

Administrative Comment
March 7, 2024
Department of Planning & Development



ST. TAMMANY PARISH
MICHAEL B. COOPER
PARISH PRESIDENT

DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT MEMO

TO: St. Tammany Parish Zoning Commission

FROM: Ross Liner, AICP, PTP, CFM

DATE: February 6, 2024

SUBJECT: 2023-3668-ZC: Text Change

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Text change: AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND ST. TAMMANY PARISH CODE OF ORDINANCES, PART II – LAND DEVELOPMENT CODE, CHAPTER 130 - ARTICLE VI, DIVISION 25 – HC-2 HIGHWAY COMMERCIAL DISTRICT; SECTION 130-918 PERMITTED USES: INCREASE THE MAXIMUM ALLOWABLE BUILDING SIZE FOR (13) AUTOMOTIVE REPAIR AND SERVICES FACILITIES NOT TO EXCEED 10,000 SQUARE FEET TO 40,000 SQUARE FEET AND DIVISION 26 – HC-2A HIGHWAY COMMERCIAL DISTRICT, SECTION. 130-945 – PERMITTED USES: INCREASE THE MAXIMUM ALLOWABLE BUILDING SIZE FOR (13) AUTOMOTIVE REPAIR AND SERVICES FACILITIES NOT TO EXCEED 10,000 SQUARE FEET TO 75,000 SQUARE FEET

The purpose of the HC-2 Highway Commercial District and HC-2A Highway Commercial District is to provide for the location of moderately scaled, more intense retail, office and service uses, generally located along major collectors and arterials designed to provide services to a portion of the Parish. Listed under the allowable uses of the HC-2 Highway Commercial District are “Automotive repair and service facilities not to exceed 10,000 square feet.” Per the site and structure provisions of the HC-2 Highway Commercial District, the maximum building size allowed is 40,000 sqft not to exceed 50% of the total area of the lot (and 75,000 sqft in HC-2A) for all other developments that are allowed in the zoning district including the following:

All uses permitted in the HC-1 Highway Commercial District and Banks and financial institutions; Convenience stores with gas; Drive-in restaurants; Liquor stores; Any private office use that is a permitted use in the NC district over 20,000 sq. ft.; Clubs, lodges, fraternal and religious institutions, meeting halls (over 20,000 sq. ft.); Veterinary clinics (with outdoor kennels); Parcel post delivery stations; Mini-warehouses; Commercial kennels; Outdoor storage yards that do not occupy an area greater than 50 percent of land area, and are enclosed by an eight-foot opaque perimeter fence, located on the same parcel as, and are accessory to an existing mini-warehouse, not to be located on the street side; Lodging, 100 rooms or less (including apartments, hotels, motels); Automotive sales not to exceed two acres

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of display and storage; Outdoor retail and storage yards; Potable storage containers use for storage; Outdoor display area of pre-assembles building, pool and playground equipment.

The HC-3 Highway Commercial District, in relation to the three previous HC designations (HC-1, HC-2, and HC-2A), allows for a maximum building size of 250,000 sqft. In addition, the list of permitted uses under the HC-3 includes “automotive service, stations, centers, and sales” similarly to the HC-2. However, the building size for this use is capped at the max square footage allowed under the zoning. Based on the list of permitted uses under the HC-2 District, the 10,000 sqft maximum building size restriction is specifically for automotive repair facilities, which seems to be an arbitrary number that prohibits larger building size without any justification in the St. Tammany Parish Unified Development Code.

For example, if an applicant that was in possession of 10 acres zoned HC-2 Highway Commercial District were to apply for a building permit with the desire to construct an automotive repair facility, the building could not exceed 10,000 sqft. The only alternative would be to Rezone the property to the HC-3 Highway Commercial District which would allow all uses from HC-1 to HC-3 and have a maximum building size of 250,000 sqft.

The intent of this text change is not only to remove a subjective cap on the square footage for one specific use, but also to prevent what can be described as up-zoning in areas of unincorporated St. Tammany Parish.