
PROPOSAL:	Amend Unified Development Ordinance Section 4.3.2, Highway Corridor Overlay regulations, and Section 7.4.5 Signage standards.
APPLICABLE CHAPTER(S):	Chapter 4; Chapter 7; Chapter 10
APPLICANT:	Yates Dunaway (Crosland LLC) on behalf of C4 OP Owner LLC
STATUTORY NOTICES:	Hearing notice published 4/29/2023 in The Lancaster News And 5/03/2023 in Carolina Gateway Posted agenda in lobby and on website 5/10/2023

All proposed amendments have been processed and notified as required by UDO Section 9.2.15.

PROJECT SUMMARY & PROPOSAL:

On behalf of C4 OP Owner LLC, applicant Yates Dunaway is proposing to amend Chapter 4 and Chapter 7 of the Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) to ***modify Section 4.3.2, Highway Corridor Overlay regulations, Section 7.4.5 Signage standards, and Section 10.3 Definitions.*** These requests are related to a proposed development in The Exchange along Hwy 521/Charlotte Hwy, located in the “Neighborhood Mixed Use” category of the Comprehensive Plan’s Future Land Use map.

OUTLINE OF TEXT AMENDMENT:

The applicant has submitted five (5) text amendments that are related to the proposed Costco site in The Exchange mixed-use project located on Charlotte Hwy. Where relevant, staff has grouped the requests.

The applicant has also applied for a rezoning for 28 acres to convert from Light Industrial to regional business, which is reported on under case file RZ-2022-0344.

The following sections of the UDO are proposed to be amended, and are reviewed by item:

ITEM 1: Section 4.3.2.B – Highway Corridor Overlay District Boundaries and Applicability and **Section 4.3.2.D** – Highway Corridor Overlay District Exceptions and Non-Conforming Situations

ITEM 2: Section 7.2.6.A – Bicycle Parking, Required Spaces

ITEM 3: Section 7.4.5.A – Wall Sign Maximum Area

ITEM 4: Section 10.3 – Definitions, to add a definition for “Large-Scale Retailer”

Except for the two grouped as Item 1, the proposed amendments will be evaluated separately, so that the Planning Commission may decide each request on its own merit.

ITEM 1. Section 4.3.2.B Highway Corridor Overlay District Boundaries and Applicability and Section 4.3.2.D – Highway Corridor Overlay District Exceptions and Non-Conforming Situations

PROPOSED TEXT AMENDMENTS:

The following sections of the UDO are proposed to be amended with the additional language (underlined):

Section 4.3.2. B.2. The Highway Corridor Overlay District development regulations, as set forth in the Highway Corridor Overlay District, apply to all uses on the properties zoned Highway Corridor Overlay District except for single family housing as identified in Section 2.5, Permitted Uses. The development regulations applicable to single family housing are the development regulations of the underlying zoning district. In addition, Hospitals, Medical Clinics, and Large-Scale Retailer facilities shall be exempt from the Highway Corridor Overlay District development regulations located in Section 4.3.2.F. I., Subsection 4.3.2.F.1.b., Section 4.3.2.G. I., and Subsection 4.3.2.G. I.a.

Section 4.3.2.D. Any property zoned and used for a single-family residential use, including the single-family residential portion of a property zoned Planned Development District (PDD), shall be exempt from the development standards of the Highway Corridor Overlay District. Any property zoned and used for a Hospital, Medical Clinic, and Large-Scale Retailer shall be exempt from the development standards of the Highway Corridor Overlay District located in Section 4.3.2. F.1. Subsection 4.3.2.F.1.b, Section 4.3.2. G.1., and Subsection 4.3.2.G.1.a.

When a parcel has a vested right in effect, that parcel may be exempt from certain provisions of the Highway Corridor Overlay District, as outlined in Chapter 9 of the UDO. The development standards of this overlay district shall apply to all other properties within the district boundaries as outlined in Section 4.3.2.B.

The effect of the two proposals is primarily the same.

RELEVANT CODE TO ITEM 1:

The proposal is to exempt the applicant's project from the development regulations in Sections 4.3.2.F.1 and 4.3.2.G.1, as follows:

4.3.2.F. GENERAL REQUIREMENTS AND DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS

1. Building Placement: All buildings shall front onto a public or private street, or share a frontage line with a square or other similar common open space. The front facade of buildings shall be generally parallel to front property lines when placed along the corridor right-of-way. The following shall also apply:

- a. In general, the setback requirements set forth in Chapter 2 and Chapter 3 of the UDO shall apply; however, in no instance shall the front setback be less than 50 feet. For commercial developments that were platted prior to the establishment of the Highway Corridor Overlay District, common setback flexibility will be considered by the Technical Review Committee (TRC).

- b. Notwithstanding any other provisions of the UDO, existing buildings built as of June 9, 2014, and not in conformity with the 50-foot front setback shall not be precluded from expanding in size based on the setback nonconformity, provided the expansion does not result in further reduction of the nonconforming setback and provide a minimum 25- foot front setback.
- c. When fronting the corridor right-of-way, buildings shall have access from the front and rear of the building.
- d. The development of retail commercial centers or villages is favorable over commercial “strip development” in the Highway Corridor Overlay District.

4.3.2.G. PARKING AND VEHICULAR ACCESS

1. Off-Street Parking: For buildings fronting on the corridor, off-street surface parking shall be located primarily to the rear of the building it serves. Side yard parking is permissible and shall occupy no more than 45 percent of the principle corridor frontage line. The following shall also apply:

- a. Where dimensions or topographical constraints of existing parcels restrict the location of off-street parking to the rear of the building it serves, the restrictions on side yard parking may be modified, on a case-by-case basis, by the Administrator;
- b. Uninterrupted areas of parking areas shall be limited in size. Parking areas with more than 20 space[s] shall be broken by buildings and/or landscape features outlined in Section 4.3.2.K.6; and
- c. Parking areas shall be designed to allow pedestrians to safely move from their vehicles to the building.

CURRENT CODE:

4.3.2 HIGHWAY CORRIDOR OVERLAY DISTRICT (HCO)

The Highway Corridor Overlay District is hereby established and is subject to the following general provisions:

A. PURPOSE AND INTENT

The Highway Corridor Overlay District is established to preserve and enhance corridors that serve as major gateways leading to, from, and within Lancaster County. As both commercial and residential land uses exist along such corridors, there is a desire of the residents of Lancaster County to provide standards relative to connectivity, aesthetic appearance, and safety along major gateways. The land use recommendations and design requirements contained in the Highway Corridor Overlay District are the result of a community-wide effort. As such, the intent of this district is to provide unified land development regulations that promote a sense of place and create consistency along significant corridors by improving the visual character of adjacent development.

B. DISTRICT BOUNDARIES AND APPLICABILITY

The Highway Corridor Overlay District applies to the following:

1. The County Council shall designate the property that is subject to the provisions of the Highway Corridor Overlay District by rezoning the properties in accordance with the procedures and requirements applicable to map amendments. In general, for those highways identified for Highway

Corridor Overlay District status, the district designation shall apply to all parcels fronting on or within 1,000 feet of the right-of-way of the designated highway. Only the following highways are designated as a Highway Corridor Overlay District:

- a. US Highway 521 from SC Highway 75 (Waxhaw Highway) northward to the North/South Carolina state line; and
 - b. SC Highway 160 from US Highway 521 westward to the York/Lancaster County line.
2. The Highway Corridor Overlay District development regulations, as set forth in the Highway Corridor Overlay District, apply to all uses on the properties zoned Highway Corridor Overlay District except for single family housing as identified in Section 2.5, Permitted Uses. The development regulations applicable to single family housing are the development regulations of the underlying zoning district.
 3. Any property within the Highway Overlay District zoned and used for industrial use, LI and HI, shall be subject to the provisions set forth in Section 4.3.2.N; and
 4. This district shall also apply to all shared access easements and/or cross-access easements located within the areas defined in Section 4.3.2.B.1, including, but not limited to, those that may be used to access any parcel or parcels beyond the boundaries of this district.

RELEVANT COMPREHENSIVE PLAN CITATIONS for ITEM 1:

Land Use Element – Community Types

An important concept introduced during the regional planning process was designating areas based on “community types.” ... The use of community types marks a significant shift in planning practice in the last ten to fifteen years, away from conventional and functional designations that merely specified the use of land and towards a renewed interest in the relationships between land uses and urban design. The objective of this more contextual way of classifying land uses is to produce more economically and environmentally attractive places to live, work and play.

The Future Land Use Category of the subject property is Neighborhood Mixed Use, which corresponds to the Community Type of Walkable Neighborhood. The adopted Comprehensive Plan states that the Walkable Neighborhood Community Type *“is synonymous with the Place Type “Mixed-Use Neighborhood.” This is due to its very specific characteristics that set it apart from most other Place Types by virtue of its deliberately structured mix of dwelling types in a development context that often operates through the separation of uses, densities and/or land value. This Place Type and Community Type has its roots in the traditional character of American communities during the early part of the 20th century, and has been revived in recent decades as a relevant option for future development.”* The Comprehensive Plan further establishes several possible land use considerations representing typical development in this category which are depicted in the table below.

Walkable Activity Center: Land Use Considerations		
Condominium / Apartment	Professional Office	Movie Theatre
Live/Work Unit	Government Building	Pocket Park
Community-wide Commercial	Church/School	Farmers’ Market
Restaurant	Library	

The Neighborhood Mixed-Use Future Land Use Category covers the upper half of the Panhandle, terminating at Waxhaw Highway (Route 75). The Neighborhood Mixed Use Future Land Use Category and Walkable Neighborhood Community Type are intended to be compatible with the existing suburban character of the area.

ITEM 1 DISCUSSION:

Exempting certain uses from 4.3.2.F removes the following requirements:

- Buildings to front on a street
- Front façade to be parallel to property lines
- Additional setbacks along Hwy 521 that provide room for highway expansion
- Required access from the front and rear of building
- Preference for commercial centers over “strip development”

Exempting certain uses from 4.3.2.G removes the following requirements:

- On-site parking primarily located in the rear of the building site
- Allowance of no more than 45 percent of parking in the side yard
- Allowance of staff to modify side yard parking restrictions
- Breaking up parking areas by buildings and/or landscaping
- Pedestrian safety consideration

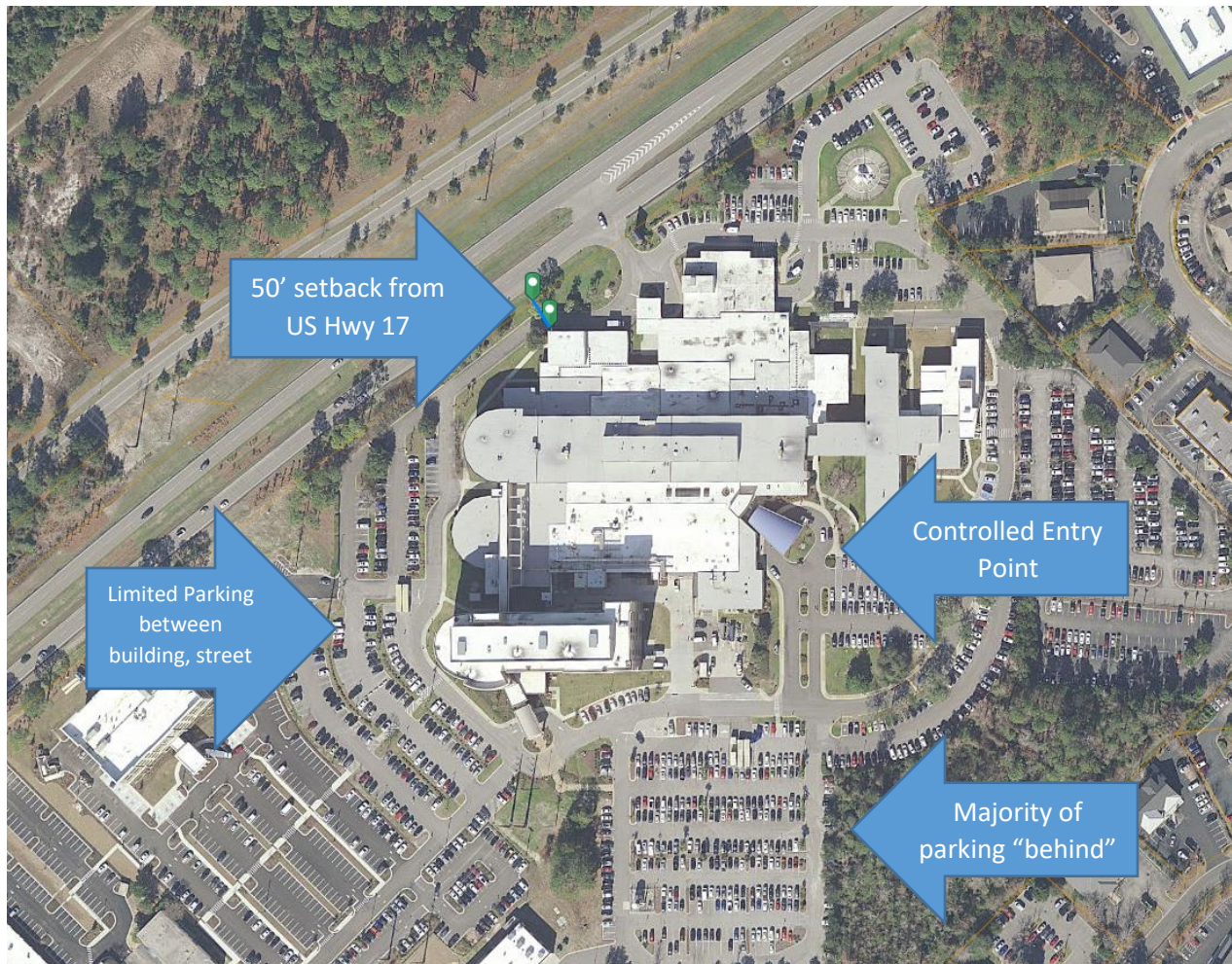
In the applicant’s narrative, it’s noted that *“Requiring frontage on the highway corridor and doing so as close as 25 feet has proven to be unworkable in many instances and counter to the goal of allowing room for the planned future widening of Highway 521 itself. For these reasons, the current draft of the Highway Corridor Overlay District in the UDO Update dated December 21, 2022, Chapter 2, proposed Section 2. 7.3, footnote 3 7, calls for the elimination of the build-to line and the 25 feet setbacks.”*

Staff does not contest this point, but wishes to clarify the following:

- An amendment to the UDO has already been made to require a minimum of 50 ft front setback along public and private roads (Ordinance 2021-1783, effective December 13, 2021).
- The current UDO draft is still a work in progress, and should not be used to indicate what will or won’t be adopted when the rewrite is completed.

The applicant also notes that the staff has recommended *“allowing parking between the road and building for large centers.”* This statement leaves out a key component of the staff’s recommendation, which is to allow *limited* parking. The full quote is as follows: **“Consider allowing some limited parking between the road and building for larger centers.”**

Regarding medical clinic and hospital design, it is clear that these uses serve a unique role in the community. Recent hospital design standards, however, have been migrating to a central entry point away from the main road and internal to the campus, located in an area that can be better controlled for security. An example of this is Grand Strand Regional Medical Center in Myrtle Beach, SC:



View from Highway:



FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS for ITEM 1:

Staff opines that the proposed text amendment is inconsistent with the “Walkable Neighborhood” community type provisions of the Comprehensive Plan.

What Makes a Community Walkable?

<https://www.walkscore.com/walkable-neighborhoods.shtml>

- **A center:** Walkable neighborhoods have a center, whether it's a main street or a public space.
- **People:** Enough people for businesses to flourish and for public transit to run frequently.
- **Mixed income, mixed use:** Affordable housing located near businesses.
- **Parks and public space:** Plenty of public places to gather and play.
- **Pedestrian design:** Buildings are close to the street; parking lots are relegated to the back.
- **Schools and workplaces:** Close enough that most residents can walk from their homes.
- **Complete streets:** Streets designed for bicyclists, pedestrians, and transit.

Staff further opines that removing large-scale uses from regulations that are intended to create a sense of place, visual character, standard connectivity, aesthetic appearance, and safety goes against what that the Highway Corridor Overlay District was designed to achieve. The text as presented is not recommended.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION for ITEM 1:

If the Planning Commission is in favor of an amendment, staff would advise against a wholesale regulation exemption and address the issue in a more targeted approach. Optional changes are provided below (with additions underlined and deletions shown in ~~strikethrough~~).

4.3.2.F. GENERAL REQUIREMENTS AND DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS

1. Building Placement: All buildings shall front onto a public or private street, or share a frontage line with a square or other similar common open space. The front facade of buildings shall be generally parallel to front property lines when placed along the corridor right-of-way. The following shall also apply:

- a. In general, the setback requirements set forth in Chapter 2 and Chapter 3 of the UDO shall apply; however, in no instance shall the front setback be less than 50 feet. For hospitals, medical clinics, large-scale retail facilities, and commercial developments that were platted prior to the establishment of the Highway Corridor Overlay District, common setback flexibility will be considered by the Technical Review Committee (TRC). TRC will consider the allowances in 4.3.2.G.1 when reviewing setbacks for hospitals, medical clinics, and large-scale retail facilities.
- b. Notwithstanding any other provisions of the UDO, existing buildings built as of June 9, 2014, and not in conformity with the 50-foot front setback shall not be precluded from expanding in size based on the setback nonconformity, provided the expansion does not result in further reduction of the nonconforming setback and provide a minimum 25- foot front setback.
- c. When fronting the corridor right-of-way, buildings shall have access from the front and rear of the building. For hospitals, medical clinics, and large-scale retail facilities with room for an off-set or corner door entrance on a side, this may be provided in place of a rear door.

- d. The development of retail commercial centers or villages is favorable over commercial “strip development” in the Highway Corridor Overlay District.

4.3.2.G. PARKING AND VEHICULAR ACCESS

1. Off-Street Parking: For buildings fronting on the corridor, off-street surface parking shall be located primarily to the rear of the building it serves. Side yard parking is permissible and shall occupy no more than 45 percent of the principle corridor frontage line. The following shall also apply:

- a. Where dimensions or topographical constraints of existing parcels restrict the location of off-street parking to the rear of the building it serves, the restrictions on side yard parking may be modified, on a case-by-case basis, by the Administrator;
- b. Uninterrupted areas of parking areas shall be limited in size. Parking areas with more than 20 space[s] shall be broken by buildings and/or landscape features as outlined in Section 4.3.2.K.6; and
- c. Parking areas shall be designed to allow pedestrians to safely move from their vehicles to the building.
- d. Hospitals, medical clinics, and large-scale retail facilities in the HCO may include up to two (2) parking drive aisles between Hwy 521 and the adjacent building. This parking area may be no wider than 125 feet, inclusive of required landscaping islands and drive aisles. This parking area includes the 50-foot setback required in Section 4.3.2.F.1.a., for a net addition of 75 feet in setback. Where setback regulations conflict with this provision, this section of code will prevail.

END OF ITEM 1

ATTACHMENTS:

- 1. Application
- 2. Proposed Text Amendment

STAFF CONTACT:

Allison Hardin, Interim Planning Director
ahardin@lancastersc.net

ITEM 2. Section 7.2.6.A – Bicycle Parking, Required Spaces

PROPOSED TEXT AMENDMENT:

The following section of the UDO is proposed to be amended to add bicycle parking requirements for large-scale retailers:

7.2.6 BICYCLE PARKING

A. REQUIRED SPACES

Use	Required Short-Term Spaces	Required Long-Term Spaces
Dwelling, Multi-Family	1 per 20 units, 3 minimum	1 per 5 units (Projects with 10+ units only)
All Other Residential Uses	None Required	None Required
All Retail Uses	1 per 5,000 SF of gross floor area, 3 minimum	1 per 5,000 SF of gross floor area
All Commercial Uses	1 per 10,000 SF of gross floor area, 3 minimum	1 per 5,000 SF of gross floor area
<u>Large-Scale Retailer Use</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>None required</u>
All Civic Uses	1 per 5,000 SF of gross floor area, 3 minimum	None Required

CURRENT CODE:

The current code would require the same number of parking spaces as retail uses, as Costco is a retail operation (source: “Costco Wholesale is a multi-billion-dollar global retailer” from “About Us” via <https://www.costco.com/about.html>). Using the applicant’s threshold for large-scale retailer as 100,000 square feet, the bicycle parking requirements would add up as shown:

Use	Required Short-Term Spaces	Required Long-Term Spaces
All Retail Uses	20 spaces	20 spaces

RELEVANT COMPREHENSIVE PLAN CITATIONS for ITEM 2:

Land Use Element – Community Types

An important concept introduced during the regional planning process was designating areas based on “community types.” ... The use of community types marks a significant shift in planning practice in the last ten to fifteen years, away from conventional and functional designations that merely specified the use of land and towards a renewed interest in the relationships between land uses and urban design. The

objective of this more contextual way of classifying land uses is to produce more economically and environmentally attractive places to live, work and play.

The Future Land Use Category of the subject property is Neighborhood Mixed Use, which corresponds to the Community Type of Walkable Neighborhood. The adopted Comprehensive Plan states that the Walkable Neighborhood Community Type *“is synonymous with the Place Type “Mixed-Use Neighborhood.” This is due to its very specific characteristics that set it apart from most other Place Types by virtue of its deliberately structured mix of dwelling types in a development context that often operates through the separation of uses, densities and/or land value. This Place Type and Community Type has its roots in the traditional character of American communities during the early part of the 20th century, and has been revived in recent decades as a relevant option for future development.”* The Comprehensive Plan further establishes several possible land use considerations representing typical development in this category which are depicted in the table below.

Walkable Activity Center: Land Use Considerations		
Condominium / Apartment	Professional Office	Movie Theatre
Live/Work Unit	Government Building	Pocket Park
Community-wide Commercial	Church/School	Farmers’ Market
Restaurant	Library	

The Neighborhood Mixed-Use Future Land Use Category covers the upper half of the Panhandle, terminating at Waxhaw Highway (Route 75). The Neighborhood Mixed Use Future Land Use Category and Walkable Neighborhood Community Type are intended to be compatible with the existing suburban character of the area.

ITEM 2 DISCUSSION:

The applicant argues that *“Large-Scale Retailers serve the public who buy significant quantities of goods and large-sized goods to transport home, in car trunks, in trucks, on tops of cars, and otherwise. The need for bicycle parking is virtually non-existent.”*

Staff does not agree. As we note in Item 4, one of the two determining factors in the applicant’s proposed definition of “Large-Scale Retailers” is the square footage of the facility. There are many types of retailers that fit in more than 100,000 square feet of building without requiring a truck to take away a purchase. Two examples in Lancaster County are Walmart and Lowe’s Home Improvement, both of which are frequented by a wide variety of customers; some own a vehicle and some own an alternative means of transportation, be it bicycle, moped, golf cart, or shoes. Additionally, a customer can use alternative means of transportation to visit a retailer, order an item, and arrange for delivery (such as when buying a sofa from a furniture store).

Bicycle parking isn’t only provided for customers; employees may also wish to employ alternative methods of coming to work, and should not be forgotten in the parking count. With the increase in alternative transportation use by residents in and around planned neighborhoods, it might also be worth discussing adding a golf cart parking requirement in the UDO in the near future.

FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS for ITEM 2:

Staff opines that the proposed text amendment is inconsistent with the “Walkable Neighborhood” community type provisions of the Comprehensive Plan.

What Makes a Community Walkable?

<https://www.walkscore.com/walkable-neighborhoods.shtml>

- **A center:** Walkable neighborhoods have a center, whether it's a main street or a public space.
- **People:** Enough people for businesses to flourish and for public transit to run frequently.
- **Mixed income, mixed use:** Affordable housing located near businesses.
- **Parks and public space:** Plenty of public places to gather and play.
- **Pedestrian design:** Buildings are close to the street; parking lots are relegated to the back.
- **Schools and workplaces:** Close enough that most residents can walk from their homes.
- **Complete streets:** Streets designed for bicyclists, pedestrians, and transit.

Staff further opines that long-term bicycle parking for employees should be considered. The text as presented is not recommended.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION for ITEM 2:

If the Planning Commission is in favor of an amendment, staff would advise an alternative accounting for bicycles. Optional changes are provided below (with additions underlined and deletions shown in ~~strikethrough~~).

7.2.6 BICYCLE PARKING

A. REQUIRED SPACES

Use	Required Short-Term Spaces	Required Long-Term Spaces
Dwelling, Multi-Family	1 per 20 units, 3 minimum	1 per 5 units (Projects with 10+ units only)
All Other Residential Uses	None Required	None Required
All Retail Uses	1 per 5,000 SF of gross floor area, 3 minimum	1 per 5,000 SF of gross floor area
All Commercial Uses	1 per 10,000 SF of gross floor area, 3 minimum	1 per 5,000 SF of gross floor area
<u>Large-Scale Retailer Use</u>	<u>3-1 per 10,000 SF of gross floor area, 15 maximum</u>	<u>None required 1 for every 50 employees</u>
All Civic Uses	1 per 5,000 SF of gross floor area, 3 minimum	None Required

END OF ITEM 2

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Application
2. Proposed Text Amendment

STAFF CONTACT:

Allison Hardin, Interim Planning Director
ahardin@lancastersc.net

ITEM 3. Section 7.4.5.A – Wall Sign Maximum Area

PROPOSED TEXT AMENDMENT:

The following section of the UDO is proposed to be amended to allow additional sign square footage for large-scale retailers:

7.4.5 SIGNAGE STANDARDS BY CATEGORY

A. ATTACHED SIGN STANDARDS

	Permitted Location	Maximum Area	Max Height	Other	Max Number
Wall Signs	AR, RR, RN, LDR, MDR, HDR, UR, RUB, PB, HDR (non-residential uses only, but not Home Occupations)	30 square feet OR 1 square foot per linear foot of building wall, whichever is greater. 50 square ft building maximum	No sign shall extend above the roofline	12-inch maximum protrusion	None. May not exceed maximum calculated square footage on any wall (cannot move allotment from one wall to another)
	NB, INS, RMX, MX, IMX	30 square feet OR 1 square foot per linear foot of building wall, whichever is greater. 50 square foot building maximum.			
	LI, HI, GB, RB	50 square feet OR 1square foot per linear foot of building wall, whichever is greater. 75 square foot per building maximum, except 400 square feet per building wall maximum for Large-Scale Retailer.			

RELEVANT COMPREHENSIVE PLAN CITATIONS for ITEM 3:***Land Use Element – Community Types***

An important concept introduced during the regional planning process was designating areas based on “community types.” ... The use of community types marks a significant shift in planning practice in the last ten to fifteen years, away from conventional and functional designations that merely specified the use of land and towards a renewed interest in the relationships between land uses and urban design. The objective of this more contextual way of classifying land uses is to produce more economically and environmentally attractive places to live, work and play.

The Future Land Use Category of the subject property is Neighborhood Mixed Use, which corresponds to the Community Type of Walkable Neighborhood. The adopted Comprehensive Plan states that the Walkable Neighborhood Community Type *“is synonymous with the Place Type “Mixed-Use Neighborhood.” This is due to its very specific characteristics that set it apart from most other Place Types by virtue of its deliberately structured mix of dwelling types in a development context that often operates through the separation of uses, densities and/or land value. This Place Type and Community Type has its roots in the traditional character of American communities during the early part of the 20th century, and has been revived in recent decades as a relevant option for future development.”* The Comprehensive Plan further establishes several possible land use considerations representing typical development in this category which are depicted in the table below.

Walkable Activity Center: Land Use Considerations		
Condominium / Apartment	Professional Office	Movie Theatre
Live/Work Unit	Government Building	Pocket Park
Community-wide Commercial	Church/School	Farmers’ Market
Restaurant	Library	

The Neighborhood Mixed-Use Future Land Use Category covers the upper half of the Panhandle, terminating at Waxhaw Highway (Route 75). The Neighborhood Mixed Use Future Land Use Category and Walkable Neighborhood Community Type are intended to be compatible with the existing suburban character of the area.

ITEM 3 DISCUSSION:

Signage is very important to a business. Too little, and you might lose opportunities for sales; too much, and the community may complain about visual clutter. Good sign code balances the needs of both the business and the residents.

At the May 4 workshop, the Planning Commission expressed interest in finding a way to relate the Costco request to other large-scale businesses (retail and grocery) in the Indian Land area. Staff compiled the information gathered in the table below.

It’s worth noting that none of these facilities have signage on all four sides, and that few counties or municipalities allow every wall to have signage as the applicant requested.



<u>Store</u>	<u>Address</u>	<u>Sq Ft*(area)</u>	<u>Wall Signage*(Front)</u>	<u>Distance*from 521</u>	<u>Zone</u>
ALDI	9553 Charlotte Hwy	18,000	30 sq ft x 2	125 ft	RB
Food Lion	8175 Charlotte Hwy	46,000	175 sq ft	325 ft	PDD
Harris Teeter	6271 Carolina Commons Dr	54,000	215 sq ft + 30 sq ft	375 ft	PDD
Lowes Home Improvement	181 Fort Mill Hwy	150,000	500 sq ft + 50 sq ft + 100 sq ft	750 ft	RB
Publix	8360 Charlotte Hwy	52,000	200 sq ft	700 ft	GB
Walmart Supercenter	10048 Charlotte Hwy	165,000	150 sq ft	800 ft	RB

**all measurements are rounded off and approximate; signs on one side of the building except for ALDI (two faces)*

-Harris Teeter and Lowes have signage on multiple entrances, and all are on the same side of the building

Some additional information to help put the sign request in perspective:

- The sign area requested per wall is 400 square feet.
 - The area of a regular digital billboard (monopole, one face) is 400 square feet.
 - The UDO currently limits billboards in Lancaster County at 150 square feet.

Staff agrees that the signage allowance needs to be somewhat proportionate to the wall. Staff disagrees that the request is in line with Walmart and Lowes Home Improvement (see above).

The applicant's justification reads, in part, that "Applicant seeks relief from the HCO's requirement that the Large-Scale Retailer building front on the highway corridor and that the planned building will be located some distance back from the highway." This is a self-created issue and would not be an applicable explanation in other situations, as in when a request creates a non-conformity. The Indian Land sign survey (in the table above) has many examples of businesses located farther from the Hwy 521 corridor and utilizing less wall-mounted signage than requested.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION for ITEM 3:

If the Planning Commission is in favor of an amendment, staff would advise an alternative total square footage measurement for wall signage per large-scale retail site and a limitation on the number of walls where the signs may be installed/displayed. Optional changes are provided below (with additions underlined and deletions shown in ~~striketrough~~).

7.4.5 SIGNAGE STANDARDS BY CATEGORY

A. ATTACHED SIGN STANDARDS

	Permitted Location	Maximum Area	Max Height	Other	Max Number
Wall Signs	AR, RR, RN, LDR, MDR, HDR, UR, RUB, PB, HDR (non-residential uses only, but not Home Occupations)	30 square feet OR 1 square foot per linear foot of building wall, whichever is greater. 50 square ft building maximum	No sign shall extend above the roofline	12-inch maximum protrusion	None. May not exceed maximum calculated square footage on any wall (cannot move allotment from one wall to another)
	NB, INS, RMX, MX, IMX	30 square feet OR 1 square foot per linear foot of building wall, whichever is greater. 50 square foot building maximum.			
	LI, HI, GB, RB	50 square feet OR 1square foot per linear foot of building wall, whichever is greater. 75 square foot per building maximum, <u>except</u> <u>maximum 400</u> <u>square feet per</u> <u>building wall each</u> <u>on a maximum of</u> <u>two walls</u> <u>(totaling 800</u> <u>square feet per</u> <u>project) for Large-</u> <u>Scale Retailer.</u>			

END OF ITEM 3

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Application
2. Proposed Text Amendment

STAFF CONTACT:

Allison Hardin, Interim Planning Director
ahardin@lancastersc.net

ITEM 4. Section 10.3 – Definitions, to add a definition for “Large-Scale Retailer”

PROPOSED TEXT AMENDMENT:

The following section of the UDO is proposed to be amended to add a definition for “Large-Scale Retailer”:

Section 10.3 Use Type Definitions

"Large-Scale Retailer" is a type of General Commercial use and includes membership-only retail warehouse facilities. Large-Scale Retailers are located in buildings of at least 100,000 square feet of gross floor area.

CURRENT CODE:

Currently, the UDO does not have a standalone definition of a “large-scale retailer.”

The Definitions section of the UDO is separated into two parts: the first is a list of definitions of Use Types, which helps staff interpret what use to apply when discussing permitted activities and development standards. The second is a general definition section, where all other definitions are housed. The most relevant definitions to the proposed project are in the Use Type section and are as follows:

GENERAL COMMERCIAL

A place of business providing the sale and display of goods or sale of services directly to the consumer, with goods available for immediate purchase and removal from the premises by the purchaser.

WHOLESALE AND DISTRIBUTION

Establishments engaged in transferring, loading, unloading, buying and selling merchandise to and from retailers, contractors, trucking and freight companies, manufacturers, institutions, farms, other wholesalers, or other professional businesses.

This includes establishments such as trucking terminals, goods transfer facilities, and other establishments acting as agents or brokers in buying, selling or otherwise transferring merchandise to or from the aforementioned entities.

This does not include establishments engaged in selling goods and merchandise to the public.

Specific examples of these establishments include:

- 1) Agents, merchandise or commodity brokers, and commission merchants;
- 2) Assemblers, buyers and associations engaged in the cooperative marketing of farm products;
- 3) Merchant wholesalers;
- 4) Stores primarily selling electrical plumbing, heating and air conditioning supplies, and equipment; and
- 5) Trucking terminals.

RELEVANT COMPREHENSIVE PLAN CITATIONS for ITEM 4:

None.

ITEM 4 DISCUSSION:

The applicant argues that *“Large-Scale Retailers are unique. They occupy very large buildings that are not conducive to fronting against a highway corridor. They have large customer parking demands that justify locating parking surrounding them including parking located between the road and the building. Parking requirements would fall under General Commercial at 1 space per 250 [square foot].”*

Facts confirm that commercial projects with more than 100,000 square feet are at least rare, if not unique. In 2017, Lancaster County compiled a geographic information system (GIS) database of the footprint of all structures at the time. Out of almost 68,000 structures surveyed, 41 were more than 100,000 square feet. (See map, next page.) Large-scale commercial projects are expensive to build, take years to plan for, sometimes require assembling multiple pieces of land to achieve, and represent a lot of risk on the developer’s side. The best ones are good community neighbors, provide stable jobs for residents, and are backed by successful parent companies.

The challenge in the proposed definition is that there are many other businesses that would classify under the moniker “large-scale retailer,” and not all of them are as successful as Costco. Some have been forced to close since the changes to retailing after the COVID pandemic, leaving behind unique, empty buildings. Some have left large vacant buildings and decaying parking lots behind when they decided to build new on undeveloped ground rather than renovate the existing location.

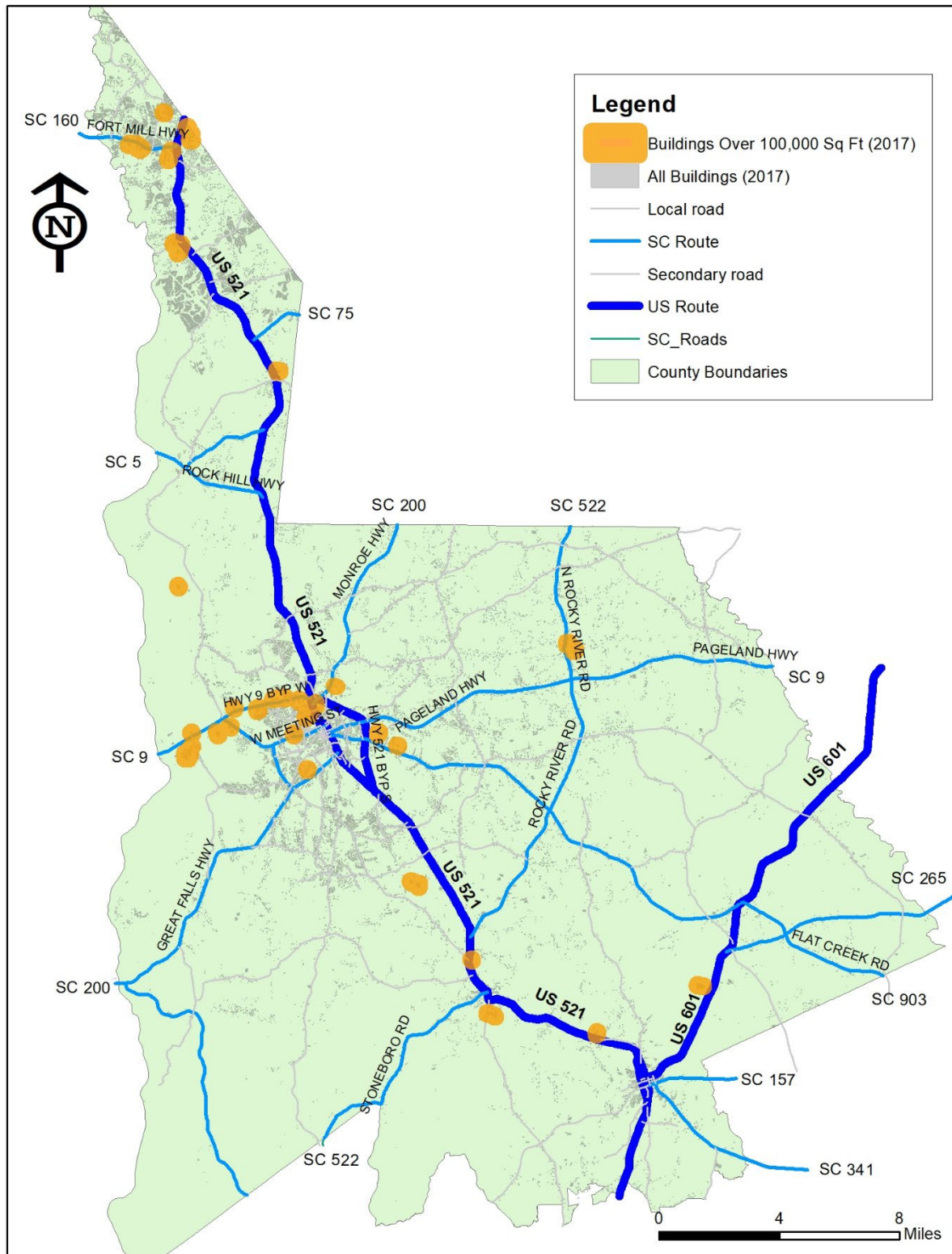
In the Indian Land area, there are already two independent, standalone retail businesses with more than 100,000 square feet in structure (Walmart predates the 2016 UDO):

<u>Store</u>	<u>Address</u>	<u>Sq Ft*(area)</u>	<u>Distance*from 521</u>	<u>Zone</u>
Lowes Home Improvement	181 Fort Mill Hwy	150,000	750 ft	RB
Walmart Supercenter	10048 Charlotte Hwy	165,000	800 ft	RB

**all measurements are rounded off and approximate*



(Left: Lowes Home Improvement; Right, Walmart)



Large buildings are also not always “not conducive” to fronting on a highway corridor. Conduciveness is all down to design. In the example below, this mixed-use development in Raleigh, NC fronts Lake Boone Trail, a high-traffic collector (comparable traffic counts to Hwy 521 in Indian Land). The design includes a plaza to accommodate the project slope that descends from west to east. Signage is a combination of wall-mounted, with a portion above the tree line scaled for visibility to vehicles, and freestanding signage at the sidewalk level that is scaled to pedestrians. When a project abuts high-traffic-volume highway corridors, it’s best when businesses along the corridor employ design elements and sign packages to get the most of the commuters’ attention.



Staff questions the statement that the large parking demands “justify locating parking surrounding them,” and is hard-pressed to find a rational nexus for it. Large parking demands are found in a wide variety of facilities – from retail to residential, commercial to college – and there are multiple ways to address those demands.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION for ITEM 4:

This proposal is key to making the remaining text amendments work for the applicant. If the Planning Commission is in favor of the changes in Item 1, 2, and 3, then this request should be adopted as well; we recommend making the definition broader, such as:

"Large-Scale Retailer" is a retail use located in buildings of at least 100,000 square feet of gross floor area.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Application
2. Proposed Text Amendment

STAFF CONTACT:

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