



CHATHAM COUNTY-SAVANNAH
METROPOLITAN PLANNING COMMISSION
"Planning the Future - Respecting the Past"

STAFF REPORT

File No. 26-003931-ZA-MAP
Date: September 15, 2026
To: The Planning Commission
Through: Melanie Wilson, Executive Director/CEO
From: Ashley Catterton, Principal Planner – Development Services
Subject: Zoning Map Amendment
Applicant/Agent: C. Scott Burns of Coastal Engineering & Consulting
Address: 815 Wheaton Street
Parcel ID: 20033 12033
Site Area: 3.12 acres
Alderman District: 2 – Detric Leggett
**Chatham County
Commission District:** 2 – Malinda Scott Hodge

REQUEST

The Petitioner requests a Zoning Map Amendment for the property located at 815 Wheaton Street from the existing Light Industrial (I-L) to Traditional Commercial-2 (TC-2). This petition is filed concurrently with the application 26-004033-ZA-FLUM, which requests a Future Land Use Map (FLUM) Amendment from *Transportation/Communication/Utilities* to *Traditional Commercial*.

The requested Zoning Map Amendment would establish a zoning classification consistent with the proposed *Traditional Commercial* future land use designation and would support commercial development compatible with the broader development pattern and planning objectives of the Urban Core Character Area.

BACKGROUND

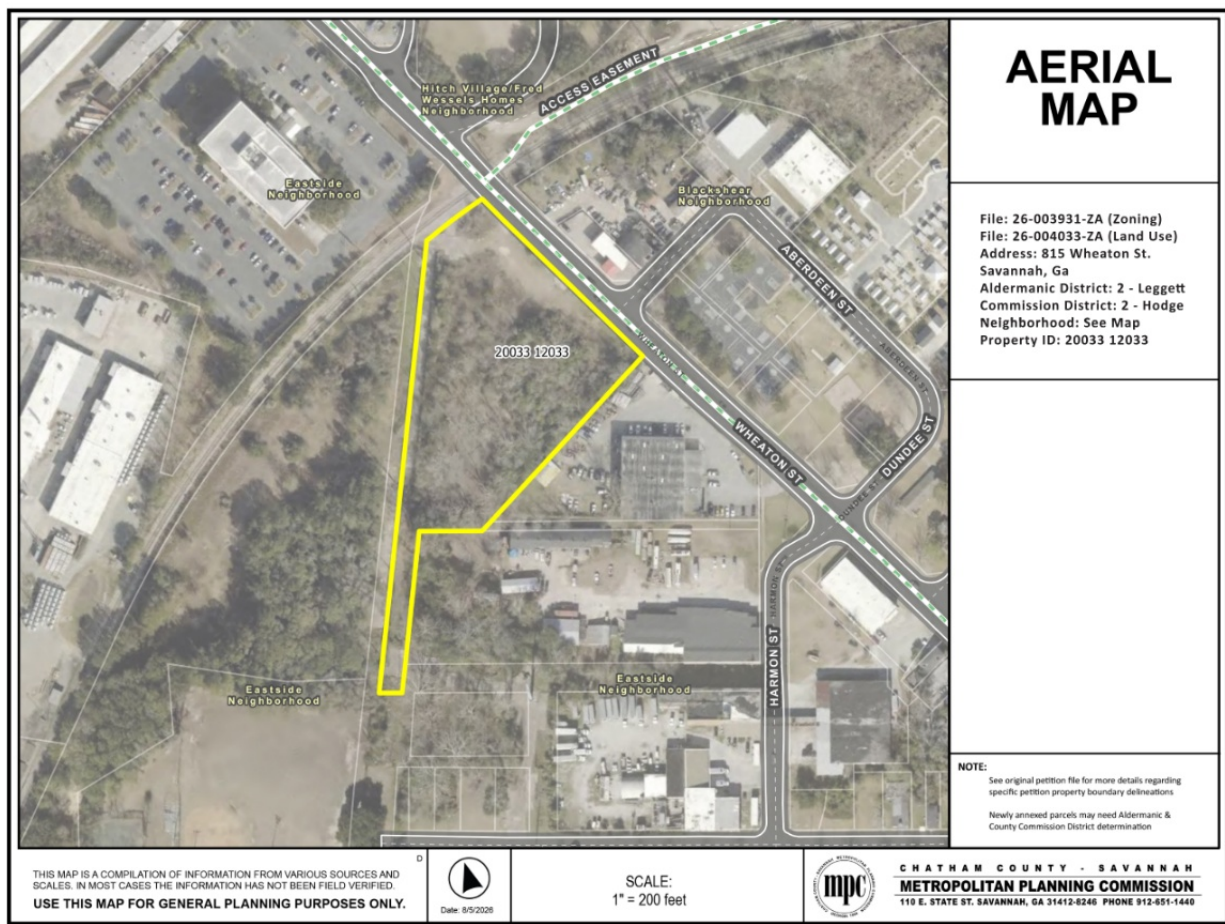
The subject property is currently zoned I-L. The City of Savannah Zoning Ordinance establishes the I-L district to provide for a wide range of research and development, light manufacturing and assembly, warehousing, wholesaling, and associated support services. Such uses are subject to standards intended to ensure compatibility with adjacent and nearby non-industrial areas. Development within the district is intended to operate in a clean and quiet manner, with most activities occurring indoors and without creating a

nuisance to nearby non-industrial uses. However, the existing development pattern surrounding the subject property is not exclusively characterized by light industrial uses or development. The surrounding area consists of a mixture of commercial, residential, and industrially zoned properties, reflecting a transitional development pattern along and near the Wheaton Street corridor.

The petitions were previously scheduled for consideration; however, at the recommendation of MPC Staff, the Petitioner requested postponement to allow additional time to reevaluate the proposed Zoning Map Amendment and associated future land use designation in relation to the existing development pattern and surrounding land uses. Following further coordination with Staff, the Petitioner revised the applications to request the TC-2 zoning district and a concurrent *Traditional Commercial* FLUM designation.

EXISTING CONDITIONS

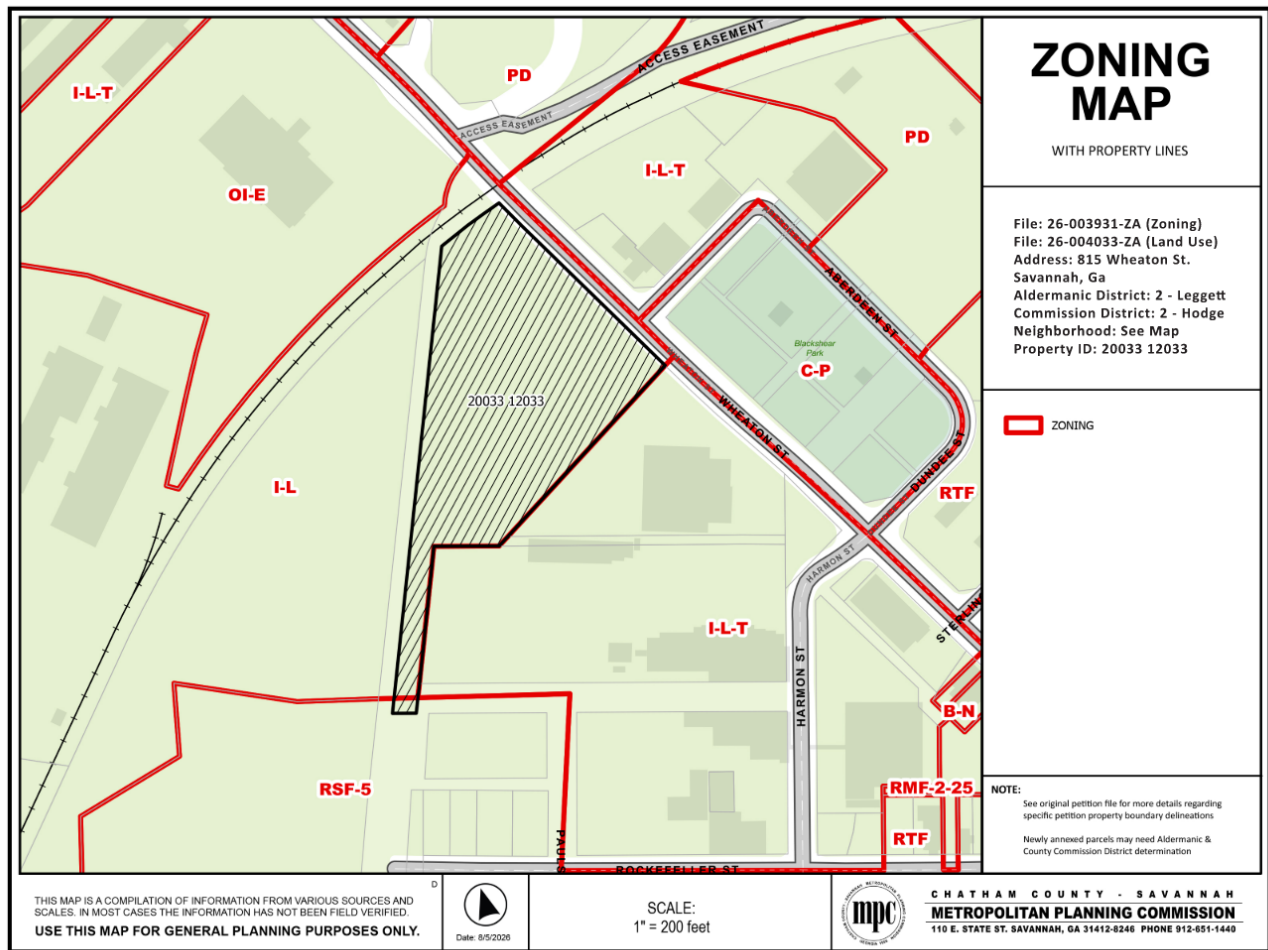
- Current Use: Vacant land (no structure or buildings are present)
- Zoning: I-L (Light Industrial)
- FLUM Designation: Transportation/Communication/Utilities
- Approximate Parcel Size: 3.12 acres



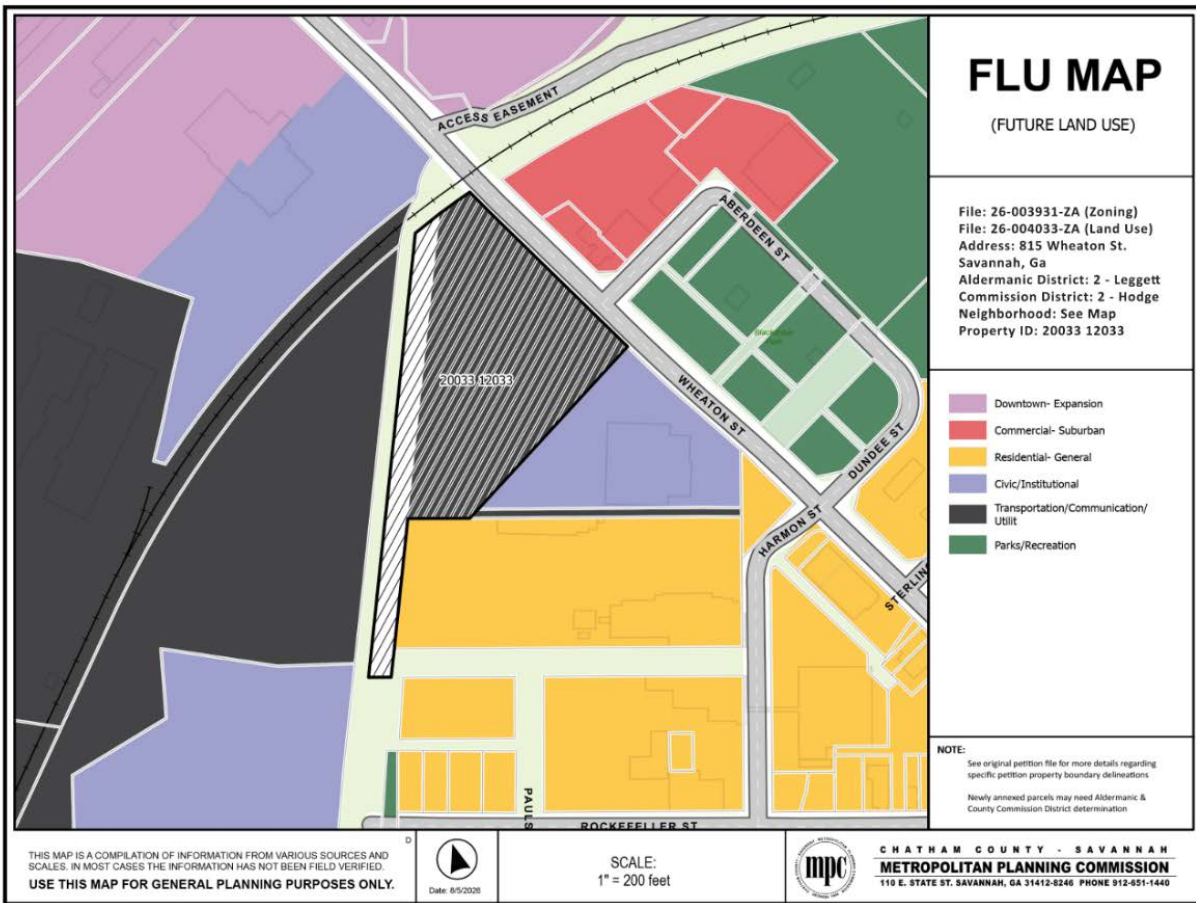
Current Aerial Map for 815 Wheaton Street

Existing Zoning & Development Pattern

LOCATION	LAND USE	EXISTING ZONING
North	Office and Institutional-Expanded & Planned Development	OI-E & PD
South	Light Industrial-Transition, Neighborhood Business, Residential Two-family, Traditional Neighborhood-3, & Traditional Residential-3	I-L-T, B-N, RTF, TN-3 & TR-3
East	Light Industrial-Transition, Conservation-Park, & Planned Development	I-L-T, C-P & PD
West	Light Industrial, Traditional Commercial-2, & Residential Single-family-5	I-L, TC-2 & RSF-5



Current Zoning Map for 815 Wheaton Street



Current FLUM Map for 815 Wheaton Street

Public Notice

Mailed notice of the Planning Commission meeting was sent to all property owners within 300-feet of the subject property, signs were posted on site and required newspaper advertisements were run at least 15 days prior to the meeting. The mailed notice included instructions on how to access the public meeting via the internet.

Neighborhood Meetings

On July 22, 2026, the Petitioner attempted to contact the Eastside Neighborhood Association by phone and email to coordinate a neighborhood meeting regarding the subject property and its initial proposed rezoning. According to the Petitioner, no response was received from the Eastside Neighborhood Association, nor was an alternative point or method of contact provided for further coordination.

IMPACT & SUITABILITY

Public Services and Facilities

The site is served by City water, sewer, and stormwater systems. Any site modifications requiring a Land Disturbance Permit will be subject to the applicable site plan review process, including review and approval by the appropriate City departments.

Comprehensive Land Use Plan Element

The rezoning request was filed concurrently with a FLUM Amendment request from *Transportation/Communication/Utilities* to *Traditional Commercial*. The subject property is currently designated *Trans/Comm/Utilities* on the FLUM, which does not support the requested TC-2 zoning district. Section 5.13.2 of the Zoning Ordinance identifies *Traditional Commercial* as the applicable FLUM category for the TC-1 and TC-2 zoning districts. Accordingly, approval of the concurrent FLUM Amendment would establish consistency between the future land use designation and the requested TC-2 zoning district.

The subject property is located within the Urban Core Character Area identified by Plan 2040. Primary uses within the Urban Core include attached and detached residential and multi-family development, while commercial, mixed-use, and civic/institutional uses are identified as secondary uses. The Urban Core is further characterized by smaller-scale neighborhood commercial development, an interconnected street network, and opportunities for infill and redevelopment that maintain walkable densities and compatibility with established community character.

The proposed TC-2 zoning district generally supports this development framework by allowing a range of residential, commercial, office, service, and mixed-use opportunities. The Zoning Ordinance established Traditional Commercial districts to accommodate commercial-oriented mixed-use development and identifies TC-2 specifically as providing for commercial corridors along higher classifications of streets that traverse historic neighborhoods. When considered in conjunction with the proposed *Traditional Commercial* FLUM designation and the Urban Core Character Area, TC-2 provides a zoning framework that can accommodate future commercial and mixed-use redevelopment while recognizing the mixed and transitional development pattern of the surrounding area.

Existing Zoning District

- Intent of the I-L Zoning District: The I-L district is intended to provide for a wide range of research and development, light manufacturing and assembly, warehousing, wholesaling, and supporting services. Development is intended to remain compatible with nearby non-industrial areas and operate in a clean and quiet manner, with most activities occurring indoors.
- Allowed Uses: The I-L district permits a range of industrial, commercial, service, transportation, and utility-related uses. Representative uses include general and contractor offices, warehousing, truck stops, manufacturing, outdoor and container storage, transportation dispatch and storage, freight terminals, railyards, and major

and minor utilities. Certain commercial uses are also permitted or allowed subject to applicable use standards.

- Development Standards: I-L development allows a maximum building coverage of 80% and requires minimum building setbacks of 25 feet from the front, 30 feet from a street side yard, 20 feet from an interior side yard, and 20 feet from the rear yard. Development is also subject to applicable general site and natural resource standards.

Proposed Zoning District

- Intent of the TC-2 Zoning District: The TC-2 district is intended to support the vibrancy of historic mixed-use neighborhoods with traditional development patterns and provide for commercial corridors along higher classifications of streets that traverse historic neighborhoods. More broadly, Traditional Commercial districts are intended to accommodate commercial-oriented mixed-use development emphasizing pedestrianism and continuation of historic development patterns.
- Allowed Uses: TC-2 permits a broad range of residential, commercial, office, service, civic, and mixed-use opportunities, including single- and multi-family residential development, apartments, general and medical offices, general retail, restaurants, personal and general services, laundromats, and other neighborhood-serving uses. Certain higher intensity uses require Limited or Special Use approval.
- Development Standards: TC-2 incorporates development standards intended to support a traditional, pedestrian-oriented development pattern, including a minimum 70% building frontage, a maximum building footprint of 10,000 square feet, and a maximum height of three stories or 45 feet. Applicable setbacks vary based on the presence of contributing structures along the block face.

ZONING ORDINANCE REVIEW

Suitability and Community Need

- Whether the range of uses permitted by the proposed zoning district is more suitable than the range of uses that are permitted by the current zoning district.

Staff Comment: *The range of uses permitted within TC-2 is more suitable for the mixed and transitional development pattern surrounding the subject property. TC-2 accommodates residential, commercial, office, service, civic, and mixed-use development while reducing reliance on the broader range of industrial, warehousing, transportation, and related uses permitted within the existing I-L district. The proposed district provides greater compatibility with the mixture of uses present in the surrounding area.*

- Whether the proposed zoning district addresses a specific need in the county or city.

Staff Comment: *The proposed TC-2 district addresses the need for a zoning framework that better accommodates neighborhood-serving commercial and mixed-*

use development within an area characterized by a mixture of residential, commercial, civic/institutional, and industrial uses. The district also provides flexibility for future redevelopment of the property consistent with the evolving character of the surrounding area.

- Whether the zoning proposal will adversely affect the existing use or usability of adjacent or nearby properties.

Staff Comment: *The proposed rezoning is not anticipated to adversely affect the existing use or usability of adjacent or nearby properties. TC-2 permits a mixture of residential and commercial uses and incorporates development standards intended to support compatibility with surrounding development. Future development of the property would remain subject to applicable site development and use standards.*

- Whether the zoning proposal is compatible with the present zoning pattern and conforming uses of nearby property and the character of the surrounding area.

Staff Comment: *The proposed TC-2 zoning district is generally compatible with the mixed zoning and development pattern surrounding the subject property. The area includes commercial, residential, civic/institutional, and industrially zoned properties, and TC-2 provides an appropriate transitional framework capable of accommodating commercial and mixed-use development within this varied context.*

- Whether there are other existing or changing conditions affecting the use and development of the property which give supporting grounds for either approval or disapproval of the zoning proposal.

Staff Comment: *The mixed and transitional development pattern surrounding the subject property provides supporting grounds for the proposed rezoning. The existing area is not exclusively characterized by industrial development, and the proposed TC-2 district provides greater flexibility for commercial and mixed-use redevelopment that reflects the existing and anticipated development pattern along and near the Wheaton Street corridor.*

Consistency

- Whether the zoning proposal is in conformity with the policy and intent of the Comprehensive Plan and other adopted plans, such as a redevelopment plan or small area plan.

Staff Comment: *The proposed TC-2 zoning district is generally consistent with the policy and intent of Plan 2040 and the Urban Core Character Area, which supports a mixture of residential, commercial, mixed-use, and civic/institutional development. The rezoning is filed concurrently with a FLUM Amendment to Traditional Commercial, which, if approved, would establish the Future Land Use Map designation required for TC-2 zoning pursuant to Section 5.13.2 of the Zoning Ordinance.*

Reasonable Use

- Whether the property to be affected by the zoning proposal has a reasonable use as currently zoned.

Staff Comment: *The subject property retains reasonable use under the existing I-L zoning district. However, the availability of reasonable use under the current zoning does not preclude consideration of whether another zoning district is more suitable. Given the mixed development pattern of the surrounding area, TC-2 provides a broader framework for commercial and mixed-use redevelopment that is more compatible with the surrounding context.*

Adequate Public Services

- Whether adequate school, public safety and emergency facilities, road, ingress and egress, parks, wastewater treatment, water supply and stormwater drainage facilities are available for the uses and densities that are permitted in the proposed zoning district.

Staff Comment: *Adequate City services are available to serve the subject property. Any site modifications requiring a Land Disturbance Permit will be subject to the applicable site plan review process, including review and approval by the appropriate City departments.*

MPC STAFF RECOMMENDATION

MPC Staff recommends **approval** of the request for a Zoning Map Amendment for the property located at 815 Wheaton Street from the existing Light Industrial (I-L) to Traditional Commercial-2 (TC-2), **subject to approval of** the concurrently requested Future Land Use Map Amendment from *Transportation/Communication/Utilities* to *Traditional Commercial*.

The proposed TC-2 zoning district is more compatible with the mixed and transitional development pattern of the surrounding area and provides an appropriate framework for future commercial and mixed-use redevelopment consistent with the Urban Core Character Area. The requested zoning district would also be consistent with the proposed *Traditional Commercial* Future Land Use designation, which permits TC-2 zoning pursuant to Section 5.13.2 of the Zoning Ordinance.

*(Note – permitted uses for TC-2 are provided at the end of this report in Attachment A.)

ATTACHMENT A – PERMITTED USE TABLE

TC-2 (Traditional Commercial-2) Uses:

TC-2	√= Permitted Use L= Limited Use S=Special Use	Use Standards
Single-family detached	√	
Single-family attached	√	
Two-family	√	
Three-family / Four-family	√	Sec. 8.1.1
Townhouse	√	
Stacked townhouse	√	
Apartment	√	
Upper story residential	√	
Child caring institution	L	Sec. 8.1.5
Dormitory/student housing	√	
Fraternity/sorority house	S	
Monastery/convent	√	
Rooming house	L	Sec. 8.1.6
Single room occupancy	L	Sec. 8.1.7
Agriculture, personal	√	
Community Garden	√	
Park, general	√	
Library/community center	√	
Museum	√	Sec. 8.7.24
Post office	√	
Police/fire station or substation	√	
Emergency Medical Services (EMS) substation/ Ambulance Service	S	Sec. 8.3.5
Shelter, emergency	S	Sec. 8.3.6
Shelter, transitional	L	Sec. 8.3.7
Soup kitchen	L	Sec. 8.3.8
Child/adult day care home	L	Sec. 8.3.9 or Sec. 8.7.11
Child/adult day care center	L	Sec. 8.3.10 or Sec. 8.7.11
Child/adult care home, 24 hour	L	Sec. 8.3.11 or Sec. 8.7.11
Child/adult care center, 24 hour	S	Sec. 8.3.12 or Sec. 8.7.11
College, university, seminary	√	Sec. 8.3.13 and Sec. 8.7.15
Educational building used by a college, university or seminary	√	Sec. 8.3.13 and Sec. 8.7.15
School, public or private (K-12)	√	Sec. 8.3.14 and Sec. 8.7.14

School, trade, vocational or business	✓	
All places of worship	✓	Sec. 8.3.15 , Sec. 8.7.13 , and Sec. 8.8.3 (d)
Private club/Lodge	S	Sec. 8.3.16
Correctional transition facility	S	Sec. 8.3.18
Hospice	✓	
Nursing home	✓	
Assisted living facility	✓	
Personal care home, registered	✓	Sec. 8.3.19
Personal care home, family	✓	Sec. 8.3.19
Personal care home, group	✓	Sec. 8.3.19
Substance recovery facility	S	Sec. 8.3.20
Office, general	✓	Sec. 8.4.1
Call center	✓	
Day labor employment center	L	Sec. 8.4.2
Office, medical	✓	Sec. 8.4.3
Office, utility/contractor	L	Sec. 8.4.4
Studio/multimedia production facility	L	Sec. 8.4.5
Indoor amusement	✓	
Indoor sports facility	✓	
Teen Club	L	Sec. 8.4.7
Theater/cinema/ performing arts	✓	
Retail, general	✓	
Art/photo studio; gallery	✓	
Convenience store	L	Sec. 8.4.14
Fuel/gas station	L	Sec. 8.4.14
Food-oriented retail	✓	Sec. 8.4.16
Garden center	L	Sec. 8.4.22
Pawnshop	L	Sec. 8.4.20
Pharmacy	✓	Sec. 8.4.21
Pharmacy for Medical Cannabis Dispensary or Medical Marijuana Dispensary	L	Sec. 8.4.51
Warehouse or Office Showroom / Flex Space	S	Sec. 8.4.23
Services, general	✓	
Animal services, indoor	L	Sec. 8.4.24
Bank	✓	
Body art services	✓	
Business support services	✓	
Catering establishment	✓	
Check Cashing; Title Pawn;	L	Sec. 8.4.26

Crematorium	S	Sec. 8.4.27
Funeral home; mortuary (not including crematorium)	✓	
Hall, banquet or reception	✓	
Instructional studio or classroom	✓	
Laundromat;	✓	
Dry Cleaner/Laundry, Neighborhood	✓	
Personal service shop	✓	Sec. 8.4.28
Psychic; palmist; medium; fortune teller	✓	
Repair-oriented services	✓	
Tour company terminal	✓	
Distillery, craft,	S	Sec. 7.14
Bar; tavern	S	Sec. 8.4.30 and Sec. 7.14
Nightclub	S	Sec. 8.4.31 and Sec. 7.14
Restaurant	✓	Sec. 8.4.32 , Sec. 8.7.24 and Sec. 7.14
Retail consumption dealer (on premise consumption of alcohol)	S	Sec. 8.7.24 and Sec. 7.14
Ancillary retail dealer (off-premise consumption of alcohol)	✓	Sec. 8.7.24 and Sec. 7.14
Package store (not including wine specialty shops)	S	Sec. 7.14
Wine Specialty Shop (not including package stores)	S	Sec. 7.14
Winery; Meadery; Cidery	S	Sec. 7.14
Brewery, Micro	S	Sec. 7.14
Bed and Breakfast Homestay	L	Sec. 8.4.33
Bed and breakfast	L	Sec. 8.4.34
Inn	L	Sec. 8.4.35 and Sec. 8.7.24
Hotel/motel, 16-74 rooms	S	Sec. 7.13 and Sec. 8.4.36
Short-term vacation rental	L	Sec. 8.4.37 and Sec. 7.5
Vehicle sales, rentals and leasing	S	Sec. 8.4.39 and Sec. 8.7.21
Moped/motor scooter sales, rentals and leasing	S	Sec. 8.4.40
Vehicle service, minor	L	Sec. 8.4.42
Vehicle service, major	S	Sec. 8.4.43
Vehicle wash, full or self-service	L	Sec. 8.4.45
Manufacturing, Artisan/Craft	L	Sec. 8.5.4
Manufacturing, Limited/Light	S	Sec. 8.5.5
Parking facility	S	Sec. 8.6.2
Passenger terminal	S	
Transportation dispatch and storage	L	Sec. 8.6.3
Utilities, major	S	
Utilities, minor	✓	