

## ARTICLE XIII. SITE DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS

### Section 13.1 Externalities

The following standards shall be applied to all land uses and development activities in Dorchester County as a means of mitigating potentially adverse impacts on adjacent properties.

#### 13.1.1 Vibration

No continuously or impulsively generated vibration shall be created that is perceptible without instruments at the property line, except for those inherent to construction operations.

#### 13.1.2 Noise

(a) No noise above such level shall be generated by a use that is objectionable with respect to intermittence, beat, frequency, or shrillness. To accomplish this, the following maximum standards shall apply.

(1) Industrial, mining, timbering, transportation, and warehousing uses: 90 dB.

(2) General commercial uses, unless specified otherwise: 80 dB.

(3) Professional and personal service, office, medium and high-density residential uses: 70 dB.

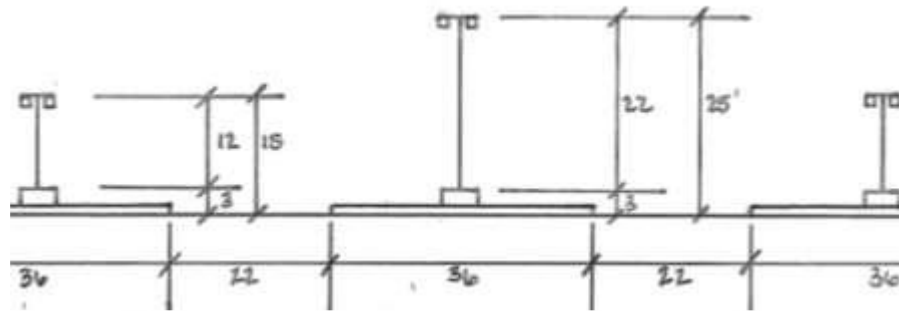
(4) Low-density residential and agricultural uses: 60 dB.

(b) Any activity within each of the general use groups listed above shall not exceed the corresponding maximum noise level, measured in decibels (dB) at the property line. These noise levels apply from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. for continuous noise. Permissible continuous noise levels shall be reduced by ten decibels (10 dB) from 7 p.m. to 7 a.m. Sudden, peak noise levels shall be permissible no more than five decibels (5 dB) higher than those allowed for continuous noise levels.

#### 13.1.3 Site Lighting Standards

The source of exterior lighting shall enhance the overall aesthetics of the site and shall be integrated with the architectural design of the buildings. Exterior site lighting shall be arranged in such a manner to not be detrimental to adjacent properties or the traveling public. The following standards shall apply.

- (a) **Height:** All light sources not attached to an occupiable building shall be elevated no more than fifteen feet (15') above finished grade, provided the following shall be exempt from this requirement:
- (1) Industrial zoning districts;
  - (2) Industrial, freight and outdoor storage, transportation (including airports) and agricultural uses, regardless of district, provided such light sources shall not be located within a distance equal to twice the height of the light source.
  - (3) Street-lighting installed to illuminate rights-of-way per SC Department of Transportation specifications.
  - (4) Athletic courts and fields (e.g., football, tennis), provided that such lights are not illuminated between the hours of midnight and eight (8) a.m.;
  - (5) Any use required by federal or State law to be illuminated such that lighting above fifteen feet (15') would be required.
  - (6) Single-family residential and manufactured home sites.
  - (7) To illuminate a large field for vehicle parking on one parcel, a parking lot including two or more parallel interior drive aisles, wherein the following requirements shall apply.
    - i. Light sources shall not be elevated greater than thirty (30) feet above finished grade, including pedestal; and shall be located only to the interior of the parking lot.
    - ii. Lower fixtures, not to be elevated greater than fifteen (15) feet above finished grade, including pedestal, shall be utilized along the perimeter to illuminate the primary building façade and pedestrian corridors within and around the parking lot.
    - iii. A large field is bounded by buildings, property boundaries or buffering, as applicable, and planting islands capping the ends of rows and parking spaces (“end caps”).



(8) Loading docks may be illuminated by light sources that do not exceed the height of fixtures as approved for the parking lot.

(b) **Intensity:** A light source not provided specifically for the circulation of pedestrians or vehicles between parcels or to and from the public right of way shall not emit light exceeding the following levels as measured at property lines. Lighting of parking areas and drive-in, drive-through, and drive-up services shall comply.

(1) One (1) foot-candle at non-residential property lines and public rights-of-way.

(2) One-quarter (1/4) foot-candle at a property line of a residential lot.

(3) Focused, directed, and undiffused light sources shall not be aimed, directed, or reflected toward a public right of way or another lot.

(4) All light sources and their direct glare shall be shielded so as not to be visible from residential lots.

(5) Light sources shall not be focused or directed into the sky unless required by law, with the following exceptions:

i. Low-voltage/low-intensity architectural and landscaping accent lighting, including that for public monuments;

ii. Illumination of government flags;

iii. Underwater illumination of swimming pools and water features;

iv. Search lights and/or other public safety functions;

(6) Illumination of the surface under fueling station canopies, other vehicle canopies, and other outdoor sales and service areas shall not exceed thirty (32) foot-candles maximum average horizontal illumination under the canopy.

- (7) Cut-off fixtures shall be used for freestanding elevated light sources illuminating vehicle service areas, parking, and circulation. Light sources in fueling station canopies shall be fully recessed.
  
- (c) **Placement:** Freestanding elevated light sources shall be encouraged to locate in landscaped islands and areas behind curbs.

## **Section 13.2 Screening and Buffering Uses**

### **13.2.1 Purpose**

Buffer requirements are established under this Ordinance to screen and mitigate negative externalities and potential nuisances impacting adjacent and nearby uses and properties, such as dirt, litter, noise, glare or danger from fire or explosions, which might otherwise result from locating potentially incompatible uses in close proximity of one another.

### **13.2.2 Use Buffer Types**

The buffers defined in the schedule below correspond to codes found in the buffer matrix on subsequent pages. The developer shall locate the land use of the proposed development within the list at the left of the page and the use category of adjacent properties at the head of the page. The intersecting row and column contain a code that refers to the buffer type(s) described herein. In the event that no land use exists on adjacent properties, the current zoning of that property shall apply.

- (a) Use buffering, when required, shall occur within and between districts, on the property for which buffering is required, along interior property lines and rights of way. Use buffers may partially or wholly overlap required easements on the property, provided the utility to which the easement is granted allows it.
- (b) Buffer yards shall be interrupted only by vehicular and pedestrian access ways in number and width required by the Ordinances of Dorchester County and/or SCDOT, and by rail spurs including areas for loading and unloading operations in conjunction with the rail spurs.
- (c) The buffer yard may be partially or fully composed of existing natural vegetation, provided that no structure is visible from any lot line and that no harvesting, underbrushing, or other clearing activities have taken place in such areas within a specified time frame, which varies by buffer type, prior to development. The natural vegetation shall, alone or supplemented, meet or exceed planting and opacity requirements of the required buffer and shall be free of kudzu.
- (d) In the Schedule, all figures are minimum requirements, and no one species shall be outnumbered by another species in the same classification by a ratio of more than two to one (2:1). (E.g., for Type 'C,' out of 100 large trees, no more than 66 may be pine.)
- (e) Plantings shall meet on-center spacing standards set forth in Section 13.3.6.
- (f) Large maturing trees may substitute for required small maturing trees but not vice versa.

**Documentation:** All required screening and buffering shall be illustrated, consistent in size and scale with the landscaping plan required for preliminary plat approval, on the site plan required for a zoning permit.

<b>Use Buffer Schedule</b>					
<b>Buffer Type</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>A w/Barrier*</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>D</b>
Depth	25'	15'	50'	100'	100'
Maturity of Natural Vegetation	3 years	3 years	4 years	5 years	6 years
<b>Large Trees</b>					
Species (incl. maximum pine)	0	0	1 (1 pine)	2 (1 pine)	3 (1 pine)
Frequency (tree per linear ft.)	-	-	1 per 40'	1 per 20'	1 per 10'
<b>Small Trees</b>					
Species	2	1	2	2	2
Frequency (tree per linear ft.)	1 per 20'	1 per 25'	1 per 16'	1 per 8'	1 per 4'
<b>Large Shrubs</b>					
Species	2 (1 evg.)	1	3 (2 evg.)	4 (2 evg.)	4 (2 evg.)
Frequency (shrub per sq. ft.)	1/100' <sup>2</sup>	1/100' <sup>2</sup>	1/125' <sup>2</sup>	1/150' <sup>2</sup>	1/175' <sup>2</sup>

*Notes: evg. = evergreen. \*See §13.2.5.*

### 13.2.3 Height-to-depth Setbacks (Type “H” buffers)

Type ‘H’ buffers shall require that all structures except fences and walls be set back from all interior lot lines a depth of not less than two times (2:1) the height of the structure. Type ‘H’ buffers do not necessarily require the introduction of vegetation and may contain parking and other accessory uses that meet this standard. Other required buffers may overlap Type ‘H’ buffers; however, this provision in no way exempts the developer from meeting the requirements of other required buffers.

### 13.2.4 Right-of-way Buffering

Bolded, italicized buffer types (e.g., ***BH***) indicated on the buffer matrix require the use also be buffered along the front property line. Front-yard buffer types shall be determined by the zoning district(s) directly across the right of way from the developing use in question. In the event that the buffering conflicts with buffering required in the Transitional Overlay District, the stricter shall apply.

### 13.2.5 Privacy Fencing

A buffer may be reduced in depth if the developer provides privacy fencing meeting the standards set forth herein.

- (a) An opaque privacy fence or wall at least six feet tall (6') shall allow the required use buffer to be reduced by one level. (e.g., such a fence would reduce the requirement of a Type 'C' buffer to Type 'B.')
- (b) An opaque privacy fence or wall at least six feet tall (6') shall allow a Type 'A' use buffer to be reduced by ten feet (10') in depth, resulting in a fifteen-foot (15') deep buffer.
- (c) The fence shall be located at least fifteen feet (15') from all property lines, unless the following conditions are met. The fence may then be located at or near the lot line.
  - (1) There is no easement along the lot line within the buffer.
  - (2) The adjacent property owner consents in writing to the Zoning Administrator to the proposed location of the fence. The type of required use buffer along both sides of the lot line would thus be reduced.

**Section 13.2 Screening and Buffering Uses**

**Buffer Matrix – Adjacent Use Category to Be Buffered**

APA Function Code and Land Use		SFR	Other Res	C	Ind.	Inst	Ag.
<b>1000</b>	<b>Residential</b>						
1100-1	Single-family residence (attached & detached) and duplex	-	-	-	-	-	-
1100-3	Multi-family residence: 3-4 units	A	-	-	-	-	-
1100-5	Multi-family residence: 5-16 units	B	A	-	-	A	A
1100-17	Multi-family residence: 17+ units	BH	BH	A	-	A	<b>BH</b>
1100-M	Manufactured housing community	<b>C</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>B</b>
1200	Congregate housing: 10+ beds	B	A	-	-	-	<b>B</b>
1300	Accommodation services: 10+ beds (e.g., hotel)	BH	BH	A	-	A	AH
1310	Accommodation services: 1-9 beds (e.g., bed-&-breakfast)	A	-	-	-	-	-
<b>2000</b>	<b>General sales, services, rental, &amp; leasing</b>	B	A	-	-	-	A
2000-I	Indoor sales/leasing: more than 10,000 SF GLA	BH	BH	A	-	B	AH
2000-O	Outdoor sales/leasing: >10,000 SF active area	B	B	A	-	B	A
2110	Auto sales, service, rental, & leasing	BH	BH	A	-	B	B
2320	Self-Storage/Mini-warehouse units	BH	BH	A	-	B	B
2500	Food services	B	B	-	-	A	A
<b>3000</b>	<b>Manufacturing and wholesale trade</b>						
3000	Manufacturing	<b>DH</b>	<b>DH</b>	<b>CH</b>	-	<b>DH</b>	<b>DH</b>
3500	Wholesale trade establishment	BH	BH	-	-	BH	AH
3600	Warehouse and storage service	<b>CH</b>	<b>CH</b>	B	-	<b>BH</b>	<b>CH</b>
3610	Junkyard and salvage yard	<b>DH</b>	<b>DH</b>	<b>DH</b>	<b>CH</b>	<b>DH</b>	<b>DH</b>
<b>4000</b>	<b>Transportation, communication, information, &amp; utilities</b>						
4110	Air transportation	<b>DH</b>	<b>DH</b>	<b>DH</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>DH</b>	<b>DH</b>
4120	Freight transportation - road and rail	<b>DH</b>	<b>DH</b>	<b>C</b>	-	<b>D</b>	<b>D</b>
4130	Passenger transportation	<b>B</b>	<b>B</b>	A	-	A	<b>B</b>
4170	Postal service	B	A	A	-	A	A
4200	Communications and information	B	B	-	-	A	A
4242	Library	A	A	-	-	-	-
4300	Utilities and utility services: 3,000 (or less) SF lot area	<b>A</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>A</b>	-	<b>A</b>	<b>A</b>
4300-3	Utilities and utility services: >3,000 SF lot area	<b>BH</b>	<b>BH</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>BH</b>
4340	Sewer, solid waste, and related services: >3,000 SF lot area	<b>DH</b>	<b>DH</b>	<b>DH</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>DH</b>	<b>DH</b>
<b>5000</b>	<b>Arts, entertainment, and recreation</b>	A	A	-	-	-	A
5000-I	A&E, Rec. commercial - Indoor: >10,000 SF GLA	BH	BH	A	-	B	AH
5000-O	A&E, Rec. commercial - Outdoor: >10,000 SF active area	B	B	A	-	B	A
<b>6000</b>	<b>Education, public admin., health care, and other institutions</b>	AH	A	-	-	-	A
6560	Social assistance, welfare, and charitable services	A	A	-	-	-	A
6700	Religious institutions	A	A	-	-	-	A
<b>7000</b>	<b>Construction-related businesses</b>	B	B	A	A	B	B
<b>8000</b>	<b>Mining and extraction establishments</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>C</b>
<b>9000</b>	<b>Agriculture, forestry, fishing, and hunting</b>						
9100	Crop production	<b>A</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>A</b>
9140	Greenhouse, nursery, and floriculture	H	H	-	-	-	-
9200	Support functions for agriculture	B	B	A	-	B	A
9300	Animal production	<b>CH</b>	<b>CH</b>	<b>BH</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>BH</b>	<b>AH</b>
9400	Forestry and logging	<b>B</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>A</b>
9500	Fishing, hunting and trapping, game preserves	-	-	-	-	-	-



### 13.2.6 Screening and buffering certain site features and accessory uses.

Measures shall be taken to mitigate negative externalities generated by utilitarian site conditions and accessory uses specified below. Buffer types prescribed shall be per Section 13.2.2. In the event that buffering standards of site features and accessory uses conflicts with buffering standards for uses, the stricter shall apply.

- (a) **Parking areas:** See Subsection 13.3(c).
- (b) **Drive-throughs and vehicle service areas:** Such with more than one (1) stacking space and/or more than one (1) stall or service point shall be screened from adjacent properties by Type 'A' buffering along all interior lot lines within direct view of such facilities.
- (c) **Loading docks and truck berths:** To screen such from view, opaque walls, wooden screening fences, landscaped berms, and/or evergreen hedges at least eight feet (8') in height shall be required parallel to the loading berths. Screening shall be parallel to and of sufficient length to screen the maximum-size vehicle that can be accommodated on-site (e.g., docks and berths that accommodate a fifty-foot [50'] trailer shall be screened with a fifty-foot [50'] wall parallel to the berth) as well as all stacking spaces.
- (d) **Refuse handling facilities and mechanical equipment:** Opaque walls or wood screening fences, with appropriate necessary door or gate, of not less than the height of the facilities or equipment to be screened, shall be required to screen from view refuse handling facilities and mechanical equipment accessory to structures greater than six thousand square feet (6,000<sup>2</sup>) in gross floor area.
- (e) **Accessory outdoor storage:** Refer to Section 10.4.15 for conditions.
- (f) **Commercial vehicle parking:** Any parking area accommodating four or more (4+) commercial vehicles weighing more than five thousand pounds (5,000 lbs.) overnight shall provide, minimally, Type 'A' buffering along the perimeter of such parking area or at the lot line. Alternatively, these vehicles may be garaged.
- (g) **Animal runs:** Any use, such as stables, breeders, kennels, and the like, providing outdoor roaming areas for a minimum number of animals shall provide Type 'A' buffering along the entire perimeter of the roaming area or at the lot line, unless the property is zoned agricultural, rural, or rural residential. The minimum number of animals for which a roaming area shall be buffered is as follows:

- (1) Five or more (5+) animals weighing at least two hundred pounds (200 lbs.) each,
- (2) Twelve or more animals weighing at least twenty pounds (20 lbs.) each, or
- (3) Twenty or more (20+) animals.

### **13.2.7 Fence and Wall Standards**

Jails, penitentiaries, and the like are exempt from fence and wall standards. Unless required otherwise in this Ordinance, fences or walls shall be permitted in the various districts, subject to the following regulations.

(a) **General Provisions:** For any fence within twenty-five feet (25') of a lot line, the finished side of the fence shall face that lot line.

(b) **Residential uses:**

- (1) Maximum height. Eight feet (8'), except as may be required for screening in the affected district.
- (2) Materials. The preferred materials are wood, wrought iron, brick, or combinations thereof. Chain link is acceptable only in side and rear yards. Barbed and razor wire shall be prohibited.

(c) **Commercial uses:**

- (1) Commercial front-yard fences and walls. The following standards shall apply to fences and walls within required and provided front yards within all commercial districts.
  - a. Maximum height. Eight feet (8').
  - b. Materials. Preferred are brick, stucco, iron, stone, wood, or combinations thereof. Chain-link and exposed concrete shall be prohibited. Barbed and razor wire shall be prohibited.
- (2) The following shall apply to commercial side- and rear-yard fences and walls.
  - a. Maximum height. Ten feet (10').
  - b. Materials. Brick, stucco, iron, stone, wood, concrete, chain-link (Barbed wire atop chain-link is permitted for fences not visible from a public right of way.), or combinations of the above.

(d) **Civic and institutional uses:**

- (1) Maximum height. Eight feet (8’).
- (2) Materials. Preferred are brick, stucco, iron, stone, wood, or combinations thereof. Chain link is acceptable only in side and rear yards. Barbed and razor wire shall be prohibited.

(e) **Agricultural and industrial uses:**

- (1) Maximum height. Ten feet (10’).
- (2) Materials. Brick, stucco, iron, stone, wood, concrete, chain-link (Barbed and razor wire atop chain-link is permitted for fences not visible from a public right of way.), or combinations of the above.

### **Section 13.3 Canopy Enhancement and Landscaping**

#### **13.3.1 Intent**

Landscaping and site enhancement serve to protect and enhance property values; to buffer incompatible land uses from one another; to buffer pedestrians and cyclists from parked and moving motor vehicles; to preserve and enhance wildlife habitat; to control stormwater erosion; to reduce flooding; to provide ambient cooling; to improve air quality; to mitigate negative effects of externalities such as noise, odor, dust, and light glare; and to beautify Dorchester County. The natural landscape and tree canopy in Dorchester County shall be conserved and enhanced to the following ends: to protect and enhance property values; to maintain the pastoral integrity of the landscape of the county; to preserve and enhance wildlife habitat; to control stormwater erosion; to reduce flooding; to provide ambient cooling; to improve air quality; to mitigate negative effects of externalities such as noise, odor, dust, and light glare; and to beautify the county.

#### **13.3.2 Applicability**

Landscaping and canopy enhancement, as provided in this section, shall be introduced during the development of property, before a certificate of occupancy is granted, and maintained thereafter. The provisions set forth herein shall apply to uses as specified in each section.

- (a) **Change, alteration, or extension of use:** Landscaping and canopy enhancement shall be brought into compliance with these regulations whenever a use, structure, or off-street parking area is changed, altered, or enlarged by at least fifty percent (50%) in tax-assessed value, floor area, number of employees, number of dwelling units, seating capacity, or otherwise.

- (b) **Exemptions:** The following parties and uses shall be exempt from these requirements:
- (1) Agriculture including timbering, tree farms, nurseries, and preserves;
  - (2) Site development of a single-family detached dwelling unit as the primary residence;
  - (3) Site development of a single manufactured home as the sole residence occupying the property; and
  - (4) Providers of infrastructure within rights of way and easements.

### 13.3.3 Planning and Documentation

All required canopy enhancement and landscaping shall be illustrated, consistent in size and scale with the landscaping plan required for preliminary plat approval, on the site plan required for a zoning permit.

- (a) **Landscape architecture:** To compliment the elements created by these provisions as well as to beautify the individual site and Dorchester County, landscaping is encouraged to include ornamental walls and fences, perennials, natural living and non-living ground covers, and topography. Landscapers are encouraged to assemble and group required landscape elements and existing vegetation in a complementary manner so as to improve the site as well as the commercial node or neighborhood.
- (b) **Incorporating landscaping, canopy enhancement, and buffering:** These three elements shall be used in concert, the requirements of which shall be construed to overlap. For example, a tree provided for canopy enhancement may also satisfy the requirement of a tree for buffering or landscaping, if appropriately located.

### 13.3.4 Required Canopy Coverage

To reinforce, expand, and enhance the natural environment in Dorchester County, those applying for land development approval shall provide for a minimum of twenty (20) inches of trees per acre.

- (a) Inches of trees required shall be those proposed for planting measured in caliper-inches and/or those existing trees proposed for retention measured in diameter at breast height.
- (b) **Tree locations:** Proposed trees shall be located so as not to be hazardous to other trees, not to obstruct or potentially obstruct vehicular or pedestrian circulation without proper pruning, and not to disrupt or damage any artificial improvements (e.g., buildings, utilities, easements) without proper pruning.
- (c) **On-center spacing:** Proposed small maturing trees for canopy enhancement shall be planted no less than twenty feet on center (20' o.c.). Proposed large maturing trees for canopy enhancement shall be planted no less than thirty feet on center (30' o.c.).
- (d) Existing trees proposed for retention to meet required canopy coverage shall be only those trees four inches in diameter at breast height (4" DBH) or larger; not otherwise protected under Section 12.4 of this Ordinance; and shall not stand in a wetland, buffer, or other area of the site otherwise conserved to meet County, State, or Federal requirements.

### 13.3.5 Required Landscape Elements

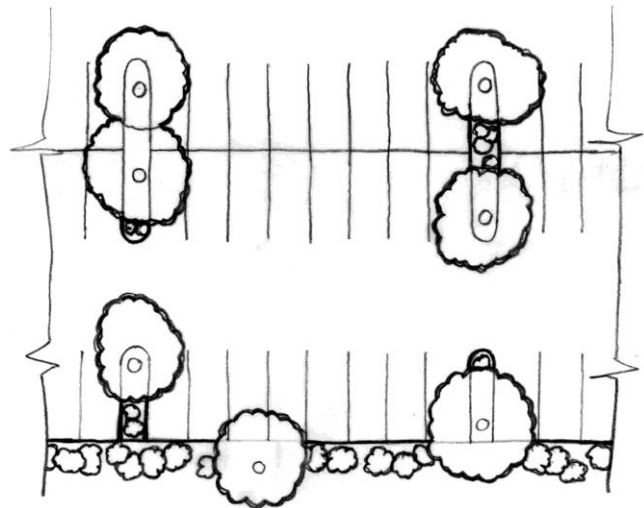
- (a) **Ground cover:** All permeable ground surfaces in environments altered from their natural state and not provided for circulation shall be planted with vegetation or otherwise landscaped to cover open areas of the site in twelve (12) months' time. The developer shall, at a minimum, install a grass lawn (Bermuda, St. Augustine, Centipede, or equivalent).
- (b) **Non-vegetative ground covers:** A two- to four-inch (2-4") layer of chipped wood, bark, pine straw, or mulching materials shall be used only in conjunction with plant materials and shall not stand alone as ground cover. Typically, non-living groundcovers shall be installed on ground that will be shaded by shrubs and planted groundcover at maturity to protect tree roots and to aid soil in moisture retention for such plants. Artificial materials shall not be construed as ground cover.
- (c) **Foundation plantings:** The following plantings shall be provided for structures set back from the right of way by four feet or more (4'+).
  - (1) Shrubs maturing to two feet (2'), min., shall be planted at five feet on center (5' o.c.), max., for the length of the building facing the public right

of way, except where traversed by pedestrian and access, within eight feet (8') of the building façade.

- (2) In the event of a blank wall, shrubs maturing to four feet (4'), min., shall be planted at eight feet on center (8' o.c.), max., and small maturing trees shall be planted within fifteen feet (15') of the building façade for the length of such blank walls facing the public right of way. A blank wall shall be defined as a wall without doors or windows over fifty linear feet (50'). Opaque glass veneers and colonnades shall not be construed as voids or as creating voids.
- (d) **Enhanced Parking Areas:** All parking areas on lots accommodating nine (9) or more vehicles shall install the following site enhancements.
- (1) Any such parking area fronting a public right of way or in direct view of such shall be bordered by shrubs maturing to two feet (2'), min., planted at five feet on center (5' o.c.), maximum, and/or a garden wall or fence three to five feet (3'-5') in height to create an opaque buffer for the length of the parking area between such area and right of way. Larger shrubs, maturing to four feet (4'), min., may be planted at ten feet on center (10' o.c.), max. Trees may substitute for no more than every fifth (5<sup>th</sup>) shrub. Such buffers may be interrupted by clearly defined driveways and walkways.
  - (2) Any such parking area paralleling interior property lines shall be bordered by a hedge of shrubs maturing to four feet (4'), min., in height to create an opaque buffer for the length of the parking area between such area and the property line. Trees may substitute for no more than every fifth (5<sup>th</sup>) shrub. Such buffers may be interrupted by clearly defined driveways and walkways.
  - (3) Except as applicable in Transitional Overlay Districts (§11.2.8), trees shall be installed in the parking area and/or within twenty feet (20') of such, at a density of one per three thousand square feet (3,000' <sup>2</sup>) of parking area and associated circulation. Trees shall be installed such that no more than twelve (12) consecutive parking spaces are provided (i.e. every thirteenth (13<sup>th</sup>) space shall be reserved for trees), and each row shall reserve space for trees. All conserved trees shall be separated from impervious surfaces by three feet (3'), minimum. The Zoning Administrator may amend these requirements only for the preservation of an existing tree by allowing a deviation from every thirteenth space, allowing a credit for an existing tree.
  - (4) Trees may be planted along the perimeter of the parking area within twenty feet (20') of the parking area in order to achieve the required density of trees.
  - (5) These requirements may be satisfied by the retention of natural vegetation adjacent to and within such parking areas.

- (6) All required landscaping adjacent to pavement (parking or roadway) shall be protected with concrete or granite curbs or equivalent barriers (such as railroad ties, half walls, fences, and bollards) when necessary to protect the vegetation from vehicular damage.
- (7) All parking areas on lots accommodating twenty (20) or more vehicles that abuts, is in, or is within fifty feet (50') of a lot occupied by a home in a single-family residential district shall provide Type 'A' buffering between the parking area and that lot. This requirement shall be in addition to standards in (1) through (6) above.

The figure to the right illustrates a possible schematic layout of parking spaces, trees, and shrubs conforming to the regulations of this subsection.



### 13.3.6 Landscaping Performance Standards.

#### (a) Plant selection

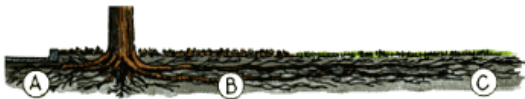
- (1) Plant materials used in conformance with the provisions of this ordinance should be of healthy, of specimen quality, and conform to the American Standard for Nursery Stock, American Standards Institute, Inc., 230 Southern Building, Washington, DC 20005.
- (2) All trees, shrubs, and groundcovers to be planted shall be hardy to botanical zone eight (8). Species chosen shall be suitable to the soil, sun exposure, and hydrological conditions of their proposed locations.
- (3) Indigenous plants: The use of trees, shrubs, and other plant materials is encouraged, where practical, to enhance the groomed landscape and natural environment of Dorchester County. Many native species are more resistant to drought, disease, and pests; are not invasive; support wildlife; and help achieve aesthetic continuity between manicured landscapes and the natural environment.

(4) Trees shall have a trunk diameter (caliper) of at least one inch (1'') and shall be a minimum of six feet (6') in height at the time of planting. Multi-trunk trees (e.g., crape myrtle) shall be at least six feet (6') tall at the time of planting.

(5) Medium to large shrubs shall be at least three-gallon size and at least twenty-four inches (24'') tall at the time of planting.

(b) **Planting Procedures:** All plant materials shall be installed according to the following standards:

(1) All newly planted trees shall be installed in a permeable area of no less than a three-foot radius (3'r) measured from the base of the tree. (Typically, the dripline is used as a guideline for determining the best minimum permeable area for planting.) When installing and conserving trees, the following **root management** considerations should be acknowledged.



(A) Because roots need oxygen, they will not normally grow in compacted, oxygen-poor soil found under paved streets or other impervious surfaces.

(B) The framework of major roots usually lies less than twelve inches (12'') below the surface.

(C) Roots often grow to a diameter one to two times the height of the tree.

(2) Unless otherwise specified, small maturing trees shall be planted ten to thirty feet on center (10'-30' o.c.). Large maturing trees shall be planted twenty to forty feet on center (20'-40' o.c.). A small maturing tree shall be planted twenty to thirty feet on center (20'-30' o.c.) from a large maturing tree. For required buffer yards, small and large maturing trees shall be planted no more than ten feet (10') and twenty feet (20'), respectively, from the buffer-yard perimeter. The landscaper shall give consideration to site conditions (e.g., guarding wetlands and avoiding embankments) in locating trees.

(3) **Screening and Buffering:**

a. Hedges: Shrubs constituting hedges shall be planted at an on-center spacing not more than their maximum expected spread at maturity or eight feet (8'), whichever is less.

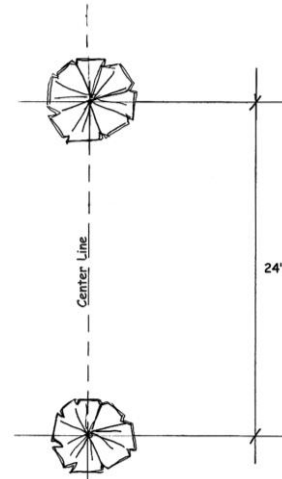
b. Shrubs constituting buffer yards shall be planted at an on-center spacing not more than eight feet (8') parallel to the lot line to be buffered and not more than sixteen feet (16'). Such shall be planted at least eight feet, on center (8' o.c.), from young trees in buffer yards.



- c. The distance from lot lines that trees and shrubs required for buffer yards shall at least be half the on-center spacing for that plant.

(4) **Vegetative ground covers** include low-growing, living plant materials such as perennials, grass, ivy, and similar plants. In order to accomplish ninety percent coverage of bare soil by groundcover within three years, spacing for groundcover shall be as follows:

- a. Two-and-a-half-inch (2 ½'') pots: twelve inches on center (12'' o.c.).
- b. Four-inch (4'') pots: eighteen inches on center (18'' o.c.).
- c. One-gallon pots: twenty-four inches on center (24'' o.c.).



(5) On-center spacing requirements may be reduced by the Zoning Administrator to allow for groupings, provided that the total number of plants introduced is not reduced; that resultant voids in the landscape are filled with foliage of existing trees and shrubs, ornamental grasses or other smaller plants, or other appropriate landscape elements, as determined and documented by a qualified professional; and that the intent of the Ordinance is upheld.

### 13.3.7 Landscape Maintenance Requirements and Guidelines

(a) All newly planted vegetative material shall be guaranteed to meet *American Standards for Nursery Stock* at time of planting and for one year thereafter. Maintenance and replacement of damaged, destroyed, or dead plant materials shall be the responsibility of the property owner.

(b) Dead, diseased, or stolen plants or those irreversibly damaged shall be replaced within thirty (30) days with the species indicated on the approved landscape plan. If expiration of such plants is created by unsuitable conditions for such species, those administering maintenance shall replace such plants with vegetation more suited to the location, provided that such maintains the integrity of the original landscape plan and the intent of this Ordinance.



(c) Trees and shrubs should be protected against damage incurred with lawn mowers and garden

equipment. Keeping grassed areas away from tree trunks with the use of mulch or similar material is recommended.

(e) Pruning: Necessary pruning should be started early and kept up at regular intervals. Trees should be pruned and shaped to avoid splitting later in life. Broken tops and branches shall be removed as soon as possible to avoid injury. Broken, weak, or diseased branches should be removed first, dead branches second, and healthy branches last. The following provisions are guidelines only. Adherence is encouraged by Dorchester County but not enforced.

(1) Proper pruning can remove excessive growth without the problems created by topping. “Topping”, i.e. reducing the crown of a tree to a uniform height, may result in ugly, bushy, weakly attached limbs growing back, often higher than the original branches. Many arborists identify topping as the biggest threat to health of a tree.

(2) Removal of more than one-third (1/3) of the crown of a tree could seriously compromise the health and structural integrity of a tree. Where possible, side branches that form angles one-third off vertical (10:00 or 2:00 positions) are encouraged. Ideally, main side branches should be no more than two-thirds (2/3) the diameter of the trunk.

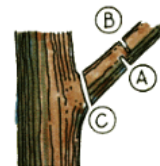
(3) “Limbing up,” or removing low branches of a tree for views or access, shall be limited to ten feet (10’) or one-third of the height of the tree, whichever is less. To remove such branches, cut them back to the trunk to avoid leaving stubs, as depicted.

(4) Pruning procedures – large limbs:

(A) Make partial cut from beneath.

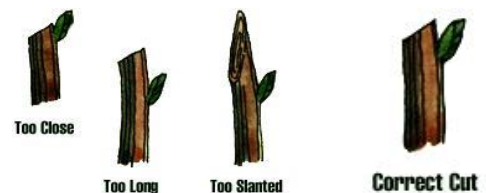
(B) Make a second cut from above several inches out, and allow the limb to fall.

(C) Complete the job with a final cut just outside the branch collar.



(5) Pruning small branches:

Make a sharp clean cut just beyond a lateral bud or other branch.



**Section 13.4 Parking Requirements**

**13.4.1 Off Street Parking Schedule, by Use**

- (a) Areas suitable for parking or storing automobiles in off-street locations shall hereafter be required for all new structures and uses and all expansion or alteration of uses that would effect an increase of ten (10) or more parking spaces.
- (b) Off-street parking spaces shall be provided and maintained in number according to the following.

<b>Residential Uses</b>	<b>Minimum Number of Required Parking Spaces</b>
Dwelling Units	Two (2) spaces for each dwelling unit.
Tourist homes, motels and hotels, assisted living facilities	One (1) space for each accommodation plus one (1) space for each (3) employees.
Boarding houses, dormitories, and congregate care facilities	One (1) space per three (3) beds plus one (1) per three (3) employees.

<b>Public/Semi-public Uses</b>	<b>Minimum Number of Required Parking Spaces</b>
Hospitals and clinics	One (1) space for each two (2) beds plus one (1) space for each staff and visiting doctor plus one (1) space for each four (4) employees, including nurses, at maximum employment on a single shift.
Places of indoor or outdoor public assembly with fixed seats, including religious institutions, trade organizations, and private clubs.	One (1) space for each two (2) staff members or employees plus one (1) space for every five (5) seats in the principal assembly room or area.
Places of assembly without fixed seats	One (1) space for each one hundred fifty square feet (150 SF) of principle assembly area.
Community center	One (1) space per two hundred fifty SF (250' <sup>2</sup> ).
Recreation – no spectators: individual and tandem sports	Two (2) spaces per court, pool table, and the like plus one (1) space per employee.
Bowling	Four (4) spaces per green or lane plus one (1) space per employee.

<b>Public/Semi-public Uses</b>	<b>Minimum Number of Required Parking Spaces</b>
Golf	One (1) space per employee plus three (3) spaces per stroke over two (2) per hole (e.g., 54 spaces for a par-3 course with 18 holes, 108 spaces for a par-72 course).
Day care, nursery	One (1) space per eight (8) attendees, which may be substituted by drive-through service and stacking spaces, per §13.4.4, plus one (1) space per employee.
Schools – kindergartens, elementary and junior high	One (1) space for each classroom and administrative office.
Schools – senior high	One (1) space for each classroom and administrative office plus, for public assembly areas, including gymnasias and auditoria, one (1) space for each twenty (20) seats or one (1) space per four hundred (400) square feet, whichever is greater.
Adult education – public or private	One (1) space per three (3) students plus one (1) per employee and instructor.
Transportation, utility, and safety facilities	One (1) per two (2) employees.
Library, museum, and archival facility	One (1) space for each three hundred (300) square feet of gross floor space.

<b>Office/Commercial Uses</b>	<b>Minimum Number of Required Parking Spaces</b>
Business, financial, professional, administrative, communications, and information offices and services	One (1) per three hundred square feet (300 <sup>2</sup> ) of gross leasable area, unless noted otherwise.
Offices with heavy visitation, including government services	One (1) per two hundred square feet (200 <sup>2</sup> ) of gross floor area.
Doctors' and Dentists' Offices	Five (5) spaces per doctor or dentist.
General retail	One (1) per two hundred square feet (200 <sup>2</sup> ) of gross leasable area, unless noted otherwise.
Retail – durable goods only	One (1) per three hundred square feet (300 <sup>2</sup> ) of gross leasable area.

Car sales, house and truck trailer sales, outdoor equipment and machinery sales, commercial nurseries	Four (4) spaces for each sales person plus one (1) for each two (2) other employees.
Marinas	Two (2) spaces for each boat storage facility.
Funeral Homes	One (1) space for each four (4) seating accommodations plus one (1) space for each two (2) employees on shift of greatest employment.
Automobile Service Stations	Two (2) spaces for each gasoline pump plus three (3) spaces for each grease rack or wash rack.
Restaurant, tavern	One (1) space per one hundred SF (100' <sup>2</sup> ) of patron area.
Restaurant – fast food	One (1) space per seventy-five SF (75' <sup>2</sup> ) of seating patron.

**Wholesale/Industrial Uses      Minimum Number of Required Parking Spaces**

Wholesaling and industrial uses including lumber, brick, coal, junk and supply yards	One (1) space for each two (2) employees at maximum employment on a single shift plus one (1) space for each company vehicle operating from the premises.
Air, bus or water ports or terminals	One (1) space for each two (2) employees at maximum employment on a single shift plus one (1) space for each company vehicle operating from the premises plus one per four hundred SF (400' <sup>2</sup> ) of public area or at least twenty-five (25) spaces per commercial transport vehicle departing the facility.

- (c) When application of the above requirements result in a fractional space requirement, the next larger requirement shall prevail.
- (d) If a specific use is not covered by these requirements, the following list of alternatives shall be consulted.
  - (1) Provided the use is not open to, patronized by, or visited by the general public, the requirement shall be one (1) space per employee in a single shift.

- (2) The Zoning Administrator may require parking spaces in number indicated in data regarding trip- and parking-generation manuals reported by the Institute of Traffic Engineers.
- (3) Otherwise, the requirements of the most closely related use shall govern.
- (e) The South Carolina Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation Board for Barrier-free Design regulations contain requirements for the provisions of parking for the handicapped, and these regulations shall be considered a part of this Ordinance.

#### **13.4.2 Potential Reductions in Minimum Number of Parking Spaces**

- (a) **Common Off-street Parking Areas:** A single use encompassing more than one activity or two more principal uses whether located on the same or separate lots, may utilize a common area in order to comply with off-street requirements, provided that the total number of individual spaces available in such common area is not less than ninety percent (90%) of the sum of the spaces required for the individual uses as separately computed in accordance with the provisions of Section 13.4.1 and provided that the owner of said lot relinquishes his development rights over the property until such time as parking space is provided elsewhere.
- (b) **Certain Mixed-use Developments:** Parking requirements for accessory uses open to the general public may be reduced twenty percent (20%).
- (c) **Joint Use of Parking Spaces:** The number of parking spaces required for churches, theaters, or assembly halls, whose peak attendance will be at night or on Sundays, may be satisfied by those which are partially or wholly assigned to another use which will be closed at night and on Sundays, provided that such parking shall be located within four hundred feet (400') of the main entrance to the proposed principle uses. Such shall be approved by the Zoning Administrator. The number of parking spaces required for churches, theaters, assembly halls, and the like may be reduced up to ninety percent (90%), provided that availability of off-site parking is documented. Such documentation shall be recordation of an easement granting parking rights to the aforementioned uses from the owner of a parking lot serving a business establishment closed nights and Sundays.
- (d) **Location of Parking on Other Property:** If the required automobile parking space cannot reasonably be provided on the same lot on which the principal use is conducted, such spaces may be provided on other off-street property provided all such property used for parking lies within four hundred (400) feet of the main entrance to such principal use. Such shall be approved by the Zoning Administrator. Such automobile parking space shall be identified on appropriate signage as associated with the principal use, specified as such as an easement to be recorded with the Office of the Register of Mesne Conveyance

for the site on which the parking space is located, and shall not thereafter be reduced or encroached upon in any manner.

- (e) **On-street Parking:** Off-street parking requirements may be supplanted by on-street parking in a planned development district, if approved by the Planning Commission.
- (f) **Pedestrian-friendly Development:** The number may be reduced by twenty percent (20%) if the development is designed to accommodate pedestrians and residents that may visit the development from off-site. The following conditions shall apply:
  - (1) Uses eligible shall be those offering local services directly to the community, such as personal goods and services consumed on-site or of such sizes and weights easily carried.
  - (2) The use eligible shall not exceed ten thousand SF (10,000'<sup>2</sup>) in gross floor area and shall not provide outdoor storage exceeding ten percent (10%) of gross floor area or outdoor sales exceeding one thousand SF (1,000'<sup>2</sup>) in area.
  - (3) The use shall not provide a front yard and/or buffer more than twenty feet (20') deeper than that required by this Ordinance.
  - (4) Parking area and drive-through service shall not be located in any required or provided front yard and not within ten feet (10') of such.
  - (5) The primary entrance to the building of each use to be eligible shall be accessible by a hardscaped walkway at least five feet (5') wide. The walkway shall run continuously across the width of the property (roughly parallel to the public right-of-way) and shall either connect to the existing walkway of adjacent lots or stub out at lot lines so as to be extended in the same manner.

### 13.4.3 Off-Street Loading and Unloading Spaces

Every lot on which a business, trade, industry, multi-family residential use or manufactured housing community containing ten (10) or more units is hereafter established shall provide space as indicated herein for the loading and unloading of vehicles on-site that has convenient access to public rights-of-way. Such space shall have access to an alley or, if there is no alley, to a street. For the purpose of this section, an off-street loading space shall have minimum dimensions of twelve (12) feet by forty (40) feet and shall be clear and free of obstructions at all times. Required space shall be considered as follows:

- (a) **Retail Business:** One (1) space for each five thousand (5,000) square feet of gross floor space.

- (b) **Transportation, port, wholesale, industrial, governmental and institutional uses, including all public assembly places, hospitals and educational institutions, public or private outdoor and indoor recreational areas or activities:** One (1) space for the first twenty-five thousand (25,000) square feet of total floor area. For anything in excess of 25,000 square feet, such uses shall provide loading spaces according to the following schedule:

**Gross Floor Area (in Square Feet)      Number of Spaces Required**

25,001-99,999	2
100,000-159,999	3
160,000-239,999	4
240,000+	1 additional space per 100,000 square feet of floor area or fraction thereof

- (c) Any multi-family residential use or mobile home park consisting of ten (10) or more dwelling units: one (1) space.
- (d) The Zoning Administrator or the Planning Commission may authorize the provision of loading spaces in addition to the requirements set forth above, provided the applicant shows just cause via documentation of like uses and shows that the provision of such shall not negatively impact adjacent properties, the zoning district, or the street network or otherwise be detrimental to the health, safety, or general welfare of the county.
- (e) All uses, whether specified in this Ordinance or not, shall provide off-street loading areas sufficient for their requirements. Such space shall be adequate so that no vehicle being loaded or unloaded in connection with normal operations shall stand in or project into a public street, walk, alley or way.
- (f) Required off-street loading and unloading areas shall in all cases be located on the same lot or parcel of land as the structure they are intended to serve. In no case shall the required off-street loading space be considered as part of the area provided to satisfy off-street parking requirements as listed herein.

**13.4.4 Stacking Space Requirements**

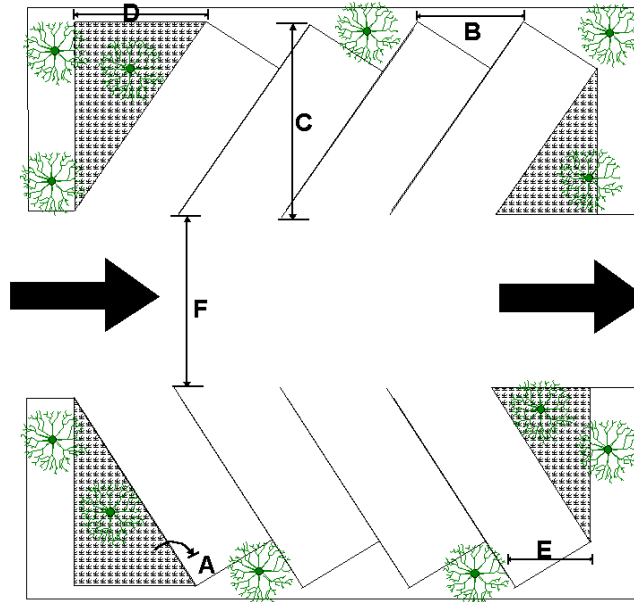
- (a) Stacking spaces shall be provided to prevent vehicles from stopping in the public right of way, to maintain order in on-site parking lots, to protect pedestrians walking along public sidewalks and approaching entry doors to structures, and to more easily enable directors of traffic, including police, to protect the health, safety, and general welfare of the public.
- (b) Uses specified in the following table that provide drive-through service are accompanied by the number of stacking spaces per point of service that shall be required for each use. Such spaces shall be arranged in a linear fashion, beginning twelve feet (12') behind the point of service, as measured along the





### 13.4.5 Parking Space Area Requirements

- (a) Diagonal/angled and perpendicular parking areas and space sizes shall conform to the following table of minimum values.



#### PARKING DIMENSIONAL STANDARDS

A Parking Angle (in degrees)	B Curb Length (in feet)	C Stall Depth (in feet)	D Starting Loss (in feet)	E Last Car Requirement (in feet)	F Aisle Width	
					One- way	Two- way
30°	18'	16'	30'	4'	12'	20'
45°	12'	18'	20'	6'	14'	20'
60°	10'	19'	12'	8'	18'	22'
90°	9'	18'	0'	9'	20'	22'

- (b) Parallel parking spaces shall be eighteen to twenty-five feet (18'-25') in length. Lane widths shall be seven to eight feet (7'-8'). Overall increase in pavement width for roads with parallel parking shall be seven feet (7') per parking aisle.

### 13.4.6 Parking Design and Improvements Standards

- (a) **Demarcating Parking Areas:** All parking areas with six (6) or more spaces shall be demarcated such that parking spaces and circulation areas are readily apparent to motorists using the parking area, as follows.

- (1) Hardscape parking areas (asphalt, blacktop, concrete, etc.) shall have hard, linear, concise edges or concrete (or similar) curbing and painted striping similar to those applied by SCDOT. Required painting includes white stripes delineating all parking spaces, yellow centerlines for two-way driveways longer than fifty feet (50'), and proper marking and signage or "no-parking" areas, handicap parking spaces, and fire lanes, as may be required in this Ordinance or other county, state, or federal standards.
  - (2) Other parking areas (grass-crete, gravel, oyster shells, et al) shall have clearly defined linear edges, containing the surfacing material where necessary. Parking spaces shall have wheel stops at the head of each space. Options include railroad ties and concrete bumpers.
- (b) The standards of (1) and (2) above may be waived by the Zoning Administrator in rural zoning districts, where traffic is substantially lighter, provided that adequate alternative measures are taken to mitigate potential safety hazards to motorists and pedestrians.
- (c) The County Public Works Director, Zoning Administrator and/or Planning Commission may allow alternative or require additional standards for directional indication, wheel stops, demarcation or other parking safety aspects as needed to provide for motorist and pedestrian safety and welfare in parking areas.

#### **13.4.7 Use of Public Rights-of-Way for Maneuvering**

When determining parking area requirements for individual uses, portions of the public rights-of-way on local streets may be considered as permissible for maneuvering incidental to parking. On arterial and collector streets, parking facilities shall provide space outside the public rights-of-way for maneuvering incidental parking.

#### **13.4.8 Parking Access in Residential Districts**

Access for parking areas on lots accommodating twenty (20) or more vehicles shall not be provided directly across the street from a single-family residential lot in a single-family residential district unless no other alternative exists.

#### **13.4.9 Entrance and Exit Points and Driveways**

Parking and Driveway Performance Standards: Parking lots and driveways accessing parking lots from rights-of-way shall conform to the widths, separations, and other design regulations set forth in the design standards of this Ordinance, as found in Section 20.3.

#### **13.4.10 Surfacing Requirements and Drainage**

All parking areas shall be surfaced in accordance with the improvements and construction standards, as found in Section 21.3. Off-street parking areas for six (6) or more vehicles and maneuvering areas and passageways established in connection with such facilities shall be constructed of all-weather surfaces with adequate drainage in accordance with the specifications for parking areas contained in the Dorchester County Land Development Regulations and other applicable County ordinances. The County Public Works Director will promote the use of materials and site designs that will minimize the creation of drainage problems.

### **Section 13.5 Sign Regulations**

**13.5.1** The intent of this section is to provide comprehensive regulation of signage within the County of Dorchester so as to eliminate confusing, distracting and unsafe signs, assure efficient transfer of information and enhance the visual environment of the County. It is therefore declared that the regulation of signs within the County of Dorchester is necessary and in the public interest:

- (a) To protect property values;
- (b) To promote and aid the economy of the County;
- (c) To protect the general public from damage or injury caused by or partially attributable to distraction and obstruction resultant from improperly designed or situated signs;
- (d) To provide a pleasing environment and appearance to the residents of the County;
- (e) To allow signs appropriate to the planned character of each zoning district;
- (f) To promote public safety, welfare and convenience; and
- (g) To free highway travelers from annoyance, prevent obstructions of traffic, and enhance the safety of travelers.

#### **13.5.2 Scope of Regulations**

- (a) No sign may be erected within the County of Dorchester except in accordance with the provisions of this Ordinance and the current building, electrical, fire prevention, and all other applicable code(s), as adopted by the County.

- (b) Nothing herein shall be construed in any way to imply, prohibit or relieve any party of this Ordinance of any duties, responsibilities or obligations evolved upon it or them by virtue of the terms of the Highway Advertising Control Act, as codified by Section 57-25-10 through and including 57-25-220 of the Code of Public Laws of South Carolina (1976) as amended.

### **13.5.3 General Provisions and Requirements**

- (a) No sign, other than those specifically exempted under Section 13.5.5 may be erected, altered, moved or repaired within the County of Dorchester until a Sign Permit has been issued by the Zoning Administrator of Dorchester County under procedures of Section 13.5.6. These requirements will be enforced in all zoning districts.

- (b) **County serial tags required for signs:**

- (1) Serial tags shall be attached to every permitted sign, other than those exempted under Section 13.5.5, immediately upon completion of construction and/or erection of the sign. Such tags shall remain the property of Dorchester County and shall not be removed without the expressed permission of the Zoning Administrator of Dorchester County or his designated agent.
- (2) It shall be the responsibility of the sign owner to attach and replace such serial tags by the most appropriate means of permanent attachment. Tags shall be attached not less than two (2') feet above and not more than five (5') feet above finished grade and shall be in clear view for inspection.
- (3) Tags shall be maintained by the sign owner in a legible condition and firmly attached to the sign. The sign owner shall request a replacement serial tag from the Zoning Administrator or his designated agent should a serial tag become lost, defaced or illegible.
- (4) Fees to obtain a sign serial tag shall be as specified under the uniform fee schedule for sign permits provided in Ordinance 89-02 and shall be paid prior to issue of the serial tag.
- (5) Any sign that does not have serial tags attached is declared to be non-conforming and must be made to conform to the serial tag attachment requirement within ninety (90) calendar days from the effective date of this Ordinance or shall be subject to penalties provided herein.

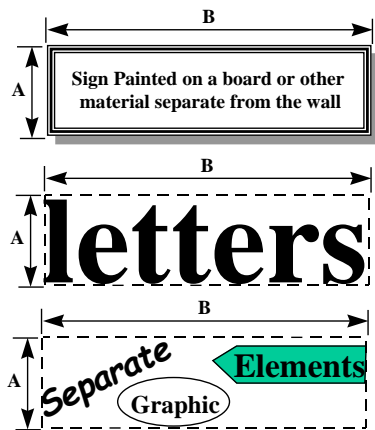
- (c) **Signs to be maintained:**

- (1) Signs shall be constructed of durable materials, maintained in good condition, and not be permitted to become dilapidated or to become hazardous to the health, safety, or general welfare of the community. A

sign shall be deemed to be in disrepair when is damaged or peeling to the extent that five percent (5%) of sign area becomes marred.

- (2) The sign owner shall be responsible to maintain the sign in good repair. Signs in disrepair shall be repaired, renovated or removed from the premises by its owner within thirty (30) calendar days following notification by the Zoning Administrator that the sign is deemed in disrepair. The Zoning Administrator shall reduce the allowed period where public safety is deemed to be threatened.

**(d) Measuring procedures for signage:**



- (1) Sign height shall be measured from the natural grade to the uppermost part of the sign's copy, structure, or other element projecting from the sign or its supporting structure and shall not be measured from the top of an earth berm or support foundation.
- (2) The face or area of a sign shall be measured to include the entire sign, including framing. When a sign consists of letters or forms placed directly on a wall, building surface, awning or marquee, or against open air as when raised above a marquee, there being no background to the letters or forms save the wall, the surface itself, or open air, the area of the sign shall be that of the smallest parallelogram in which all the lettering and forms of the signage can be enclosed.

**(e) Illumination:** If illuminated, signs shall only be illuminated by the following means. [Signs to be situated within a Transitional Overlay District (TOD), illumination shall comply with and shall not exceed the limits provided in Article XI.2]

- (1) Constant, steady, stationary exterior light of reasonable intensity, shielded against adverse radiation of light and directed solely at the sign, shall not exceed five thousand (5,000) lumens per source and shall not illuminate the sign at a level greater than sixty (60) foot-candles at any point in the sign face. Light sources elevated twenty-five feet (25') or more shall be allowed no more than 25,000 lumens per source, measuring no greater than eighty (80) foot-candles at the sign face.
- (2) Low-level interior backlighting shall not illuminate the sign at a level exceeding forty (40) foot-candles in lettering and logos and twenty (20) foot-candles in the background of the sign face. Light sources elevated more than forty feet (40') shall be allowed no more than sixty (60) foot-candles at the sign face.

- (3) Light sources to illuminate signs will be shielded from all adjacent residential buildings and all streets and shall not be of such brightness as to cause glare hazardous to pedestrians or automobile drivers or so as to create a nuisance to residential districts.
- (4) Signs shall not have light-reflective backgrounds but may use reflecting lettering.
- (5) No illuminated sign shall be located within seventy-five feet (75') of a residential district or use, unless such use is an accessory use in a mixed-use development.

#### **13.5.4 Prohibited Signs**

The following signs are prohibited:

- (a) Snipe Signs, such as temporary wire-framed and wood-staked signs affixed into the ground and signs painted on or attached to trees, rocks or other natural features, telephone or utility poles;
- (b) Sandwich board and pedestal signs, except as may be specifically authorized elsewhere in this Ordinance;
- (c) Signs having flashing or animated illumination, or illumination which appears to be animated, excluding time/date/temperature signs and vertical rotating red, white, and blue striped poles denoting barber shops;
- (d) Signs and advertising devices mounted on roof of or towed behind a vehicle parked in view of the public right-of-way;
- (e) Signs which emit sound, odor, or matter;
- (f) Signs with rotating or flashing lights or the words “stop,” “danger,” or any other word, phrase, symbol, character, or illumination that could be construed as an official warning, a traffic safety device, or a public safety vehicle by a motorist;
- (g) Signs in rights-of-way and utilities and maintenance easements, other than signage meeting the specifications of SCDOT or Dorchester County for directing, informing, or warning travelers on State and County roads;
- (h) Signs in marshes and wetlands and required buffers thereof;
- (i) Signs which obstruct free egress/ingress from a door, window, fire escape or other exit-way required by current building and fire codes;

- (j) Signs which may obstruct the view of a vehicle operator;
- (k) Signs which constitute a threat to public safety;
- (l) Signs that display lewd, indecent, or offensive messages, graphics, or representations;
- (m) Abandoned or dilapidated signs;
- (n) Any sign erected without a building permit and/or without a Dorchester County serial I.D. tag attached; and
- (o) Off-site signs, except as set forth in 13.5.7: Billboards, signs that identify or advertise products or services not available at the site on which the sign is located.

### **13.5.5 Exempted Signs**

- (a) Fluttering signs (e.g., flags, pennants, banners, and balloons) to the extent that such signs do not constitute a public nuisance or hazard.
- (b) Political candidacy signs, provided they are removed within one (1) week after the election in which the candidate ran.
- (c) Official notices posted by the courts or other public agencies.
- (d) Historical plaques or official markers.
- (e) Traffic directional, warning or informational signs erected on authority of a public agency.
- (f) Signs attached to dispensers of primary products, such as gasoline pumps, where such information is required by law, and signs providing retail pricing of bulk petroleum products.
- (g) For a Single Family Residential lot or unit, one (1) real estate sign not exceeding five (5) SF in sign area per face and not more than ten (10) SF in total area per roadway frontage, provided that such signs shall be removed by the sign owner within seven (7) working days of the rental, sale or lease of the property.
- (h) Signs and accompanying decorations acknowledging official national, state, and local holidays.

### **13.5.6 Sign Permits**

Any person or entity wishing to erect, install and/or construct signage permitted under this ordinance shall make application for a sign permit. All signs provided



for hereafter shall require a sign permit, unless otherwise noted. Such application shall be accompanied by the following:

- (a) Photograph or drawing which accurately represents the display copy of the proposed sign.
- (b) Land plat showing the specific location of each existing sign and each proposed sign on the applicable site relative to all property lines, easements and/or rights-of-way, including those of above-ground public utilities.
- (c) The dimensions of each existing and/or proposed sign, including the number of sign faces, and the height and square footage of each sign and sign face.
- (d) The amount of floor space at the site where the sign(s) is(are) proposed to be placed on the facade of a building.
- (e) If the sign(s) is(are) proposed to be placed on the facade of a building, the percentage of the facade which is to be covered by the sign.
- (f) For exterior signage lighting, the output, in lumens, of each light source.
- (g) The total cost of each proposed sign, including cost of the installation.

### **13.5.7 Permitted Signs**

#### **(a) General Provisions for Freestanding Signs**

- (1) A sign which would otherwise qualify as a portable sign may be used as a permitted freestanding sign, provided that such sign is anchored so as not to become airborne and is grounded and wired as a permanent sign under applicable code regulations adopted by Dorchester County.
- (2) A sign which would otherwise qualify as a sandwich board sign may be utilized as a freestanding sign provided such sign is properly anchored so as not to become airborne and is not located within a right-of-way.
- (3) Pole and pylon signs shall have a minimum clearance of 8'-0" from finished grade to the underside of the sign and its lowest horizontal component for head clearance and for drivers to observe activity and/or traffic as may be the case.
- (4) Freestanding signs shall be set back one foot (1') from all lot lines for every one foot (1') in height.
- (5) A monument sign shall be exempt from this requirement, provided such is less than six feet (6') in height, is mounted on a base with a footprint larger than the shadow of the sign (its area measured from overhead), is situated

perpendicular to the public right-of-way, and is complemented by small shrubs and/or other ornamental plantings, of sixty percent (60%) opacity, surrounding the base.

- (6) A billboard shall be exempt from this requirement, provided it meets SCDOT standards regarding placement.

**(b) Freestanding Signs in Non-residential Developments:** The area and quantity of freestanding signs and faces thereof for vehicular entrances to commercial, industrial, or office developments shall conform to the following standards. Entrances eligible for signage described in this subsection shall not include those designed for loading and unloading commercial vehicles in commercial or office developments. Vehicular entrances are those curb cuts and driveways serving the development from the public right of way.

- (1) Major commercial/industrial/office developments which contain equal to or more than one hundred thousand (100,000) square feet (herein after abbreviated SF) of floor space shall be permitted one freestanding sign per vehicular entrance but no more than two (2) such signs for the development. Such signs shall have no more than one hundred fifty (150) SF of sign face divided among not more than four (4) sign faces. No single sign face shall exceed seventy-five (75) SF.
- (2) Secondary commercial/industrial/office developments which contain more than forty thousand (40,000) SF, but less than one hundred thousand (100,000) SF of floor space shall be permitted one (1) freestanding sign per vehicular entrance but no more than two (2) such signs per development. Said signs shall not have more than one hundred (100) SF of sign face divided among not more than four (4) sign faces. No single sign face shall exceed fifty (50) SF in area.
- (3) Minor commercial/industrial/office developments of forty thousand (40,000) SF or less of floor space shall be permitted one (1) freestanding sign per vehicular entrance, but not more than two (2) per development. Said signs shall not have more than hundred (100) SF of sign face per sign divided among not more than four (4) sign faces. No single sign face shall exceed fifty (50) SF.
- (4) For multi-unit developments, those having several retail office suites, industrial outlets or businesses, maximum signage area allowed may be increased by five (5) SF for each such separate business or outlet located therein, provided such addition may not exceed the additional allowance of more than fifty (50) SF.
- (5) Freestanding signs provided for in this subsection shall conform to the following height limitations:

DEVELOPMENT	NUMBER OF SIGNS	MAXIMUM HEIGHT
100,000 sq. ft. or more	1	25 ft.
	2 or more	12 ft.
>40,000 sq. ft. but <100,000	1	20 ft.
	2 or more	12 ft.
40,000 sq. ft. or less	1	16 ft.
	2 or more	12 ft.

(6) All signs located within the TOD shall comply with the following standards:

Maximum Sign Face Area (square feet) [1]	50
Maximum Sign Height (feet) [2]	10
Maximum number of signs per major road	1
Internal Illumination Allowed.	
Flashing or moving signs not allowed;	
*Save and except signs may indicate by Movement, time, date and temperature.*	

[1] A maximum of two (2) sign faces shall be allowed per sign

[2] Freestanding signs shall be monument or pedestal type.

(c) **Businesses at Expressway Interchanges:** Businesses located at expressway interchanges which serve the traveling public, including businesses offering food, gasoline, vehicle repair and lodging, shall be permitted to erect one freestanding sign conforming to the following provisions on their property in place of one freestanding sign permitted by this chapter for vehicular entrances.

(1) Such a sign shall be located within a one-thousand-foot (1,000') radius drawn from the center of intersecting highways, located at the intersection of the centerlines of public rights-of-way. The business may be located on either side of the highway.

(2) Such a sign shall be oriented to the interstate highway and shall not exceed a total of three hundred (300) square feet in total sign area (one hundred fifty SF {150'<sup>2</sup>} per face). The height of such sign shall not exceed fifty (50') above the highest elevation of the interchange.

(d) **Institutional Signs in Residential Districts**

(1) Institutional signs shall be no more than six (6) feet in height and each sign face shall not exceed twenty-four (24) SF.

- (2) There shall be no more than one (1) sign per institutional use per entrance; provided, however, each separate building shall be allowed one (1) additional sign no more than four feet in height and twelve (12) sq. ft. in signage area.

**(e) Residential and Multi-family Development Identification**

- (1) Residential developments may have two (2) signs per entrance which shall not exceed six (6) feet in height and twenty-four (24) SF in sign face area identifying the development by name.
- (2) Multi-family developments may have two (2) signs per entrance, identifying the development by name. Maximum height and width of sign and structure and total signage area shall be as follows:

<b>MAX. HEIGHT</b>	<b>MAX. WIDTH</b>	<b>MAX. SIGN AREA</b>	<b>TYPE OF ROADWAY FRONTED</b>
6 feet	9 feet	36 SF	Less than four (4) traffic lanes wide
8 feet	12 feet	48 SF	Four (4) or more lanes and 45 mph or less
10 feet	15 feet	60 SF	Four (4) or more lanes and more than 45 mph

**(f) Wall and Fence Signs**

- (1) Signs attached to garden walls, retaining walls, or fences shall be considered to be freestanding signs and shall be limited to two (2) signs per entrance. No other freestanding signs shall be erected in addition to wall or fence signs.
- (2) The sign face of a wall or fence sign shall not exceed twenty four (24) sq. ft. in area, provided that four (4) additional sq. ft. of wall or fence sign is allowed where more than one business or use occupies the same building.

**(g) Menu Boards, Kiosks and Directory Signs:** Multiple-use shopping, business, office and/or professional centers and developments may have additional freestanding directory signs or kiosks.

- (1) Fast-food restaurants may have additional freestanding menu boards.
- (2) The area of a menu board, directory sign or kiosk shall be contained within the limits for total freestanding signage area at such centers and developments and shall not exceed eight (8) feet in height and four feet (4') in width.

- (3) These additional freestanding signs shall be to the interior of the lot, addressing those circulating the lot, not traveling the public right-of-way, and shall be for informational purposes only.

**(h) Direction or Warning Signs – Non-governmental**

- (1) On-premise signs shall not exceed six (6) SF per sign face nor more than two (2) sign faces and shall not be more than four (4) feet in height.
- (2) Such signs shall not be considered signs for the purpose of computing total number and area of freestanding, facade or temporary signs; however, such signs shall be included in valuation computations for issuance of sign permits.
- (i) **Billboards:** Billboards shall be permitted only in the rights-of-way of expressways or within fifty feet (50') of such, provided those signs off the rights of way are within Commercial General or Industrial Zoning Districts. Billboards shall not be erected in vertical stacked configurations. Additionally, billboards shall be the only freestanding signage on a lot of record.

(1) Billboards shall comply with the following dimensional requirements:

- a. The dimensions of the area of the sign shall be twelve (12) feet by twenty-five (25) feet (12' X 25') or fourteen (14) by forty-eight (48) feet (14' by 48') plus not more than 128 SF of cut-out or extension space;
  - b. The top of signage shall not exceed forty (40) feet in height, except where placed adjacent to an elevated roadway, in which case the top of signage may be elevated to a height of not more than twenty-five (25) feet above the crown of such elevated roadway; provided the sign shall not exceed seventy (70) feet in height above existing grade, as measured from the base of structure; and
  - c. The maximum vertical clearance between the lowest part of the sign border or bottom edge, and the finished grade level shall not be less than fifteen (15) feet.
- (2) No part of a billboard shall be located less than one thousand (1,000) linear feet from any part of another sign placed along the same side of the roadway or less than five hundred (500) linear feet from any part of another sign along the opposite side of the same roadway or along intersecting roadways.
  - (3) No part of a billboard may be located closer to any property line or right-of-way line than the allowable setback distance for accessory or primary structures, which ever is less, and as specified under the applicable section of Article VI.

- (4) Illuminated billboards shall be placed no less than four hundred (400) feet in horizontal radius from any property zoned or used for residential purposes.
- (5) Billboards shall be limited to two faces mounted back-to-back. Both faces shall be of the same height and width, and sign face area. For back-to-back signs, the maximum angle between sign backs shall be from parallel to forty-five (45) degrees of absolute angle with respect to the opposite back.
- (6) For billboards to be erected or replaced after 1 July 1990, such sign support structure shall be of modern mono-pole design and shall be finished in earth tones.

**(j) Facade Signs**

- (1) Sign faces shall not occupy more than fifteen (15) percent per facade of the building, up to a maximum sign area of one hundred square feet (100 SF).
- (2) Where more than one business or use occupies a single building, each such business or use may erect signage whose sign face shall not occupy more than fifteen (15) percent per facade of the separate business entity or use, and provided that such signage shall not collectively exceed fifteen (15) percent of the total facade, up to a maximum sign area of one hundred square feet (100 SF).
- (3) Where a use or business occupies an interior space of building under multiple occupancy, said business may erect signage on the exterior facade in equal proportion to its share in floor space provided that the total collective facade signage of all businesses and/or use located therein shall not exceed fifteen (15) percent of the total facade.
- (4) Facade signs may be attached to an awning or canopy, provided the area of such a sign shall not exceed a fifteen percent (15%) of the façade or fascia to which it is attached, up to a maximum sign area of one hundred square feet (100 SF).
- (5) Notwithstanding Subsection (1) above and provided that a building have a footprint larger than 50,000 square feet and that the building façade upon which a façade sign is to be placed is set back from the property boundary it most directly faces by a distance greater than 300 feet, a façade sign shall not occupy more than fifteen percent (15%) of the façade upon which it is to be placed, up to a maximum sign area of 200 square feet.

- (k) Window Signs:** In addition to signage permitted under facade signs, window signs may be displayed, provided that no more than ten (10) percent of the aggregate area of the window is covered by such signage.

(l) **Projecting Signs**

- (1) No part of a projecting sign shall be elevated above grade.
- (2) A projecting sign shall project horizontally or down from the structure to which it is attached, no more than four feet (4').
- (3) A projecting sign shall not exceed six square feet (6 SF) in sign area per face and no more than twelve square feet (12 SF) in total sign area.
- (4) Projecting signs shall be limited to one (1) per business or office suite (m)

(m) **Temporary Signs:** The following size limitations and other restrictions apply to temporary signs, which shall include all portable signs, signs which are not permanently attached to a building, and/or signs which are not firmly anchored to the site on which said sign is located.

- (1) The total area shall not exceed thirty-two (32) sq. ft. per sign face and shall have not more than two (2) sign faces.
- (2) The sign shall not exceed a maximum height of eight (8) feet.
- (3) Only one (1) temporary sign may be located at a single business location, unless more than one business entity or use is located thereon, in which case not more than one (1) sign is allowed for each such business entity or use at any given time. A temporary business sign shall be in place only during the hours of operation of the business it serves.
- (4) For commercial and/or industrial developments and improvements thereto that are situated within the Transitional Overlay District (TOD), as provided in Article IX, temporary and/or portable signs shall not be allowed to remain situated or installed on or within said property for a period of more than thirty (30) calendar days in any consecutive twelve-month period; provided, however, a business entity which is newly opened on a parcel, site or location, as defined by open space separation and/or by firewall separation from any adjacent building or other commercial entity, shall be allowed one (1) portable or temporary sign to be installed for a period of up to forty-five (45) calendar days immediately following issuance of the initial business license for that business entity at or on that single unique site; furthermore, no allowance of time for the installation of temporary and/or portable signs shall be combined to exceed forty-five (45) calendar days in any consecutive twelve-month period.
- (5) The installation of a temporary or portable sign which advertises products or services available from any business which does not possess a current and valid Dorchester County Business License shall be prohibited.

**(n) Temporary Real-Estate and Construction-Project Signs**

- (1) Single Family Subdivision, Multi-Family, Commercial and Industrial Developments – One (1) real estate sign not exceeding forty-eight (48) SF in sign area, and if freestanding, not exceeding forty-eight (48) SF in sign area per face, nor more than two faces per sign shall be permitted. Such sign(s) shall not be more than eight (8) feet in height. Developments fronting more than one roadway shall be permitted one such sign at each roadway frontage.
- (2) Project signs shall not be erected prior to issuance of a building permit and shall be removed prior to issuance of the certificate of occupancy.
- (3) Real estate signs shall be removed by the sign owner within seven (7) working days of the rental, sale or lease of the property or upon ninety (90) percent build-out or occupancy, which ever comes first, but shall in no case remain twelve (12) months after completion of construction.