

to limit impacts of high densities by requiring seasonal use, improving vegetative screening, centralizing shore recreation facilities, installing new sewage treatment systems, or other means.

(Code 1978, § 23.17(J); Ord. No. 07-03-06, § 2(Exh. A), 3-27-2007)

**Secs. 30-810—30-899. Reserved.**

#### **DIVISION 14. LARGE SCALE COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS**

##### **Sec. 30-900. Purpose and intent.**

(a) *Purpose.* The purpose of these standards are to ensure large scale commercial development is to provide compatible design, size and layout considerations to the unique built and natural environment of Grand Rapids.

(b) *Intent.* The intent of these development standards is to provide standards that influence building and site design of large scale development that creates a smaller scale, feel and relationship to the small town atmosphere of Grand Rapids. Large scale commercial development has the potential to distract, disrupt or adversely impact the natural and built environment of Grand Rapids and the surrounding area. When properly implemented, the standards contained in this section minimize impacts to better integrate these developments within the context of the community. This section establishes standards that regulate the location, appearance and function of buildings; off-street parking and circulation; vehicular and pedestrian access; loading areas; yard spaces; and preservation of natural site amenities. It is not the intent of the City of Grand Rapids to unnecessarily over-regulate large scale commercial development when these uses provide retail services and create market dynamics that are a benefit to the greater good of Grand Rapids and its market area.

(Ord. No. 05-05-08, 5-18-2005; Ord. No. 07-03-06, § 2(Exh. A), 3-27-2007)

##### **Sec. 30-901. Applicability.**

(a) *New large scale commercial development.* The standards contained in this section apply to commercial development that has a building footprint area exceeding 70,000 square feet.

(b) *Existing large scale commercial development.* When triggered by occupation; change in use; building enlargement, expansion, or modification; or site modifications to commercial development with building footprints exceeding 70,000 square feet, the provisions of Section 30-458 are applicable.

(c) *Procedure.* All commercial development meeting the applicability criteria of this section will be reviewed by the conditional use permit process contained in Section 30-531.

(Ord. No. 05-05-08, 5-18-2005; Ord. No. 07-03-06, § 2(Exh. A), 3-27-2007)

**Sec. 30-902. Site design standards.**

The following section outlines the guidelines and standards required for large scale commercial development within the City of Grand Rapids. The following site and building design standards present the objectives for development with regards to site planning and building design.

- (1) *Site planning.* Site planning as it relates to the commercial and community context shall be considered. Buildings shall be located to relate to adjacent streets, other adjacent commercial development, residential neighborhoods, and community features. Grand Rapids has a wealth of natural features which need proper attention and consideration during the site planning process. These features create intrinsic site value when properly integrated into development planning by providing opportunities to create outdoor spaces that convey community identity.
- (2) *Building setbacks.* Building setbacks are as required by applicable zoning districts.
- (3) *Parking and vehicular circulation.*
  - a. Standards for minimum and maximum parking space ratios, parking lot space sizes and design, and interior landscaping are applicable.
  - b. The distribution of parking spaces shall be arranged to provide convenient vehicular and pedestrian movement. Consideration for the distance from the furthest parking space to building entries shall be given as well as the route by which people walk from their car to the building entry.
  - c. Off-street parking spaces shall be located in two yard spaces. This standard may be relaxed if:
    1. The majority of parking area is screened by natural vegetation or outlot development sites.
    2. Parking in only one yard space will preserve features of the site that can be considered as site amenities.
  - d. A traffic study shall accompany the application showing the proposed amount of traffic generated by the development and its impact on surrounding roadways including existing and proposed levels of service at intersections. The developer shall consult with city staff to establish parameters of study and its scope.
  - e. Parking lots shall incorporate other natural features, design elements, or functional elements such as stormwater management systems internally within the parking lot to break up the parking lot into smaller areas to minimize negative visual impacts.
  - f. Driveways and isles shall be located in a manner to relate to surrounding roadway systems, driveways serving adjacent development, and other land uses that may be negatively impacted by high levels of traffic.
  - g. Differing pavement surfaces shall be used to define vehicle isles and pedestrian walkways and crossing areas.

- h. Pedestrian walkways shall be incorporated into the parking lot to minimize potential conflicts with vehicles.
- (4) *Pedestrian and bicycle circulation*
- a. Sidewalks and/trails shall be provided along the all sides of the site perimeter with street frontage. Trails shall be provided as needed to connect the site to community trail systems and/or link to natural site amenities. Widths and locations of the sidewalks and trails shall be determined by their intended use and guided by the city.
  - b. Bicycle racks shall be provided in close proximity to building entrances.
- (5) *Landscaping and screening*
- a. Minimum standards for tree preservation and landscaping shall apply as regulated in sections 30-594 and 30-595.
  - b. Special landscaping attention shall be given to loading areas. Buffering techniques that incorporate berming shall be used when adjacent to residential areas if a building entrance is not present.
  - c. Mature trees along the perimeter of the site shall be preserved to create development "rooms" that aid to minimize the scale of development.
  - d. Additional landscaping to minimize the impacts of large parking areas and building size shall be provided as determined necessary by the city.
- (6) *Community spaces.* Sites should provide attractive and inviting pedestrian scale features, spaces and amenities. Entrances and parking lots should be configured to be functional and inviting with walkways conveniently tied to logical destinations. Pedestrian ways should be anchored by special design features such as towers, arcades, porticoes, pedestrian light fixtures, bollards, planter walls, and other architectural elements that define circulation ways and outdoor spaces. The features and spaces should enhance the building as integral parts of the community fabric. Other features to be considered for site amenities include patio/seating area, pedestrian plaza with benches, transportation center, window shopping walkways, outdoor play area, kiosk area, water feature, clock tower, steeple, or other such deliberately shaped area and/or a focal feature or amenity that, in the judgment of the City, adequately enhances such community and public spaces.
- (7) *Walls and fences.* Walls and fencing may be used in cases where natural landscaping is not adequate for screening purposes. Fencing materials and design shall relate to the building design and character when used. Additional landscaping treatment may be required to soften the fence from public view.
- (8) *Outdoor storage, trash collection and loading.* Loading areas and outdoor storage areas exert visual and noise impacts on surrounding development and residential areas. These areas, when visible from adjoining properties and/or public streets, should be screened, recessed or enclosed. While screens and recesses can effectively mitigate

these impacts, the selection of inappropriate screening materials can exacerbate the problem. Appropriate locations for loading and outdoor storage areas include areas between buildings, where more than one building is located on a site and such buildings are not more than 40 feet apart, or on those sides of buildings that do not have customer entrances. In addition, the following standards apply:

- a. Areas for outdoor storage, truck parking, trash collection or compaction, loading, or other such uses shall not be visible from public or private rights-of-way or residential areas.
- b. All storage, collection, and compaction of trash shall occur within the principal building.
- c. Loading docks, truck parking, utility meters, HVAC equipment, and other service functions shall be incorporated into the overall design of the building and the landscaping so that the visual and acoustic impacts of these functions are fully contained and out of view from adjacent properties and public streets.
- d. Non-enclosed areas for the storage and sale of seasonal inventory shall be permanently defined and screened with walls and/or fences. Materials, colors, and designs of screening walls and/or fences and the cover shall conform to those used as predominant materials and colors of the building. If such areas are to be covered, then the covering shall conform to those used as predominant materials and colors on the buildings.

- (9) *Shopping cart management.* Defined areas for the storage of shopping carts shall be provided. Overnight outdoor storage within parking lots shall not be permitted.

(Ord. No. 05-05-08, 5-18-2005; Ord. No. 07-03-06, § 2(Exh. A), 3-27-2007)

### **Sec. 30-903. Building design standards.**

The size of large commercial buildings can have a positive or negative impact on community character. By identifying appropriate building design standards for large commercial development, these buildings can become community assets that help promote the image, identity and economy of Grand Rapids. By encouraging designs that play down size, relate to community character and provide a human scale, provide a higher probability of producing positive benefits to the community including their eventual reuse.

- (1) ***Building width and facade.*** The building width and facade treatment may be the most important design considerations as they convey first and lasting impressions of the development. Long building facades with no articulation can present a generic low quality image. Grand Rapids development character needs to reinforce smaller scale character elements that have a greater degree of human scale. The following standards shall apply to building facades and exterior walls.
  - a. For exterior walls that front on a public street, the facade shall be articulated so that there are projections and recesses every 100 feet. The minimum projection and recess shall be 5 feet.

- b. **Materials and colors.** Buildings shall incorporate high quality materials that provide long term durability and design appeal. Concrete cinder block and metal siding are prohibited on building facades that face public streets. Facade colors shall be low reflectance and subtle. High intensity colors are prohibited but complementary colors that accent primary colors are acceptable.
  - c. *Building height.* As prescribed by the zoning district.
  - d. *Rear facades.* Rear facades or facades not fronting public streets should be designed to compliment the front facade.
  - e. *Entries and window treatment*
    - 1. Buildings shall incorporate canopies, awnings, or porticos that clearly identify building entry locations. The size and design of these treatments shall integrate with the overall building architecture.
    - 2. Windows should be incorporated into street facing facades except for those facades that are loading areas. Windows shall have functional two-way glass.
  - f. *Roof treatment.* Variations in roof lines should be used to add interest to and reduce the massive scale of large buildings. Rooftop equipment shall be designed to blend into the building or be concealed through the use of features such as parapets, mansard roofs, gable roofs, hip roofs, or dormers.
  - g. *Signage.* Signage both wall and freestanding, shall be consistent with the over all building design character. Sign area and height shall be as prescribed in division 10, article VI.
  - h. *Lighting.* A comprehensive lighting plan shall be developed for building and site lighting. Lighting shall not produce unnecessary glare or light pollution.
- (Ord. No. 05-05-08, 5-18-2005; Ord. No. 07-03-06, § 2(Exh. A), 3-27-2007)

**Sec. 30-904. Other requirements.**

The following shall also be required:

- (1) *Adaptability for reuse plan.*
  - a. The building design for a retail use shall demonstrate how the building is designed for adaptation to a multi-tenant building in the event of the abandonment of the large scale commercial store. The design may include, but is not limited to, compartmentalized construction, including plumbing, electrical, service, heating, ventilation, air conditioning and wall placement. The plans shall also demonstrate how the exterior of the building can be divided into separate tenancies, facades can be adapted to separate entrances, parking can be shared, and the exterior can be maintained as a multi-tenant building.
  - b. When a business relocates to another building, the owner shall not place restrictions on the use or occupancy of the previously occupied property through the use of deed restrictions, covenants, or other means which would encumber the

property's reuse in the open market. Every attempt shall be made by the owner to sell or lease the building to a use(s) allowed under zoning district requirements without prohibition of similar uses that may pose competition.

- (2) *Environmental review.* Large scale commercial development with buildings over 125,000 square feet are required to prepare an Environmental Assessment Worksheet (EAW) as prescribed by Minnesota Rules Chapter 4410. The city will serve as the responsible governmental unit (RGU) for review of the EAW unless otherwise assigned.

(Ord. No. 05-05-08, 5-18-2005; Ord. No. 07-03-06, § 2(Exh. A), 3-27-2007)

**Secs. 30-905—30-949. Reserved.**

**DIVISION 15. TELECOMMUNICATIONS TOWERS AND FACILITIES**

**Sec. 30-950. Purpose and intent.**

(a) The Federal Communications Act of 1934 as amended by the Telecommunications Act of 1996 ("the Act") grants the Federal Communications Commission exclusive jurisdiction over the regulation of the environmental effects of radio frequency emissions from telecommunications facilities and the regulation of radio signal interference among users of the radio frequency spectrum.

(b) Consistent with the Act, the regulation of towers and telecommunications facilities in the city will not have the effect of prohibiting any person from providing wireless telecommunications services. The general purpose of this section is to regulate the placement, construction, and modification of telecommunication towers and facilities in order to protect the health, safety and welfare of the public, while not unreasonably interfering with the development of the competitive wireless telecommunications marketplace in the city. In addition, this section recognizes the contractual control for the purpose of preserving public health, safety, and welfare that can be exercised over telecommunications facilities when those facilities are located on property owned or controlled by governmental entities. Specifically, the purposes of this section are:

- (1) To regulate the location of telecommunication towers and facilities;
- (2) To protect residential areas and land uses from potential adverse impacts of telecommunication towers and facilities;
- (3) To minimize adverse visual impacts of telecommunication towers and facilities through design, site, landscaping, and innovative camouflaging techniques;
- (4) To promote and encourage shared use and collocation of telecommunication towers and antenna support structures;