

Article 12 - Density and Dimensional Regulations

Section 16-12.1. Minimum Lot Size. All lots in the following zones shall have at least the amount of square footage indicated in the following table:

Zoning Classification	Minimum Square Feet
R-A	The minimum lot size for a residence shall be one-half acre.
R-15	15,000
R-10	10,000
R-6	6,000
R-MH	6,000
CB	No minimum
GB	No minimum
OI	No minimum
HMC	No minimum
HSG	No minimum
PGS	No minimum

Section 16-12.2. Residential Density. The following shall represent the maximum density permitted for residential uses in the various zoning districts:

Zoning Classification	Permitted Use	Maximum Density	
		Within Watershed Area	Outside Watershed Area
R-15	Single Family	2 Units Per Acre Minimum Lot Size: 15,000 sf	3 Units Per Acre Minimum Lot Size: 15,000 sf
R-10S	Single Family	2 Units Per Acre Minimum Lot Size: 10,000 sf	4 Units Per Acre Minimum Lot Size: 10,000 sf
R-10D	Two Family	2 Buildings (4 Units) Per Acre Minimum Lot Size: 15,000 sf per building	2 Buildings (4 Units) Per Acre Minimum Lot Size: 15,000 sf per building
R-10 M	Two Family	2 Buildings (4 Units) Per Acre Minimum Lot Size: 15,000 sf per building	3 Buildings (6 Units) Per Acre Minimum Lot Size: 15,000 sf per building

		Maximum Density	
Zoning Classification	Permitted Use	Within Watershed Area	Outside Watershed Area
R-10 M	Multi Family	4 Units Per Acre Also limited to 24% impervious area.	4 Units Per Acre
R-6S	Single Family	2 Units Per Acre Minimum Lot Size: 6,000 sf	6 Units Per Acre Minimum Lot Size: 6,000 sf
R-6M	Two Family	2 Buildings (4 Units) Per Acre Minimum Lot Size: 9,000 sf per building Also limited to 24% impervious area.	3 Buildings (6 Units) Per Acre Minimum Lot Size: 9,000 sf per building
R-6M	Multi Family	5 Units Per Acre Also limited to 24% impervious area.	5 Units Per Acre

16-12.2.1. Every lot developed as a single-family residence with accessory apartment shall have the number of square feet equal to 133% of the minimum required for single family residences in that district. Lots in the CB, GB and OI districts may be used for single-family residential purposes regardless of lot size.

16-12.2.2. Every lot developed as a duplex or two-family conversion shall have the number of square feet equal to 150% of the minimum required for the single-family residences in that district.

16-12.2.3. Lots in the R-MH, GB, and HMC zoning districts, where residential developments are permissible, may be developed at a density equal to the density allowed within the R-6S District for single family developments, or the density allowed within the R-6M District for multi-family developments, whichever is applicable to the type of development that is being proposed. Properties zoned CB or TC are not subject to residential density limits.

16-12.2.4. With respect to lots where multi-family conversions are permissible, the lot must contain at least the number of square feet equal to 200% of the minimum required for single family residency if a conversion into three dwelling units is proposed and 250% of the minimum required for single family residency if a conversion into four dwelling units is proposed.

Section 16-12.3. Minimum Lot Widths. No lot may be created that is so narrow or otherwise so irregularly shaped that it would be impracticable to construct on it a building that:

- a) Could be used for purposes that are permissible in that zoning district; and
- b) Could satisfy any applicable setback requirements for that district.

16-12.3.1. Without limiting the generality of the foregoing standard, the following minimum lot widths are required to satisfy the standard set forth in herein. The lot width shall be measured along a straight line connecting the points at which a line that demarcates the required setback from the street intersects with lot boundary lines at opposite sides of the lot.

Zoning Classification	Lot Width
R-A	100 feet
R-15	100 feet
R-10	80 feet
R-6	60 feet
R-MH	60 feet
CB	None
GB	None
OI	None
HMC	None
HSG	None
PGS	None

16-12.3.2. No lot created after the effective date of this chapter that is less than the recommended width shall be entitled to a variance from any building setback requirement.

Section 16-12.4. Building Setback Requirements. Subject to the other provisions of this section, no portion of any building or any sign may be located on any lot closer to any lot line or to the street right-of-way line or center line than is authorized in the table set forth below. If the street right-of-way line is readily determinable (by reference to a reworked map, set irons, or other means), the setback shall be measured from such right-of-way line. If the right-of-way is not so determinable, the setback shall be measured from the street centerline. The term "lot boundary

line" refers to lot boundaries other than those that abut streets. For the purposes of determining setbacks in this article, the Blue Ridge Parkway boundary is considered a lot boundary line.

Zone	Minimum Distance From Street Right-of-Way Line		Minimum Distance From Street Centerline		Minimum Distance From Lot Boundary Line
	Building	Sign	Building	Sign	
R-15	30	20.0	45	50.0	12
R-10	30	15.0	45	45.0	10
R-6	25	12.5	40	42.5	8
R-MH	25	12.5	40	42.5	8
CB	Sec. 16-12.6	Sec. 16-17.13	Sec. 16-12.6	Sec. 16-17.13	Sec. 16-12.6
GB	20	Sec. 16-17.13	35	Sec. 16-17.13	8
OI	15	Sec. 16-17.13	30	Sec. 16-17.13	8
HMC	15	Sec. 16-17.13	30	Sec. 16-17.13	8
HSG	-	Sec. 16-17.13	30	Sec. 16-17.13	-
PGS	-	Sec. 16-17.13	30	Sec. 16-17.13	-
R-A	25	12.5	40	42.5	12

16-12.4.1. The board of adjustment may issue a variance to allow a reduction in the minimum front yard setback if it concludes that, because of the topographic features of the lot in question, it would be impractical to build upon the lot in compliance with the front setback requirements or such compliance would work an unwarranted hardship on the developer.

16-12.4.2. Whenever a lot in a nonresidential district has a common boundary line with a lot in a residential district, and the property line setback requirement applicable to the residential lot is greater than that applicable to the nonresidential lot, then the lot in the nonresidential district shall be required to observe the property line setback requirement applicable to the adjoining residential lot.

16-12.4.3. Setback distances shall be measured from the property line or street right-of-way line to a point on the lot that is directly below the nearest extension of any part of the building that is substantially a part of the building itself and not a mere appendage to it (such as a flagpole, etc.). Please refer to Appendix B, page A-8 for Diagram.

16-12.4.4. Whenever a private road that serves more than three lots or more than three dwelling units or that serves any nonresidential use tending to generate traffic equivalent to more than three dwelling units is located along a lot boundary, then:

- a) If the lot is not also bordered by a public street, buildings and freestanding signs shall be set back from the centerline of the private road just as if such road were a public street.
- b) If the lot is also bordered by a public street, then the setback distance on lots used for residential purposes (as set forth above in the column labeled "Minimum Distance from Lot Boundary Line") shall be measured from the inside boundary of the traveled portion of the private road.

16-12.4.5. Notwithstanding any other provision of this section, on lots in residential zones used for residential purposes, a maximum of one accessory building may be located in the rear yard of such lot without regard to the setback requirements otherwise applicable to the rear lot boundary line if such accessory building does not exceed fifteen feet in height or contain more than 150 square feet of gross floor area.

16-12.4.6. The front yard requirements of this chapter for dwelling units shall not apply to any lot where the average setback of existing buildings located wholly or partially within one hundred feet on either side of the proposed dwelling and on the same side of the street in the same block and use district as such lot is less than the minimum required front yard depth. In such case, the setback on such lots may be less than the required setback but not less than the average of the existing setbacks on the aforementioned lots, or a distance of twenty (20) feet from the street right-of-way lines, whichever is greater.

16-12.4.7. Notwithstanding any other provisions of this Section, lots with single-family residential use, the Administrator may grant an administrative waiver or variance of the setback requirements contained herein due to topography. In such case, the minimum distance required under this Section for placement of a building from the street right-of-way line or street centerline may be reduced up to 5 feet by using one of the calculations, described herein. The property owner shall be entitled to choose from either method.

16-12.4.7.1. The elevation shall be calculated by the Administrator, or a licensed North Carolina Surveyor. It shall be measured at two points in each of the side lot property lines, one of which is located in the street centerline or the street right-of-way line, and the other of which is located 45 feet or 30 feet from said point, as may be appropriate, running the same course as the lot boundary line. The two elevations and the street centerline or the street right-of-way line shall be averaged, and the two elevations and the lot boundary lines shall be averaged, and for every two feet of decrease or increase in elevation as determined by the Administrator or a licensed North Carolina Surveyor

between the two averaged elevations, one foot of setback may be deducted from the front setback requirements of this chapter; or

16-12.4.7.2. The elevation shall be calculated by the Administrator, or a licensed North Carolina Surveyor. It shall be measured at two points, one of which is located at a point in the street centerline or street right-of-way line which is in the center of said lot, and the other of which is located 45 feet or 30 feet from said point, as may be appropriate, running perpendicular from said point in the center of the lot. For every two feet of decrease or increase in elevation as determined by the Administrator or a licensed North Carolina Surveyor between the two elevations, one foot of setback may be deducted from the front setback requirements of this chapter.

16-12.4.8. Notwithstanding any other provisions of this section, a parking deck that has neither a wall nor a roof may be located within the required setback area between the building and the street. An open, protective barrier not more than 42 inches high located around the perimeter of the parking deck shall not be considered a wall for the purposes of this section.

16-12.4.9. Whenever a lot in a residential zoning district is bordered by more than one public street, the applicable street setback shall only apply to the lot line bordering the primary street. A street setback of twenty (20) feet shall apply to the lot line(s) bordering streets other than the primary street.

16-12.4.10. The individual lots within a Townhouse development, whether for residential or non-residential use, shall not be required to meet the building setback requirements, minimum lot sizes, or minimum lot widths as specified in herein, provided the overall zoning lot containing the Townhouse development meets such standards.

Section 16-12.5. Setback Requirements from Historic Trails. The Town hereby recognizes the existence of three historic trails known as the *Lonesome Pine Trail*, the *Glen Burney Trail*, and the *Thunderhole Trail*. No building, fence, structure, or other encumbrance shall be permitted within 15 feet of the centerline of any such trail. The approximate location of those trails are delineated on a map located in the Planning and Inspections Office.

Section 16-12.6 Central Business and Town Center Districts Setbacks, Building Height, Open Space, and Green Space Requirements. Lots developed in the Central Business District and Town Center (East/West/Sunset) Districts shall meet the following standards pertaining to setbacks, building heights, open space and green space areas, and other development criteria:

16-12.6.1 Setbacks.

Town Center – East

Street setback shall be five (5) feet. The setback shall be measured from the back of the public sidewalk. For consistency, the back of the public sidewalk shall be measured nine

(9) feet from the back of the existing curb. Awnings are permitted in the street setback and may encroach over the public sidewalk provided the lowest portion is at least 7 feet above the sidewalk.

Side and rear setbacks shall be five (5) feet, unless a common or shared wall is possible. Lots that are one (1) acre or greater in size shall have 15-foot side and rear lot boundary setbacks.

Town Center – West

Street setback shall be twenty-five (25) feet. The setback shall be measured from the back of the public sidewalk. For consistency, the back of the public sidewalk shall be measured nine (9) feet from the back of the existing curb. Awnings are permitted in the street setback and may encroach over the public sidewalk provided the lowest portion is at least 7 feet above the sidewalk.

Side and rear setbacks shall be five (5) feet. Lots that are one (1) acre or greater in size shall have 15-foot side and rear lot boundary setbacks.

Town Center - Sunset

Street setback shall be fifteen (15) feet. For consistency, the back of the public sidewalk shall be measured nine (9) feet from the back of the existing curb.

Side and rear setbacks shall be five (5) feet. Lots that are one (1) acre or greater in size shall have 15-foot side and rear lot boundary setbacks.

Central Business

Street setback shall be fifteen (15) feet. The setback shall be measured from the back of the public sidewalk. For consistency, the back of the public sidewalk shall be measured nine (9) feet from the back of the existing curb. Awnings are permitted in the street setback and may encroach over the public sidewalk provided the lowest portion is at least 7 feet above the sidewalk.

Side setbacks shall be five (5) feet. Lots that are one (1) acre or greater in size shall have 15-foot side and rear lot boundary setbacks.

16-12.6.1.1 All buildings may be rebuilt to the existing building footprint. This option may only be applied if, prior to the development or removal of the building, a survey is performed by a licensed North Carolina Surveyor to accurately determine the existing footprint. The exception is that any building on the east side of Main Street in the Town Center rebuilt from the original foundation must meet the 5-foot street setback.

The area between the buildings and the sidewalk shall be open space.

16-12.6.2 *Open Space/Green Space.* For purposes of this section, open space is defined as the gross land area not covered by a building, between the building and the public sidewalk.

16-12.6.2.1 In the Central Business, Town Center West and Town Center Sunset districts, a minimum of 40 % of the open space at the front of the building, must be planted green space with an emphasis on large shade trees. Planted green space shall be defined as areas with grass, herbaceous ground cover, shrubbery, and drip line areas of mature, shade trees. Massive areas of mulch, void of vegetation, shall not be considered green space.

16-12.6.2.2 One (1) shade tree shall be planted for every 250 square feet of required green space.

16-12.6.3. *Tree Protection.* All existing trees eight (8) inches in diameter at breast height (dbh) and greater shall be retained to the extent reasonably practical. If saving such trees, especially those located within the proposed building footprint, would cause undue hardship on the developer, those trees may be removed through the approval of the Board of Commissioners. All proposed developments in the Central Business and Town Center Districts shall submit a site plan with a tree survey that locates all trees eight (8) inches dbh and greater. The Board of Commissioners shall specifically approve the removal of any trees eight (8) inches dbh and greater during site plan approval. Any trees designated for protection shall be replaced with a tree of similar species at least three (3) inches in diameter (measured 6 inches above grade), if the tree dies or must be removed due to unforeseen construction activities.

16-12.6.4. *Retaining Walls.* All retaining walls shall be preserved and maintained. If the retaining wall is in poor structural condition, a new wall must be built back to replicate the original wall.

16-12.6.4.1. New retaining walls in the Central Business and Town Center Districts that are adjacent to a street shall be made of natural, locally found stone. Cultured stone that has the appearance of natural, locally found stone may be used as a substitute.

16-12.6.4.2. The Board of Commissioners recognize the need for compliance with ADA requirements and will consider such when reviewing a request for removal, or modification, of existing retaining walls.

16-12.6.5 *Building Heights Downtown.* The following standards determine the applicable building heights for buildings in the Central Business and Town Center Districts.

16-12.6.5.1 *Town Center East*

Maximum building height is limited to 30 feet, measured from the sidewalk elevation to the highest point of the structure. Rooflines, parapets and facades shall have variable heights in relation to adjacent buildings, not exceeding the maximum roof height for that zoning district.

16-12.6.5.2 *Town Center West*

Maximum building height is limited to 35 feet, measured from the sidewalk elevation to the highest point of the structure. Where an existing rock wall is located adjacent to an existing sidewalk, the maximum height shall be measured from the average finished ground elevation adjacent to the primary entrance to the highest point of the building or structure. Buildings made nonconforming by this section can only be rebuilt in the existing footprint to the existing building height or 30 feet whichever is greater.

16-12.6.5.3 *Central Business*

The maximum building height shall be limited to 35 feet, as measured from the average elevation of the existing or proposed sidewalk along the street to the highest point of the building or structure (Please refer to Appendix B for Diagram). Where an existing rock wall is located adjacent to an existing sidewalk, or where a property does not border a primary street on any side, the maximum height shall be measured from the average finished ground elevation adjacent to the primary entrance to the highest point of the building or structure.

16-12.6.5.4 *Town Center Sunset*

The maximum building height shall be limited to 35 feet, as measured from the average elevation of the existing or proposed sidewalk along Sunset Drive to the highest point of the building or structure (Please refer to Appendix B for Diagram). Where an existing rock wall is located adjacent to an existing sidewalk, the maximum height shall be measured from the average finished ground elevation adjacent to the primary entrance to the highest point of the building or structure.

16-12.6.5.5 The maximum building height for any building located 35 feet or more from the back of the existing or proposed sidewalk adjacent to a public street shall be measured from the average finished ground elevation adjacent to the primary entrance. For purposes of this paragraph, the entire structure must be located at or beyond the 35-foot setback. No other building walls (rear, side, etc.), measured from the average finished grade along the base of the wall to the highest point of the structure may exceed 45 feet.

Notwithstanding where the building entrance is located, no building wall facing Main Street shall exceed 35 feet to the top of the roof.

16-12.6.6. Property Grades and Elevations. Property grade elevations shall be maintained as reasonably practical. The Board of Commissioners shall have the authority to determine if the proposed grade elevations are consistent with the character of the Central Business and Town Center areas.

16-12.6.6.1 Alleys. Alleys that connect adjacent lots and provide parking, delivery access, utility access, and garbage pickup will be strongly encouraged. Alleys may be required in certain situations through a Special Use permit.

16-12.6.7. Building Heights (Excluding Districts in Section 16-12.6.5). Subject to the remaining provisions of this section, the height of a building or structure in any residential district (R-15, R-10, R-6, or RMH), may not exceed 35 feet. Similarly, the eave height of a building or structure in the R-A district or any non-residential district (HMC, HSG, OI, or PGS) may not exceed 35 feet and the overall height of the building or structure shall not exceed 50 feet.

In the **General Business** District, the overall height of the building or structure shall not exceed 35 feet if the building meets the standard 20-foot street setback and 8-foot side and rear setbacks. The overall building height may be increased to 50 feet if the building meets a street setback of 40 feet and side and rear setbacks of 16 feet.

16-12.6.7.1. Subject to Section 16-12.6.7.2 the following features are exempt from the district height limitations set forth in Section 16-12.6.7.

- a) Chimneys, church spires, elevator shafts, and similar structural appendages not intended as places of occupancy or storage;
- b) Flagpoles and similar devices;
- c) Heating and air conditioning equipment, solar collectors, and similar equipment, fixtures and devices.

16-12.6.7.2. The features listed in Section 16-12.6.7.1 are exempt from the height limitations set forth in Section 16-12.6.7, if they conform to the following requirements:

- a) Not more than one-third of the total roof area may be consumed by such features.
- b) The features described in Section 16-12.6.7.1.c) above must be set back from the edge of the roof a minimum distance of one foot for every foot by which such features extend above the roof surface of the principal building to which they are attached.
- c) The permit-issuing authority may authorize or require that parapet walls be constructed (up to a height not exceeding that of the features screened) to shield the

features listed in Section 16-12.6.7.1(a) & c) from view.

16-12.6.8. The permit-issuing authority may authorize the construction of a building one or more sides of which exceed the building height limitations set forth in Section 16-12.6.7 if it finds that:

- a) The height of the building measured at the front side does not exceed the building height limitations set forth in section 16-12.6.7 and
- b) Other sides of the building exceed building height limitations because the building is constructed on a severe grade, and
- c) The building is not in violation of the Mountain Ridge Protection Act of 1983.

16-12.6.9. With respect to developments in the non-residential zoning districts that require a Special Use permit, the Board of Commissioners may authorize the construction of a building one or more sides of which exceed the building height limitations set forth in section 16-12.6.7 if it finds that:

- a) It would be impractical to construct on the lot a building that suits the reasonable needs of the proposed use (such as a gymnasium, theater, etc.) without the height exception; and
- b) The building will be designed, located, and constructed so that it does not unreasonably obstruct the view of owners or occupants of other property and is not otherwise substantially out of character with the size, scale, and appearance of other buildings within the immediate neighborhood; and
- c) The building is not in violation of the Mountain Ridge Protection Act of 1983.

16-12.6.10. Towers and antennas are allowed in all zoning districts to the extent authorized in Article 10 (*Table of Permissible Uses*), use classification 18.000, and Article 18.

Section 16-12.7. Density on Lots Where Portion Dedicated to Town. Subject to the other provisions of this section, if any portion of a tract lies within an area designated on any officially adopted Town plan as part of a proposed public park, greenway, or bikeway, and before the tract is developed, the owner of the tract, with the concurrence of the Town, dedicates to the Town that portion of the tract so designated, then, when the remainder of the tract is developed for residential purposes, the permissible density at which the remainder may be developed shall be calculated in accordance with the provisions of this section.

16-12.7.1. If the proposed use of the remainder is a single-family residential subdivision, the developer need not set aside usable open space to the extent that an equivalent amount of land has previously been dedicated to the Town in accordance with Section 16-12.7.

16-12.7.2. If the proposed use of the remainder is a multi-family project, then the permissible density at which the remainder may be developed shall be calculated by regarding the dedicated portion of the original lot as if it were still part of the lot proposed for development.

16-12.7.3. If the portion of the tract that remains after dedication as provided in Section 16-12.7 is divided in such a way that the resultant parcels are intended for future subdivision or development, then each of the resultant parcels shall be entitled to its pro rata share of the "density bonus" provided for in herein.

Section 16-12.8. Flexibility in Applying the Standards Contained in this Article. With respect to developments or projects that require a Special Use permit, the Board of Commissioners may permit deviations from the strict requirements of this Article if it concludes, based upon the information submitted at the hearing, that the project or development with the approved deviations:

- a) Will not materially endanger the public health or safety;
- b) Will not substantially injure the value of adjoining or abutting property;
- c) Will be in harmony with the area in which it is to be located;
- d) Will be in general conformity with the master plan or other plan officially adopted by the board; and
- e) Will be in substantial conformity with the intent of the regulations contained in this Article.

Any such findings shall be clearly entered on the face of the permit.

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