



C H A T H A M C O U N T Y - S A V A N N A H

METROPOLITAN PLANNING COMMISSION

"Planning the Future - Respecting the Past"

M E M O R A N D U M

DATE: October 18, 2022
TO: THE MAYOR AND ALDERMEN OF THE CITY OF SAVANNAH
FROM: METROPOLITAN PLANNING COMMISSION
SUBJECT: MPC RECOMMENDATION

PETITION REFERENCED:

Proposed Text amendment to the City of Savannah Zoning Ordinance

Re: Amendment to Article 5 (Base Zoning Districts) and Section 8.4 (Restaurants)
to allow Restaurants in Office-Institutional Districts

Petitioner: MPC Staff

Nirav Gandhi, Planner, MPC Development Services

MPC File No. 22-003650-ZA

MPC ACTION:

Approval of the proposed Text Amendment to allow restaurants in the OI, OI-E, and OI-T zoning districts with limitations and a special use permit.

MPC STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Approval of the proposed Text Amendment to allow restaurants in the OI, OI-E, and OI-T zoning districts with limitations as a permitted use.

MEMBERS PRESENT: 9 + Chairman

Dwayne Stephens, Chairman	Wayne Noha
Laureen Boles	Jeff Notrica
Travis Coles	Tom Woiwode
Michael Kaigler	
Elizabeth Epstein	
Karen Jarrett	
Jay Melder	

PLANNING COMMISSION VOTE: Approve Staff Recommendation
with Amendment (10-0)

APPROVAL Votes: 10	DENIAL Votes: 0	ABSENT
Boles Coles Epstein Jarrett Kaigler Melder Noha Notrica Stephens Woiwode		Coleman Ervin Watkins Welch

Respectfully submitted,

Melanie Wilson
Executive Director

MW/sh

Enclosure

cc Mark Massey, Clerk of Council
Lester B. Johnson, Assistant City Attorney
Jennifer Herman, Assistant City Attorney
Zarina Davis, Department of Inspections
Bridget Lidy, Department of Inspections
Candra Teshome, Department of Inspections



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M E M O R A N D U M

TO: Mayor and Aldermen of the City of Savannah

FROM: The Metropolitan Planning Commission

DATE: October 18, 2022

SUBJECT: Text Amendment to the City of Savannah Zoning Ordinance
Re: Amendment to Article 5, Base Zoning Districts
Applicant: Staff Generated Amendment
MPC Staff Reviewer: Nirav Gandhi, Project Planner

MPC FILE NO: 22-003650-ZA - TEXT

ISSUE:

A petition to amend Section 5 (Base Zoning Districts) and Sec 8.4 (Restaurants) to amend a number of zoning districts to allow restaurants by special use permit with limited conditions. The following zoning districts are proposed to be amended to allow for small restaurants: O-I (Office Institutional), OI-E (Office Institutional Extension), and OI-T (Office Institutional-Transition).

BACKGROUND:

In August 2022, MPC staff received a petition to rezone an OI property on the edge of a residential area to B-N for the purposes of opening a café there. Upon further research, staff has found that there are several zoning districts that do not allow for small restaurants and cafes that would fit the character of the neighborhood and further our goals of creating more walkable mixed-use communities for Savannah.

There have been a number of corridors in Savannah that were historically residential but transitioned to commercial over time, as well as boundary areas of fully residential districts. The OI districts are intended to be transitional areas between fully commercial and fully residential districts. This makes them an ideal location for smaller restaurants and cafes, which would experience great use from those in the neighborhoods and working nearby.

Because there is not a definition for cafes in the ordinance, staff recommends allowing restaurants in the aforementioned zoning districts with the following limitations:

1. Within the identified districts, restaurants shall be allowed within existing buildings only.
2. Required parking shall be 5 spaces per thousand square feet for restaurants over 3,000

square feet in gross floor area.

3. Drive-thru restaurants shall be prohibited.
4. Hours of operation shall be limited to 6:00 a.m. to 9:00 pm

Staff recommended the text to be amended is in **bold** and underline as follows:

8.4.32 Restaurant

- a. *In the D-R zoning district, the hours of operation shall be limited to between 7:00 a.m. and 11:00 p.m.*
- b. *In the D-N zoning district, the hours of operation shall be limited to between 6:00 a.m. to 12:00 a.m.*
- c. *The restaurant must be located on a street classified as a collector or arterial (as identified in Appendix A-1),-unless such use existed prior to the Effective Date of this Ordinance.*
Restaurants in the OI, OI-T, and OI-E districts are exempt from this condition.
- d. **Restaurants are permitted by right in zoning districts OI, OI-T, and OI-E pending compliance with all the following criteria:**
 - a. **Within the identified districts, restaurants shall be allowed within existing buildings only.**
 - b. **Required parking shall be 5 spaces per thousand square feet for restaurants over 3,000 square feet in gross floor area.**
 - c. **Drive-thru restaurants shall be prohibited.**
 - d. **The hours of operation shall be limited to between 6:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m.**

The Base Zoning Districts Section (Section 5) for each of these individual zoning districts (OI, OI-T, OI-E) shall be amended by adding the following to the use table:

Restaurants. Permitted Use. Refer to Sec. 8.4.32, Sec. 8.7.24 and Sec. 7.14.

Upon discussion, the Planning commission added that restaurants in these districts shall be contingent upon a special use permit granted by the City Council rather than a permitted use as proposed by staff.

FINDINGS:

1. There are a significant number of buildings in these districts that were formerly used as residences, but as commercial corridors in Savannah have developed and expanded, they have become less viable for their original residential use.
2. The proposed amendment would facilitate walkable, mixed-use communities and would allow for the establishment of cafes and small restaurants that are beneficial to those who both work in these zoning districts during the day and those who live nearby.
3. The intent of the OI districts is to act as transitional space between the fully residential R and fully commercial B districts.

POLICY ANALYSIS:

The proposed amendment will be a major step towards creating walkable, mixed-use communities outside of the core downtown areas. Schools, offices, libraries, museums, and many other nonresidential uses of these districts will work well with small restaurants made from converted houses.

RECOMMENDATION:

The Planning Commission recommends **approval** of the petition to amend Section 5 and Section 8.432 Restaurant as follows:

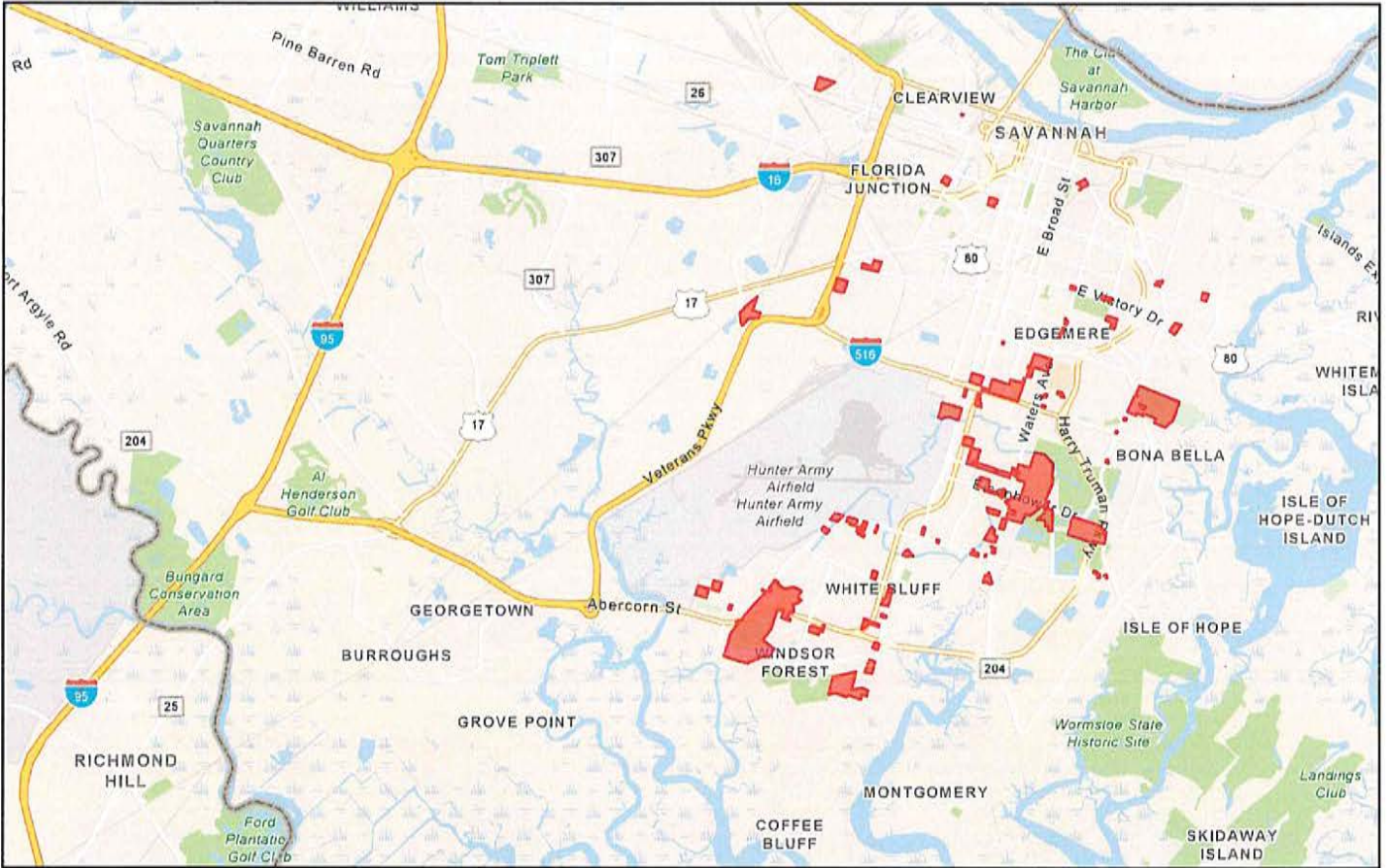
8.4.32 Restaurant

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- b. *In the D-N zoning district, the hours of operation shall be limited to between 6:00 a.m. to 12:00 a.m.*
- c. *The restaurant must be located on a street classified as a collector or arterial (as identified in Appendix A-1),-unless such use existed prior to the Effective Date of this Ordinance. **Restaurants in the OI, OI-T, and OI-E districts are exempt from this condition.***
- d. **Restaurants are permitted by special use permit in zoning districts OI, OI-T, and OI-E pending compliance with all the following criteria:**
 - a. **Within the identified districts, restaurants shall be allowed within existing buildings only.**
 - b. **Required parking shall be 5 spaces per thousand square feet for restaurants over 3,000 square feet in gross floor area.**
 - c. **Drive-thru restaurants shall be prohibited.**
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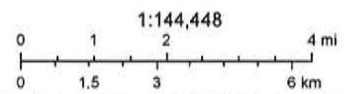
Restaurants. Special Use. Refer to Sec. 8.4.32, Sec. 8.7.24 and Sec. 7.14.

SAGIS iMap Viewer



10/18/2022, 10:56:40 AM

 Chatham County Boundary



City of Hinesville, Savannah Area GIS, Esri, HERE, Garmin, SafeGraph, GeoTechnologies, Inc, MET/NASA, USGS, EPA, NPS, USDA, SAGIS

1. Savannah State University
2. Georgia Regional Hospital
3. Benedictine Military School, Chatham County Offices
4. Savannah Tech
5. Savannah Country Day School/Windsor Forest Baptist Church
6. Armstrong State University/St. Joseph's
7. The Seed Church/Office Complex
8. Candler Hospital/Cavalry Baptist Complex

