

**SECTION 4**  
**ZONING DISTRICTS**

**Sec. 4-1 Establishment of Districts.**

In order to protect the character of existing neighborhoods, to prevent excessive density of population in areas which are not adequately served with water, sewerage facilities, and fire protection; to ensure that adequate and suitable areas will be available in Chatham County to provide housing for growing population, and to protect residential areas from the blighting effects of the traffic, noise, odors, and dust generated by commercial and industrial activity; to provide for and accommodate growth and expansion of commercial and industrial activities; to prevent blight and slums, and to promote orderly growth and development by grouping unrelated uses together and by separating dissimilar and unrelated uses; and in order that the various other purpose of this Ordinance may be accomplished, there are hereby established within the unincorporated areas of Chatham County the following zoning districts:

***A-T Agriculture-Tourist.*** The purpose of this district shall be to designate and protect certain roadside areas in which roadside-service commercial facilities catering to the tourists, on and two-family dwellings, agricultural activities of all types, and other appropriate uses in keeping with the existing or intended character of such areas will be permitted.

***B- Business.*** The purpose of this district shall be to create and protect areas in which heavy commercial and certain industrial-like activities are permitted.

***B-1 Business-Limited.*** The purpose of this district shall be to create and protect areas in which limited business and certain industrial-like activities, which have limited traffic generation potential, are permitted. This district is intended to be applied in areas, which would not be appropriate for more intensive commercial districts because of the character of the surrounding land uses and other factors.

***B-2 Business General.*** The purpose of this district shall be to provide alternative sites for business uses and certain industrial-like activities, including transmission and receiving towers, which have limited traffic generation potential. This district is intended to be applied to sites, which have or can be provided with sufficient buffers to protect surrounding properties.

***B-N Neighborhood-Business.*** The purpose of this district shall be to provide convenient shopping facilities consisting of convenience goods and personal services in neighborhood market areas of from 3,000 to 5,000 people.

***B-N-1 Neighborhood-Business-Limited.*** The purpose of this district shall be to provide a mixture of convenient non-nuisance producing commercial facilities consisting of goods and personal service sin neighborhood market areas of 3,000 to 5,000 people.

***B-C Community-Business.*** The purpose of this district shall be to provide community shopping facilities consisting of a wide variety of sales and service facilities at locations that will be accessible to a market area containing from 35,000 to 70,000 people.

***C-A Agriculture-Conservation.*** The purpose of this district shall be to establish and protect rural areas against the blight and depreciation which can result from premature development; to encourage the development of rural areas in a coordinated and orderly manner; to protect the use of land adjoining roads passing through the rural portions of the county against strip development which can lead to traffic congestion and traffic hazards; and for other purposes.

***C-M Marsh Conservation.*** The purpose of the C-M district is to encourage all reasonable public and private uses and developments of the marshlands, such as rice farming, marshland grass cultivation and harvesting, grazing, boating, fishing, hunting, and swimming that will not be significantly detrimental to the biological, ecology, aquatic life, wildlife, recreation, and scenic resources of the marshlands and will not pollute the inlets and coastal waters with human or industrial wastes or the long-term silting that would result from unduly disturbing the marshlands, all for the purpose of furthering the social and economic welfare of the citizens of Chatham County or the State of Georgia and of the Nation.

***EO Environmental Overlay District.*** The purpose of the Environmental Overlay District is to establish supplemental standards to bolster those currently in the Chatham County Zoning Ordinance in order to, a) protect and enhance community character; b) provide for safe and orderly development; and c) protect environmental quality, especially the estuarine system that surrounds the community.

***I-H Heavy-Industrial.*** The purpose of this district shall be to create and protect areas in which industries, which are not permitted in other districts, can be permitted.

***I-L Light-Industrial.*** The purpose of this district shall be to create and protect areas for those light industrial uses, which do not possess objectionable characteristics, which might be detrimental to surrounding neighborhoods, or to the other uses, permitted in this district.

***I-P Institutional-Professional.*** The purpose of this district shall be to create an area in which residential, institutional, and professional uses can be intermixed and at the same time achieve a healthful living environment with functional open space. The maximum density of 24 dwelling units per acre to net residential land area shall be permitted in this district.

**M Manufacturing.** The purpose of this district shall be to create and protect areas in which nonnuisance producing manufacturing activities and nonmanufacturing uses closely related to such activities will be permitted.

**O-I Office-Institutional.** The Office and Institutional (“O-I”) district is established to allow office uses as well as a limited number of other uses that are compatible with an office environment, and to serve as a transition district between residential areas and more intensive commercial areas.

*[(O-I district adopted on May 23, 2014 (Z-140106-00001-1))]*

**P Planning District.** The purpose of this district shall be to provide areas within which comprehensive development plans shall be prepared for review by the MPC or MPC staff in order to secure an orderly development pattern. Such districts are considered "overlay" districts and the uses permitted in such districts are those uses permitted in the zoning district which they overlay.

Property may be rezoned to a P classification on a finding by the Planning Commission that:

- a. Such rezoning would be in the community’s interest.
- b. Unplanned and uncoordinated development could result in potential problems in such areas as traffic flow, schools, recreation, open spaces, and public facilities.
- c. To insure an orderly growth and development, it is appropriate to require approval of specific development plans to the Planning Commission Staff.

**PD-M Planned-Development-Marina.** The purpose of this district shall be to create an area within which the development of marina-residential facilities are permitted in a manner which serves the water access and property aesthetically compatible with surrounding uses and in a safe condition so as to prevent nuisances or hazards created by vehicular movement, noise, fume generation or high intensity use detrimental to adjacent residential development. Residential development may be included in any marina complex provided a maximum net residential density is established at the time of zoning in compliance with the PUD-M regulations and the MPC determines that the marina activities and the residential development are compatible uses in terms of design, management, operations, and orientation. The five types of PD-M districts are as follows:

- a. **PD-M-1 Marine-Private Residential:** The purpose of this district shall be to create water access and limited marina support activities for recreational boating to serve the occupants of a residential development. Marinas within this district are not open to the general public.
- b. **PD-M-2 Marina-Public Recreational:** The purpose of this district shall be to create water access and limited marina support activities for recreational boating open to the general public.

- c. ***PD-M-3 Marina and Yacht Club:*** The purpose of this district shall be to allow for a mixture of recreational boating and private club activities including restaurant and lounge for the use of members and their guests.
- d. ***PD-M-4 Marina: Limited Supply and Service Facilities:*** The purpose of this district shall be to allow for a mixture of recreational boating, boat sales and repair services and related services normally required to support recreational, charter and limited commercial boating activities.
- e. ***PD-M-5 Marine Supply and Service Facility:*** The purpose of this district shall be to allow a full service marina including boat sales and repair services; the sale of meals and beverages, including alcoholic beverages; and related service activities normally required to support recreational, charter and commercial boating activities.

***PD-N Planned Development Rezoning for Certain Nonconforming Uses.*** Where nonconforming uses of structures, or structures and premises in combination, exist in residential districts, involve one acre or more in lot area, and are found by the Planning Commission to be likely to continue indefinitely, it is intended to make possible rezoning of such nonconforming uses to PD-N status as a means for encouraging improvements and controlling further development or redevelopment. Unless such nonconforming uses are rezoned to PD-N status, the provisions of Section 8 shall apply.

***PD-R Planned Development-Reclamation.*** The purpose of this district is to permit the filling and/or surface mining of land in a manner which insures that the operation of such activity does not adversely affect the ecology, or the use and enjoyment of surrounding properties, and that upon a timely conclusion of such activity, the site is permanently established as either an inert landfill or a lake and in such a manner so as to render the property aesthetically compatible with surrounding uses and in a safe condition. PD-R districts approved for inert landfills shall be designated PD-R-L and PD-R at the time or rezoning. Such designations shall be shown on the official Zoning Map of Chatham County.

***PD-R-SL Planned Development-Reclamation-Sanitary Landfill.*** The purpose of this district is to permit landfills to accept solid waste generated by municipal, commercial or industrial processes that is not a hazardous waste regulated under the Hazardous Waste Management Act and regulations promulgated by the Board of Natural Resources, Chapter 391-3-11,1 or other information, which may be placed by the State EPD.

***PD-R-IL Planned Development-Reclamation-Industrial Landfill.*** The purpose of this district is to permit landfills to accept solid waste generated by manufacturing or industrial processes that is not a hazardous waste regulated under the Hazardous Waste Management Act and regulations promulgated by the Board of Natural Resources, (Chapter 391-3-1), or biomedical waste or municipal solid waste as defined in the regulations promulgated by the Board of Natural Resources, Chapter 391-3-11.

Industrial waste includes, but is not limited to, wastes resulting from the following manufacturing processes: electric power generation; fertilizer/agricultural chemicals/inorganic chemicals; iron and steel manufacturing; leather and leather products; nonferrous metals manufacturing/foundries; plastics and resins manufacturing; stone, glass, clay and concrete products; textile manufacturing; transportation equipment; and waste treatment. This term does not include mining waste or oil and gas waste or food or food related by-products. It does include Construction/Demolition waste, and other limitations which may be placed by State EPD.

***P-I-L-T Planned-Light-Industrial-Transition.*** The purpose of this district shall be to recognize that areas exist which contain residential and industrial uses in close proximity and this pattern of development is likely to continue. This district recognizes the need for planned development standards for the mutual protection of uses; therefore, the provision of Section 4-6.5 - Planned Development District shall apply.

***P-N-T Planned-Neighborhood-Transition.*** The purpose of this district is to permit select nonresidential uses in transitional, predominately residential neighborhoods, subject to specific design standards, to assure such uses will be visually compatible with the existing residential development. This district may only be established on lots which: (1) abut and have access to a major or secondary arterial street; and, (2) are adjacent to either an existing conforming business or professional office, community recreational, or service establishment or are in a business, institutional, or industrial zoning district which permits such uses.

***P-S-C Planned Shopping Center.*** The purpose of this district shall be to create and protect areas in which only planned shopping centers and large retail outlets shall be permitted. In addition to other consideration, a tract of land shall meet the following specific requirements before it shall be designated as a planned shopping center district:

- a. The tract of land shall be not less than four acres in area;
- b. The tract of land shall abut on a major arterial, secondary arterial, or collector street as designated on the Road Classification Map of Chatham County, or as defined by this Ordinance; and
- c. The average depth of the tract of land measured from the abutting street right-of-way line shall be not less than 250 feet.

***PUD Planned Unit Development.*** For purposes of these Regulations, Planned Unit Development (PUD) is defined as:

- a. Land under unified control to be planned and developed in single development operation or a definitely programmed series of development operations; such

development may include a program for establishment, operation, and maintenance of common open spaces, area, facilities, and improvements available for common use by occupants of the district; and,

- b. A development consisting of principal and accessory structures and uses substantially related to the character of the district, which will be developed according to comprehensive and detailed plans for streets, utilities, lots, or building sites, and the like.

***PUD-CC Planned Unit Development-Commercial Center.*** The purpose of this district is to create a transitional business, services and retail area allowing a limited range of business uses, within a planned development under specific design requirements in order to minimize adverse impacts on surrounding areas and to maximize the efficient utilization of property. Such transitional area shall be either a logical extension of an existing business development or be compatible with the existing surrounding development pattern or the proposed land use pattern for the area. Such development may include residential uses.

***P-R-C Protected River Corridor.*** The purpose of this district shall be to create areas within protected river corridors as defined by the River Corridor Protection Act, in order to help preserve those qualities that make a river suitable as a habitat for wildlife, a site for recreation, and a source for clean drinking water, to allow free movement of waters. Such districts shall be considered "overlay" districts and the uses permitted in such districts shall be those uses permitted in the zoning district which it overlays, subject to the restrictions and prohibitions of Sec. 4-10.

***R-A Residential-Agriculture.*** The purpose of this district is to protect those rural areas within the urban expansion areas of the county for future urban development, and to protect certain rural highway roadside areas against strip development, which can lead to traffic congestion, traffic hazards, and roadside blight.

***R-A-1 Residential-Agriculture-Limited.*** The purpose of this district is to protect those rural areas within the urban expansion areas of the county for future low density residential urban development and to protect certain rural highway roadside areas against strip development which can lead to traffic congestion, traffic hazards, and roadside blight.

***R-B-1 Residential-Business.*** The purpose of this district shall be to create an area in which certain types of convenience-shopping-retail sales and service uses can be established and at the same time prevent nuisances or hazards created by vehicular movement, noise or fume generation, or high intensity use detrimental to adjacent residential development.

***R-M-H Residential-Mobile Home.*** The purpose of this district shall be to establish a residential district in which the uses and regulations are restricted to permit the development of mobile homes and single-family residences and certain compatible nonresidential uses, and to permit the development in a manner which protects and preserved property values to adjacent properties. This district shall be used for areas where development is sparse and where such use will help to stabilize or to upgrade the area. This zone may be used on a lot-by-lot basis to allow mobile homes where placement of the mobile home will not adversely affect surrounding property values or impair the purposes and intent of the Zoning Ordinance.

***RMH-1 Residential Manufactured/Mobile Home Park.*** The purpose of this district shall be to establish a residential district in which the uses and regulations are restricted in order to permit the development of manufactured or mobile home parks in a manner, which protects and preserves property values of adjacent properties. Such uses shall comply with the Chatham County Manufactured Home Park Ordinance.

***R-1 One-Family Residential.*** The purpose of this district shall be to create an environment in which one-family dwellings, and certain nondwelling uses, are permitted in order to promote stability and character of low-density residential development with adequate open space. A maximum density of five dwelling units per acre of net residential land area shall be permitted in this district.

***R-1-A One-Family Residential.*** The purpose of this district shall be to create an environment in which one-family dwellings, and certain nondwelling uses, are permitted in order to promote stability and character of low-density residential development with adequate open space. A maximum density of 3.50 dwelling units per acre of net residential land area shall be permitted in this district.

***R-1-B One-Family Residential.*** The purpose of this district shall be to create an environment in which one-family dwellings, and certain nondwelling uses, are permitted in order to promote stability and character of low-density residential development with adequate open space. A maximum density of 2.0 dwelling units per acre of net residential land area shall be permitted in this district.

***R-1-C One-Family Residential.*** The purpose of this district shall be to create an environment in which one-family dwellings, and certain nondwelling uses, are permitted in order to promote stability and character of low-density residential development with adequate open space. A maximum density of 1.35 dwelling units per acre of net residential land area shall be permitted in this district.

***P-R-1-S One-Family Residential-Small Lot Subdivisions.*** The purpose of this district shall be to establish areas of not less than two acres in size where in single-family detached and single-family semi-attached dwellings on individual small lots may be developed in order to maximize innovating techniques, efficiency of land use, and to provide families with lower cost home ownership opportunities.

**R-2 Two-Family Residential.** The purpose of this district shall be to create an environment in which one-family dwellings, two-family dwellings, and certain nondwelling uses are permitted in order to promote the stability and character of medium density residential development with functional open space. A maximum density of 12 dwelling units per acre of net residential land area shall be permitted in this district.

**R-2-A Two-Family Residential Limited.** The purpose of his district shall be to create an environment in which only one- and two-family dwellings and certain nondwelling uses are permitted in order to promote the stability and character of medium density residential development with functional open space. A maximum density of 12 dwelling units per acre of net residential land area shall be permitted in this district.

**R-3 Multi-Family Residential.** The purpose of this district shall be to create an area in which one-family, two-family, multi-family and certain nondwelling uses are permitted in order to help ensure a healthful living environment and functional open space in multi-family areas. The net dwelling unit density for this zone shall be established at the time of rezoning. The density to be established shall be recommended by the Metropolitan Planning Commission, but shall be not more than 40 units per net acre. In establishing a density standard for a R-3 district, the Metropolitan Planning Commission shall consider the following conditions, among others:

- a. The traffic that will be generated by the proposed development in comparison to uses permitted under the existing zoning classification.
- b. The capacity of water and sewer systems to accommodate the proposed development.
- c. The compatibility of the development with the surrounding land uses.

All future approved densities shall be shown on the zoning map as a suffix after the R-3 designation (i.e. R-3-8, etc.)

*[R-3 district amended June 12, 2015 (Z-150215-00011)]*

**T-B Tourist-Business.** The purpose of this district shall be to provide and encourage the proper grouping of roadside service areas that will accommodate the needs of the traveling public in a manner that prevents traffic congestion, traffic hazards, and blight on the streets, roads and highways within Chatham County and to create and protect commercial water recreation areas.



***TO-I Islands Town Center Overlay District.*** The purpose of the Town Center Overlay District is to provide for orderly commercial and residential development in two centralized hubs in the Islands Community. The overlay district provides for residential and commercial design standards, a system of performance standards, and pedestrian and bicycle linkages within the districts and between them and adjacent neighborhoods. "(The TO-I district was replaced by the TC district through the establishment of Subsection 4-13 on April 11, 2003.)"

***W-I Waterfront-Industry.*** The purpose of this district shall be to create and protect areas for commercial fishing operations and other activities that are dependent upon a waterfront location.

***WT Wireless Communication/Digital Television Tower Overlay District.*** The purpose of this district shall be to permit the development in rural areas of a single commercial wireless telecommunications monopole tower or a digital television tower where there are large tracts of undeveloped R-A zoned properties and where commercial rezoning would be inappropriate.

#### **Sec. 4-2 Zoning Map.**

The location and boundaries of zoning districts shall be shown on a map entitled "Zoning Map of Chatham County," dated August 10, 1962, and said map may be amended subsequent to the adoption thereof; and as said map is made a part of these Regulations to the same extent as if the information set forth on said map was fully described and incorporated therein. The "Zoning Map of Chatham County" shall be on file in the office of the Clerk of the Commissioners of Chatham County.

#### **Sec. 4-3 Interpretation of Zoning District Boundaries.**

When uncertainty exists with respect to the location of boundaries of any zoning district as shown on the "Zoning Map of Chatham County" the following rules shall apply:

##### **Sec. 4-3.1.**

Unless otherwise specifically indicated, where district boundaries are indicated on the zoning map as approximately following the centerline of a street, highway, railroad right-of-way line, stream bed or river bed, or such centerlines extended, then such centerlines shall be construed to be such district boundaries.

##### **Sec. 4-3.2.**

Where district boundaries are indicated on the zoning map as approximately following the corporate limits line of any incorporated place, then such corporate limits shall be construed to be such district boundaries.

**Sec. 4-3.3.**

Where district boundaries are indicated on the zoning map as being set back from a street, road, highway, railroad, stream or river, and parallel thereto, then such district boundaries, unless otherwise specifically indicated shall be construed as being 150 feet from the right-of-way line of such street, road, highway, railroad, and 150 feet from the bank of a stream or river as being parallel to such streets, roads, highway, railroad, stream, or river.

**Sec. 4-3.4.**

Where a district boundary divides a lot, the requirements for the district in which the greater portion of the lot lies shall be extended to the balance of the lot, provided, however, that such extension shall not include any part of such lot which lies more than 50 feet beyond the district boundary, and provided further that this provision shall not apply to a through lot. In the case of a through lot, the restrictions of the district applying to adjoining lots which front on the same street as the lot frontage in question shall apply.

**Sec. 4-4 Uses Prohibited.**

If either a use or class of use is not specifically indicated as being permitted in a district, either as a matter of right, or on the approval of the Board of Appeals, then such use or class of use shall be prohibited in such district.

**Sec. 4-5 Provisions Regarding Use.**

Within the various zoning districts established by this Ordinance and designated on the Zoning Map of Chatham County, no building, structure, or land shall be constructed, erected, or altered, used or maintained except as provided in the following schedules, number, and entitled as follows: