

**PROPOSAL:** Amend Unified Development Ordinance Section 4.3.2, Highway Corridor Overlay District (HCO), paragraph D “Exceptions and non-conforming situations.”

**APPLICABLE CHAPTER(S):** Chapter 4

**APPLICANT:** The Keith Corporation c/o Sam Walker.

**STATUTORY NOTICES:** Hearing notice published 9/03/2022 in Lancaster News and 9/14/2022 in Carolina Gateway;  
Posted agenda in lobby on 9/13/2022.

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**PROJECT SUMMARY & PROPOSAL:**

On behalf of The Keith Corporation, the applicant is proposing to amend Chapter 4 of the Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) to modify the provisions of Section 4.3.2 paragraph D, “Exceptions and non-conforming situations.” Applicant proposes to add hospitals as a use type exempt from the development standards of the Highway Corridor Overlay.

As noted in the application, MUSC is developing a new unified campus (research, medical/hospital) which *“requires unique site planning features that are currently non-conforming in the Highway Corridor Overlay District.”*

The applicant offers the proposed text amendment attached for the Commission’s consideration. For ease of reference, new text is referenced in red/underlined font and deletions are referenced in ~~strikethrough~~ font. The proposed language is found in Attachment 1.

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**OUTLINE OF TEXT AMENDMENT:**

The following sections of the UDO are proposed to be amended:

*Section 4.3.2.D, Highway Corridor Overlay District (HCO) “Exceptions and Non-Conforming Situations”:*

The proposed text amendment would exempt any property developed as a “unified campus” from all standards of the Highway Corridor Overlay District.

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**FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS:**

The proposed text amendment has been found to be inconsistent with the applicable provisions of the Comprehensive Plan as required by UDO Section 9.2.15.B.3, as well as with the applicable provisions of SC Code Title VI.

After reviewing MUSC's proposed development, staff believes that the modifications which may be needed to accommodate the applicant's intended use may be better addressed via a more targeted amendment.

**Option 1:**

It is County Staff's understanding that the primary "site planning feature" which is inconsistent with the HCOD is MUSC's desire to locate primary parking area between the highway and the medical facilities on site. If this is the case, staff recommends that the amendment be revised to alter 4.3.2.G "Off-Street Parking"; to allow hospital uses the option of an alternative parking arrangement where parking may be located between the highway and buildings on the hospital campus so long as increased buffering and landscaping criteria are met.

**Option 2:**

If there are broader issues, the best approach may be to create a new section within the HCOD similar to Section 4.3.2.M (this section provides specific exemptions to Industrial properties within the HCOD). If this approach is taken, Staff would recommend that this new section be crafted specifically for "Hospital Campuses" or "Medical Campuses" as opposed to all properties developed as a "unified campus". We also recommend that along with the requested exemptions some improvements be required; similar to the recommendation in option 1.

For example, if an alternative parking arrangement is used: increased landscaping and buffering requirements shall apply; if the architecture proposed is inconsistent with the requirements of the HCOD: other beautification and/or walkability improvements will be provided; etc.

It should also be noted that the County is currently in the process of updating the UDO and it may be appropriate to study any proposed large changes to the Highway Corridor Overlay District, as well as all other uses, as a part of that process.

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**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:**

Staff recommends **denial** of the proposed text amendment as written.

The applicant's reasoning for the proposed text amendment is due to "unique site planning features" specific to their proposed campus. Staff feels these issues could be addressed more directly through a text amendment crafted to target specific portions of the HCOD as opposed to a broad exemption to all HCOD requirements for any property developed as a "unified campus".

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**ATTACHMENTS:**

1. Application
2. Proposed Ordinance
3. Proposed Site Plan

**STAFF CONTACT:**

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