



Amendments to the Town of Bluffton Code of Ordinances, Chapter 23 – Unified Development Ordinance, Various Sections

**Presentation to Town Council
March 12, 2024
Department of Growth Management
Kevin Icard, AICP**

UDO Amendments – 2023 and 2024



To support the Town’s *Strategic Plan* to annually assess and propose amendments to the Unified Development Ordinance related to the “Community Quality of Life” strategic focus area.

January 17, 2023 – Joint Town Council & Planning Commission Workshop

March 1, 2023 – Historic Preservation Commission Workshop

March 22, 2023 – Planning Commission Public Hearing

April 26, 2023 – Planning Commission Public Hearing

May 24, 2023 – Planning Commission Public Hearing

June 28, 2023 – Planning Commission Public Hearing

July 11, 2023 – Town Council (First Reading)

September 12, 2023 – Town Council (Second Reading & Public Hearing)

January 17, 2024 – Historic Preservation Commission Workshop

January 23, 2024 – Planning Commission Public Hearing

February 28, 2024 – Planning Commission Public Hearing

Overview of Proposed UDO Amendments



Sec. 3.13, Development and Stormwater Surety (New-2024)

To better distinguish between Development and Stormwater surety requirements, and to add more specificity to the stormwater requirements

Sec. 3.14, Certificate of Construction Compliance or CCC (New-2024)

Revision to allow Commercial development to obtain a Building Permit without a Temporary CCC (as is required for Single-family Residential) due to construction timing and financing difficulties. No Certificate of Occupancy can be obtained unless a Final CCC has been issued by the Town.

Sec. 5.10, Stormwater (New-2024)

To make a distinction between Development and Redevelopment with regard to area of land disturbance, which may trigger stormwater and grading plan requirements.

Overview of Proposed UDO Amendments



Sec. 5.11: Parking (Previously Reviewed by Town Council-2023)

- 1) Allow compact parking spaces for non-residential uses only when there are 25 or more parking spaces—reduces percentage from 25% to 10%;
- 2) Eliminate the ability to use public parking facilities within 500 feet from counting towards required parking;
- 3) Change the number of parking spaces to be provided from maximum to minimum; and,
- 4) Eliminate golf carts spaces from counting towards required parking.

(New-2024): Increase angle parking space dimensions slightly for 30°, 45° and 60° parking (stall depth, curb length) and parallel parking to better accommodate all vehicle sizes without encroaching into a drive aisle.

Overview of Proposed UDO Amendments



Table 4.3, Storefront Manufacturing (New-2024)

Addition of Storefront Manufacturing use to the NG-HD district as a conditional use. While primarily engaged in commercial sales, a Storefront Manufacturing use may have low intensity manufacturing, assembly and packaging activities that do not affect neighbors (e.g., leather goods).

Overview of Proposed Amendments



Sec. 5.15: Certificate of Appropriateness (COFA-HD)

- 1) Provide a process for relocation of buildings in the Old Town Bluffton Historic District;
- 2) Require Development Plan approval before COFA-HD review;
- 3) Distinguish Sheds from Garden Structures,
- 4) Increase front build-to zone in the NC-HD and NCE-HD districts, 5-10 feet;
- 5) Increase side yard setback in NCE-HD for four building types from five (5) to eight (8) feet);
- 6) Add a Medium House Type to prevent over use of Additional Building Type; and,
- 7) Minor reformatting.

The Planning Commission proposed two amendments:

- **Medium House Type Characteristic** (revise wording to state that MHT is larger than a cottage)
- **Vehicular Opening Width** (Revise garage width openings to allow a maximum of 12ft for one opening and a maximum 10ft for two openings)

Text Amendment Review Criteria



1. **Section 3.5.3.A. Consistency with the Comprehensive Plan or, if conditions have changed since the Comprehensive Plan was adopted, the consistency with the overall intent of the Plan, recent development trends and the general character of the area.**

The preservation-related proposed amendments support the Comprehensive Plan goal to “[p]reserve the Town’s historic and cultural resources,” and the stormwater amendments support the goal to review and update the Stormwater Ordinance, as needed.

2. **Section 3.5.3.B. Consistency with demographic changes, prevailing economic trends, and/or newly recognized best planning practices.**

Some of the proposed amendments will help to better retain the Town’s traditional pattern of development and its older structures, which supports a more sustainable and authentic environment, and which aligns with best practices for historic preservation. Allowing the storefront manufacturing use in Old Town supports the economic trend to allow small-scale manufacturing uses in “downtown” areas.

3. **Section 3.5.3.C. Enhancement of the health, safety, and welfare of the Town of Bluffton.**

The proposed amendments support the general welfare of the Town and its residents.

4. **Section 3.5.3.D. Impact of the proposed amendment on the provision of public services.**

The amendment has no relationship to this criterion.

5. **Section 3.5.3.E. The application must comply with applicable requirements in the Applications Manual.**

Complies.

Town Council Action



As granted by the powers and duties set forth in Section 2.2.6.C.4 of the UDO, Town Council has the authority to take the following actions with respect to this application:

1. Approve the application as submitted;
2. Approve the application with amendments; or
3. Deny the application as submitted.

Next Steps



UDO Text Amendment Procedure	Date	Complete
Step 1. Historic Preservation Commission Discussion	2023: March 1 2024: January 3	✓
Step 2. Planning Commission Public Hearing and Recommendation	2023: March 22, April 26, May 24, June 28 2024: January 24, February 28	✓
Step 3. Town Council – 1st Reading	2023: July 11 2024: March 12	✓
Step 4. Town Council Meeting – Final Reading and Public Hearing	2023: September 12 (portion withdrawn) 2024: April 9	✓

Motion – Approve with Amendments



*I move to **Approve** the amendments to the Town of Bluffton Code of Ordinances Chapter 23 – Unified Development Ordinance, as submitted with the following amendment(s):*

- 1. **Sec. 5.15.8.I. (Medium House Type):** A revision of the characteristic “Larger than a cottage and smaller than a Village House” to “Larger than a cottage.”; and,*
- 2. **Sec. 5.15.8.F. (Carriage Houses):** A revision to limit garages with one vehicular opening to an opening no greater than 12 feet in width; and garages with two vehicular openings to openings no greater than 10 feet in width.*



QUESTIONS & DISCUSSION