (12) feet to other buildings.

5. Building Height Guidelines

- a. The maximum building height shall not exceed four (4) stories.
 - I. Stories should be used rather than feet to encourage creative building design and density;
 - II. First floors should be limited to no more than fourteen (14) feet in height while subsequent floors should be limited to no more than ten (10) feet in height;
- b. Floors should be measured from sub floor to finished ceiling
 - I. Roof structures should not be included in the height calculations for structures to encourage the use of different types of roofs (gable, flat with amenities, etc);

- c. Where existing structures within the block face between two intersecting streets establish a uniform building height of less than four (4) stories, the maximum building height shall not exceed that uniform building height by more than fifty percent (50%) of that uniform building height;
 - I. In no case shall a building exceed four (4) stories.

6. Pedestrian Orientation Guidelines

- a. Sidewalks should be provided along the length of any façade abutting parking areas. Such sidewalks should be located so as to provide planting beds for foundation landscaping.
- b. An accessible route to the principal entry to the building within the boundary of a site must be provided that meets the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

■ PARKING LOT GUIDELINES

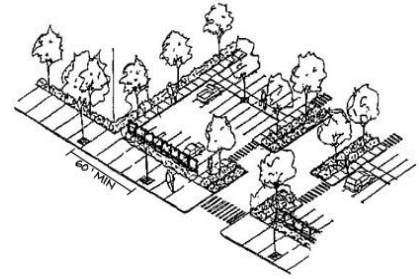
1. Parking Lot Layout Guidelines

- a. Where possible, parking should be consolidated. To limit the amount of impervious surfaces dedicated to parking on each lot, shared parking should be encouraged.
- b. No on-street parking should be allowed in the Overlay District.
- c. Minimum Parking Requirements: In the Overlay District, a minimum of one (1) space for each 300 square feet of retail or office gross floor area and one parking space per bedroom shall be provided on site, except as modified below.
 - I. Parking Credits and Exceptions:
 - i. Where parking is available off-site and within 1,200 feet of the front entry to the building, and that parking is owned or controlled under a permanent, irrevocable and recorded parking encumbrance agreement for use by the occupants or employees on the site, said parking should be allowed to be counted to satisfy the off-street parking requirements.
 - ii. In those portions of the Overlay District which are occupied as a retail use, all parking located behind the front facade of the building should be double-counted so that each such parking space behind the front setback shall be counted as if it were two (2) spaces available to satisfy the off-street parking requirements for such retail use.
 - iii. Where it can be demonstrated through a documented parking study that the demand for parking of the combined uses of two (2) or more buildings can be satisfied with the shared and jointly accessible off-street parking available to those buildings, then the Administrator should be allowed to grant a deviation to these parking requirements based on the parking study results.
 - iv. The Administrator should be charged with evaluating the parking post occupancy to determine if, in fact, the assumptions in the parking study were accurate. If found to be inaccurate, the Administrator should be allowed to force a property owner to comply with these regulations through other means cited above.

- d. Location: All parking serving the site and counted toward minimum parking requirements shall be located on the site or within 1,200 feet of the front (main) entrance to the site.

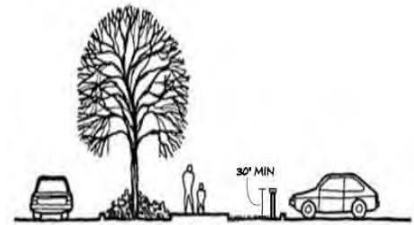
2. Parking Lot Landscaping Guidelines

- a. Where parking lots providing for 5 or more parking spaces are in view of the public right-of-way, there should be a minimum 12-foot street yard between the parking area and the street. This street yard should consist of canopy trees and understory trees as well as hedges and ground covers. **(Graphic 1.4)**
- b. Where parking is placed between the building and the right-of-way, view of the parking from the street should be buffered to a height of 30 inches, except where vehicular sight lines might be impaired. Buffering should consist of a combination of the following:
 - I. Masonry walls compatible with proposed building design, and landscaped as a foundation wall; **(Graphic 1.5)**
 - II. Screening fence of wood or approved material at least 75% opaque. Chain link fencing with wood slats should be prohibited; or
 - III. Understory & evergreen trees, shrubs and groundcovers. At a minimum, 50% of a planted buffer should be evergreen;
 - IV. An earthen berm between the right-of-way and the parking lot. Berms should be undulating and landscaped and not exceed a height of 3 feet or a slope of 3:1. **(Graphic 1.6)**
- c. To break up large expanses of parking and provide a minimum 5% landscape area, landscape islands should be required such that no parking space may be greater than 50 linear feet away from a landscape island containing a canopy tree. **(Graphic 1.7)**
 - I. Landscape islands should be sufficient size to accommodate canopy trees or understory trees as required.
- d. Encourage and implement Xeriscaping.
- e. Encourage and implement standards suggested in the Urban Forest Master Management Plan.



Graphic 1.4

Parking lots within view of the public right-of-way must be adequately screened. Wherever feasible, connections should be provided between adjacent parking lots.



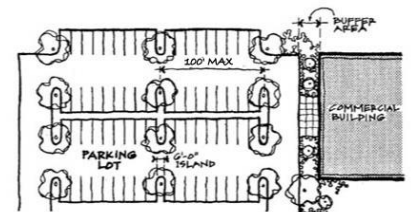
Graphic 1.5

When utilized for screening parking lots, masonry walls must be compatible with the proposed building design, and should stand at a minimum height of 30 inches.



Graphic 1.6

In order to screen parking lots from the right-of-way, a combination of landscaping, berms, fencing, or walls should be used.



Graphic 1.7

To minimize large expanses of parking, landscaped islands should be used. No parking space should be greater than 50 linear feet from a landscaped island.

3. Parking Lot Lighting Guidelines

- a. Parking areas should be illuminated during hours of operation of the use so as to avoid hot spots or dark areas; and so as not to allow adjacent properties to be illuminated.
- b. Encourage and implement Dark Sky compliance.

4. Parking Structures Guidelines

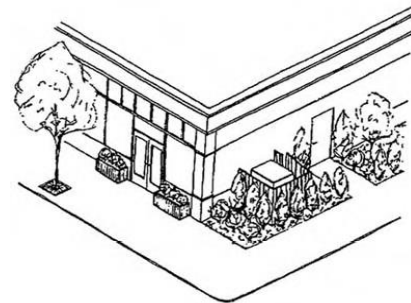
Parking structures should be strongly encouraged to help consolidate parking, encourage walking and encourage better utilization of land.

- a. Parking structures should be designed so ramps are hidden from view from the street or public right-of-way.
- b. Parking structures should be set back from the right-of-way and a landscape buffer and sidewalk should be installed in the set back area. Landscaping adjacent to street right-of-ways should meet or exceed the guidelines for landscaping (below).
- c. Any parking structure exceeding twenty-five (25) feet in height should be set back from the right-of-way a minimum of one (1) horizontal foot for each two (2) vertical feet of height.
 - I. Parking structures that have retail uses built into the street façade are exempt from this limitation.
- d. In no case should a parking structure exceed 40 feet in height.

■ SITE GUIDELINES

1. Site Landscaping Guidelines

- a. A minimum 15% of the gross site area should be landscaped open space or healthy existing vegetation. **(Graphic 1.8) (FURTHER CONSIDERATION NEEDED BASED ON URBAN FOREST MANAGEMENT PLAN)**
- b. Prior to development, measures should be taken to protect all natural elements from damage due to construction activities.
- c. Areas necessary for safe and efficient construction activities should be clearly identified on the site plan and staked on site.
 - a. Trees to be preserved should be identified and protected as required by the tree preservation ordinance.
 - b. All sensitive areas including: wetlands, slopes, and vegetation, outside the construction zone must be protected with fencing or other barrier devices.



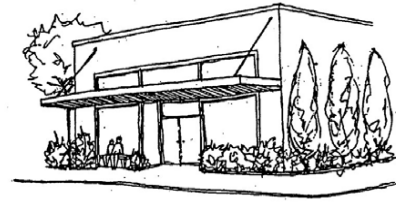
Graphic 1.8

A minimum of 15% of the gross site area should be landscaped. Such landscaping should be integrated with the architecture and design of the structure, screening ground level utilities.

- d. There should be sufficient quantities of canopy, understory and evergreen trees, shrubs and ground covers to adequately screen unattractive views at the side and rear of buildings.
- e. There should be minimum quantities of over story trees, vegetation and shrubs at the rear and sides of buildings.
- f. Minimum required landscape areas should be provided adjacent to all building walls (excluding driveways, entrance areas, covered walkways, service and delivery areas);
- g. Landscape areas should be planted with a balance of canopy, understory and evergreen trees, shrubs & ground covers;
- h. Plantings should emphasize softening of large expanses of building wall lengths and heights, accent building entrances and architectural features and screen mechanical equipment adjacent to buildings. *(Graphics 1.9 & 1.10)*
- i. Landscaping should be designed and installed to minimize potential obstruction of critical sight lines;
 - a. Landscape plantings should be designed so as to avoid obstruction of a motorist's vision at the intersections of outlet access drives, access roads or streets;
- j. Encourage and implement Xeriscaping.
- k. Encourage and implement standards suggested in the Urban Forest Master Management Plan.

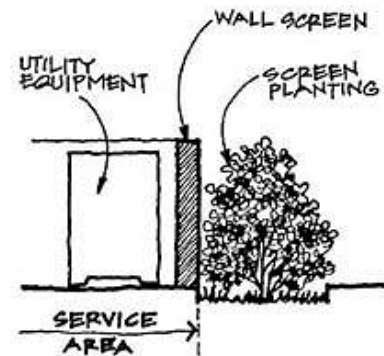
2. Site Lighting Guidelines

- a. All areas intended for pedestrian use should be sufficiently lighted by lighting fixtures that focus on lighting walkways and sitting areas. *(Graphic 1.11)*
- b. Property owners and managers should be required to safely illuminate building entry/exit locations; however, such areas should only be illuminated using shielded lighting or off-building lighting that does not generate glare or otherwise allow the light to be viewed directly from off the property.
- c. Building walls should be allowed to be illuminated with down lighting.
- d. No building illumination shall cause the site to exceed maximum site lighting limitations.
- e. Encourage and implement Dark Sky compliance.



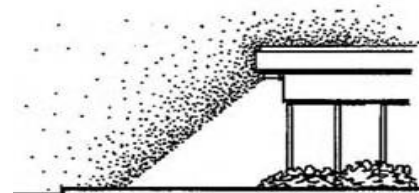
Graphic 1.9

Plantings should be provided adjacent to all buildings and should be used to soften large expanses of building walls, accenting entrances and architectural features.



Graphic 1.10

Landscaping or a wall screen should be used to screen mechanical equipment from adjacent to buildings.

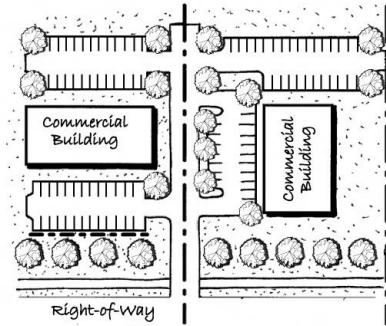


Graphic 1.11

A minimum of 15% of the gross site area should be landscaped. Such landscaping should be integrated with the architecture and design of the structure, screening ground level utilities.

3. Site Access Guidelines

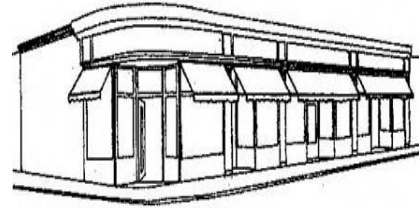
- a. Driveways across from intersections should be consolidated wherever feasible to coordinate access at the intersection.
- b. Driveways should be designed with adequate on-site storage for entering and exiting vehicles to reduce unsafe conflicts with through traffic or on-site traffic and to avoid congestion at entrances. **(Graphic 1.12)**
- c. Separation between access points on all state highways should comply with North Carolina Department of Transportation Access Classification System & Standards.
- d. No more than one (1) vehicular access to Deerfield Road and State Farm Road should be permitted on any site unless one (1) such access is shared between the subject site and an adjacent site.
- e. Each site should provide a cross access point and cross access easement to allow circulation between sites.



Graphic 1.12
Parking areas should be screened, and where appropriate, access provided between adjoining uses.

4. Site Safety Guidelines

- a. Each site should be illuminated during operating hours of the use so that site users may move in all public areas of the site without walking through dark areas;
- b. Entries to buildings, both principal and secondary, should be illuminated at all times. Luminaries within fixtures used to illuminate entries should not be directly visible from off the site.
- c. The walls adjacent to parking areas and walkways should be glazed so as to allow for observation of all parking areas and walkways from inside buildings. **(Graphic 1.13)**
- d. Site landscaping and building features should not be installed or maintained in a way which allows a person to hide from observation by pedestrians on the site.



Graphic 1.13
A portion of walls adjacent to parking areas and walkways should be glazed.

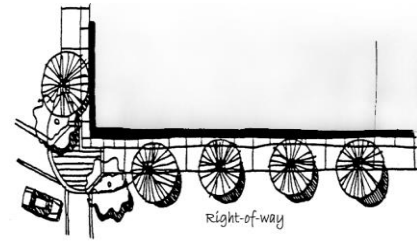
5. Bicycle/Pedestrian Oriented Guidelines

Opportunities for bicycle and pedestrian mobility should be enhanced through site design strategies and bicycle/pedestrian access ways that seek to shorten walking distances and increase accessibility between buildings and uses.

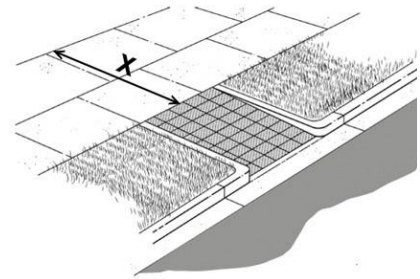
- a. Pedestrian circulation should be provided between abutting properties through the use of walkways or identifiable pathways.
- b. Pedestrian paths or sidewalks should be clearly distinguished from vehicular paths by landscaping, paving materials, or architectural elements. (Graphic 1.14)
- c. Pedestrian paths, curb cuts and ADA-compliant ramps should be provided throughout. (Graphic 1.15)
- d. Vehicular parking lots should include bicycle parking areas or facilities to reduce the need for vehicular access. (Graphic 1.16)
- e. A ratio of vehicle-to-bicycle parking should be developed so that for every so many vehicle parking spaces provided, a bicycle space must also be provided.
- f. Consider requiring bicycle lockers or secured bicycle storage in parking structures.
- g. Bicycle Parking: Since the goal is to encourage bicycling and walking, all developments should have both long-term and short-term bicycle parking.
 - a. Short-term
 - b. Long-term

■ CANOPY COVERAGE AND TREE PRESERVATION GUIDELINES

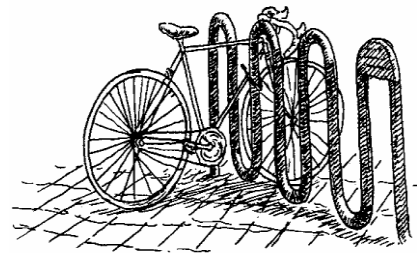
Recommended 20% canopy coverage through preservation of existing vegetation or if property is lacking the required 20% canopy coverage, require new plantings to meet 20% coverage and protect Historic Trees as required currently in UDO Section 370.



Graphic 1.14
Landscaping and paving materials should be used to distinguish pedestrian paths and sidewalks from vehicular



Graphic 1.15
Sidewalks and pedestrian paths along rights-of-way and parking lots should incorporate design features compliant with ADA standards to accommodate individuals with disabilities.



Graphic 1.15
Increased accessibility for bicycle mobility can be enhanced through site designs that incorporate bicycle racks.

Medical District Overlay

● **USE LIMITATION GUIDELINES**

- a. **First Floor Uses:** Uses on the first floor shall be limited to Retail, Business, Professional Services, Personal Services uses; Educational & Institutional uses; and restaurant uses shown in Table 1 (below).

1.320	1.330	1.400	1.530	1.700	2.110	2.300
3.100	5.130	6.230	7.100	7.200	7.400	8.100
8.200	8.300	10.100	13.0	15.100	16.0	17.0
18.0	22.0	23.0	27.0	29.0		

- b. **Upper Floor Uses:** Uses on all floors above the first floor shall be limited to those uses allowed on the first floor, or any residential use listed in the Town of Boone Unified Development Ordinance Permissible Use Table for the R-3 zoning district.
- c. **Single Use MF Residential Buildings:** Buildings not fronting on Deerfield Road or State Farm Road should be allowed to be single use multi-family residential buildings.

● **SIGNS**

All signage should be part of a unified sign plan developed for the Hospital Overlay District to encourage a sense of place. Except as provided below, signs shall meet the requirements of Article 18 of the Boone Unified Development Ordinance.

- a. **Freestanding Signs:** Freestanding signage requiring a permit shall be limited to monument signs. No sign exceeding fifty (50) square feet for single tenant buildings or 150 square feet for multi-tenant buildings shall be permitted within the Overlay District.
 - I. Only one monument sign should be permitted per development
- b. **Projecting Signs:** No more than one (1) right-angle sign should be allowed for each business.
 - I. The bottom of a projecting sign should be at least ten (10) feet above any sidewalk, parking area, or other paved area.
 - II. The area of a projecting sign will be calculated in the overall attached signage.
 - III. Projecting signs shall not exceed twenty-four (24) square feet maximum area on each side.
 - IV. A business should be allowed to trade a permissible wall sign for another projecting.
- c. **Wall Signs:** Attached wall signs should be strongly encouraged.
 - I. No wall sign should project more than six (6) inches into the public right-of-way.
 - II. Wall signs should not project more than twelve (12) inches from the building façade.
 - III. All attached wall signs may be illuminated.

DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS

The following development regulations are meant to replace the regulations found within the Unified Development Ordinance as they relate to the Medical District Overlay district. The regulations found in this plan provide the standards for the development of each lot or property within the Medical District Overlay district and illustrates how each development, lot or property relates to adjacent properties and public spaces.

1) Details, fenestrations, context sensitivity:

(a) Publically visible exterior walls shall have, at a minimum:

- (1) 50% (fifty percent) glazing; or
- (2) 65% (sixty five percent) glazing when facing public roads or parking lots; and
- (3) 30% (thirty percent) accent materials; and
- (4) Three features

(b) Rooftop amenities such as patios are allowed.

(c) Only gable or flat roofs are allowed.

(d) Rooftop mechanical installations are allowed:

- (1) All rooftop mechanical equipment shall be screened from view from adjacent properties and adjacent rights-of-way by use of parapet walls or screens; and
- (2) Screens shall be designed to be compatible with building architecture.

2) Building siting and orientation:

(a) Buildings, and their principal entry points, shall be oriented to, and visible from the street-front property line.

(b) Buildings, and their principal entry points, shall be sited in proximity to the public sidewalk system:

(c) Where other structures or areas used for outdoor dining or courtyards are contiguous with and adjacent to buildings, secondary entrances are allowed and encouraged.

3) Building Materials Guidelines:

(a) Building materials shall be uniform throughout the overlay district and must be selected from the attached Appendix ___.

(b) Primary or field materials for walls and facades visible from the right-of-way shall be limited to brick, masonry, and glass, and

(c) Accent materials shall be limited to those materials listed in Appendix ___ and must complement the field materials chosen.

Parking Lot Landscaping/Lighting

(a) Where parking lots providing for 5 or more parking spaces and are in view of the public right-of-way:

- (1) A minimum 12-foot street yard between the parking area and the street.
 - (i) This street yard shall consist of canopy trees, understory trees as well as hedges and ground covers as detailed in Appendix ___.
 - (ii) Canopy trees shall be placed in accordance with the overall Street Tree Master Plan for the Medical District Overlay and shall be incorporated into the landscape plan for each development site.
 - (iii) Deciduous understory trees and evergreen trees can be used interchangeably within the street yard buffer as required by this sub-section.
 - (iv) Hedges and ground covers shall not impede site triangles for driveways and intersections.

(b) Where parking is placed between the building and the right-of-way, view of the parking from the street shall be buffered to a minimum height of 30 inches.

- (1) Buffering shall consist of any combination of the following:
 - (i) Masonry walls compatible with proposed building design, and landscaped as a foundation wall; or
 - (ii) Screening fence of wood or other approved material at least 75% opaque; or
 - (iii) Understory and evergreen trees, shrubs and groundcovers; or
 - (iv) An earthen berm. Berms shall be undulating and landscaped and not exceed a height of 3 feet or a slope of 3:1.
- (2) At a minimum, 50% (fifty percent) of the plant material in a parking lot buffer shall be evergreen;
- (3) No more than one row of parking and one (1) one-way drive aisle may be placed between the front façade of a building and the front property line.
- (4) Vehicular sight lines shall be preserved.
- (5) Chain link fencing with wood slats is prohibited in the parking lot buffer.

(c) Landscape islands shall be required to break up large expanses of parking.

- (1) No parking space may be greater than 50 linear feet away from a landscape island containing a canopy or understory tree; and
- (2) Parking islands may be used as part of the requirement to provide a minimum 5% landscape area within and around parking areas.

■ DEFINITIONS

The following definitions are specific to this Overlay District and work with the definitions found in the Unified Development Ordinance. Where there is a conflict between the definitions found within this plan and the UDO, the definitions in this plan will control for all projects proposed within the Medical Center Overlay District if a developer chooses to develop to the standards found within this plan.