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Chapter 17.80

DOWNTOWN OVERLAY

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17.80.010 Purpose. The purpose of the downtown overlay is to encourage the preservation, improvement and renewal of the existing business district of the city maintaining a center of commercial and civic activity for the community; encourage pedestrian traffic; require design features that reduce conflicts with vehicular traffic flow; and improve the general appearance, safety and convenience of the downtown area by requiring greater attention to the design of buildings, parking, landscaping, lighting and traffic circulation.

(Ord. 682, §4 (part), 1999)

17.80.020 Applicability. A. The downtown overlay shall apply to properties on the west side of Highway 30 beginning on the north side of E.M. Watts at Otto Petersen School and extending north to Scappoose-Vernonia Highway and including all properties with frontages on either side of West First Street or Highway 30 and to properties on the east side of Highway 30 beginning at East Columbia Avenue and extending north to Williams Street and including all properties with frontages on NE First Street, East Columbia Avenue extending west to Fourth Street/West Lane, or Highway 30, as shown on Exhibit A, attached to the ordinance codified in this chapter.

B. Expansion or Redevelopment: For developed properties which do not meet the requirements of these design standards, any building or site alterations on the property must be brought into compliance based on the following:

1. The proposed improvements exceed thirty percent of the assessed value as determined by the Columbia County assessor's office for all improvements on the property, including sites with multiple tenants; or

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2. The proposed alterations exceed ten thousand dollars.

C. Limit of Required Improvements. The requirements of the downtown overlay must be met for the entire property. However, required improvements costing over ten percent of the value of the proposed alterations do not have to be made. It is the responsibility of the applicant to document that the value of the required improvements exceed ten percent of the value of the building and/or site alterations.

D. Required Standards. Alterations to developed properties shall be brought into compliance with these design standards. When all required improvements are not being made, they shall be provided in the following order of priority:

1. Parking perimeter screening and planting;
2. Design of parking;
3. Architectural character, where applicable;
4. Lighting.

E. Section 17.80.080, Building orientation, height and architectural character shall apply only to structures adjacent to East Columbia Avenue and/or Highway 30.

F. Except as specifically exempted in this chapter, all other requirements of Title 17 shall apply within the downtown overlay.

(Ord. 738 §1 (part), 2003; Ord. 682 §4 (part), 1999)

17.80.030 Uses. Permitted and conditional uses shall be as defined in underlying base zone.

(Ord. 682 §4 (part), 1999)

17.80.040 Dimensional requirements. A. Base zoning dimensions are not applicable within the downtown overlay.

B. No minimum lot area shall be required.

C. No minimum lot width shall be required.

D. No minimum setbacks shall be required for buildings, except as necessary to maintain visual clearance areas at unsignalized intersections.

E. No building shall exceed thirty-five feet in height.

(Ord. 738 §1 (part), 2003; Ord. 682 §4 (part), 1999)

17.80.050 Parking. A. Parking shall be in accordance with Chapter 17.106, Off-Street Parking and Loading Requirements, except as specifically defined in this section. Illustrations of desirable parking design shall reflect the general concepts and designs as shown in the 1998 ODOT/DLCD Quick Response Project and/or the 2002 ODDA Resource Team Report.

B. Location of Parking.

1. Off-street surface parking lots shall be located to the side or rear of buildings. Parking at midblock or behind buildings is

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preferred. When parking cannot be located at midblock or behind buildings, perimeter screening and planting shall be required, complying with design standards for parking perimeter screening and planting, subsection D of this section.

2. Off-street surface parking lots shall not be located between a front facade of a building adjacent to a public street, and the public street.

3. New parking lots and garages shall not be located within twenty feet of a street corner.

C. Design of Parking.

1. Off-street surface parking areas shall be designed to be as unobtrusive, and as attractive in appearance, as possible.

2. Angled or perpendicular parking spaces shall provide, where needed, extruded curbs (tire stops) or widened curbs to prevent bumper overhang into landscape areas or walkways.

3. Landscaping around and within surface parking areas shall equal ten percent of the total parking area.

4. Landscaping shall be installed within planting bays, and in any other area where parking stalls, circulation aisles, driveways and pedestrian movements shall not be precluded by the landscaping.

5. Trees shall be used extensively at the perimeter and in the interior of surface parking lots to break up large parking areas and provide shade. One tree which shall provide a canopy of at least three hundred square feet upon maturity shall be provided for each fifty lineal feet of street frontage or fraction thereof.

6. Pedestrian accessways through surface parking lots shall be clearly identifiable through use of different paving materials, pavement markings, grade separation, or landscaping, well-lighted, and as short as practicable.

7. Surface parking lot vehicular accessways shall not exceed twenty feet in width, and shall not be located within twenty-five feet of a corner.

8. New parking areas shall be designed to the extent practicable to connect with existing parking areas on adjacent sites to eliminate the necessity of utilizing the street for parallel movements.

D. Parking Perimeter Screening and Planting. When required by subsection (A) (1) of this section, parking areas adjacent to public streets shall provide landscaping which meets one of the following standards:

1. A five-foot-wide planting strip between the right-of-way and the parking area. The planting strip may be pierced by pedestrian-

accessible and vehicular access-ways. Planting strips shall be planted with an evergreen hedge. Hedges shall be no less than thirty-six inches or more than forty-two inches in height at

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maturity. Materials shall achieve a balance between low-lying and vertical shrubbery and trees. Hedges and other landscaping shall be planted and maintained to afford adequate sight distance for vehicles exiting the parking lot; or

2. A solid decorative wall or fence thirty-six inches in height parallel to and not nearer than one foot from the right-of-way line. The area between the wall or fence and the street line shall be landscaped. Materials shall achieve a balance between low-lying and vertical shrubbery and trees. The required wall or fence and landscaping shall be designed to allow for access to the site and sidewalk by pedestrians and shall be constructed and maintained to afford adequate sight distance for vehicles exiting the parking lot; or

3. A transparent screen or grille forty-eight inches to seventy-two inches in height parallel to the right-of-way line. A one-foot minimum planting strip shall be located either inside the screen, or between the screen and the right-of-way. The plant strip shall be planted with a hedge or other landscaping. Materials shall achieve a balance between low-lying and vertical shrubbery and trees. The required screen or grill and landscaping shall be designed to allow for access to the site and sidewalk by pedestrians and shall be constructed and maintained to afford adequate sight distance for vehicles exiting the parking lot.

E. Reduced Off-Street Parking Requirements.

1. For any structure meeting the applicability provisions of Chapter 17.120 (Site Development Review), the Planning Commission may grant reduced off-street parking standards within the following parameters:

a. Up to a 100-percent reduction capacity for the area existing between NW Laurel Street and NW Casey Street for properties having frontages on either side of West First Street or Highway 30.

b. Up to a 50-percent reduction capacity for the area existing on the east side of Highway 30 beginning at East Columbia Avenue and extending north to Williams Street and including all properties with frontages on NE First Street, East Columbia Avenue extending west to Fourth Street/West Lane, or Highway 30 as shown on Exhibit A, attached to the ordinance codified in this chapter.

(Ord. 738 §1 (part), 2003; Ord. 682 § 4 (part), 1999)

17.80.060 Lighting. A. Illustrations of desirable lighting shall reflect the general concepts and designs as shown in the 1998 ODOT/DLCD Quick Response Project and/or the 2002 ODDA Resource Team Report.

B. Pedestrian scale street lighting shall be provided along

arterials, major collectors, minor collectors and local streets.

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C. Pedestrian scale street lights shall be no taller than twenty feet along arterials, major collectors, minor collectors and local streets.

D. Additional pedestrian-oriented site lighting (i.e., path lighting including step lights, well lights and bollards) is encouraged.

E. Fixture height and lighting levels shall be commensurate with their intended use and function and shall assure compatibility with neighboring land uses. Baffles shall be incorporated to minimize glare and to focus lighting to its intended area.

F. Minimum lighting levels shall be provided for public safety in all urban spaces open to public circulation.

G. No lighting standard shall exceed twenty-five feet in height.

H. A minimum average light level of 1.2 footcandles is required for urban spaces and sidewalks.

I. Maximum lighting levels shall not exceed 3.0 foot-candles at intersections or 1.5 footcandles in parking areas.

J. Accent lighting on architectural focal points and landscape features is encouraged.

K. Seasonal lighting is encouraged on trees.

(Ord. 738 §1 (part), 2003; Ord. 682 § 4 (part), 1999)

17.80.070 Service areas. A. Illustrations of desirable service area screening shall reflect the general concepts and designs as shown in the 1998 ODOT/DLCD Quick Response Project and/or the 2002 ODDA Resource Team Report.

B. All on-site service areas, loading zones and outdoor storage areas, waste storage, disposal facilities, transformer and utility vaults and similar activities shall be located in an area not visible from a street or urban space. If this is not possible, then the service area, loading zone or storage area must be fully screened from public view. Prohibited screening includes chain-link fencing with or without slats. Acceptable screening includes a stone, masonry or wood enclosure incorporated into a building wall.

(Ord. 738 §1 (part), 2003; Ord. 682 § 4 (part), 1999)

17.80.080 Building orientation, height and architectural character.

A. Section 17.80.080, Building orientation, height and architectural character shall apply only to structures adjacent to East Columbia Avenue and/or Highway 30. Illustrations of desirable storefronts, design and architectural character shall reflect the general concepts and designs as shown in the 1998 ODOT/DLCD Quick Response Project

and/or the 2002 ODDA Resource Team Report.

B. Building orientation. For corner lots with frontage on East Columbia Avenue or Highway 30, building orientation shall exist so as to include building frontages and entrances along each street, or so

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oriented as to include a corner entrance. Incorporation of a corner entrance will require significant building massing and frontage orientation along both street frontages.

C. Height.

1. The facade height of corner buildings shall be two to three stories and not more than thirty-five feet high. Where possible corner buildings shall be the tallest structures in each block.

2. The facade height of buildings in the middle of the block shall be one to two stories and no more than twenty-seven feet high.

3. The minimum facade height for single-story buildings shall be twenty feet for buildings with unbroken rooflines, but may be as short as fourteen feet for buildings providing architectural diversity to roof profiles. Building height shall be measured from the highest grade point of the building frontage from ground to top of cornice or midpoint of roof slope.

4. There shall be no setback between buildings and the right-of-way.

D. Architectural Character.

1. Awnings.

a. Awnings at the ground level of buildings are encouraged.

b. Awnings shall not obscure or distract from significant architectural features and should fit within the window bays (either above the main glass or the transom light).

c. The color of the awning shall be compatible with its attached building.

2. Building Design.

a. The exterior walls of building facades along Columbia Avenue or Highway 30 shall be of suitable durable building materials including the following: stucco, stone, terra-cotta, tile, cedar shakes and shingles, beveled or shiplap or other narrow-course horizontal (boards or siding, vertical board and batten siding, articulated architectural concrete masonry units (CMU), or similar materials which are resistant and easy to clean. Prohibited building materials include the following: plain concrete, plain concrete block, corrugated metal, unarticulated board siding (e.g., T1-11 siding, plain plywood, sheet press board) and similar quality, nondurable materials

3. Building Fronts.

a. Ground floor windows shall be provided on building facades facing Columbia Avenue and Highway 30.

b. Darkly tinted windows and mirrored windows that block two-way

visibility are prohibited as ground floor windows.

c. Ground floor building facades along a Columbia Avenue or Highway 30 must contain unobscured windows for at least fifty percent of the wall area and seventy-five percent of the wall length within the first ten feet of wall height. Lower window sills shall not be

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more than three feet above grade except where interior floor levels prohibit such placement, in which case the lower window sill shall not be more than a maximum of four feet above the finished exterior grade.

d. On the ground floor, buildings shall incorporate large display windows with transom lights above.

e. New buildings whose street frontage is more than forty-five feet wide shall be designed so they convey a sense of division through the use of either pilasters, window and door openings, recessed entries, off-sets or other architectural details and shall break any flat, monolithic facade by including architectural elements such as bay windows, recessed entrances, changes in materials, or other articulation so as to provide pedestrian scale to the ground floor. Other articulation shall include: columns, pilasters or vertical architectural elements which serve to modulate the building facade.

(Ord. 738 §1 (part), 2003; Ord. 682 §4 (part), 1999)

17.80.090 Signs. A. Signs shall be in accordance with the requirements of Chapter 17.114, Signs.

(Ord. 682 §4 (part), 1999)

17.80.100 Landscaping. A. Except as specifically required in Section 17.80.050, no additional landscaping shall be required within the downtown overlay. The requirements of Chapter 17.100, Landscaping, shall not apply within the downtown overlay.

B. Pedestrian scale lighting and hanging floral baskets may be substituted for street trees for frontages on the west side of Highway 30 from the northwest corner of JP West Street north to the southwest corner of Watts Street. Such substitutions shall be in accordance with the standards in Section 17.80.060. The design of the fixture shall be subject to planning commission approval.

(Ord. 682 §4 (part), 1999)

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