

Section 5.0: Central Business District Regulations.

Purpose and Intent

The Town of Lancaster Central Business District (CBD) is regulated by form based zoning. This form based zoning code is intended to reinforce the existing development pattern and to foster vital mixed use districts. The three sub-districts are intended to promote a lively mix of uses including shop fronts, sidewalk cafes, and upper story residences and offices as well as single family residences, civic uses, and highway commercial enterprises.

Redevelopment within the CBD shall be regulated by the following zoning regulations in order to achieve the Town's vision set forth in the Master Plan. The goal of these regulations shall be to secure the harmonious and orderly evolution of these sub-districts.

All of the areas within the CBD share a common goal of an increased emphasis on the form and placement of structures, and a decreased emphasis on the function(s) contained within them. As such, this article sets careful and clear controls on building form—with broader parameters on building use—so as to shape clear, attractive public and private spaces in the CBD with a healthy mix of uses.

Wherever there appears to be a conflict between this form based code and other sections of the Zoning Ordinance (as applied to a particular development), the requirements specifically set forth in this section shall prevail. For development standards not covered herein, the other applicable sections in the Lancaster Land Use Regulations shall be used as the requirement.

Sub-districts

- a. The Regulating Plan shall locate the boundaries for the following sub-districts in the CBD:
 1. South End
 2. Middle
 3. North End

- b. Guiding Principles
 1. The goal of the building height and build to line (setback) standards is to create a healthy and vital public realm.
 2. Buildings are aligned and relate to the street in a way that reinforces the District Purpose Statement and contributes to vital and safe public space.
 3. Consistent building forms exist on both sides of the street, creating a clear public space and community identity.
 4. Vehicle storage, garbage and mechanical equipment are screened, kept away from the street, and buffered from properties in neighboring districts.

5. Within the South End sub-district, new retail and commercial activities are located on the Ground Floor along the frontage. Residential activity is not permitted on the Ground Floor, unless as a pre-existing use.
6. Parking (not including on-street parking) shall be located away from the streets and shared parking facilities and shared access to lots is required.
7. The preservation and renewal of historic buildings shall be a priority, and historic character shall be preserved and enhanced by context sensitive construction during renovations and new construction.

Standards: The standards for use and dimensions to be utilized within the CBD are shown on the Sub District Standard Sheets at the end of this section. Included in each table are the following areas:

- (a) District Purpose
- (b) Dimensional Standards Table
- (c) Diagram of Building Height
- (d) Diagram of Building Position
- (e) Design Standards
- (f) Permitted Uses

Design Requirements: The General Principles and intent of these Site Design, Architectural, and Landscape/Streetscape Standards are to provide design requirements that assist with the development and redevelopment of properties within the CBD Sub-districts. These standards were developed to reflect and preserve the character of each Sub-district, while ensuring pedestrian and vehicular safety and comfort.

a. **Site Design:**

1. **Build-to and Setbacks:** Sites within the South End CBD shall be developed so that buildings are placed at or near the back of the sidewalk. In the Middle and North End a setback is allowed, but structures are expected to relate to and reinforce the public realm along the street.
2. **Facade Alignment:** Individual, adjacent buildings shall be aligned when practical, to create a continuous form along the streetscape. New development in all Sub Districts shall take into consideration the facade alignment of existing adjacent structures. In the case of differing adjacent alignments, the new buildings shall align with the most conforming adjacent building.

3. **Parking:** Off-street parking shall conform to Standard Sheets for each district. Where feasible, the sharing of parking within adjacent lots shall be considered. Shared access to parking lots shall be considered whenever possible to limit curb-cuts onto major roadways. Parking provided for a project shall be screened from the street to a height of at least 4'. Parking shall be considered accessory and is not permitted as a principal use of a lot. No more than 25% of the total parking area may be located in front of the primary structure where permitted.
 4. **Existing Vegetation:** The protection and incorporation of existing, healthy trees is encouraged in new site plans.
 5. **Service Areas and Utilities:** Loading docks, trash/recycling facilities, utility boxes, transformers, and other such mechanical equipment shall not be visible from the street. Placement behind buildings and/or screening shall be required.
 6. **Pedestrian Access:** Safe pedestrian access that complies with the most recent Americans with Disabilities Act Accessibility guidelines shall be provided from the public way to the entrances to the buildings and parking areas.
 7. **Access Management:** Curb cuts must be limited to increase safety and preserve the capacity of the roadway network, and vehicular and pedestrian connections to adjacent properties are required.
 8. **Non-Public Realm:** The private, rear portions of the lots allow commercial operators to utilize these spaces as efficient working environments unseen by the public and allow residents to have private and semi-private (for apartment and condominium buildings) open space.
- b. **Architectural Standards:** The following standards are required and shall be utilized by the applicant. Additional standards have been included in the Site Plan Regulations to guide the applicant. The intent behind these standards is to reinforce the existing character and historic nature of Lancaster's CBD. However, modern buildings that are sensitive to that character may be permitted as well, subject to Planning Board approval.
1. **Corporate Architecture:** Architecture that serves as a 'sign' or buildings that use architecture to define a corporate identity (corporate architecture) shall not be permitted.
 2. **Building Walls (Exterior):** Building walls shall reflect and complement the traditional materials and techniques of Lancaster's architecture. They should express the construction techniques and structural constraints of traditional, long-lasting, building materials. Simple structural configurations and solid craftsmanship are favored over complexity and ostentation.

- (i) Building materials shall be context sensitive and shall reflect a consistency to be found within the sub-district. Wood, brick, stone and masonry building materials are encouraged for exterior walls.
- (ii) The building facade shall receive more attention than the rest of the building. The articulation of architectural detail should increase on lower facade levels and ground floor to enhance the public/pedestrian experience.
- (iii) Long, blank, uninterrupted walls shall be avoided at the front, street side of buildings. If such walls are unavoidable, articulation such as columns, pilasters, and masonry details, and plantings shall be used to visually break up a blank facade.

3. **Roofs and Parapets:**

- (i) Roofs and Parapets should demonstrate a commonsense recognition of the climate by utilizing appropriate pitch, drainage, and materials. Gable ends, when utilized, shall be oriented towards the primary street.
- (ii) Buildings without visible roof surfaces and overhanging eaves shall have a cornice projecting horizontally at least six (6) inches beyond the building walls. For buildings two stories or taller, the cornice projection shall increase an additional six (6) to twelve (12) inches per story.
- (iii) Skylights and roof vents are permitted but should be shielded from the street view.
- (iv) Building designs need to reflect the adjacent massing. Ornamentation should be consistent with that used in the neighborhood of buildings to reinforce the fabric and richness of the community.

4. **Windows and Doors:**

- (i) The building facade must have a pedestrian scale entrance that faces the primary frontage, and at least 30% of the facade shall be composed of windows. Principal building entrances shall be clearly visible from the street and create a safe inviting space. Overhead pedestrian covering, lighting, and business identification signage should be incorporated.
- (ii) Long expanses of horizontal windows shall be divided by mullions or vertical elements, as appropriate for the building style, so as to create vertically oriented window sections.

5. **Optional Requirements Related to Architectural Standards:**

- (i) LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) standards, or an equivalent standard (or such others as may succeed them), are optional but encouraged to be incorporated into the building design
 - (ii) Green roof technologies are encouraged, if suitable, to promote energy efficiency and stormwater management. Vegetative cover should be considered for flat roofs and solar panels should be considered for integration on all roof structures.
- c. **Landscape/Streetscape Elements:**
1. Streetscape elements such as sidewalk materials, lighting, and street trees, must be consistent within a project and complimentary to materials and planting on adjacent properties.
 2. Building facades are the public "face" of every building. Owners are encouraged to place planters, window boxes or in-ground plantings of year-round seasonal interest. Evergreen and flowering plants, perennials, and/or climbing vines shall be used to enhance areas in front of buildings.
 3. Street trees are an essential element in defining the street form. Trees are also important in traffic calming, decreasing heat-island effect by shading of pavement, and enhancing the aesthetic appeal of the district. Trees shall be planted at regular intervals, not less than 30 feet on center where possible. Adjacent trees shall be considered when choosing placement and species.
 4. In the North End Sub-district, where off-street parking is located along the streetscape in front of buildings, a 10 (ten) foot planting strip shall be incorporated along the front property line to screen parking lots. Plantings shall be at least 3'-4' tall, but shall not interfere with vehicular site lines (at entrances and exits) or pedestrian safety.
 5. Rain gardens and biofiltration swales designed to treat or infiltrate stormwater runoff are encouraged. These planting areas must be located and designed to enhance the visual quality of the development and the safety of pedestrians.
 6. Lighting: Materials and equipment chosen for lighting fixtures should be durable, energy efficient and weather well. Appropriate lighting is desirable for nighttime visibility, crime deterrence, and decoration. However, it should be noted that lighting that is too bright or intense creates glare, hinders night vision, and creates light pollution. These elements are to be avoided.
 - (i) In order to minimize light pollution, light should be directed downward to the immediate area being lighted and away from any living quarters.
 - (ii) Lights shall be located no more than sixteen (16) feet above grade.

- (iii) Floodlights or directional lights are permitted, but must be shielded or aimed in such a way that they do not shine into other lots, or the street.
- (iv) Floodlighting shall not be used to illuminate building walls.
- (v) Site lighting shall be of a design and height so as to illuminate only the lot.
- (vi) No flashing, traveling, animated, or intermittent lighting shall be on the exterior of any building, nor shall it be visible from the street or adjacent properties, whether such lighting is of temporary or long-term duration.

d. Mechanical Equipment:

1. The following shall not be stored or located within any area considered a front yard under this Code, and shall be screened from view from the street or adjacent properties: Air compressors, mechanical pumps, exterior water heaters, water softeners, utility and telephone company transformers, meters or boxes, garbage cans, storage tanks, and the like.
2. Roof mounted mechanical equipment shall be located so as to not be visible from the street, public space, or parking lots, or from the ground level of adjacent properties. Screening features employed shall use similar and/ or complementary building materials to the building on which they are located.
 - a. Renewable energy systems including solar photovoltaic panels, solar hot water systems, and small wind turbines are exempt from the shielding requirements, but placement must be considered to ensure that adjacent properties are not impacted.

Conditional Use Permit

- a. Conditional use approval for relief from the dimensional standards herein may be granted by the Planning Board (RSA 674:21 II) after proper public notice and public hearing provided that the proposed project complies with the following standards:
 1. That both public and private buildings and landscaping shall contribute to the physical definition of rights of way as civic spaces.
 2. That development shall adequately accommodate automobiles, while respecting pedestrians and the needs of public areas.
 3. That the design of streets and buildings shall reinforce safe, accessible environments.
 4. That architecture and landscape design will be guided by the local climate, topography, history, and building practice.
 5. That buildings shall be energy efficient in accordance with the state energy code at a minimum.

6. That civic buildings and public gathering places shall be provided at locations that reinforce community identity and activity.
 7. That the preservation and renewal of historic buildings shall be a priority.
 8. That the harmonious and orderly evolution of these sub-districts shall be secured through the adoption of these regulations.
 9. That the proposed building(s) shall match the more conforming façade alignment of the adjacent buildings' rather than the provisions of this code, through the issuance of a conditional use permit.
- b. Conditional use approval to permit a use under the "other" category may be granted by the Planning Board (RSA 674:21 II) after proper public notice and public hearing provided that the proposed use complies with the following standards:
1. The requested use is essential or desirable to the public convenience or welfare.
 2. The requested use will not create undue traffic congestion, nor unduly impair pedestrian safety.
 3. The requested use will not overload any public water, drainage or sewerage system nor any other municipal system to such an extent that the requested use or any developed use in the immediate area or in any other area of the town will not be unduly subjected to hazards affecting health, safety or the general welfare.
 4. Any conditional use permit which has not been acted upon in accordance with the approval of the Planning Board within two (2) years of the date of said approval shall be considered null and void.
- c. Conditional use approval shall be subject to the completion of a Conditional Use Permit by the Planning Board and the Applicant. Said permit shall be recorded at the Coos County Registry of Deeds.

Administration

- a. The CBD exists like every other district and development within the community, and is intended to be reviewed and approved as any other district. A Conditional Use Permit process with the Planning Board has been created, however, to allow for relief from the dimensional standards if necessary and to allow for consideration of additional uses. Any appeals of this section shall be treated as any other zoning appeal, and shall be directed to the Zoning Board of Appeals. Projects submitted shall follow the process outlined in the Site Plan Review Regulations.

Commercial—South End Sub-District

The information included in this Table represents the requirements for development in this District, see section xxx for additional requirements



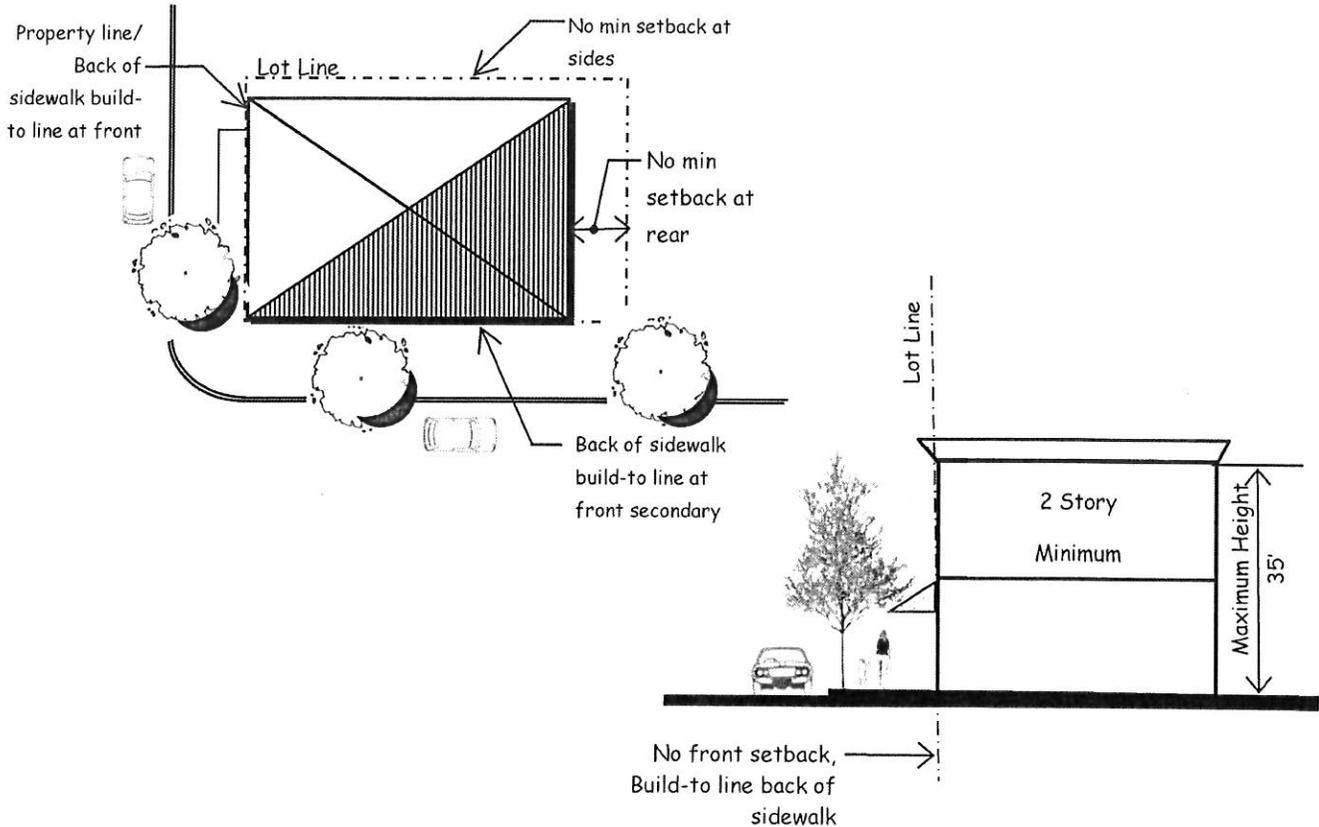
Statement of Purpose

This is the traditional commercial core for Lancaster, starting at the Town Hall and running north to Bunker Hill Street. It is characterized by multi-story, primarily 19th Century structures constructed of traditional materials, primarily brick and clapboard. There is minimal building setback from the public sidewalks. In general, structures follow their traditional pattern of ground floor retail uses and upper-story residential and/or office uses. Where on-site parking is provided, it is generally to the rear or side of the buildings. This is the historic core of the community.

Dimensional Building Table

Design Standards	
ARCHITECTURAL STANDARDS	Yes
LANDSCAPE STANDARDS	Yes
ACCESS MANAGEMENT STANDARDS	Yes
PARKING STANDARDS	Off site within 1,000'

LOT DIMENSIONS	
Density	6 Units per 10,000 sf
Min Lot Size	None
Frontage (feet)	None required
Lot Coverage	None required
PRINCIPAL BUILDING SETBACKS (Feet)	
Front Setback	Build-to at property line
Side Setback	none
Rear Setback	none
OUTBUILDING/ACCESSORY USE SETBACKS (Feet)	
Front Setback	Behind Principal Building
Side Setback	0
Rear Setback	0
BUILDING HEIGHT (Feet)	
Principal Building	35
Outbuilding	35
Minimum Stories	Two story minimum



Commercial—South End Sub-District

The information included in this Table represents the requirements for development in this District, see section xxx for additional requirements



FORM BASED CODE Use Table

Uses	South End Sub-District	Middle Sub-District	North End Sub-District
<i>Residential</i>	Permitted, but not on ground floor	Permitted	Permitted
<i>Lodging</i>	Permitted	Permitted, up to 12 rooms w/stays up to 14 days	Permitted
<i>Professional Offices/Services/Commercial</i>	Permitted	Permitted	Permitted
<i>Eating & Drinking</i>	Permitted, no drive thru	Permitted, no drive thru	Permitted
<i>Retail/Personal Services</i>	Permitted	Permitted	Permitted
<i>Civic</i>	Permitted	Permitted	Permitted
<i>Other</i>	Via Conditional Use Permit	Via Conditional Use Permit	Via Conditional Use Permit

Commercial—Middle Sub-District

The information included in this Table represents the requirements for development in this District, see section xxx for additional requirements



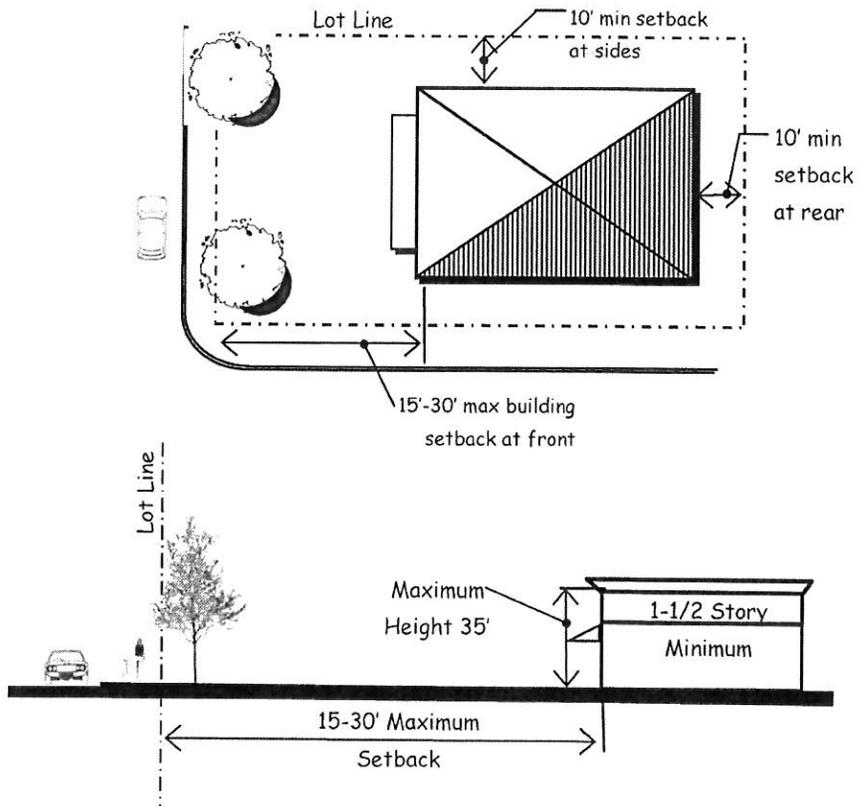
Statement of Purpose

This section of Main Street runs from Bunker Hill Street to Depot Street. It is characterized by many institutional uses: churches, the new and older courthouses, and the library. Although with towers and steeples some of the buildings are quite tall, in general this area has a lower building density and structure height than the southern end of Main Street. There are many public, or quasi-public, green spaces that are used for markets, quiet seating areas, or other non-intensive uses. Residences, or residences converting to commercial uses are present, but still at a lower density than at the southern end of Main Street.

Dimensional Standards Table

LOT DIMENSIONS	
Density	3 Units per 10,000 sf
Min Lot Size	10,000 sf
Frontage (feet)	None required
Lot Coverage	60%
PRINCIPAL BUILDING SETBACKS (Feet)	
Front Setback	15 - 30 max
Side Setback	10
Rear Setback	10
OUTBUILDING/ACCESSORY USE SETBACKS (Feet)	
Front Setback	Building setback + 15' min
Side Setback	10
Rear Setback	10
BUILDING HEIGHT (Feet)	
Principal Building	35
Outbuilding	35
Minimum Stories	One and a half story min

Design Standards	
ARCHITECTURAL STANDARDS	Yes
LANDSCAPE STANDARDS	Yes
ACCESS MANAGEMENT STANDARDS	Yes
PARKING STANDARDS	On site to side and rear



Commercial—Middle Sub-District

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FORM BASED CODE Use Table

Uses	South End Sub-District	Middle Sub-District	North End Sub-District
<i>Residential</i>	Permitted, but not on ground floor	Permitted	Permitted
<i>Lodging</i>	Permitted	Permitted, up to 12 rooms w/stays up to 14 days	Permitted
<i>Professional Offices/Services/Commercial</i>	Permitted	Permitted	Permitted
<i>Eating & Drinking</i>	Permitted, no drive thru	Permitted, no drive thru	Permitted
<i>Retail/Personal Services</i>	Permitted	Permitted	Permitted
<i>Civic</i>	Permitted	Permitted	Permitted
<i>Other</i>	Via Conditional Use Permit	Via Conditional Use Permit	Via Conditional Use Permit

Commercial—North End Sub-District

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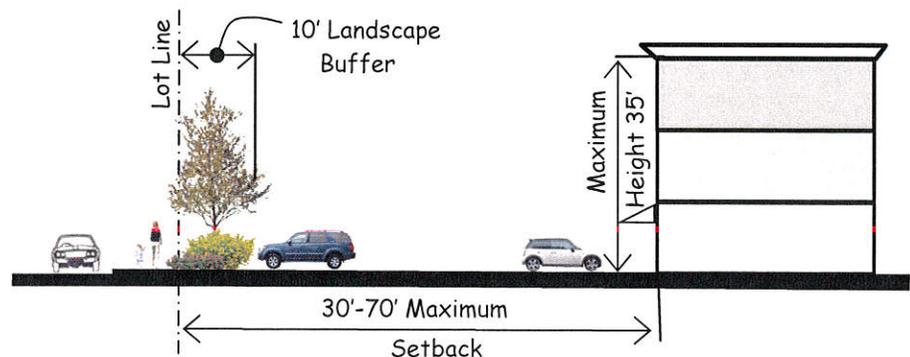
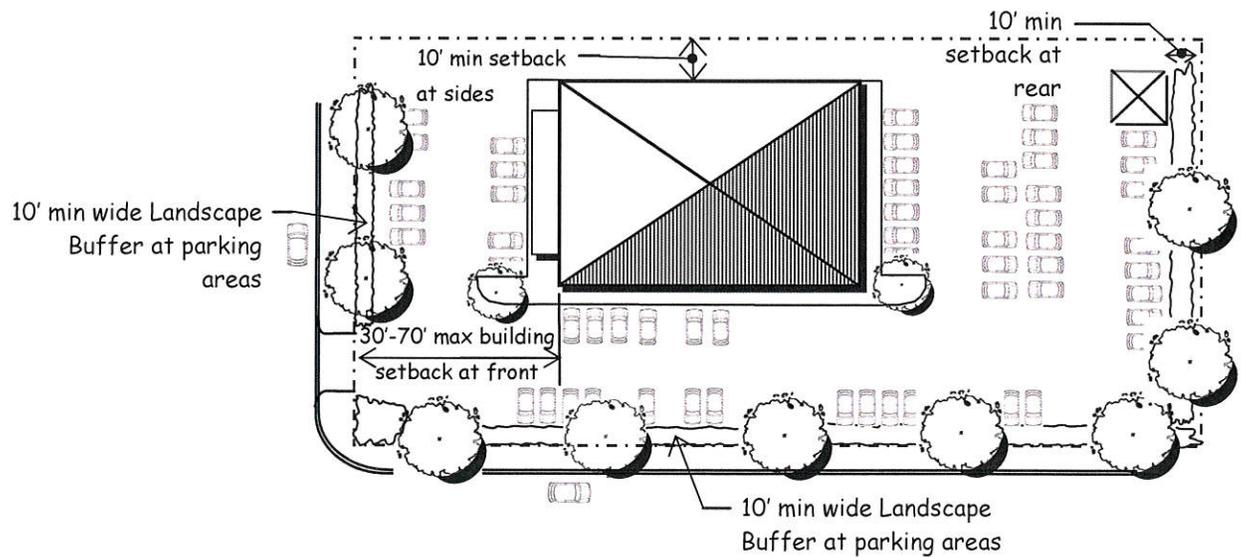
Statement of Purpose

From Depot Street to the intersection of Routes 2 and 3 there lies an area in transition. There remain some older residential homes, but they are now interspersed with new commercial activity. While sidewalks line both sides of the roadway, there is more a focus on automobile based shopping here. Most newly re-developed commercial sites offer on-site parking. As this area continues to develop, automobile traffic will be a continual focus, but, to the extent possible, it will be important to introduce landscaping and pedestrian elements that reflect the traditional uses here. Safety will be a continuing concern here requiring careful blending of the needs of pedestrians and through traffic with the needs of vehicles entering and exiting these new commercial sites.

Design Standards	
ARCHITECTURAL STANDARDS	Yes
LANDSCAPE STANDARDS	Yes
ACCESS MANAGEMENT STANDARDS	Yes
PARKING STANDARDS	On site; limited to 25% at front majority to side and rear

Dimensional Building Table

LOT DIMENSIONS	
Density	3 Units per 10,000 sf
Min Lot Size	10,000 sf
Frontage (feet)	None required
Lot Coverage	75%
PRINCIPAL BUILDING SETBACKS (Feet)	
Front Setback	30 - 70 max
Side Setback	10
Rear Setback	10
OUTBUILDING/ACCESSORY USE SETBACKS (Feet)	
Front Setback	Building setback + 15' min
Side Setback	10
Rear Setback	10
.BUILDING HEIGHT (Feet)	
Principal Building	35
Outbuilding	35
Minimum Stories	None



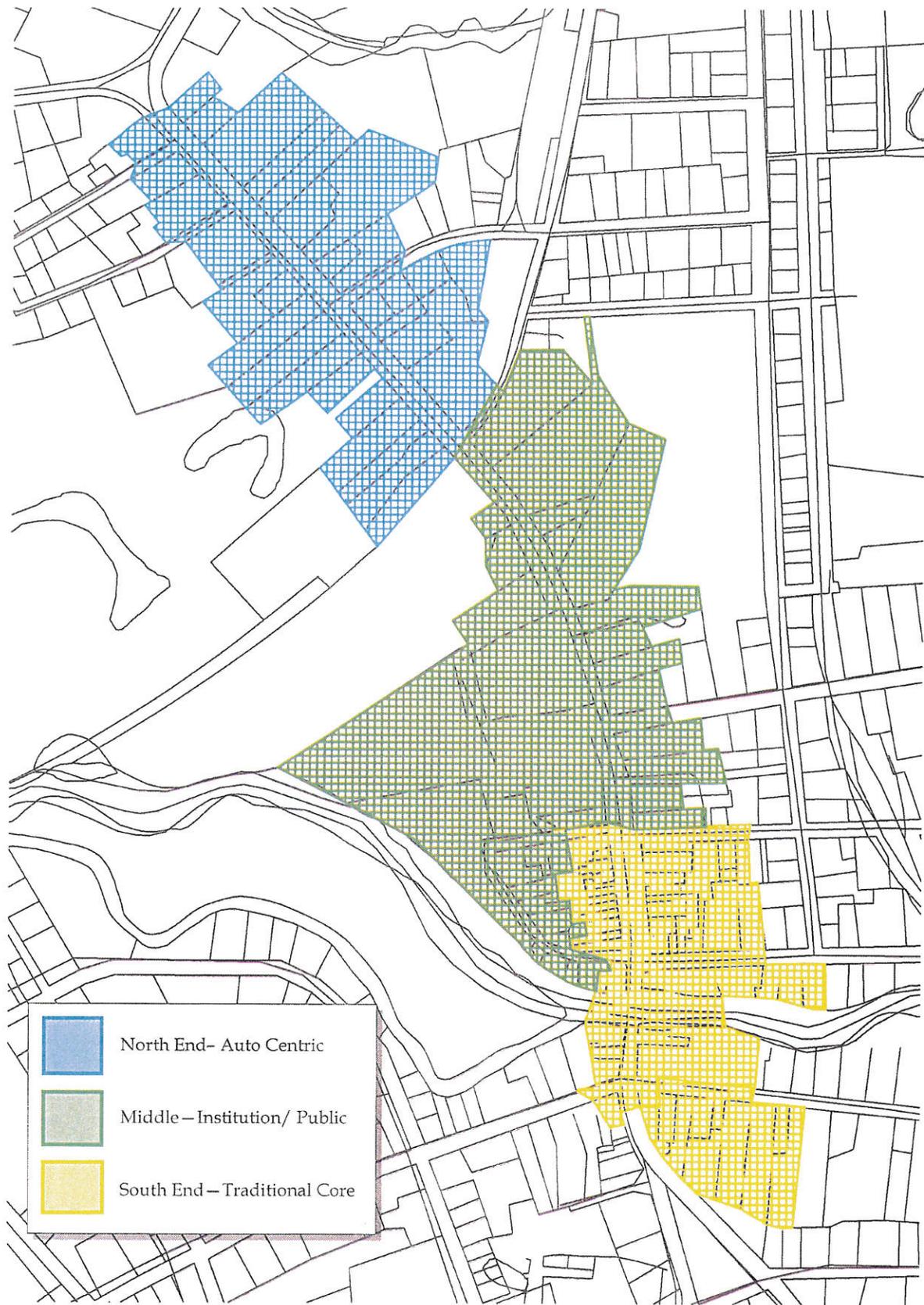
Commercial—North End Sub-District

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FORM BASED CODE Use Table

Uses	South End Sub-District	Middle Sub-District	North End Sub-District
<i>Residential</i>	Permitted, but not on ground floor	Permitted	Permitted
<i>Lodging</i>	Permitted	Permitted, up to 12 rooms w/stays up to 14 days	Permitted
<i>Professional Offices/Services/Commercial</i>	Permitted	Permitted	Permitted
<i>Eating & Drinking</i>	Permitted, no drive thrus	Permitted, no drive thrus	Permitted
<i>Retail/Personal Services</i>	Permitted	Permitted	Permitted
<i>Civic</i>	Permitted	Permitted	Permitted
<i>Other</i>	Via Conditional Use Permit	Via Conditional Use Permit	Via Conditional Use Permit



Town of Lancaster.

Proposed District Areas