

ARTICLE VIII, PEACHTREE PARKWAY OVERLAY DISTRICT:

21-8.1 **Purpose.** The purpose of this overlay district is to establish minimum standards for site development, exterior architectural design, landscaping, and signage of buildings that contribute to the district's overall character. This is accomplished through enhancement of commercial growth through unity of design and quality architecture and the creation of visual interest through landscape and architectural features. Design standards are intended to ensure coordinated design of building exteriors in order to promote visual congruence, positively impact adjacent properties, and produce buildings that augment the character and appearance of the area. It is the goal of this ordinance to promote freedom in design while establishing a baseline for design compatibility. This goal is in accordance with the County's objective to encourage landscaping, signage, building design, and other development regulations that enhance the image of the County and create value as stated in the implementation program of the Comprehensive Plan. In addition, the overlay district complies with the respective subarea visions which state that the vicinity will be the site of quality development and business opportunities. The subarea visions also maintain that the area will be known to have grown in a responsible manner, offering residents a high quality of life as well as opportunities for employment, shopping, and recreation.

21-8.2 **Delineation of District.** The Peachtree Parkway Overlay District applies to all properties indicated on the Official Overlay District Maps of Forsyth County. Regulations pertain to parcels or portions of parcels that fall within 1,000 feet of the centerline of Peachtree Parkway/Highway 141. If a portion of a parcel extends beyond the boundary of the overlay district, overlay regulations may extend to the remaining portion of the parcel(s) at the option of the property owner. Where land is classified as an overlay district, the regulations governing development in the overlay district shall apply in addition to the regulations governing development in the underlying base zoning district. In the event of an express conflict between the standards governing a base zoning district and those governing an overlay district, the standards governing the overlay district shall control.

21-8.3 **Permitted Uses.** All uses allowed in the underlying zoning districts as established by this Code are permitted in the Peachtree Parkway Overlay District.

21-8.4 **Design Plan Administrative Review.** Design review shall be performed by County planning staff. Should a design not meet all of the standards contained within the regulations, then the proposed design must be submitted to the Forsyth County Planning Commission for review and approval as an Alternate Design Review. Architectural elevations, exterior finish schedules, landscape, and signage plans must be submitted to the Planning Department at the time of application for a land disturbance permit. Lighting plans must be submitted prior to the issuance of a building permit. See Chapter 7 for land disturbance and building permit procedures. These plans shall address and conform to all provisions set forth under Chapter 21, Section 8.

21-8.5 **Site Design Standards.**

- (A) Parking for commercial establishments shall be distributed along not less than two sides of the building exterior. Parking that fronts the main building entrance(s) shall not exceed sixty (60) percent of parking total or three hundred (300) parking spaces, whichever is less.
- (B) New commercial developments and substantial improvements to existing commercial developments shall provide for pedestrian and automobile access connections between adjacent commercial properties.
- (C) Landscaping. The intent of this section is to require the integration of all landscape improvements with the overall project site requirements. All plant materials shall be used to enhance the existing area, particularly as viewed from an adjacent right-of-way, and to mitigate development impacts. Landscape plans shall be submitted to the Planning Department for design review. The following is in addition to Ordinance No. 98 (Tree Protection and Replacement Ordinance) and shall be implemented:
 - (1) Plant materials shall be used as accent elements at roadside entryways to provide a definite sense of arrival to commercial properties. Plant materials shall consist of ground cover, herbaceous ornamentals, shrubs, understory, and/or overstory trees adjacent to the establishment's monument sign(s). These materials shall be clustered while maintaining adequate sight distance to and from the entryway. Entryway plantings shall be compatible with adjacent landscape areas in species selection and provide a cohesive transition between landscape plantings.
 - (2) All landscape areas shall provide a design of appropriate character and shall incorporate a minimum of forty (40%) percent evergreen trees and shrubs.
 - (3) A minimum twenty-five (25) foot wide landscape strip shall be provided along the proposed future rights-of-way and reservation lines of Georgia Highway 141/Peachtree Parkway.
 - (4) All landscape strips are required to contain a combination of at least two (2) of the following elements to provide a minimum of three levels of scale: vegetative ground cover, herbaceous

ornamentals, and low to mid-level shrubs in addition to a combination of large canopy trees. All proposed shrubs should be a minimum of three (3) gallon size and two (2) feet high at time of planting spaced every five (5) feet on center. Strips must also include large canopy trees with total caliper measurements equivalent to a minimum of six (6) caliper inches per fifty (50) linear feet with a minimum two (2) inch caliper and eight (8) foot height required at time of installation for each tree. Tree placement may be grouped and staggered rather than following a regulated line along the road frontage. Trees shall count towards the tree density requirements as outlined in Ordinance 98 (Tree Protection and Replacement Ordinance).

- (5) All parking areas shall be screened from view with evergreen shrubs. Shrubs shall be no less than three (3) feet in height as measured from the top of curb of the parking areas. Exemption to this requirement may be requested when the site is below road grade level.
- (6) Landscape Installment and Maintenance. Certification by a registered landscape architect verifying that landscaping meets the standards of this code and the approved plans must be submitted. In addition, the contractor responsible for landscape installation must certify that all plant material has been installed per the approved plans. These certifications must be submitted prior to the release of the Certificate of Occupancy (CO).
- (7) All dead and damaged plant material within landscaped areas must be replaced with a similar species within one month. If weather conditions are not appropriate for replanting, the property owner may postpone replacement for up to six (6) months. Replacement trees and shrubs shall be of similar size to trees or shrubs being replaced.
- (8) Performance Security. When planting stock availability is low or weather conditions are not appropriate for planting new trees, shrubs, and/or perennials, the property owner may postpone planting for up to six (6) months, provided that performance security is posted with Forsyth County in accordance with the following criteria:
 - (a) Security shall be in an approved form submitted to the Department of Planning and Development with appropriate documentation of stock availability and weather conditions.
 - (b) Security shall be in an amount equal to 110 percent of the cost of materials, installation, and guarantee, as demonstrated by a signed contract between the owner and a landscape contractor and approval by Department of Planning and Development.

An inspection shall be made by the Department of Planning and Development of all plantings to assure compliance with plan requirements prior to release of performance security. Forsyth County will use the performance security at the time of expiration if the planting requirements have not been fulfilled, or if the owner has not requested an extension. Funds received from the performance security will be used to bring the project into compliance. One six (6) month extension is permitted with documented justification. Any inspections performed after the final inspection for project release are subject to re-inspection fee schedules, which shall be maintained on file at the Department of Planning and Development.

- (9) Retaining walls, if necessary, must be faced with brick, stone, cast stone or split face modular block if visible from the right-of-way.

21-8.6 **Architectural Design Standards.** The architectural design standards established herein apply to all commercial development requiring a land disturbance permit. They are intended to achieve a base level of quality for architectural and landscape design that is responsive to its context and contributes to the overall character of the overlay district. The architectural criteria listed below establish minimum design standards for buildings within the overlay district in order to reduce the impacts of commercial development on adjacent properties. The highest quality of architectural design and innovation is encouraged. These standards are in addition to the design criteria contained in Chapters 11 and 12.

- (A) Building Materials and Architectural Treatments. The following design standards, guidelines, and enhancements are established to create a sense of architectural consistency throughout the overlay district and to ensure high quality architectural design.
 - (1) Exterior building materials on all commercial development shall consist of a minimum of seventy-five (75) percent per vertical wall plane of brick, natural or pre-cast stone, and/or glass if visible from the right-of-way or if adjacent to a property used or zoned residential or agricultural. If multiple establishments are contained within one contiguous structure, the percentage pertains to the entire façade rather than individual façade fronts.
 - (2) Accent wall materials on all commercial development shall not exceed twenty-five (25) percent per vertical wall plane. Accent building materials include, but are not limited to, exterior finish

- insulation systems, stucco, and painted dimension wood. If multiple establishments are contained within one contiguous structure, the percentage pertains to the entire façade rather than individual façade fronts. Smooth, split face and/or rib faced concrete masonry units, aluminum siding, vinyl siding, and corrugated steel are prohibited.
- (3) The principle entry area of a building, or if in a shopping center the largest tenant or a central location of a group of buildings, shall be articulated and should express greater architectural detail than other portions of the building. Entries shall include at least one of the following or similar architectural elements:
- (a) overhangs
 - (b) canopies
 - (c) recesses/projections
 - (d) columns
 - (e) arcades
 - (f) corniced parapets over the door
 - (g) peaked roof forms
 - (h) arches
 - (i) display windows
 - (j) integral planters or wing walls that incorporate landscaped areas and/or places for sitting
- (4) Freestanding accessory structures shall have architectural detailing and design elements consistent with the primary buildings of the development complex to provide a cohesive design.
- (5) Roof features. Rooflines on commercial buildings shall incorporate roof features (extensions, and/or projections such as gable, hip, parapet, dormers or others) that achieve visual interest through variation along one third of the entire horizontal length of roofline. These features shall conform to the following specifications where applicable:
- (a) The roof pitch of sloped roofs shall be a minimum of 4:12.
 - (b) Roof styles for multi-building complexes shall be compatible and consistent with roof designs for the entire complex.
- (6) Burglar bars, fiberglass awnings, and steel-roll down curtains are prohibited except at the structure's rear. Burglar bars are prohibited on the rear if visible from a public street. Burglar bars are also prohibited on the rear of an outparcel building if visible from the main structure.
- (C) Color. All exterior painted surfaces on commercial structures visible from the right-of-way shall be painted in neutrals and earth tones. Neutrals refer to blacks, whites, beiges or grays while earth tones refer to browns, umbers, sienna, terracotta and brick tones. Fluorescent colors and those bright in intensity are prohibited. Glass, metal, natural stones, and sign faces are excluded from the color requirements.
- (D) Exterior Lighting. All lighting for commercial development shall be designed to integrate with the overall development character.
- (1) Lighting shall be architecturally integrated with the style, material, and color of on-site structures.
 - (2) Lighting shall be unobtrusive and refrain from adverse impact of adjacent properties and public right-of-ways. See 16-4.22 for fixture type, light spillage, and height regulations.
 - (3) Exposed neon and fluorescent lighting is not permitted except for open and closed signs.
 - (4) For drive-under canopies and pump islands, the luminaries shall be recessed into the canopy ceiling so that the bottom of the luminaries does not extend below the ceiling.
 - (5) Promotional beacons, search lights, laser source lights, strobe lights or any similar light when projected above the horizon, tube lighting, and lighting used for causing sky glow to attract attention in excess of the lighting used to provide safety, security and utility are prohibited. Projects that want to integrate lines or rows of lights within a defined pedestrian plaza may seek administrative approval upon submission of lighting specifications. Such lights shall not be placed permanently on building exteriors.
 - (6) Pedestrian street lights, not to exceed fourteen (14) feet in height, shall be installed along SR 141/Peachtree Parkway from Majors Road to SR 9/Atlanta Highway per GDOT approved lighting plan.
- (E) Screening. In addition to regulations set forth in Chapter 12, the following standards shall apply:

- (1) Accessory site features including, but not limited to, meters, meter boxes, electrical transformers, and other equipment located on the ground shall be screened from view from public rights-of-way, residential uses, or any residential or agricultural zoning category by placement behind the main building, 100% opaque fencing, berm and/or a vegetative screen planted according to County buffer standards.
- (2) Flat roofs, roof mounted equipment and other accessories shall be screened from view from the public rights-of-way, residential uses or any residential or agricultural zoning category by a parapet, gable roof, roof screen, or other architectural feature. Roof equipment and roof screens shall be finished to match the roof or parapet wall. When the relationship between building roofs and adjoining public streets and/or residential developments make screening of roof equipment impossible (e.g. road higher than roof), a parapet of no less than four feet in height shall be installed.
- (3) Loading areas shall be screened from the public rights-of-way, residential uses, or any residential or agricultural zoning category by placement behind the main building or appropriately scaled wall, the use of earthen berms that are no less than 5 feet in height at the time of planting and/or a vegetative screen planted according to County buffer standards.
- (4) Drive-thru facilities and stacking lanes, when contiguous to any public right-of-way, residential use, or pedestrian gathering area shall be obscured from view by an earthen berm and/or a vegetative screen planted according to County buffer standards.
- (6) Storage of shopping carts shall be located adjacent to the building where the carts are utilized. Storage/enclosure shall be made out of masonry to match the exterior building materials. Parking lot corrals are allowed.
- (7) Walls or fences, required or otherwise, when visible from the right-of-way shall complement the exterior materials of the primary structure on site.
- (8) Chain link fencing is prohibited on SR 141/Peachtree Parkway frontage. If fence sides are visible from the right-of-way, they must be screened with evergreen trees, shrubs, and/or decorative fencing for their full length and height.

21.8-7 **Signage.** This section establishes minimum standards to promote and ensure a cohesive and unified identification program within the overlay district. A detailed signage plan is required to be submitted that addresses and conforms to all provisions set forth in this section. The signage plan shall address sign dimensions, materials, height, color scheme, lighting, and location of each sign on the building and on the ground. In addition to Ordinance 74 (Sign Ordinance), the following shall apply:

- (A) Freestanding sign structure/base materials shall match the principal building material.
- (B) Wall signs shall not cover architectural features or details, and not extend beyond the roof line or outer edges of the building.
- (C) Where there is more than one sign on a site, signs shall be complementary to each other in shape and related components and type of construction materials.
- (D) Any exterior light source shall be completely shielded and directed solely on the sign and not upon any other object or adjacent properties.