

Model Zoning Ordinance Central Places

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Downtown Awakening is a multi-phase program to help municipalities stimulate reinvestment in Delaware County's Central Places. This project is a part of the initial phase of the program to create a series of long-range vision plans, each with a specific and coordinated strategic action plan for implementation. This program is an implementation effort of Delaware County 2035, the County's comprehensive plan.

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Section I: Introduction

Many downtowns and main streets across the region, referred to as "Central Places" in Delaware County 2035, have experienced renewed vibrancy and economic development. As people gravitate towards these Central Places, it is important for local communities to have zoning ordinances that support appropriate projects and enhance people's desired experiences. The Central Places Model Zoning Ordinance serves as a guide for local communities to implement a contemporary zoning ordinance and understand the implications of various options within the zoning ordinance text. It includes model text that can be modified to maintain and enhance the unique development and design character of each Central Place while supporting economic development.

BACKGROUND

The idea of "downtown" brings to mind images of bustling shops, outdoor seating, and community events for many people. Downtowns are often walkable destinations integrated with surrounding neighborhoods and can be found throughout Delaware County. Streets typically have improved pedestrian amenities, such as wider sidewalks, benches, and enhanced crosswalks. Mixed land uses, with a range of building sizes and density, lend a unique character and identity to these areas. Apartments or offices can often be found above street level retail in buildings along primary streets. Surrounding streets are typically comprised of apartments and single-family homes.

Real estate trends in recent years show an increased desire for housing that is located within walking distance to shopping, dining, and other cultural attractions. Further, many homebuyers emphasize proximity to transit when selecting a home to purchase. As such, increasing walkability and developing complete streets will help to make communities more attractive to potential renters and buyers.

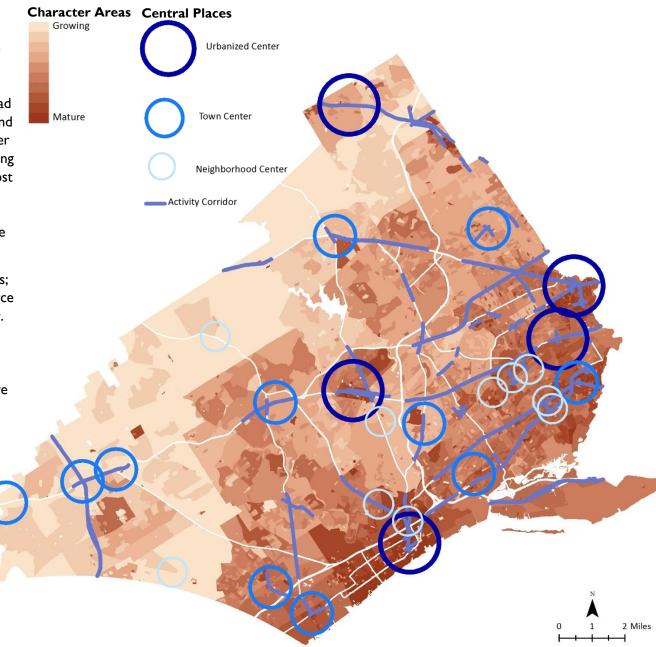
Different Central Places have unique sets of conditions that will impact the use of this Model Zoning Ordinance. Some Central Places are fortunate to attract ongoing development and have high commercial occupancy rates and a diverse mix of consumers and markets. Others may have experienced commercial tenancy loss and a decline in the residential population. Some Central Places are in the process of revitalization, attracting new development and redeveloping older buildings, transit facilities, and infrastructure while others have not started this process and this Model Zoning Ordinance may provide a foundation for improvement. This guide will help areas seeking new vitality and those looking to maintain or grow current conditions.



Community Framework

Delaware County 2035, the County's comprehensive plan, organizes the diverse place types of the County into Character Areas and Central Places. The County has four Character Area types, which are broad areas with similar development patterns and characteristics. The four types of Character Areas are: Mature Neighborhoods, Growing Suburbs, Greenways, and Open Space. Most communities have a spectrum including all four Character Areas and any individual location includes characteristics of multiple Character Areas.

There are also four types of Central Places; all are community focal points that reinforce or establish a sense of place and character. The four types of Central Places are: Urbanized Centers, Town Centers, Neighborhood Centers, and Activity Corridors. Examples, but not an exhaustive list, of Character Areas are highlighted in the map to the right.



Urbanized Centers are the largest of the three types of Central Places. They generally consist of multiple streets, a central business district containing a mix of land uses, and public transit facilities. The combination of mixed-uses and access to regional rail lines and busways ensures consistent activity throughout a day and makes Urbanized Centers active locations for transit-oriented developments. The street grid is connected with a developed sidewalk network creating a walkable, pedestrian oriented environment. Urbanized Centers are usually surrounded by older, mature residential neighborhoods and attract their foot traffic. Examples of Urbanized Centers in Delaware County include the 69th Street Center of Upper Darby Township, Chester City, Media Borough, and Wayne, Radnor Township.



Town Centers are smaller than Urbanized Centers, usually consisting of a main street or a town square adjacent to small-to mid-sized residential enclaves. Mixed land uses are still important, however commercial activity in Town Centers is usually at a smaller scale and lower intensity than in Urbanized Centers. Blocks are medium-sized and may contain a mix of retail, commercial, and residential uses, making the area a walkable destination. Public transit may be available through regional rail stations or bus stops which connect people from a wider area to these centers. Examples of Town Centers in Delaware County include the Swarthmore town center, Havertown in Haverford Township, Marcus Hook, and Ridley Park.



Neighborhood Centers are the smallest Central Place, often existing at the intersection of roads, or commuter rail lines or bus lines, surrounded by pockets of residential neighborhoods. They are small, defined areas of commercial, retail, and civic use. They may be walkable due to their proximity to residential areas and typically have a unique history or character, creating a focal point for the surrounding communities. Examples of Neighborhood Centers include *Aldan*, *Booths Corner* in Bethel Township, *University Crossing* in Chester City, and *Gradyville* in Edgmont Township.



USE OF THIS MODEL ZONING ORDINANCE

The provisions contained in the Model Zoning Ordinance are designed to promote growth and development that will maintain and enhance Central Places or support their revitalization, while preserving their existing scale and design or building towards the community vision. The provisions address the design features that comprise the principal features of Central Places. These features include mixed uses, preservation of historic structures, build-to lines, appropriate building heights, floor area ratios, surface parking design standards, streetscape enhancements, lighting, and other features discussed in Section 2.

The Model Zoning Ordinance may be adopted by any municipality in the County that contains a Central Place as described in Delaware County 2035, or as defined by the township or borough. The provisions may be adopted in their entirety as a new Central Places zoning district, or selectively incorporated into the existing municipal zoning district of a central place. The model provisions are organized in the form of a standard zoning district establishing permitted uses, special permit uses, accessory uses, lot dimensional and area requirements, building size, height, and setback standards, and development intensity appropriate for Central Places.

Decision Points and Annotations

The three types of Central Places, while reflecting common land use principles and design features, also differ in their size, scale, function and character. The Model Zoning Ordinance recognizes these differences by providing annotations in the right-hand margins of the text that provide recommended variations in the model provision which are calibrated specifically to urban, town or neighborhood centers. The annotations occur at key points in the Model Zoning Ordinance that are related to the design features in Section 2. Annotations noted as "decision points" reflect an opportunity for the community to customize the ordinance to fit their community character.

Section I: Introduction

An overview of the Model Zoning Ordinance document.

Section 2: Design Features

Defines the basic design features that create the built environment.

Section 3: Annotated Model Ordinance

An annotated version of the Model Zoning Ordinance.

Section 4: Editable Model Ordinance

An editable copy of the Model Zoning Ordinance for use by communities.



Section 2: Design Features

The built environment of a community creates a unique experience for visitors; when appropriately designed, it can make people feel welcome, comfortable, and encourage them to spend time in the community. Design features, which are commonly regulated through a community's zoning ordinance and subdivision and land development ordinance (SALDO), serve as the "building blocks" of the built environment and visitor experience. They may include such items as building height, parking location, and streetscape amenities. The manner in which design features are used, their size, shape, and location all affect the way that people feel and perceive a community – they create powerful and long-lasting impressions. The appropriate combination of design features is integral to the vitality and appeal of local downtowns and is what makes them important focal points in the community. This section defines the primary design features and the impact they have on downtowns and identifies best practices for use of each feature.

Design Features:

- Mixed-Uses
- Build-to Line
- Building Height
- Floor Area Ratio (FAR)
- Exterior Lighting
- Screening of Refuse Areas
- Outdoor Dining
- Parking
- Pedestrian Design Standards
- Building Orientation and Entrances
- Building Walls and Windows
- Architectural Pattern
- Streetscape Elements
- · Landscaping and Greening
- Street Trees
- Parking Lot Landscaping
- Courtyards, Plazas, Squares, and Gardens
- Historic Buildings
- Signs

MIXED-USES

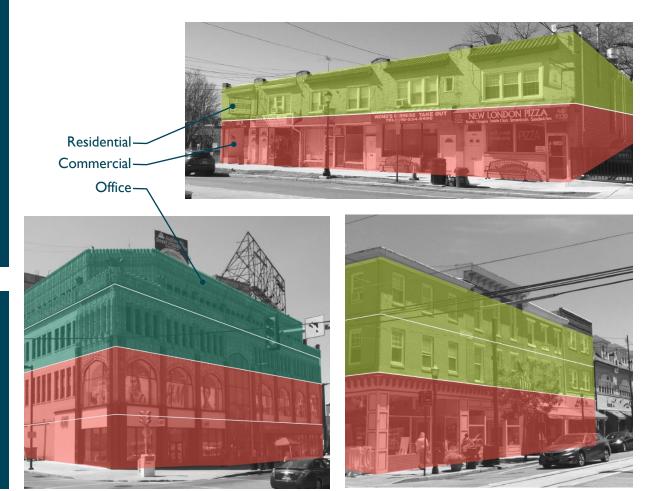
Mixed-uses are comprised of diverse use types located within the same district, street, or building. Mixed-uses support daily shopping and service needs, provide employment, residential-living opportunities, and recreational and community facilities. They contribute to the economic success of downtowns.

Mixed-uses encourage ongoing pedestrian foot traffic and activity throughout the day. Retail stores, commercial services, and offices typically attract users during the day. Residences, stores, dining, entertainment, and cultural uses retain activity during evenings and weekends.

Mixed-uses are one of the defining characteristics of Central Places and integral to establishing and maintaining an active and lively downtown district.

Q DECISION POINT #1

See Section 2 of the Model Zoning Ordinance for recommended uses for Urban, Town, and Neighborhood centers.



BUILD-TO LINE

The build-to line is where the property line meets the public right-of-way. Buildings are usually developed up to the sidewalk in downtown and mains streets, leading to a consistent building line and promoting pedestrian foot traffic. When buildings are set too far back from the sidewalk, pedestrians may perceive the street as uninviting as empty spaces detract from the attraction and activity of storefronts.

The Model Zoning Ordinance requires new buildings to be placed along the sidewalk or within a maximum setback of the average of surrounding buildings. Setbacks from the sidewalk are permitted for purposes of a plaza, square, courtyard, recessed entrance, or outdoor dining.

See Section 3.C of the Model Zoning Ordinance.





BUILDING HEIGHT

Building height establishes the street wall, enclosure, and the shared public space of downtowns and main streets. One to threestory low-rise buildings characterize town and neighborhood centers with moderate intensity of use and an accessible scale. Mid-rise and high-rise buildings allow a greater intensity of use which generates more activity, creating an urban character.

Specifying building height maximums and minimums can ensure new development is compatible with the existing or desired scale and character of downtown or main street. Setback requirements for upper stories can mitigate the bulk of taller buildings contributing to an open and inviting streetscape.

Q DECISION POINT #3

See Section 3.G of the Model Zoning
Ordinance for recommended building height
standards for Central Places.







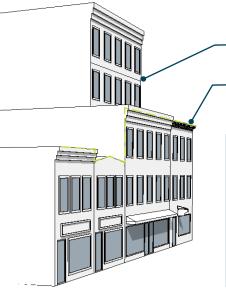
For the purposes of this Model Zoning Ordinance, the following assumptions are made regarding height:

One-story: 12 feet
Two-story: 24 feet
Three-story: 36 feet
Four-story: 48 feet
Add 12 feet for each
additional story



Traditional Roof Alignment

Upper story setback requirements can help to mitigate the effects of taller buildings and maintain a traditional architectural pattern while still allowing for a greater FAR.



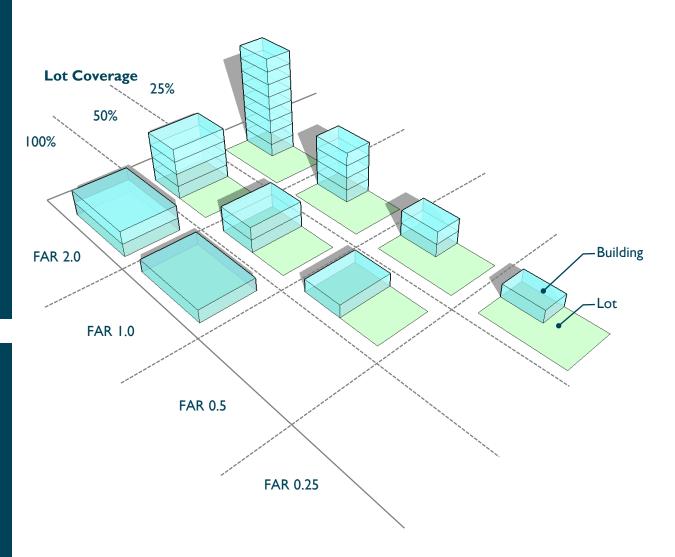
FLOOR AREA RATIO

The floor area ratio (FAR) regulates the size and height of a building, limiting the total floor area to a proportion of the lot area upon which a building is located. Along with a building height maximum, floor area ratio can enable development of an appropriate size and intensity for Central Places while providing for flexibility in the design of a building and site.

Building footprint is the area encompassed by a building's outer walls at ground-level. Specifying a maximum non-residential building footprint for Central Places can ensure development compatible with the scale and design of traditional downtowns, rather than a larger, big-box style typical of more automobile-oriented development.

Q DECISION POINT #4

See Section 3.H of the Model Zoning Ordinance for recommended FAR's for urban, town and neighborhood centers and allowable non-residential building footprints.



EXTERIOR LIGHTING

Exterior lighting illuminates buildings and signs helping to provide nighttime site visibility and sign legibility. Exterior lighting should be designed to enhance a site, highlighting a building's architecture and entrances, and providing safety and security for pedestrians.

Exterior lighting can also be used to highlight gateway areas to downtowns and main streets. All exterior lighting should be designed to prevent glare onto adjacent properties.

The lighting fixtures themselves are important design features and should be selected to fit appropriately with the existing or desired character of a Central Place.

See Section 4.B of the Model Zoning Ordinance.





SCREENING OF REFUSE AREAS

Screening refuse areas creates a more attractive streetscape by shielding views and access to the trash and byproducts of commercial and other uses. It reduces their visual impact and improves the appearance of the downtown district, making it more likely that pedestrians will continue to visit the surrounding area. As buildings and uses are generally denser in Central Places, there will likely not be enough room for planted buffers. As such, screening may be accomplished with decorative fencing or building extensions.

See Section 4.C of the Model Zoning Ordinance.





OUTDOOR DINING

Outdoor dining in seasonal weather is an appealing amenity that can attract diners to sit-down restaurants and other food and beverage establishments. It also connects customers to the exterior spaces of buildings, stimulating an active and interesting streetscape.

Outdoor dining in front of or alongside restaurants places diners within the visual frame of the sidewalk. Social interaction is facilitated and personal safety may be enhanced by allowing diners to utilize the sidewalk as a public space. Outdoor dining should be regulated to ensure a safe, clear path along the sidewalk for pedestrians and emergency responders.

See Section 4.E of the Model Zoning Ordinance.





PARKING

Available parking is an important part of downtowns and main streets. However, off-street surface parking lots can be unattractive, interrupting the building line and creating excessive curb-cuts that break the sidewalk connections and conflict with safe pedestrian movement.

Surface parking lots should be located at the rear or side of buildings when possible to minimize their intrusiveness. An excess of parking may be minimized through shared parking arrangements, where multiple uses may share spaces in the same parking lot. Additionally, curb-cuts can be reduced through connections between adjacent parking lots.

Structured parking can minimize the need for surface parking and complement the existing streetscape of Central Places with ground floor commercial uses. When possible, structure parking should be located on the periphery of the downtown to encourage more pedestrian activity.

P DECISION POINT #5

See Section 5 of the Model Zoning Ordinance for recommended standards for parking standards.







It is important to note that meeting all parking requirements on site may not be feasible given that lot sizes and shapes cannot be easily altered to meet commercial needs and that the demolition of buildings in the commercial core to provide parking is in conflict with the intent to preserve the existing character and streetscape of this district. Communities may allow developers to provide a fee-in-lieu of established parking to help address this matter.

Funding from this fee can be used for a range of improvements, such as construction of public parking, pedestrian facilities (e.g., sidewalks, crosswalks, or bumpouts), bicycle facilities, transit facilities, and maintenance of these facilities.

PEDESTRIAN DESIGN STANDARDS

Design standards for sidewalks ensure that downtowns and main streets have the access and connectivity needed to make them commercial and employment hubs and residential enclaves.

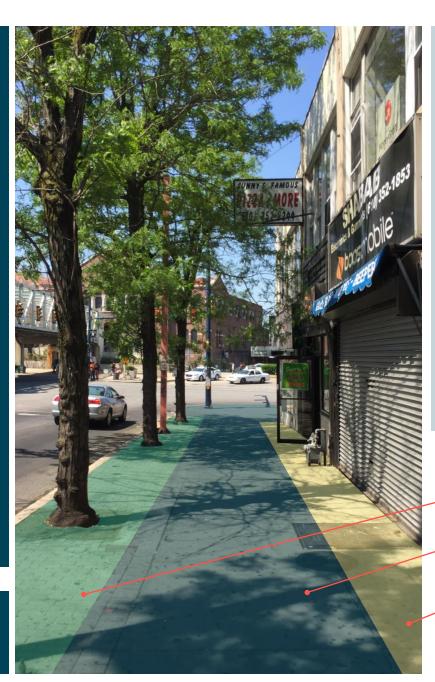
A continuous sidewalk system allows people to walk to shops, transit, and other amenities. Sidewalk connections, such as crosswalks and bulb-outs enhance pedestrian comfort and safety.

The Model Zoning Ordinance requires sidewalks along all street frontages and that they connect to building entrances, parking areas, existing sidewalks, and transit stops. Pedestrian access, comfort, and safety is an important component of a successful Central Place.

The appropriate width for sidewalks will vary depending on the scale of the downtown, but it is important to consider site furnishings and similar amenities that may impact the effective width for pedestrians.

Q DECISION POINT #6

See Section 6.A of the Model Zoning Ordinance for recommended pedestrian design standards.



In order to determine an appropriate sidewalk width, it is important to understand the manner in which sections of the sidewalk function.

Furnishing Zone:

A designated space that serves as a buffer between the pedestrian zone and vehicular movement; includes space for street trees and furnishings such as benches, trash cans, lights, and other utilities.

Pedestrian Zone:

Space to remain clear of obstructions for pedestrian movement.

Frontage Zone:

Space immediately adjacent to the building that acts as a transition between internal uses and the pedestrian zone; may include small, pedestrian-scale signage or planters.

Furnishing Zone

– Pedestrian Zone

Frontage Zone

BUILDING ORIENTATION AND ENTRANCES

Building orientation is the direction of the principal façade and entrance(s) of a building and its location relative to the street and sidewalk.

Buildings in Central Places should be oriented towards pedestrians. Entrances should be visible and accessible from the sidewalk along the street in order to encourage and support pedestrian activity downtown. When parking is located in the rear or along-side a building, pedestrian access to the main entrance and/or a secondary entrance should be installed.

See Section 6.B.1.a of the Model Zoning Ordinance.







BUILDING WALLS AND WINDOWS

Blank, solid walls along building frontages should be avoided in downtowns and main streets. Building frontage should contain the principal entrance to a building as well as windows to create visibility into downtown establishments.

A minimum percentage of the area of building frontage should contain windows. The transparency created connects the activity inside of a building to pedestrians outside. This helps draw pedestrians into businesses and creates an interesting and inviting streetscape for people.

Building frontages exceeding a specified length should contain articulation or other architectural treatments at intervals to reduce the monotony of extended, flat walls.

P DECISION POINT #7

See Section 6.B. I.b of the Model Zoning Ordinance for standards the minimum percentages of building frontage that must contain windows.



- Consistent Transparency



Limited Transparency

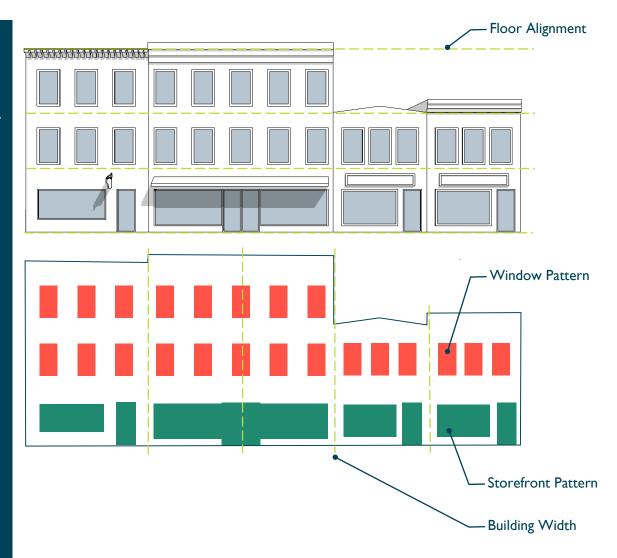
ARCHITECTURAL PATTERN

Architectural pattern addresses the consistency between buildings. Architectural pattern addresses building massing, or three-dimensional size and shape. It also addresses the horizontal architectural features such as the location and proportion of entrances and windows, and the relative alignment of top, middle and base floors. The use of compatible building materials and roof styles is also part of architectural pattern.

Traditional downtowns and main streets typically exhibit a degree of consistency and proportionality in massing and architectural detail creating a visual pattern that defines a unique place and identity. New development should complement existing buildings by exhibiting characteristics of the architectural pattern.

Architectural pattern influences the experience of visitors; a compatible building size, location, and placement of ground floor windows and doors can foster pedestrian activity.

See Section 6.B.1.b.5 of the Model Zoning Ordinance.



STREETSCAPE ELEMENTS

Streetscape elements are enhancements placed along roads, sidewalks, and building frontages. Streetscape elements can improve the safety, accessibility, and appearance of Central Places by calming traffic, augmenting the pedestrian network, and providing visual and aesthetic amenities.

Typical streetscape elements include:

- Textured crosswalks
- Curb bump-outs
- · Benches and seating
- Trash and recycling receptacles
- Wayfinding signage and displays
- Decorative lighting
- Gardens and water features
- Landscaping and planters
- Banners and gateway signage
- Clock towers

While improved streetscapes are often referred to as "beautification" projects, they set the experience for visitors and send a message to current and potential investors that the community cares about its downtown.

Q DECISION POINT #8

See Section 7 of the Model Zoning Ordinance for recommended streetscape elements and development bonuses to incentivize their provision.





LANDSCAPING AND GREENING

Landscaping and greening involve the introduction of grass, plants, flowers, and other natural flora and vegetation into the built environment. These elements serve a number of purposes enhancing the visual and aesthetic appeal of downtown as well as improving the environment.

Landscaping and greening elements can include grass strips and plantings between sidewalks and curbs and in street medians; shrubs, bushes, and trees; flowers in decorative hanging baskets, planters, and window boxes; and the landscaping of yards and along perimeters of properties.

Together, these elements help to provide visual and physical separation between pedestrian and vehicular spaces; this encourages longer stays downtown by increasing the comfort level of pedestrians.

PDECISION POINT #8

See Section 7 of the Model Zoning Ordinance for recommended standards for landscaping and greening elements.







STREET TREES

Trees planted along the sidewalk and other public spaces in downtown and main street districts serve a number of useful functions. They can improve air quality, mitigate the negative impacts of automobiles, provide shade, screen sun glare, reduce reflective heat, and aid stormwater drainage.

Street trees also provide a scenic amenity, visually connecting the street, building frontage, and sidewalk by providing a unifying element to downtown and main street districts.

Care should be taken to maintain street trees by pruning lower branches so that signage is not blocked and remains visible to pedestrians and people in passing vehicles.

See Section 7.A.4 of the Model Zoning Ordinance.





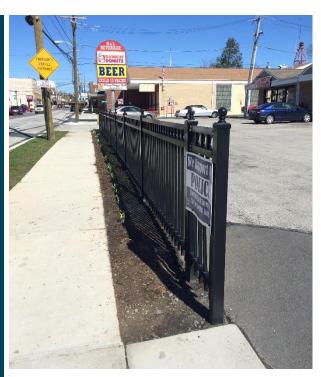
PARKING LOT LANDSCAPING

Landscaped parking lots help diminish the negative effect of large areas of paving in downtowns and main street districts.

Screening parking from adjacent streets provides some visual relief and contributes to a more pedestrian friendly streetscape.

Landscaping within parking lots is also an important design feature. Landscaped islands can help guide traffic flow, while providing visual relief and contributing to stormwater management.

See Section 7.A.6 of the Model Zoning Ordinance.





COURTYARDS, PLAZAS, SQUARES, AND GARDENS

Courtyards, plazas, and squares are public gathering spaces used for outdoor enjoyment, relaxation, and social interaction. Historically located in downtowns and along main streets they often serve as a focal point providing places for community events and serving as distinctive landmarks.

The Model Zoning Ordinance encourages the development of plazas, squares, courtyards, and gardens as an option to satisfy the requirements for landscaping and greening elements along street frontages.

See Section 7.A.7 of the Model Zoning Ordinance.





HISTORIC BUILDINGS

Historic buildings are structures officially designated as having intrinsic historic or architectural significance. Historic buildings may have local, regional, or national significance and can be protected from demolition or unregulated alteration.

Historic structures are an important element of Central Places because they offer tangible connections to the past, and provide unique architectural and design qualities that contribute to the visual character and distinctiveness of downtowns.

It is important to retrofit or expand older buildings, rather than construct new buildings, in order to preserve historic character. When an historic building cannot feasibly be used, the preservation of the façade or portions of the interior can retain important features of the structure.

See Section 8 of the Model Zoning Ordinance.









SIGNS

Signs are visual displays that identify and advertise businesses and other uses and communicate public information. Signage is pervasive and can be found on most buildings and sidewalks and along roads. Well-designed and maintained signs can attract consumers to businesses and other uses while also contributing to the character of a community. Decorative signage, such as gateway signs or street banners, can be used to create a unique sense of place.

Signage area should be proportional to the size and scale of buildings. Coordination in style and design of signs provides a unifying element to downtown, enhancing the visual appeal and distinctiveness of a Central Place. Lighting for signs should be discreet and unobtrusive. Gooseneck style exterior lighting is preferred while backlit "box-style" signs should be restricted.

See Section 9 of the Model Zoning Ordinance.







Section 3: Annotated Model Ordinance

I. Intent

- A. The intent of the Central Places Model Zoning Ordinance is to:
 - I. Promote the development of compact, pedestrian-oriented Urban, Town, or Neighborhood Centers consisting of vibrant commercial, employment, and residential living environments.
 - 2. Encourage a diverse mix of residential, business, commercial, office, institutional, educational, cultural, and entertainment activities for workers, visitors, and residents.
 - 3. Encourage pedestrian oriented development within walking distance to nearby transit services at densities that will help support transit usage and business.
 - 4. Create Central Places that are unique, attractive, and distinctive destinations for visitors and residents.
 - 5. Enhance community character through the promotion of high quality design in Central Places.
 - 6. Encourage new buildings, additions, and renovations that are consistent and complementary to the existing character of development.
 - 7. Promote the health and well-being of residents by encouraging physical activity, alternative transportation, and social interaction.

2. Uses

- A. Permitted Uses:
 - I. A mix of uses as permitted in Section 2.A.
 - 2. Apartments, above ground-floor.
 - 3. Retail sales, general, excluding drive-through facilities.
 - 4. Food and beverage retail sales, excluding drive-through facilities.
 - 5. Personal service (including health clubs and gyms).
 - 6. Repair service, consumer (including bicycles).
 - 7. Eating and drinking establishments, including outdoor dining.
 - 8. Entertainment, including theater for motion picture and stage plays.
 - 9. Financial services, excluding drive-through facilities.
 - 10. Medical services.
 - 11. Offices, above ground floor storefronts.
 - 12. Office building, with offices above ground-floor.
 - 13. Apartment building, with dwelling units above ground floor.
 - 14. Lodging, including hotels and bed-and-breakfast houses.

Decision Point #1: Mixed Uses

The type and mix of uses permitted may vary depending on the Central Place type.

Urban Centers may permit a full-range of commercial, office, food and beverage, entertainment, and institutional uses, as well as apartments and lodging facilities.

Town Centers may allow a mix of retail and service uses, with offices and dwelling units permitted, above ground floor.

Neighborhood Centers may allow the lowest-impact retail and service uses with dwelling units permitted above ground or at street level.

See description in Section 2: Design Features.

Offices should generally be located above ground-floor commercial or other permitted uses as they will not generate the foot traffic or evening and weekend visitation desired for Urban and Town Centers.

Offices in conjunction with medical and financial service uses may be permitted on ground-floors and neighborhood centers may permit offices on ground-floors.

- 15. Artisan manufacturing, trade, or handicraft production.
- 16. Artist live/work space, above ground-floor.
- 17. Cultural exhibits and libraries.
- 18. Veterinary, animal grooming, and pet products sales.
- 19. Studio/instruction school for dance, music, art, or photography.
- 20. Gallery and museum.
- 21. Religious institutions and their ancillary uses.
- 22. Day care center.
- 23. Private clubs and fraternal organizations.
- 24. Government administration, public safety, post office, community center, or public library.
- 25. Transit facilities.
- 26. Public, plaza, square, courtyard, or urban garden.
- 27. Pedestrian take-out window.
- 28. Street vendors.
- 29. Farmer's market.
- 30. Wireless communications facilities, collocated.

B. Conditional Uses:

- I. Assisted living, nursing, or group home.
- 2. Funeral homes and undertaking establishments.
- 3. Parking, commercial.
- 4. School.
- Hospital.

C. Prohibited Uses:

- I. Vehicle sales, service, and repair.
- 2. Car wash.
- 3. Gas station.
- 4. Drive-through window or facilities.
- 5. Residential storage/self-storage warehouse.
- 6. Animal shelter/boarding kennel.
- 7. Any use not permitted in this district.
- 8. Uses determined by the governing body to be of similar nature to the prohibited uses listed in this Section.

3. Development Standards

- A. Minimum Lot Size: 1,250 square feet.
- B. Minimum Lot Width: 20 feet.
- C. Build-to Line. Buildings shall be:

Conditional Uses permitted may vary based on the design, scale, and character of a particular Urban, Neighborhood, or Town Center. Urban Centers may be appropriate for a full range of institutional uses, while Town and Neighborhood Centers may limit such uses or not allow them.

Prohibited Uses are generally higher-impact, autooriented uses more appropriately located along activity corridors and the perimeter of a Central Place. Additional uses may also be appropriate for prohibition in a Central Place based on the character and function of the district.

Minimum Lot Size is specified to prevent buildings that are too small and narrow and to prevent overcrowding.

Buildings in Central Places are recommended to be developed at the **Build-to Line** with some variation allowed based on the setbacks of surrounding buildings and the provisions of plazas, courtyards, recessed entrances, or outdoor dining.

- I. Built to the sidewalk: or
- 2. The setback should be the average of the two closest structures on the same side of the street with a maximum setback of 20 feet; or
- 3. Setback from the sidewalk a maximum 20 feet for purposes of a plaza, square, courtyard, recessed entrance, or outdoor dining.
- D. Side Yard Setback: There shall be no side yard setback for buildings that share a party wall. The setback between buildings shall be 10 feet (5 feet per each building) when not sharing a party wall.___
- E. Rear Yard Setback: percent of the lot depth.
- F. Maximum Impervious Coverage: one-hundred percent (100%), maximum.
- G. Building Height: Buildings shall be a minimum of stories or feet high and a maximum of feet high, except where permitted to exceed such maximums as allowed in Section VI Bonus Provisions.
 - I. For a building taller than feet, any portion of that building feet and higher as measured at the street frontage shall be set back a minimum of the sidewalk.
- H. Floor Area Ratio (FAR): Minimum of to maximum of ...

4. General Requirements

- A. Public Utilities:
 - 1. All uses shall be served by public water and sewer facilities.
- B. Exterior Lighting:
 - I. All exterior lighting shall be designed to prevent glare onto adjacent properties. Pedestrian pathways shall be clearly marked and well lit. Lighting should be sufficient for security and identification without allowing light to shine or reflect onto adjacent sites. The height of fixtures shall be a maximum of 20 feet for parking lots and 14 feet for pedestrian walkways.
- C. Refuse Areas:
 - The storage of refuse shall be provided inside building(s) or within an outdoor area enclosed by walls or opaque fencing. Any refuse area outside of the building shall be designed to be architecturally compatible with the building(s), shall not be located in the front of the building, and be entirely screened by a fence or enclosure which is at least 6 feet high.
- D. Screening:
 - I. All wall-mounted mechanical, electrical, communication, and service equipment, including satellite dishes and vent pipes, shall be screened from public view by parapets, walls, fences, landscaping, or other approved means.

Decision Point #2: Rear Yard Setback

Rear yard setbacks may vary based on the presence of alleys or the proximity of residential uses. Central Places that have rear-alley access may not require a rear-yard setback or up to a maximum of 10 feet. Central Places that abut residential uses or zoning districts may require setbacks up to 30 feet.

Decision Point #3: Building Height

Building height may vary based on Central Place type. Consider upper story setbacks where appropriate.

Urban Centers may permit building heights up to 85 feet or 7 to 8 stories.

Town Centers may permit mid-rise buildings from 30 to 48 feet or 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ to 4 stories.

Neighborhood Centers may limit buildings to a maximum of 36 feet or $2\frac{1}{2}$ stories.

See description in Section 2: Design Features

Decision Point #4: Floor Area Ratio

The allowable floor area ration for buildings may vary based on central place type.

Urban Centers may permit an FAR in the range of 3.0 to 8.0.

Town Centers may permit an FAR range of 2.0 to 4.5. **Neighborhood Centers** may limit FAR to a range of 0.5 to 1.0.

See description in Section 2: Design Features

Exterior Lighting

See description in Section 2: Design Features.

Screening of Refuse Areas

- 2. All rooftop mechanical equipment and other appurtenances shall be concealed by or integrated within the roof form or screened from view at ground level of nearby streets. The following, when above the roofline, requires screening: stair wells, elevator shafts, air conditioning units, large vents, heat pumps, and mechanical equipment.
- 3. Parking lots visible from a street shall be continuously screened by a 3-foot-high wall/fence or plantings. Parking lots adjacent to a residential use shall be continuously screened by a 6-foot-high wall/fence or plantings. Screening shall include:
 - a) Hedges, installed at 36 inches in height; or
 - b) Mixed planting (trees and shrubs); or
 - c) Wall sections, with no wall break of more than 9 feet, and landscaping to provide a continuous screen.
- 4. Service and loading areas must be visually screened from street and pedestrian ways. For new construction, service and loading areas must be behind the building. Loading docks shall not be on the street frontage but to the side and rear of the building.

E. Outdoor Dining:

- 1. Outdoor furnishings are limited to tables, chairs, and umbrellas.
- Outdoor furniture shall be stored inside the restaurant after normal operating hours.
- 3. Planters, posts with ropes, or other removable enclosures, as well as a reservation podium, are encouraged and shall be used as a way of defining the area occupied by outdoor dining.
- 4. Refuse facilities should be provided.
- 5. Advertising or promotional features shall be limited to umbrellas and canopies.
- 6. Outdoor dining cannot impede pedestrian traffic flow. A minimum pathway of at least 5 feet free of obstacles shall be maintained.

5. Parking Standards

- A. Parking shall be provided according to the requirements of the Parking Chapter of the municipal zoning ordinance except as modified by this section.
- B. No off-street parking shall be required for non-residential uses in this district unless the gross floor area of such uses exceed 1.5 times the area of the lot, in which case off-street parking shall be provided at a minimum ratio of 1.5 spaces per each 1,000 feet of gross floor area in excess of twice the lot area.
- C. One (I) off street parking space must be provided for each dwelling unit.

Outdoor Dining

See description in Section 2: Design Features

Decision Point #5: Parking

Parking requirements may vary based on the scale of the community and its accessibility to transit. Communities should consider alternative options, such as shared parking and fee-in-lieu of parking to preserve the intent of a walkable, relatively dense downtown.

- D. Shared parking is permitted for two or more properties to provide the parking spaces required when two or more establishments share the same parking area, whether on the same lot or abutting lots, if specifically approved by the governing body subject to the following conditions:
 - I. A shared parking agreement (for two uses) or a shared parking district (for more than two uses), which involves a contractual agreement between users, is required, approved by the municipality, and recorded. A shared parking agreement allows users an opportunity, if they choose, to redesign parking lots to be more efficient in serving multiple users. This may consist of making new curb cuts between parking lots, restriping lots, or redesigning internal traffic circulation and pedestrian walkways.
 - 2. That some portion of the shared parking area lies within 750 feet from a regularly used entrance into the building served by the shared parking arrangement.
- E. Fee-in-Lieu of Parking:
 - 1. As an alternative to the direct provision of off-street parking, whether on site or off site, an applicant for a use that will require such parking under the terms of this section may seek conditional use approval from the governing body to pay a fee-in-lieu of the required parking. Where, in the opinion of the governing body in response to the applicant's request for conditional use approval, neither onsite nor off-site parking presents a feasible and desirable means of providing all the off-street parking required by this section, the governing body may authorize the payment of a fee-in-lieu of the actual creation of some or all of that required parking by the applicant.
 - 2. The fee in lieu of payment is determined by the regulations outlined in



- F. Surface Parking Design
 - Vehicular Access:
 - a) Vehicular access to surface parking shall be from an alley or side street where possible.
 - 2. Pedestrian Access:
 - a) Safe provisions for pedestrian access to and through a parking lot shall be required. Surface parking areas and pedestrian walkways connecting to them shall be well-lit.
 - 3. Location of Surface Parking:
 - a) Surface parking shall be located to the rear of the principal building or to the side (however, parking shall not be located between a building and the street). Parking shall be set back 10 feet from the legal right-of-way.

- Surface parking shall not be permitted immediately adjacent to the intersection on lots that are at the intersections of collector or arterial roads.
- c) Off-street surface parking shall not extend more than 70 feet in width along any pedestrian street frontage without an outdoor cafe, urban garden, plaza, square, courtyard, or landscaping feature with seating.
- 4. Interconnected Parking Areas:
 - a) Parking areas on abutting nonresidential lots shall be interconnected by access driveways.
 - Each nonresidential lot shall provide cross access easements for its parking areas and access driveways guaranteeing access to adjacent lots. Interconnections shall be logically placed and easily identifiable to ensure convenient traffic flow.

6. Design Standards

- A. Pedestrian Design Standards:
 - Sidewalks are required along all street frontages with a minimum width of feet.
 - 2. Sidewalks are required to connect the street frontage to all front building entrances, parking areas, central open spaces, and any other destination that generates pedestrian traffic. Sidewalks shall connect to existing sidewalks on abutting tracts and other nearby pedestrian destination points and transit stops.
 - 3. The sidewalk pattern shall continue across driveways.
- B. Building Design Standards:
 - I. Nonresidential buildings and apartment buildings shall meet the following requirements:
 - a) Building Orientation and Entrances:
 - The front façade of buildings shall be oriented toward the principal street or thoroughfare with an everyday public entrance in this front façade.
 - (2) When buildings are located on corners, the entrance shall be located on the corner with an appropriate building articulation, such as a chamfered corner, turret, canopy, or other similar building feature. The municipal governing body may allow front façades to face existing side streets, when these façades will extend an existing commercial district along this existing side street.

Decision Point #6: Pedestrian Design Standards

Sidewalk width may vary based on Central Place type.

Urban Centers may require 12-feet sidewalk widths

Town Centers should require 10-feet sidewalks

Neighborhood Centers can allow 8-feet sidewalk minimums

See description in Section 2: Design Features

Building Orientation and Entrances should be facing a principal street or thoroughfare and connect to the existing pedestrian network. This provides storefronts with visibility and access for customers and fosters a busy streetscape.

- (3) All primary building entrances shall be accentuated. Entrances permitted include: recessed, protruding, canopy, portico, or overhang.
- b) Walls and Windows:
 - (1) Blank walls shall not be permitted along any exterior wall facing a street, parking area, or walking area. Walls or portions of walls where windows are not provided shall have architectural treatments that are similar to the front façade, including materials, colors, and details. At least four of the following architectural treatments shall be provided:
 - (a) Masonry (but not flat concrete block).
 - (b) Concrete or masonry plinth at the base of the wall.
 - (c) Belt courses of a different texture or color.
 - (d) Projecting cornice.
 - (e) Projecting metal canopy.
 - (f) Decorative tilework.
 - (g) Trellis containing planting.
 - (h) Medallions.
 - (i) Opaque or translucent glass.
 - (j) Artwork.
 - (k) Vertical/horizontal articulation.
 - (I) Lighting fixtures.
 - (m) An architectural element not listed above, as approved by the governing body, that meets the intent.
 - (2) Windows:
 - (a) The ground floor front façades of buildings visible from the pedestrian view shall consist of a minimum of percent window area, with views provided through these windows into the business. Ground floor windows shall be a maximum of 12 to 20 inches above the sidewalk.
 - (b) Upper story windows of front façades shall not be boarded or covered and shall comprise a minimum of thirty-five percent (35%) window area in the façade above the ground floor.
 - (c) Smoked, reflective, or black glass in windows are prohibited.

Portions of **Building walls** where windows are not present should contain architectural treatments to create variation and visual interest and avoid creating blank, dead spaces.

See description in Section 2: Design Features

Decision Point #7: Windows

Building frontages should contain a minimum of window transparency, the amount of which may vary depending on the central place type,

Urban Centers may require building frontages contain up to a minimum of sixty percent (60%) transparent windows

Town and **Neighborhood Centers** may require between thirty to fifty percent (30% to 50%) transparency in building frontage.

(d) Exterior security gates or roll-down security doors shall be prohibited. Link or grill type security devices shall be permitted only if installed on the interior of the building, within the window or door frames. Such security equipment shall be recessed and completely concealed during regular business hours, and shall be predominantly transparent to allow maximum visibility of the interior. Nonconforming gates shall not be rebuilt, replaced, enlarged, or altered unless made to conform to regulations.

(3) Roofs:

(a) Roofs shall be in keeping with the character of adjacent buildings or shall have pitched roofs. Pitched roofs shall have a minimum slope of 4:12 and a maximum slope of 12:12.

(4) Building Character:

(a) New infill development shall generally employ building types that are compatible to the historic architecture of the area in their massing and external treatment.

(5) Architectural Pattern:

- (a) New infill development shall also retain the historic architectural pattern rhythm of building openings (including windows and entries) of the same block.
- (b) New infill development shall also attempt to maintain the horizontal pattern of façades in the district by using a similar alignment of windows, floor spacing, cornices, awnings as well as other elements. This rhythm shall be achieved by aligning the top, middle, and base floors. Buildings shall have a distinct base at ground level using articulation or materials such as stone, masonry, or decorative concrete. The top level should be treated with a distinct outline with elements such as projecting parapet, cornice, or other projection.

(6) Massing:

(a) Buildings shall be similar in height and size or articulated and subdivided into massing that is more or less proportional to adjacent structures and maintains the existing architectural pattern.

Architectural Pattern

- (b) If a building has over 100 feet of frontage, then no single storefront shall exceed 75 feet in length.
- (c) Buildings must have at least a 3- to 5-foot variation in depth in all street façades for every 50 feet of continuous façade. Such breaks may be met through the use of bay windows, porches, porticos, building extensions, towers, recessed doorways, and other architectural treatments.

7. Streetscape and Green Area Standards

- A. The following streetscape and green area standards are required for inclusion as part of all new developments and additions or alterations along the street frontage:
 - The site shall be landscaped in accordance with the provisions Section 817 of the <u>Delaware County Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance</u> (SALDO) or the local municipal SALDO.
 - 2. Streetscape and green area standards should relate to an existing streetscape design or plan and be reviewed by the governing body. The applicant should demonstrate that these standards are met through elevations and conceptual sketches.
 - 3. Figure I, indicates the categories and minimum requirements for streetscape and green area standards. Category A, contains planting and greening elements. Category B, includes more elaborate greening elements as well as street furniture and other streetscape elements. Category C, includes more extensive building elements, streetscape improvements, and open space elements. Figure 2 presents the streetscape and green area items within each category.

Figure 1: Streetscape Requirements by Development

Building additions and alterations	Developments of 2,500-4,999 gross square feet	Developments of 5,000-9,9999 gross square feet	New developments of 10,000 gross square feet
4 points	4 points	9 points	18 points

Figure 2: Streetscape Amenities

Streetscape Feature	Points
Decorative Banners/Flags	I
Window Box	2
Additional Planting Area	2
Permanent Street Planter	2
Decorative Building Lighting	I
Bench	2
Trash Receptacle	2
Raised Planting Bed	2
Public Art/Mural	2
Trellis, Arbor or Pergola	2
Awning for Window of Door	2
Bicycle Parking for at least 5 bicycles	2
Kiosk	2
Drinking Fountain	2
Decorative Paving	2
Water Feature	2
Balconies	3
Decorative Street Lighting	3
Planting in Curb Extension	3
Urban Garden	3
Roof Garden	3
Bus Shelter	3
Clock Tower	3
Decorative Architectural Treatments	4
Plaza, Square, Courtyard	6
Façade Restoration	6
Other Amenity Approved by Governing Body	As mutually agreed upon

Decision Point #8: Streetscape Elements and Landscaping and Greening

The type and mix of streetscape amenities may vary depending on the Central Place type and desired community character.

- 4. Street Tree Standards:
 - a) Existing street trees shall be retained where feasible and incorporated into the street tree design.
 - b) Spacing:
 - (1) Street trees shall not be spaced less than 20 feet apart with a maximum spacing of 30 feet. Consideration shall be made for driveways, street lights, utility poles, underground utilities, traffic light poles and other obstructions, which may cause a spacing of greater than 30 feet in certain instances
 - c) Size:
 - (1) Each street tree shall be a minimum of 3-inch caliper diameter measured at breast height.
 - d) Tree wells and planter strips:
 - (1) Street trees shall be planted in tree wells or planter strips underlain by soil. Tree wells shall be a minimum of 4 feet long x 4 feet wide by 3.5 feet deep and covered with tree grates, concrete unit pavers, and/or cobbles. A 2-foot x 2-foot opening shall be left for the tree grate.
 - (2) Planter strips shall be a minimum of 5 feet wide
 - Street trees shall comply with all other requirements and standards of Section 817 of the Delaware County SALDO or the local municipal SALDO for elements not superseded by this zoning.
- 5. Urban Garden Standards:
 - a) Minimum size required is 300 square feet.
 - b) An urban garden shall be located where it is visible and accessible from either a public sidewalk or pedestrian connection.
 - c) Sixty percent (60%) of the garden shall be of plant materials such as trees, vines, shrubs, and seasonal flowers with year round interest. All trees shall be 3.5 inches in caliper.
 - d) A water feature is encouraged.
 - e) One seating space is required for each 30 square feet of garden area.
- 6. Parking Lot Landscaping:
 - Parking lots shall be landscaped in accordance with the provisions Section 817(D) of the Delaware County SALDO or the local municipal SALDO.
- 7. Public Plazas/Squares/Courtyards Standards:
 - a) The minimum size required is 500 square feet.

Street Trees

See description in Section 2: Design Features

Parking Lot Landscaping

See description in Section 2: Design Features

Courtyards, Plazas, Squares, and Gardens

- b) The plaza shall be located where it is visible and accessible from either a public sidewalk or pedestrian connection.
- c) A minimum of thirty percent (30%) of the plaza shall be landscaped with trees, shrubs, and mixed plantings with year round interest.
- d) The plaza shall use the following paving materials: unit pavers, paving stones, or concrete. No more than twenty percent (20%) of the plaza shall be concrete.
- e) One seating space is required for each 30 square feet of plaza area.
- f) The plaza shall not be used for parking, loading, or vehicular access (excluding emergency vehicular access).
- g) Public art and fountains are encouraged.
- h) Trash containers shall be distributed throughout the plaza.
- i) The plaza shall provide shade by using the following elements: trees, canopies, trellises, umbrellas, or building walls.
- j) One tree is required for every 500 square feet. Trees shall be of 3.5 inches in caliper.
- k) Lighting shall be provided.
- l) Plazas shall connect to other activities such as outdoor cafes, restaurants, and building entries.
- m) Plazas shall be located if possible to have maximum direct sunlight with a south or west orientation.
- n) Plazas, if constructed by a private entity, shall have an agreement with the community for public access.

8. Bonus Provisions

A. Bonus Provisions: An increase of FAR for a total Floor Area Ratio of is permitted for the following:

Figure 3: Building floor area ratio bonus features

Feature	Bonus FAR
Structured Parking A minimum of fifty percent (50%) of the provided parking spaces shall be available to the public.	
Structured parking is provided within the building footprint.	
Preservation of a historic structure or facade on the development site Must follow the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation.	
Public Plaza, Square, or Courtyard Minimum 250 square feet.	
Shall be located where it is visible and accessible from either a public sidewalk or pedestrian connection.	
Thirty percent (30%) of the area shall be landscaped with trees, shrubs, and mixed plantings with year-round interest.	
One seating space is required for each 30 square feet of public area.	
Shall not be used for parking, loading, or vehicular access (excluding emergency vehicle access).	
Replacement of Existing Nonconforming Signage Where applicable. Shall include approved permitted signage consistent with Section 9 herein.	
Provision of Streetscape Amenities Provision of streetscape amenities from Figure 2: Streetscape Amenities with a total of 10 points above the total required amount from Section 7.	

An increase in the permitted floor area ratio may be allowed based on the provision of value-added features to new or existing development, as shown in Figure 3.			
The amount of the permissible increase, or bonus, will vary based on the Central Place Type and community character.			
	Recommended Bonus FAR		
Feature	Urban Center	Town Center	Neigh. Center
Structured parking	2.0	1.5	N/A
Preservation of a historic structure or facade	1.5	- 1	0.5
Public plaza, square, or courtyard:	0.5	0.5	.25
Replacement of existing nonconforming signage	0.5	0.5	.25
Provision of streetscape amenities	0.5	0.5	.25
Green roof	0.5	0.5	.25
Alternative energy sources	0.5	0.5	.25

0.5

0.5

Decision Point #9: FAR Bonus

Green building design

Feature	Bonus FAR
Green Roof The green roof shall cover at least seventy percent (70%) of the net roof area (the total gross area minus areas covered by mechanical equipment). Green roofs shall be designed and installed under the direction of a professional with demonstrated expertise in green roof design and construction. Vegetation must be maintained for the life of the building. The green roof shall conform to the best available technology standards, such as those published by LEED ² .	
Alternative Energy Sources Install a solar, wind, or geothermal power generation facility that is designed to provide at least fifteen percent (15%) of the expected annual energy use for the building. The facility shall be designed and installed under the direction of a professional with demonstrated expertise in the design and construction of such facilities.	
Green Building Design Applicant must submit letter of intent communicating commitment to achieve LEED-NC or EB Silver Rating or similar standard on their building. Within 90 days of receiving the final Certificate of Occupancy, the applicant must submit documentation that demonstrates achievement of a LEED Silver Rating or similar standard.	

9. Signs

- A. The following sign types are permitted.
 - I. Wall Signs:
 - a) Projecting no more than 12 inches beyond the building and not exceeding ten percent (10%) of building façade
 - 2. Projecting Signs:
 - a) No lower than 8 feet above grade and not exceeding 5 square feet. Projecting signs shall exceed the eave line or top of parapet wall of the principal building, whichever is lower.
 - 3. Window Signs:
 - a) Not exceeding fifteen percent (15%) of the total glass area of the window.
 - 4. Awning Signs:

Signs

- a) Awning signs shall be traditional fabric foldout awning and not permanently affixed backlit awnings.
- b) The sign lettering and/or logo shall not exceed thirty percent (30%) of the exterior surface of the awning or canopy.
- c) A minimum height of 8 feet from the lowest point to the sidewalk is required.
- 5. Marquee Signs:
 - a) Marquee Signs shall not exceed 150 square feet and maintain a vertical clearance of ten feet above grade.
- 6. Sign Illumination:
 - a) The use of flashing, pulsating, or moving lights shall be prohibited.
 - b) Backlit, halo-lit illumination, or reverse channel letter with halo illumination are recommended.
 - c) External illumination should be unobtrusive, such as goose neck lighting.
 - d) External sign lighting should be shielded to avoid glare.

10. Definitions

A. The following terms are used throughout this ordinance and shall have the following meanings:

Artisan manufacturing, trade, or handicraft production: The shared or individual use of hand-tools, mechanical tools, and electronic tools for the manufacture of finished products or parts including design, processing, fabrication, assembly, treatment, and packaging of products; as well as the incidental storage, sales, and distribution of such products. Typical artisan manufacturing uses include, but are not limited to: electronic goods; food and bakery products; beverages; printmaking; household appliances; leather products; jewelry and clothing/apparel; metal work; furniture; glass or ceramic production; and paper manufacturing.

Build-to Line: A line extending through a lot, generally parallel to the front property line which marks the location from which the vertical plane of the front of building elevation must be erected.

Façade: The exterior walls of a building facing a frontage line.

Floor Area Ratio (FAR): The ratio of a building's gross floor area to the total lot area on which the building is located.

Gross Floor Area: The sum of the gross horizontal areas of each floor of a building, measured from the exterior walls or from the centerline of the walls separating two buildings. Does not include an area used exclusively for surface or structured parking, basements at least one-half the floor to ceiling height is below grade, attics less than seven (7) feet in height, exterior balconies, uncovered steps, or interior courtyards.

Live-work Space: A live/work space is a single unit (e.g., studio, loft, or one bedroom) consisting of both a commercial/office and a residential component that is occupied by the same resident. The live/work unit shall be the primary dwelling of the occupant.

Massing: The three-dimensional shape of building(s) height, width, and depth.

Storefront: The front side of a store or a store building facing a street.



Section 4: Editable Model Ordinance

Section 4 of this Model Ordinance is an editable word document containing the language outlined in Section 3: Annotated Model Ordinance.

The word document can be downloaded at: www.co.delaware.pa.us/planning/pubs/ModelDowntownZoning.html.