



City of Tacoma  
Planning and Development Services

**Agenda Item  
D-5**

**To:** Planning Commission  
**From:** Brian Boudet, Manager, Planning Services Division  
**Subject:** **Mixed-Use Centers Zoning Code Update**  
**Meeting Date:** February 5, 2014  
**Memo Date:** January 29, 2014

At the next meeting on February 5<sup>th</sup>, the Commission will continue its consideration of potential amendments to the Zoning Code designed to remove unnecessary barriers and encourage development within the City's Mixed-Use Center (Annual Amendment Application #2014-04). As follow-up to the previous presentation of the draft consultant analysis report, staff and the consultants from BLRB will provide an overview of the specific text amendments to the Tacoma Municipal Code sections that regulate building design and construction in the centers.

Attached is a draft of the amended code sections. The proposed changes to the code are provided in underline and strikethrough format.

If you have any questions, please contact me at 573-2389 or [bboudet@cityoftacoma.org](mailto:bboudet@cityoftacoma.org).

c: Peter Huffman, Director





## Mixed-Use Centers Zoning Code Update (2014)

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### DRAFT LAND USE REGULATORY CODE CHANGES

January 28, 2014

The proposed code amendments include the following key elements:

#### **Core Pedestrian Street: first level use limitations**

- Revise the requirements for street level use on designated core pedestrian streets to allow for work/live units

#### **Yard Space Standards**

- Expand the exemptions from the requirement to provide on-site yard space to include:
  - Projects with a Floor Area Ratio (FAR) above 3.0
  - Projects located within ¼-mile of a park or school with recreational facilities (current exemption is at 300 feet)
  - Mixed-use projects that provide ground floor retail or restaurant uses
- Reduce the per-unit yard space requirement for multi-family and mixed-use structures from 100 square feet to 50 square feet
- Provide more flexibility in the types of features that can be provided to meet the yard space requirement (courtyards, roof decks, balconies, etc.)

#### **Mass Reduction: Upper Floor Streetfront Stepbacks**

- Revise the current stepback exemption for a “tower” feature to allow it to be located anywhere along the pedestrian street frontage (currently limited to just the corner of the building)
- Clarify that one per street frontage is allowed

#### **Residential Transition Standards: Upper Story Stepbacks**

- Revise the method for calculating this additional height restriction as follows:
  - Revise the starting location of measurement from the edge of the building to the zone transition line
  - Revise the starting height from 25 feet to 35 feet (the standard height limit for residential zones)

#### **Off-Street Parking**

- Revise the parking exemption for buildings within ten feet of the right-of-way on designated core pedestrian streets to include projects that provide commercial space within ten feet of the right-of-way on all designated pedestrian streets
- For extra parking provided by a project, increase the allowed maximum percentage of compact stalls from 30% to 50%

Note: These amendments show all of the changes to existing Land Use regulations. The sections included are only those portions of the code that are associated with these amendments. New text is underlined and text that has been deleted is shown as ~~strikethrough~~. In cases where a section has been reorganized, the key changes are also **highlighted**.

### 13.06.300 Mixed-Use Center Districts.

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#### D. Land use requirements.

1. Use requirements. The following use table designates all permitted, limited, and prohibited uses in the districts listed. Use classifications not listed in this section or provided for in Section 13.06.500 are prohibited, unless permitted via Section 13.05.030.E.

#### 2. Use table abbreviations.

P	=	Permitted use in this district.
CU	=	Conditional use in this district. Requires conditional use permit, consistent with the criteria and procedures of Section 13.06.640.
TU	=	Temporary use consistent with Section 13.06.635.
N	=	Prohibited use in this district.

3. District use table.

Uses	NCX	CCX	UCX	UCX-TD	RCX <sup>1</sup>	CIX	HMX	URX	NRX	Additional Regulations <sup>3,4,5</sup> (also see footnotes at bottom of table)
* * *										
Warehouse, storage	N	N	N	N	N	P	N	N	N	
Wholesale or distribution	N	N	N	N	N	P	N	N	N	
<u>Work-Live</u>	<u>P</u>	<u>P</u>	<u>P</u>	<u>P</u>	<u>P</u>	<u>P</u>	<u>P</u>	<u>P</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>Not subject to minimum density requirements</u>
Wireless communication facility	P*/CU**	P*/CU**	P*/CU**	P*/CU**	P*/CU**	P*/CU**	P*/CU**	P*/CU**	P*/CU**	*Wireless communication facilities are also subject to Section 13.06.545.D.1. **Wireless communication facilities are also subject to Section 13.06.545.D.2.
Work release center	N	N	CU	N	N	CU	N	N	N	Permitted with no more than 15 residents in the UCX and no more than 25 residents in the CIX, subject to a Conditional Use Permit and the development regulations found in Section 13.06.550.
Uses not prohibited by City Charter and not prohibited herein	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	

**Footnotes:**

1. The floor area of any development in RCX must be at least 75 percent residential, unless otherwise noted.
2. For uses that are restricted from locating at street-level along designated pedestrian or core pedestrian streets, the following limited exception is provided. Entrances, lobbies, management offices, and similar common facilities that provide access to and service a restricted use that is located above and/or behind street-level uses shall be allowed, as long as they occupy no more than 50-percent or 75 feet, whichever is less, of the site's street-level frontage on the designated pedestrian or core pedestrian street. See Section 13.06.300.C. for the list of designated pedestrian and core pedestrian streets.
3. For historic structures and sites, certain uses that are otherwise prohibited may be allowed, subject to the approval of a conditional use permit. See Section 13.06.640.F for additional details, limitations and requirements.
4. Commercial shipping containers shall not be an allowed type of accessory building in any mixed-use zoning district. Such storage containers may be allowed as a temporary use, subject to the limitations and standards in Section 13.06.635.
5. Additional restrictions on the location of parking in mixed-use zoning districts are contained in the parking regulations – see Section 13.06.510.A.1 Table 2

**TABLE 13.06.300.G: RESIDENTIAL X-DISTRICT YARD SPACE STANDARDS**

1. Duplexes and Triplexes. At least 200 square feet of yard space is required for each dwelling unit. Required yard space could include a combination of front porches, private or shared rear yards, balconies, or rooftop decks. Vehicular access areas and required walkways and buffers shall not count as yard space and front yard areas may not be counted towards this requirement, except for those yard areas set back beyond the minimum requirement.

2. Townhouse Development. At least 200 square feet of yard space is required for each townhouse. Required yard space could include a combination of private front or rear yard space, porches, balconies, rooftop decks, or shared common yard space amongst groups of townhouses. Vehicular access areas and required walkways and buffers shall not count as yard space.

3. Multi-Family and Mixed-Use Development. At least 50 square feet of yard space is required for each dwelling unit. Required setback and buffer areas, vehicular access areas and required walkways and buffers shall not count towards the yard space requirement. This required yard space can be provided through any combination of the following types of areas/features:

a. Common Yard space. This includes landscaped courtyards or decks, front porches, community gardens with pathways, children’s play areas, or other multi-purpose recreational and/or green spaces. Requirements for common yard spaces include the following:

- (1) No dimension shall be less than fifteen feet in width (except for front porches).
- (2) Spaces shall be visible from multiple dwelling units and positioned near pedestrian activity.
- (3) Spaces shall feature paths, landscaping, seating, lighting and other pedestrian amenities to make the area more functional and enjoyable.
- (4) Individual entries shall be provided onto common yard space from adjacent ground floor residential units, where applicable.
- (5) Space should be oriented to receive direct sunlight for part of the day, facing east, west, or (preferably) south, when possible.
- (6) Common yard space shall be open to the sky, except for clear atrium roofs and shared porches.
- (7) Shared porches qualify as common yard space provided no dimension is less than eight feet

b. Private balconies, porches, decks, patios or yards. To qualify as yard space, such spaces shall be at least thirty five square feet, with no dimension less than four feet.

c. Rooftop decks. To qualify, rooftop decks must meet the following standards:

- (1) Must be accessible to all dwelling units.
- (2) Must include amenities such as seating areas and landscaping.
- (3) Must feature hard surfacing appropriate to encourage residential use.
- (4) Must include lighting for residents’ safety.
- (5) No dimension shall be less than 15 feet in width.

Exceptions:

- a. Projects located within a quarter mile of a public park or public school that includes outdoor recreational facilities.
- b. Projects with a minimum floor area ratio (FAR) of 3.
- c. Projects that meet the ground floor retail/restaurant height bonus requirements.

G. Residential X-District Yard Space Standards. The following standards apply to all new duplex/triplex, townhouse, multi-family or mixed-use development in X-Districts. They are intended to provide yard space for residents of these developments.

~~1. Duplexes and Triplexes. At least 200 square feet of yard space is required for each dwelling unit. Required yard space could include a combination of front porches, private or shared rear yards, balconies, or rooftop decks. Vehicular access areas and required walkways and buffers shall not count as yard space and front yard areas may not be counted towards this requirement, except for those yard areas set back beyond the minimum requirement.~~

~~2. Townhouse Development. At least 200 square feet of yard space is required for each townhouse. Required yard space could include a combination of private front or rear yard space, porches, balconies, rooftop decks, or shared common yard space amongst groups of townhouses. Vehicular access areas and required walkways and buffers shall not count as yard space.~~

~~3. Multi Family and Mixed Use Development. At least 100 square feet of yard space is required for each dwelling unit. Required setback and buffer areas, vehicular access areas and required walkways and buffers shall not count towards the yard space requirement. Projects located within 300 feet of a public park or public school that includes outdoor recreational facilities are exempt from this requirement.~~

~~a. Common Yard space. Where accessible to all residents, common yard space may count for up to 100 percent of the required yard space. This includes landscaped courtyards or decks, front porches, community gardens with pathways, children's play areas, or other multi purpose recreational and/or green spaces. Special requirements and recommendations for common yard spaces include the following:~~

~~(1) No dimension shall be less than fifteen feet in width (except for front porches).~~

~~(2) Spaces shall be visible from multiple dwelling units and positioned near pedestrian activity.~~

~~(3) Spaces shall feature paths, landscaping, seating, lighting and other pedestrian amenities to make the area more functional and enjoyable.~~

~~(4) Individual entries shall be provided onto common yard space from adjacent ground floor residential units, where applicable.~~

~~(5) Space should be oriented to receive direct sunlight for part of the day, facing east, west, or (preferably) south, when possible.~~

~~(6) Common yard space shall be open to the sky, except for clear atrium roofs and shared porches.~~

~~(7) Shared porches qualify as common yard space provided:~~

~~(a) No dimension is less than eight feet.~~

~~(b) It is open on at least two sides.~~

~~(8) Decks and courtyards located on the top of a portion of a building may count as common open space as long as they are visible from multiple dwelling units within the building (this is distinguished from rooftop decks that are not visible from multiple units, which are addressed separately under subsection c, below).~~

~~b. Balconies. Private balconies, porches, decks, patios or yards may be used to meet up to 50 percent of the required yard space. To qualify as yard space, such spaces shall be at least thirty five square feet, with no dimension less than four feet.~~

~~e. Rooftop decks may be used to meet up to 25 percent of yard space for all multi-family uses and up to 50 percent of the required yard space in mixed use developments, provided they:~~

~~(1) Must be accessible to all dwelling units.~~

~~(2) Must include amenities such as seating areas and landscaping.~~

~~(3) Must feature hard surfacing appropriate to encourage residential use.~~

~~(4) Must include lighting for residents' safety.~~

~~4. All units shall have access to at least one qualifying yard space, either their own, a shared yard space, or both.~~

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**13.06.501 Building design standards.**

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**H. X-District Mass Reduction Standards.** The following requirements apply to all development located in any X-District, unless specifically exempted.

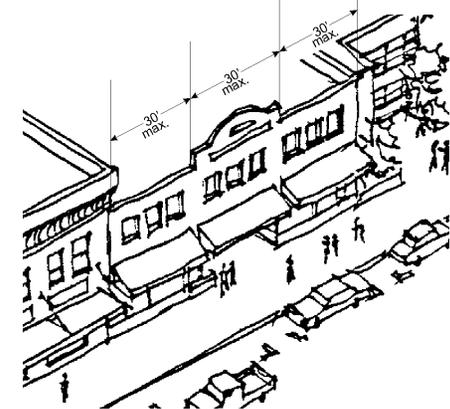
1. Façade Articulation: The following design choices are intended to help reduce the apparent mass of structures and achieve a more human scale environment by providing physical breaks in the building volume that reduce large, flat, geometrical planes on any given building elevation.

a. All building facades fronting directly on a Designated Pedestrian Street must include at least two of the following articulation features at intervals no greater than 40 feet to reinforce the desired pattern of small storefronts adjacent to the sidewalk. Buildings that have 60 feet or less of frontage on the designated pedestrian street are exempt from this standard.

- (1) Use of window and/or entries that reinforce the pattern of small storefront spaces.
- (2) Use of vertical piers to reinforce the pattern of small storefront spaces. Such piers must project at least 2 inches from the façade and extend from the ground floor to the roofline.
- (3) Use of weather protection features that reinforce the pattern of small storefronts. For example, for a business that occupies three lots, use three separate awnings to break down the scale of the storefronts. Alternating colors of the awnings may be useful as well.
- (4) Roofline modulation as defined in Section 13.06.501.I
- (5) Change in building material or siding style.

**Example Figures**

Right: This building uses roofline modulation, window configurations, and weather protection elements to reinforce the pattern of small storefronts.  
 Below: Other acceptable façade articulation examples. All use window configurations to reinforce the desired small storefront pattern. Other features used in these examples to meet the standards include:



Vertical piers

Roofline modulation

Different weather protection elements



<p>b. All non-residential facades fronting on a non-Pedestrian Designated Street or containing a pedestrian entrance must include at least three of the following articulation features at intervals no greater than 60 feet. Buildings that have 120 feet or less of frontage on the non-designated street are exempt from this standard. Buildings that employ brick as the siding material on a majority of the subject façade are required to only provide two of the articulation features instead of three.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(1) Use of window configurations and/or entries that reinforce the pattern of storefront spaces.</li> <li>(2) Vertical building modulation. The minimum depth and width of modulation shall be 2 and 4 feet, respectively, if tied to a change in building material/siding style and/or roofline modulation as defined in Section 13.06.501.I. Otherwise, the minimum depth and width of modulation shall be 10 and 15 feet, respectively.</li> <li>(3) Use of separate weather protection features that reinforce the pattern of storefront spaces.</li> <li>(4) Roofline modulation as defined in Section 13.06.501.I</li> <li>(5) Horizontal modulation (upper level step-backs). To qualify for this measure, the minimum horizontal modulation shall be 5 feet and the treatment must be used in increments at no greater than the articulation interval or provided along more than 75 feet of the façade.</li> <li>(6) Change in building material or siding style.</li> <li>(7) Use of vertical piers. Such piers must project at least 2 inches from the façade and extend from the ground floor to the roofline.</li> <li>(8) Providing a trellis, tree, or other landscape feature within each interval. Such feature must be at least one-half the height of the building (at planting time for any landscaping element).</li> </ol>
<p>c. All residential buildings and residential portions of mixed-use buildings shall include at least three of the following articulation features at intervals of no more than 30 feet along all facades facing a street, common open space, or common parking areas. Buildings that have 60 feet or less of frontage on the street or façade width facing the common open space or common parking area are exempt from this standard. Buildings that employ brick as the siding material on a majority of the subject façade are required to only provide two of the articulation features instead of three.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(1) Repeating distinctive window patterns at intervals less than the required interval.</li> <li>(2) Vertical building modulation. Minimum depth and width of modulation is 2 feet and 4 feet, respectively, if tied to a change in building material/siding style and/or roofline modulation as defined in Section 13.06.501.I. Otherwise, minimum depth and width of modulation is 10 and 15 feet, respectively. Balconies may not be used to meet modulation option unless they are recessed or projected from the façade at least 18 inches.</li> <li>(3) Horizontal modulation (upper level step-backs). To qualify for this measure, the minimum horizontal modulation shall be 5 feet and the treatment must be used in increments at no greater than the articulation interval or provided along more than 75 percent of the façade</li> <li>(4) Roofline modulation as defined in Section 13.06.501.I</li> <li>(5) Vertical articulation of the façade. This refers to design treatments that provide a clear delineation of the building's top, middle and bottom. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) Top features may include a sloped roofline or strong cornice line as defined in Section 13.06.501.I. For facades utilizing upper level stepbacks, the "top" design treatment may be applied to the top of the front vertical plane of the building or the top of the building where it is set back from the building's front vertical wall (provided the top of the building is visible from the centerline of the adjacent street).</li> <li>(b) Middle features: provide consistent articulation of middle floors with windows, balconies, exterior materials, modulation, and detailing</li> <li>(c) Bottom: provide a distinctive ground floor or lower floors design that contrasts with other floors through the use of both contrasting window design/configuration and contrasting exterior materials</li> <li>(d) Façade reduction elements including balconies and bay windows may project into street rights-of-way, where allowed by the Public Works Department, but not into alley rights-of-way</li> </ol> </li> </ol>

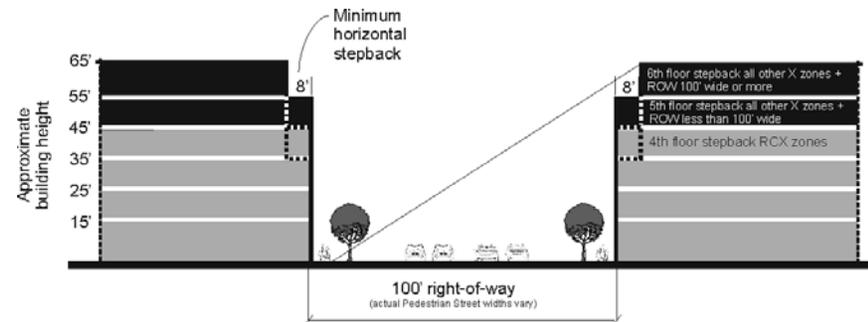


Above: Residential building articulation at 30-foot or less intervals. Below: Articulation examples of mixed-use buildings containing residential uses on upper floors. These examples include vertical and horizontal modulation and changes in building materials at no more than 30-foot articulation intervals.



2. Mass Reduction: Upper Floor Streetfront Stepbacks. The following standards are intended to reduce the appearance of bulk and reduce the potential for shade and shadow impacts on pedestrian streets. They apply to all development along designated pedestrian streets, unless specifically exempted.

- a. 8' minimum stepback along the streetfront façade for 4th floor and above in RCX Districts.
- b. 8' minimum horizontal stepback along for 5th floor and above in X Districts other than RCX, where the ROW width is less than 100'.
- c. 8' minimum horizon stepback for 6th floor and above in X zones other than RCX, where the ROW width is 100' or greater.
- d. Exceptions to b and c, above: ~~Portions of buildings adjacent to street corners along designated pedestrian streets can depart from this standard to incorporate distinctive street corner design elements such as a turret. Such corner building features shall be no more than 25 feet in width along both streets and other portions of the building shall meet applicable stepback standards. One distinctive design element of no more than 25 feet in width is allowed to extend vertically without these required stepbacks for each façade along a designated pedestrian street~~



3. **Mass Reduction: Maximum Façade Widths.** The following standards are intended to incorporate a significant modulation of the exterior wall through all floors except the ground floor. They apply to the upper story façades of multi-story buildings that are greater than 120 feet in width. Such buildings shall include at least one of the following features to break up the massing of the building and add visual interest:

- a. Provide vertical building modulation at least 20 feet deep and 30 feet wide. For multi-story buildings the modulation must extend through more than one-half of the building floors.
- b. Use of a contrasting vertical modulated design component that extends through all floors above the first floor fronting on the street (upper floors that are stepped back more than 10 feet from the façade are exempt) and featuring at least two of the following:

- (1) Utilizes a change in building materials that effectively contrast from the rest of the façade.
- (2) Component is modulated vertically from the rest of the façade by an average of 6 inches.
- (3) Component is designed to provide roofline modulation per 13.06.501.I, below.

- c. Façade employs building walls with contrasting articulation that make it appear like two distinct buildings. To qualify for this option, these contrasting façades must employ the following:

- (1) Different building materials and/or configuration of building materials.
- (2) Contrasting window design (sizes or configurations).



Examples of façades wider than 120 feet that effectively use techniques to reduce the apparent bulk and scale of the structure. The image on the left uses street and upper level courtyards whereas the right image uses both vertical building modulation and the use of contrasting building materials and articulation.

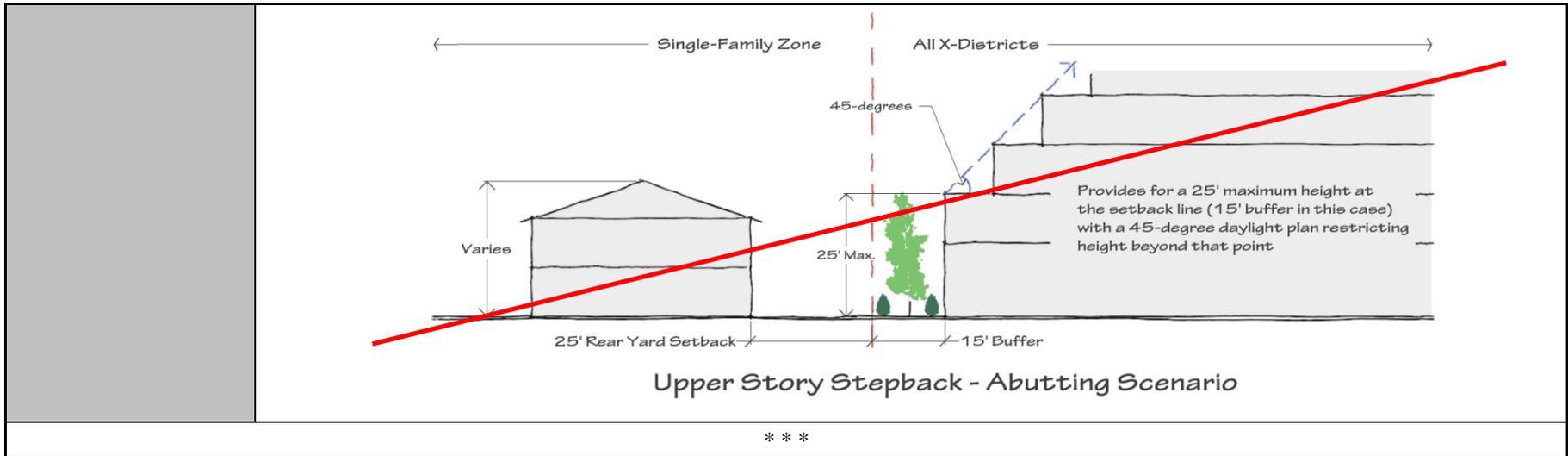
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**13.06.503 Residential transition standards.**

The following items are required to help ensure appropriate transitions between non-residential and/or higher intensity development and adjacent residential districts, in terms of building bulk and scale, location of activity areas for privacy and noise reduction, provision of greenspace, and visual separation:

[See table below.]

<p><b>A. Upper Story Stepback</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Structures shall not intercept a 25-degree daylight plane inclined into the C, T, PDB, HM, M, or PMI District from a height of <del>25</del><u>35</u> feet above existing grade at any R-District / C, T, PDB, HM, M, or PMI District boundaries, excluding boundaries with R-4 Districts, R-5 Districts, and/or non-residential uses in any R District. For purposes of this provision, vacant land located in an R-District shall be considered a residential use.</li> <li>2. The following requirements apply in all X-Districts, where a Mixed-Use Center boundary is adjacent to single-family zoning (R-1, R-2 and R-2SRD Districts), except where the adjacent use within the single-family zone is a park, permanent open space, undevelopable steep slope, public facility or freeway.             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Projects abutting a single-family zone at a <del>street,</del> alley or rear or side property line shall not intercept a 45-degree daylight plane inclined into the X-District from a height of <del>25</del><u>35</u> feet above existing grade, measured from <del>the inside edge of the required buffer or setback (example of abutting scenario below); the zone transition line (example of the alley scenario below).</del></li> <li><del>b. Projects abutting a single family zone at a street shall not intercept a 45-degree daylight plane inclined into the X District from a height of 35 feet above existing grade at the property line.</del></li> </ol> </li> </ol> <div data-bbox="724 852 1816 1258" data-label="Diagram"> </div> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Upper Story Stepback - Alley Scenario</b></p>
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**13.06.510 Off-street parking and storage areas.**

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<b>TABLE 2 – Parking in Mixed-Use Center Districts</b>	
Quantity	Residential Uses. Minimum 1.0 stall per unit. Commercial or Office Uses. Minimum 2.5 stalls per 1000 square feet of floor area. UCX-TD Commercial or Office Uses (including retail, service and eating and drinking establishments). Minimum 0 stalls per 1000 square feet of floor area. Other Uses. For uses not specifically listed above, the parking requirement in the Mixed-Use Center Districts shall be 70% of the parking requirement for that use identified in Table 1. See Section 13.06.510.B.2.f for use of compact stalls. For purposes of calculating parking quantity requirements, “floor area,” when used, shall not include space devoted to parking.
Exemptions	No parking is required for any structure in existence upon the date the Mixed-Use Center was created within which it exists (see Section 13.17.020). New development shall provide parking as required. In NCX and CCX Districts, no parking is required for buildings located within 10 feet of the right-of-way of the designated <del>ere</del> pedestrian streets (see Section 13.06.300.C). In NCX, CCX, and UCX Districts, no parking is required for the first 3,000 square feet of each ground-level retail or eating and drinking establishment.
* * *	
<b><u>Development Standards – Compact Stalls.</u></b>	
<u>Compact Stalls</u>	<u>A maximum 30 percent of the parking spaces provided may be composed of compact stalls, except that for any parking provided in excess of the minimum quantity requirements, up to 50% of those excess stalls may be composed of compact stalls.</u>
* * *	

**13.06.700 Definitions and illustrations.**

For the purposes of this chapter, certain words and terms are defined as follows: words used in the present tense include the future, words in the singular number include the plural, and words in the plural number include the singular; the word “building” includes the word “structure”; the word “shall” is mandatory and not directory. For words that are not defined in this chapter, or that do not incorporate a definition by reference, refer to a Webster’s Dictionary published within the last ten years.

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13.06.700.W

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Wireless communication and wireless communication facilities. Facilities used in the transmission of information by wire, radio, optical cable, electromagnetic, or other similar means for communication, cellular phone, personal communication services, enhanced specialized mobile radio, and any other services licensed by the FCC and unlicensed wireless services. These types of facilities also include central office switching units, remote switching units, telecommunications radio relay stations, and ground level equipment structures. This classification does not include communication facilities.

Wireless communication tower. Any structure that is designed and constructed primarily for the purpose of supporting one or more antennas, including self-supporting lattice towers, guyed towers, or monopole towers. The term encompasses wireless communication facilities, radio and television transmission towers, microwave towers, common-carrier towers, cellular telephone towers, wireless communication towers, and alternative tower structures, and the like.

Work-live. A non-residential use that includes a subordinate residential component consisting of at least a kitchen, bathroom and sleeping quarters.

Work release center. An alternative to imprisonment, including work and/or training release programs which are under the supervision of a court or a federal, state, or local agency. This definition excludes at-home electronic surveillance.

Works of art. Artist-produced creations of visual art, including, but not limited to, sculptures, murals, paintings, inlays, earthworks, mosaics, etc. Works of art can be both self-standing and/or integrated into the structure or its grounds. The reproduction of original works of art, mass-produced artwork, or architect-designed elements are not included. Also not included are directional signage or super graphics, maps, etc., except where an artist is employed.

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