

AN ORDINANCE
To Be Entitled

AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND DIVISION II, PART 8,
 PLANNING AND REGULATION OF DEVELOPMENT,
 CHAPTER 3, ZONING, AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND ARTICLE 5.0 BASE ZONING
 DISTRICTS AND ARTICLE 9.0 GENERAL SITE STANDARDS;
 TO PROVIDE FOR EFFECTIVE DATES; TO REPEAL ALL ORDINANCES IN CONFLICT
 HEREWITH AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

BE IT ORDAINED by the Mayor and Aldermen of the City of Savannah, Georgia, in regular meeting of Council assembled and pursuant to lawful authority thereof:

SECTION 1: That Division II, Part 8, Planning and Regulation of Development, Chapter 3, Zoning of the Code of the City of Savannah, Georgia hereinafter be referenced as “Code”, be amended to read as follows:

Note: Revisions shown in red.
Text to be enacted shown in bold and underlined.
Text to be repealed shown in bold and strikethrough.

ARTICLE 5.0 BASE ZONING DISTRICTS

5.17.5 Development Standards for Permitted Uses

Development in any I- district shall meet the development standards as set forth below.

5.17.5 Development Standards for Permitted Uses				
Standards	IL-R	IL-T	IL	IH
Lot Dimensions (min)				
Lot area (sq ft)	--	--	--	--
Lot width (ft)	--	--	--	--
Building (max)				
Building Coverage	70%	80%	80%	80%
Height (ft) ^[1]	50	60	--	--
Ground floor area (sq ft)	20,000	--	--	--
Building Setback (min ft)				
Front	25	25	25	25
Side (street) yard	25	25	30	40
Side (interior) yard	25	15	20	25
Rear yard	15	15	20	25
From lane	5	5	5	5
From access easement	5	5	5	5
Building separation	See Fire Code	See Fire Code	See Fire Code	See Fire Code

5.17.5 Development Standards for Permitted Uses				
Standards	IL-R	IL-T	IL	IH
Accessory Structure Setback	See Sec. 8.7	See Sec. 8.7	See Sec. 8.7	See Sec. 8.7
Parking Area Setback (min ft)				
From collector and arterial street rights-of-way	15	15	15	15
From local street rights-of-way	10	10	10	10
From lane, property line or access easement	5	5	5	5

^[1] Buildings proposed within ~~50~~ **100** feet of a Residential zoning district shall be subject to the height restrictions established in such Residential zoning district and then may increase in height one (1) foot for every one (1) foot of distance from the Residential zoning district. For example, the portion of the building that is ~~65~~ **105** feet from a Residential zoning district with a 36 foot height limit cannot exceed ~~54~~ **41** feet in height.

9.5.4 Buffers

c. Exemptions

- i. Properties located within any Downtown zoning district shall be exempt from the buffer provisions of this Section with the exception of the Off-Street Parking Lot Buffer.
- ii. Properties located within any TN- or TC- zoning district shall be exempt from the Street Yard Buffer. Such properties shall also be exempt from the Use Buffer provisions of this Section only when the adjacent properties are within any TN-, TC- or D- zoning district. This exemption shall not apply to the Off-Street Parking Lot Buffer.
- iii. The requirements of this Section shall not apply to the portion of a property that abuts marshland **or wetlands**.

e. Use Buffers

The purpose of a Use Buffer is generally to provide a vegetative screen that serves to either obscure the view of adjacent buildings or uses or to achieve a degree of opacity that prevents clear recognition of the use being buffered. The width and opacity of the required Use Buffer increases with the degree of incompatibility between uses.

i. Land Use Classes

There are six (6) classes of land uses and zoning districts for the purpose of determining the type of Use Buffer that is required. Within each land use class are land use categories, specific land uses and zoning districts, as listed in [Sec. 5.4, Principal Use Table](#). The zoning district shall be used to determine the land use class of vacant property. Wireless Communications Facilities shall provide a buffer in accordance with [Sec. 8.9](#).

The following uses shall not be required to provide or be provided a use buffer: Dock, private; Community garden; and Minor utility.

Commentary: *The six (6) classes of land uses shown below include both individual uses and land uses categories.*

1. **Class 1**
 - a. Single-family residential; Two-family residential;
 - b. Manufactured homes (excluding those in a manufactured home park);
 - c. Monastery, convent;
 - d. Personal care home, registered and family;
 - e. Agriculture, restricted;
 - f. Park, General;
 - g. Golf course;
 - h. Child/adult day care homes;
 - i. Dock, Residential Community;
 - j. Watercraft launch/Ramp;
 - k. Class 1 Composting Facility; and
 - l. Vacant land within the following zoning districts: C-, RSF-, TR-, RTF-.
2. **Class 2**
 - a. Three-Four Family, Townhomes; attached residential under 5 units per building;
 - b. Children's home;
 - c. Personal care home, group;
 - d. Rooming house;
 - e. Residential Amenity Area, Clubhouse (accessory to a residential use);
 - f. Bed & Breakfast, Inn; Short-term Vacation Rental Unit; and
 - g. Vacant land within the following zoning districts: RMHP, RMF-1, D-R, D-N.
3. **Class 3**
 - a. Attached residential 5 units or more per building and apartments;
 - b. Group Living Uses (unless specifically listed in another Land Use Class);
 - c. Campground, Recreational Vehicle Park;
 - d. Agricultural Uses (Agriculture, general shall not be required to buffer against Agriculture, restricted); See Sec. 8.2.2 for Surface Mine/Borrow Pit buffer standards;
 - e. All Civic Uses (unless specifically listed in another Land Use Class);
 - f. Riding academy; equestrian center; horse stable, commercial;
 - g. Uses as permitted (meeting the conditions of) in the OI-T zoning district;
 - h. Class 1(a) Composting Facility; and

- i. Vacant land within the following zoning districts: RMF-2, RMF-3, A-1, OI-T, TN-, TC-, D-C, D-CBD, D-W, D-X.
4. **Class 4**
- a. Parking facility;
 - b. Library/Community Center (public);
 - c. Post office;
 - d. Shelter, emergency and transitional;
 - e. Soup kitchen;
 - f. Child/adult day care center;
 - g. Child/adult care center, 24 hour;
 - h. All Educational uses;
 - i. Places of worship (301 seats or more);
 - j. All Club or Lodge uses;
 - k. All Office uses;
 - l. Restaurants; bar; tavern; nightclub;
 - m. Lodging (unless specifically listed in another Land Use Class);
 - n. Indoor Recreation (unless specifically listed in another Land Use Class);
 - o. Commercial Services (unless specifically listed in another Land Use Class);
 - p. Retail Sales less than 100,000 square feet (unless specifically listed in another Land Use Class);
 - q. Shopping Centers less than 100,000 square feet;
 - r. Vehicle sales, rentals and leasing; Vehicle service, minor; Moped/scooter sales, rentals and leasing; Watercraft sales, rentals and service;
 - s. Self-service storage;
 - t. Taxi dispatch; Limousine service and other;
 - u. Artisan/Craft - Industry/Manufacturing;
 - v. Broadcast Transmission Tower; and
 - w. Vacant land within the following zoning districts: OI, OI-E, B-L, B-N, B-C.
5. **Class 5**
- a. Hospitals;
 - b. Arena; convention center;
 - c. Outdoor Recreation (unless specifically listed in another Land Use Class);
 - d. Animal services; outdoor;
 - e. Vehicle, Watercraft and Heavy Equipment sales and service (unless specifically listed in another Land Use Class);
 - f. Adult-oriented businesses;

- g. Water-oriented uses (unless specifically listed in another Land Use Class); Water-oriented uses shall not be required to buffer against another water-oriented use, regardless of land use class;
- h. Retail Sales 100,000 sq ft or larger (unless specifically listed in another Land Use Class);
- i. Shopping Centers 100,000 sq ft or larger;
- j. Research, Testing and Development Laboratory;
- k. Truck stop; Passenger Terminal;
- l. Outdoor Sales; and
- m. Vacant land within the following zoning districts: B-M, I-L-R.

6. Class 6

~~a. Outdoor storage yard (principal use);~~

~~a. b.~~ Transportation/Communication/Utility uses (unless specifically listed in another Land Use Class);

~~b. e.~~ Industrial Uses (unless specifically listed in another Land Use Class);

~~c. d.~~ Detention & Correctional Facilities;

~~e. Waste-related uses (unless specifically listed in another Land Use Class); and~~

~~d. f.~~ Vacant land within the following zoning districts: I-L-T, I-L, I-H.

7. Class 7

a. Container Storage Yard;

b. Outdoor Storage Yard;

c. Warehousing;

d. Industry, Manufacturing and Processing (excluding Artisan/Craft);

e. Waste related uses;

f. Mulch or Compost Processing;

g. Intermodal Freight Yard;

h. Railyard;

i. Vehicle and Freight Terminal; and

j. Data Center

ii. Determination of Buffer Type

Table 9.5-1 identifies the buffer type required for a given development based on its land use class and the land use class of the adjacent property. A Use Buffer is not required between nonresidential uses in a development with outparcels or a combined development.

Table 9.5-1 Determination of Buffer Type							
Existing (Adjacent) Land Use Class							
		1	2	3	4	5	6
Proposed Land Use Class	1	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
	2	A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
	3	B	B	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
	4	C	C	B ^[1]	N/A	N/A	N/A
	5	D	D	C ^[1]	N/A	N/A	N/A
	6	E	E	D	C	B	N/A
	7	F	F	E	C	B	N/A

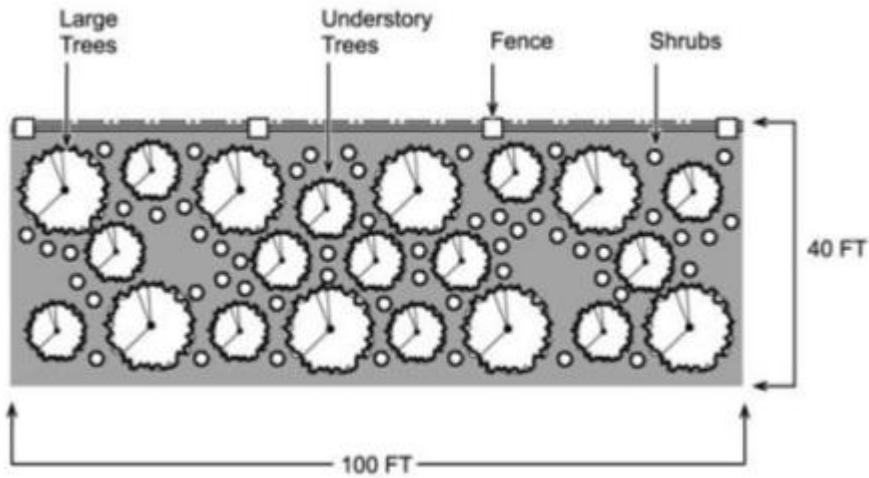
[1] This buffer is only required when the proposed use is adjacent to a residential use.

iii. Use Buffer Types and Options

5. Type E Buffer Planting Standards

Type E Buffer Planting Option	
	40 ft buffer width 8 ft fence/wall
Plantings (per 100 linear feet)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 8 large trees • 13 understory trees • 55 shrubs

Type E Buffer Planting Option

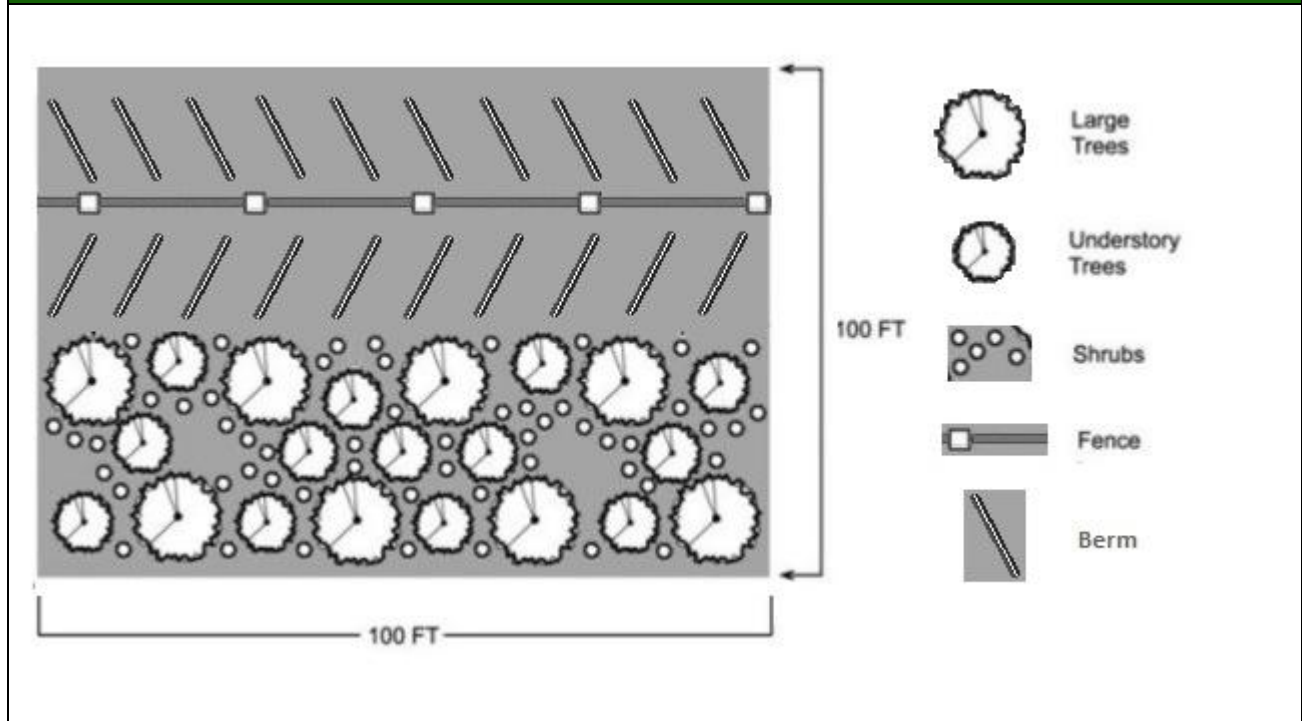


6. Type F Buffer Planting Standards

Type F Buffer Planting Option

	<p><u>100 ft buffer width;</u> <u>8 ft tall berm;</u> <u>8 ft fence/wall along peak of berm</u> <u>OR</u> <u>12 ft fence/wall parallel to berm;</u> <u>Minimum 30 ft planting area on exterior side of berm;</u> <u>Minimum of 20% of understory tree and shrub plantings on</u> <u>berm</u></p>
<p><u>Plantings (per 100 linear feet)</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>10 large trees</u> • <u>15 understory trees</u> • <u>70 shrubs</u>

Type F Buffer Planting Option



- a. The average width of the Type F buffer may be reduced by up to 40% on sites of 10 acres or less. The minimum width of the reduced buffer shall not be less than 50% of the typical required width. Planting requirements may be reduced proportionately to a permitted width reduction. This provision may not be combined with Sec. 9.5.4.d.vii Design Variations for Use and Street Yard Buffers.
- b. For sites with disturbed area larger than 25 acres or any site that is part of a development requiring a DRI, the height of the berm shall be increased to 20 feet. A fence or wall shall not be required.
- c. A fence on top of a berm is not required to include pilasters or columns as described in Sec. 9.5.4.e.v.1.c.
- d. Berms shall be subjected to the following:
 - i. The slope shall not exceed 33%.
 - ii. A horizontal crown shall be provided at the top of the slope with a width not less than 4 feet.
 - iii. In addition to any plantings used to meet requirements shown in the table above, a berm shall be covered with grass or other ground cover to prevent erosion.
 - iv. Berms shall not drain onto neighboring yards or cause pooling of water. Runoff shall be directed into appropriate drainage easements or facilities.
 - v. Berms shall not contain non-earth fill materials such as concrete, asphalt, wood, garbage, metal, etc.
 - vi. Openings may be provided in berms as described by Sec. 9.5.4.e.iv Permitted Improvements within Use Buffers.

vii. Berms may be modified to allow for the preservation of existing trees in accordance with Chapter 12 Landscape and Tree Ordinance.

v. Design Standards for Use Buffers

1. Fences and Walls

In addition to the requirements of Sec. 9.6, Fences and Walls, the following standards shall apply to all fences and walls required to be located within a buffer. Where standards conflict, the provisions of this Section shall apply.

- a. Any fence or wall shall be opaque as specified in Sec. 9.6, Fences and Walls and shall be constructed of textured or split-faced block, brick, stone, stucco over concrete block, architectural tile, decay-resistant wood or similar opaque materials. Wood fences shall be a board on board, shadowbox, or similar style.
- b. The height of a fence or wall shall not exceed eight (8) feet, except as required by other sections of this Ordinance.
- c. Fences and walls shall be interrupted at intervals not exceeding 30 feet by architectural features such as pilasters or columns.
- d. ~~The fence or wall shall be located within one (1) foot of the property line or shall be set back at least 20 feet from the property line. In any case, the~~ The fence or wall shall be located within the required buffer.
- e. The applicant shall be required to demonstrate provision for access and maintenance of landscaping and the fence or wall at the time of site development plan review.
- f. When a required fence or wall would be located parallel to an opaque fence or wall at least six (6) feet in height on an adjacent property, the fence or wall shall not be required.
- g. Pedestrian connections through fences, walls or hedges that connect to adjacent neighborhoods or other uses are encouraged.

SECTION 2: That the requirements of Section 3.2 of the Zoning Ordinance effective the 1st of September 2019 and the law in such cases made and provided has been satisfied. An opportunity for a public hearing was afforded anyone having an interest or property right which may have been affected by this zoning amendment, said notice being published in the Savannah Morning News, on the 29th day of April of January 2026, a copy of said notices being attached hereto and made a part hereof.

SECTION 3: All ordinances or parts of ordinances in conflict herewith are hereby repealed.

EFFECTIVE DATE: This ordinance shall be effective as of the date hereof.

ADOPTED AND APPROVED: ____ day of _____ 2026.

Van R. Johnson, II
Mayor

ATTEST:

Mark Massey
Clerk of Council

