

## Zoning Districts – General Description and Purpose

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*For information regarding the specific uses allowed in each district, setbacks, heights, parking requirements, etc., please go to the [Virginia Beach City Code](#) online, scroll down and click on Appendix A Zoning Ordinance, and find the Section referenced after the title of the district listed below. If you do not find what you are looking for there, please call (757) 385-8074.*

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### **P-1 PRESERVATION DISTRICT**

[\(Section 300 of the City Zoning Ordinance, City Code, Appendix A\)](#)

It is the intent of the City of Virginia Beach to protect its atmosphere, lands and waters from pollution, impairment or destruction for the benefit, enjoyment and general welfare of the public. Critical areas of special concern include parklands, wilderness areas, open spaces, greenbelts, beach reserves, scenic areas, wetlands, floodplains, floodways, watersheds and water supplies; and to conserve fish and wildlife. The boundaries of these areas of critical concern shall be identified and delineated in order to provide a means of protecting and preserving them.

### **AG-1/AG-2 AGRICULTURAL DISTRICTS**

[\(Section 400 of the City Zoning Ordinance, City Code, Appendix A\)](#)

The purpose of the **AG-1 and AG-2 Agricultural Districts** is to protect and preserve agricultural lands for agricultural functions and to protect and preserve agricultural lands and activities in the rural areas of the city in harmony with reasonable levels of rural residential development and in keeping with the special rural character, environmental protection needs and limited rural infrastructure available.

### **RESIDENTIAL DISTRICTS**

[\(Section 500 of the City Zoning Ordinance, City Code, Appendix A\)](#)

The purpose of the Residential Districts is to provide areas for residential housing types at a variety of densities, provide for harmonious neighborhoods located so as to create compatibility and to provide for certain other necessary and related uses within residential communities but limited as to maintain neighborhood compatibility.

- The **R-40, R-30 and R-20 Residential Districts** provide for larger minimum lot sizes for use in areas where lower residential densities are necessary to address environmental and public facilities constraints as recommended by the Comprehensive Plan.
- The **R-15, R-10 and R-7.5 Residential Districts** provide for medium density single-family residential development in areas where these densities are recommended by the Comprehensive Plan.
- The **R-5D Residential Duplex District** is created in recognition of the existence of developed areas where single-family and semidetached dwellings exist on lots averaging five thousand (5,000) square feet in area and where duplexes exist on lots of ten thousand (10,000) square feet in area. It is not the intention to create additional R-5D Districts or to enlarge the limits of existing R-5D Districts.
- The **R-5R Residential Resort District** is created in recognition of the existence of developed areas where single-family and duplex dwellings exist on lots of less than seven thousand five hundred (7,500) square feet in area and where the character of the neighborhood includes both permanent year-round residents as well as seasonal residents. It is not the intention to create additional R-5R Districts or to enlarge the limits of existing R-5R Districts.
- The **R-5S Residential Single-Family District** is created in recognition of the existence of developed areas where single-family dwellings exist on lots with fifty- and sixty-foot frontages. It is not the intention to create additional R-5S Districts or to enlarge the limits of existing R-5S Districts.
- The **R-2.5 Residential Townhouse District** provides for the development of residential townhouses in areas where such development is recommended by the Comprehensive Plan.

## **APARTMENT DISTRICTS**

### **[\(Section 600 of the City Zoning Ordinance, City Code, Appendix A\)](#)**

- The purpose of the **A-12 and A-18 Apartment Districts** is to provide areas for various multiple-family housing types at a variety of densities, in areas where public facilities are adequate to support these densities, and to provide for certain other necessary and related uses within multi-family communities but limited as to maintain compatibility with residential uses.
- The **A-24 and A-36 Apartment Districts** are created in recognition of the existence of developed areas where multifamily dwellings exist at densities between twenty-four (24) and thirty-six (36) dwelling units per

acre. It is not the intention to create additional A-24 or A-36 Districts or to enlarge the limits of existing A-24 or A-36 Districts except in cases to promote infilling in areas that are already zoned or developed at densities between twenty-four (24) and thirty-six (36) dwelling units per acre.

## **HOTEL DISTRICT**

[\(Section 700 of the City Zoning Ordinance, City Code, Appendix A\)](#)

The purpose of the **H-1 Hotel District** is to provide medium-density hotel areas for general application in the city where such uses are desirable and where public facilities are available to meet its needs.

## **OFFICE DISTRICTS**

[\(Section 800 of the City Zoning Ordinance, City Code, Appendix A\)](#)

- The **O-1 Office District** is intended primarily for office and institutional uses. Within this district, it is intended to provide an environment appropriate to office or institutional character and compatible with residential uses which may adjoin and where public facilities are available to meet its needs.
- The **O-2 Office District** is intended for larger scale office and institutional structures and uses in areas where public facilities are available and where conflicts with residential neighborhoods can be avoided.

## **BUSINESS DISTRICTS**

[\(Section 900 of the City Zoning Ordinance, City Code, Appendix A\)](#)

- The purpose of the **B-1 Neighborhood Business District** is to provide areas where a limited range of business establishments can be located near or adjacent to residential development without adversely impacting the adjacent residential area.
- The purpose of the **B-1A Limited Community Business District** is to provide areas where limited commercial development can be dispersed to support the needs of nearby residential neighborhoods.
- The purpose of the **B-2 Community Business District** is to provide land needed for community-wide business establishments. This district is intended for general application in the city. It is intended that, by the creation of this district, business uses will be geographically concentrated.

- The purpose of the **B-3 Central Business District** is to set apart that portion of the city which forms the metropolitan center for financial, commercial, professional and cultural activities, including business, professional and cultural development in a manner that complements the B-3A Pembroke Central Business Core District and the policies identified in the City of Virginia Beach Comprehensive Plan. It is intended that any uses likely to create friction with these proposed types of activities will be discouraged. This district is not intended for general application throughout the city.
- The purpose of the **B-3A Pembroke Central Business Core District** is to optimize development potential for a mixed-use, pedestrian-oriented, urban activity center with mid- to high-rise structures that contain numerous types of uses, including business, retail, residential, cultural, and educational and other public and private uses. The B-3A district is intended to comprise publicly accessible community open space areas, generally reflective of the concepts identified in the city's Comprehensive Plan and the Pembroke Central Business District Master Plan. Requests for rezonings to the B-3A Pembroke Central Business Core District shall be limited within the area bound by Independence Boulevard, Jeanne Street, Constitution Drive and the Norfolk-Southern Railroad right-of-way. As to those buildings and structures rendered nonconforming by a rezoning to B-3A, it is the intent of the City Council to encourage their appropriate expansion or renovation by resolution, as set forth in section 105, in order to effectuate the intent of this section. This district is not intended for general application throughout the city.
- The purpose of the **B-4 Mixed Use District** is to provide for retail and commercial service facilities and residential uses in those areas of the city where a mixture of such uses is desirable and recommended by the policies of the Comprehensive Plan.
- The purpose of the **B-4C Central Business Mixed Use District** is to provide an area that complements the B-3A Pembroke Central Business Core District through quality mixed use development at intensities and patterns that support multiple modes of transportation, higher residential densities, and an integrated mix of residential and non-residential uses within the same building or on the same lot. Requests for rezonings to the B-4C Central Business Mixed Use District shall be limited to the area surrounding the B-3A Pembroke Central Business Core District and generally bounded by Thalia Creek on the east, Interstate 264 on the south, Aragona Boulevard on the west, and Jeanne Street and Broad Street on the north. Development within the B-4C Central Business Mixed Use District should adhere to the Comprehensive Plan's Mixed Use Development Guidelines.

## **INDUSTRIAL DISTRICTS**

[\(Section 1000 of the City Zoning Ordinance, City Code, Appendix A\)](#)

- The purpose of the **I-1 Light Industrial District** is to permit light industrial uses, wholesaling, storage, packaging, distribution, and retailing restricted primarily to operations requiring bulk deliveries by truck or van in locations served by major transportation networks and in areas where employment centers close to residential concentrations will reduce traffic congestion and add to public convenience by moving places of work closer to places of residence.
  
- The purpose of the **I-2 Heavy Industrial District** is to permit industrial operations, wholesaling, warehousing and distribution in areas suitable for these functions.

## **PLANNED DEVELOPMENT DISTRICTS**

[\(Section 1100 of the City Zoning Ordinance, City Code, Appendix A\)](#)

It is the intent not to create additional PD-H1 or PD-H2 Districts, or to enlarge the limits of existing PD-H1 or PD-H2 Districts. It is only the intent of this article to recognize those areas currently developed, being developed, or proposed for development under planned unit development regulations as zoned PD-H1 or PD-H2.

## **HISTORIC AND CULTURAL DISTRICTS**

[\(Section 1300 of the City Zoning Ordinance, City Code, Appendix A\)](#)

The purpose of this district is to provide the vehicle by which certain areas, structures and objects within the city that have historic and cultural significance may be preserved and protected.

## **RESORT TOURIST DISTRICTS**

[\(Section 1500 of the City Zoning Ordinance, City Code, Appendix A\)](#)

- The purpose of the **RT-1 Resort Tourist District** is to provide areas which can accommodate high density hotels and their related needs and where a high concentration of resort facilities is desirable. This district is not intended for general application but should be limited generally to those properties contiguous to Atlantic Avenue. Development in the district should advance Resort Area land use and design goals and, as expressed in the Comprehensive Plan, conform to the Oceanfront Resort Area Plan and the Oceanfront Resort Area Design Guidelines. While under the

Navy's OPNAV Instruction 11010.B (December 19, 2002), hotels and motels in accident potential zones or in noise zones 65-70 dB DNL or higher are not deemed to be compatible with operations arising out of Naval Air Station Oceana, such uses are the historical base of the City of Virginia Beach's Resort Area. The development and enhancement of high-quality hotel and motel uses is thus encouraged, but such uses should be sensitive to their proximity to Naval Air Station Oceana and should, therefore, be compatible with air operations to the greatest extent possible.

- The purpose of the **RT-2 Resort Tourist District** is to provide areas for resort hotels and appropriate mixtures of other complementary uses generally in the area west of Atlantic Avenue and east of Pacific Avenue. It is further the intent of this district to recognize existing on-site parking problems and to foster good design and development patterns through the use of incentives. Development in this district shall advance Resort Area land use and design goals and, as expressed in the Comprehensive Plan, conform to the Oceanfront Resort Area Plan and the Oceanfront Resort Area Design Guidelines, and shall be appropriate in use and design to its proximity to Naval Air Station Oceana.
- The purpose of the **RT-3 Resort Tourist District** is to provide an area for a mixture of uses primarily devoted to resort and complementary resort uses that promote convention, entertainment, residential, civic and related activities, increase the economic tax base, protect and leverage public investment with private investment, ensure land use compatibility with existing residential areas, ensure good pedestrian movement systems, and provide exceptional design quality. Development in this district shall advance Resort Area land use and design goals and, as expressed in the Comprehensive Plan, conform to the Oceanfront Resort Area Plan and the Oceanfront Resort Area Design Guidelines, and shall be appropriate in use and design to its proximity to Naval Air Station Oceana.
- The purpose of the **RT-3 (LRG) Laskin Road Gateway Overlay District** is to enhance one (1) of the primary routes of access to the Oceanfront Resort Area by providing areas for resort hotels, residential, retail, office, and mixtures of such uses serving the surrounding area. The district and its associated uses should be located generally in the area west of Pacific Avenue, east of Little Neck Creek and Beach Garden Park, north of 29th Street and south of 32nd Street, where a high concentration of such uses is desirable. The purpose of this district is also to foster good design and development patterns through the use of incentives, including tax abatement specific to the special characteristics of this important gateway to the oceanfront.

## **SHORE DRIVE CORRIDOR OVERLAY DISTRICT (SD)**

[\(Section 1700 of the City Zoning Ordinance, City Code, Appendix A\)](#)

The Shore Drive Corridor is not only one of the primary routes of access to the city's oceanfront resort area, but is also the location of First Landing/Seashore State Park, the site of the historic first landing of the Jamestown colonists in 1607, Fort Story, beaches on the Chesapeake Bay, and many stable and attractive residential communities. As such, its appearance is vital to the city. The purpose of the Shore Drive Corridor District is to enhance the appearance of the area encompassed by the District and to preserve its vitality as an important gateway to the city.

## **SPECIAL REGULATIONS IN AIR INSTALLATIONS COMPATIBLE USE ZONES (AICUZ)**

[\(Section 1800 of the City Zoning Ordinance, City Code, Appendix A\)](#)

The purpose of this article is to regulate, in a manner consistent with the rights of individual property owners and the requirements of military operations at Naval Air Station (NAS) Oceana, development of uses and structures that are incompatible with military operations; to sustain the economic health of the city and Hampton Roads Region; to protect and preserve the public health, safety and welfare from the adverse impacts associated with high levels of noise from flight operations at NAS Oceana and the potential for aircraft accidents associated with proximity to airport operations; and to maintain the overall quality of life of those who live, work and recreate in the City of Virginia Beach.

## **OLD BEACH OVERLAY DISTRICT (OB)**

[\(Section 1900 of the City Zoning Ordinance, City Code, Appendix A\)](#)

The purpose of the Old Beach Overlay District is to preserve and enhance the historic status of the Old Beach neighborhood as one of the first residential areas within the Oceanfront Resort Area by providing opportunities for both new and redeveloped resort residential development, characterized by single-family cottage-style homes and compatible multiple-family residential dwellings. Furthermore, the Old Beach Design Guidelines are provided for this district, the purpose of which is to encourage development that is appropriate for the district.

## **HISTORIC KEMPSVILLE AREA OVERLAY DISTRICT (HK)**

[\(Section 2000 of the City Zoning Ordinance, City Code, Appendix A\)](#)

Historic Kempsville is not only one of the primary crossroads within the City, but is also the location of the third courthouse in Princess Anne County, the site of a Revolutionary War skirmish, an early cultural and economic hub within the City, and is surrounded by many stable and attractive residential communities. As such, its appearance and revitalization is important to the physical and economic vitality of the City. The purpose of the **Historic Kempsville Area Overlay District** is to enhance the appearance of the area encompassed by the District and to help restore its vitality as an important and historic location within the City.

## **WORKFORCE HOUSING**

[\(Section 2100 of the City Zoning Ordinance, City Code, Appendix A\)](#)

The purpose and intent of this article is to encourage the development of high-quality housing that is: (1) affordable by households with annual incomes of between eighty (80) percent and one hundred twenty (120) percent of Area Median Income (AMI); or (2), for rental purposes, by households with annual incomes of between sixty (60) percent and ninety (90) percent of AMI, adjusted for family size, who live or work in Virginia Beach. Because such households generally, although not uniformly, consist of one (1) or two (2) working members, such housing is termed "workforce housing." In order to accomplish that goal, this article establishes incentives for the construction of workforce housing in areas of the city, including Strategic Growth Areas, in which the Comprehensive Plan recognizes increased density to be appropriate. Equally importantly, this article also ensures that workforce housing will be well-designed, of high quality, and well-integrated into the overall development of which it is a component.