



City of Bristol
Zoning Commission

SPECIAL MEETING - THURSDAY, AUGUST 21, 2025
VIRTUAL - ONLINE VIA ZOOM
5:00 P.M.

INFORMATION FOR THE PUBLIC TO ACCESS THIS MEETING:

Zoom Meeting link:

<https://bristolct-gov.zoom.us/j/89584205447?pwd=QbZqKVUaovtPjFkMkc0BbSrcNY9b74.>

1

Meeting ID:

895 8420 5447

Meeting Passcode:

123456

Join by phone

1-929-205-6099

AGENDA

1. Call to Order
2. Public Participation
3. New Business
 - a. Review and Discussion on Recommendation #R27 - Cannabis Cultivators
Add New Section 4.3.3.
 - b. Review and Discussion on Recommendation #R37 - "A" Zone Bulk Standards
Amend Bulk Standards.
 - c. Review and Discussion on Recommendation #R38 - Mixed Use Standards in the BD
(Downtown Business) zone. Allow Dwelling Units at Street Level.
 - d. Review and Discussion on Recommendation R39 - Signs
Amend Section 14.
 - e. Review and Discussion on Recommendation R40 - Outdoor Lighting
Amend Section 11.2.
 - f. Review and Discussion on Recommendation R41 - Access Management
Amend Section 12.

- g. Review and Discussion on Recommendation R42 - Landscaping
Amend Section 11.1.
 - h. Review and Discussion on Recommendation R43 - Fences
Amend Section 11.3.
 - i. Review and Discussion on Recommendation R44 - Average Finished Grade
Amend Definition and Provide Guidance for Compliance.
 - j. Review and Discussion on Recommendation R45 - Animal Grooming
Add as a Permitted Use.
 - k. Review and Discussion on Recommendation R46 - Data Centers
Add as a Permitted Use.
 - l. Review and Discussion on Recommendation R47 - Posting of Properties
Amend Requirements.
 - m. Review and Discussion on Recommendation R48 - Text Amendments
Various Miscellaneous Amendments.
- 4. Staff Reports
 - 5. Adjournment

REMINDER: The next Regular Meeting of the Zoning Commission is Monday, September 15, 2025



City of Bristol Comprehensive Zoning Update

Date: 8/5/25

Recommendation 27: Cannabis Cultivation

Purpose: Regulate the cultivation of cannabis so as to permit only within indoor locations in the Industrial and Industrial Park zones and to provide adequate controls on their establishment to control potential nuisances associated with such use.

Description: Add cannabis cultivation and micro-cultivation as defined and authorized by Connecticut General Statutes Section 21a-420 as a Special Permit use in the Industrial zone, and Industrial Park Zones. Allow indoor cultivation only; prohibit outdoor cultivation.

Geographic Extents: Industrial zone, Industrial Park 1, 3, and 5 zones.

Potential Impacts: May result in establishment of a cannabis cultivation facility in the IP-1 or IP-5 zone. Location of such use in the I or IP-3 is unlikely given the residential zone distancing requirement and the size of those zones relative to their proximity to residential zones. May result in the establishment of a cannabis micro-cultivation facility in the I, IP-1, IP-3, or IP-5 zones.

Context: The zoning regulations currently lack regulations or restrictions on cannabis establishments permitted under Connecticut General Statutes Section 21a-420. Without regulations specific to cannabis establishments, establishments may locate in zones where similar non-cannabis establishments may be located. Multiple cities and towns in Connecticut permit Cannabis cultivators with varying restrictions on their location and operations. Below is a summary of regulations from five municipalities:

Town or City	Distancing Requirement from Residential Zone or Use	Distancing Requirement from Schools, Churches, Parks and other Sensitive Uses	Distancing Requirement from other Cannabis Cultivators	Other
East Hartford	none	none	none	Police and Fire Department approvals. Odor monitoring and mitigation
New Britain	100 feet	200 feet	1,000 feet	Security Plan Requirement
Rocky Hill	200 feet	200 feet	1,000 feet	
Southington	750 feet	750 feet	1,000 feet	
Waterbury	none	500 feet	2,000 feet	Security Plan, Odor Abatement Plan Requirement



Recommended Zoning Amendments:

1. Amend the Section 4.2 Principal Use Summary Table to including "Cannabis Cultivation" and "Cannabis MicroCultivation" as Special Permit uses in the I, IP-1, IP-3, and IP-25 zones.

Principal Use	Commercial, Industrial, and Mixed-Use Districts							
	BN	BG ¹	BD	BHC ²	I	IP-1	IP-3	IP-5
Cannabis Cultivation and Micro-Cultivation	—	—	—	—	SP	SP	SP	SP

2. Add new section 4.3.3 (renumber existing Section 4.3.3 as 4.3.4 and renumber subsequent sections) Cannabis Cultivation and Micro-Cultivation as follows:

4.3.3 Cannabis Cultivation and Micro-Cultivation

- A. All Cannabis cultivators and micro-cultivators are subject to Article VIII of the City of Bristol Code of Ordinances.
- B. Cannabis cultivation and cannabis micro-cultivation shall only be permitted as indoor uses. The outdoor cultivation of cannabis is prohibited within the City of Bristol.
- C. Cannabis cultivation facilities shall be located at least 500 feet from a residential zone. Micro-cultivation facilities shall be located at least 250 feet from a residential zone. The distance requirement shall be measured by taking the nearest straight line between the facility building and the zoning boundary.
- D. Consistent with Section 13-125 of the City of Bristol Code of Ordinances, no cannabis cultivator or micro-cultivator shall be permitted to operate on a site that is within 250 feet of any school, church, hospital, municipal park or municipal recreational facility as measured by taking the nearest straight line between the respective lot boundaries of said sites. The establishment of one of these uses within 250 feet of an existing cannabis cultivator or micro-cultivator shall not cause the cultivator or micro-cultivator to be non-conforming.
- E. No cannabis cultivator or micro-cultivator shall be located within 1,000 feet of another cannabis cultivator or micro-cultivator. The distance requirement shall be measured by taking the nearest straight line between the respective lot boundaries of the sites.
- F. The facility shall not generate waste or emissions that result in adverse environmental impacts to surrounding properties and mitigation measures shall be taken to control the generation of odor.
- G. The Police Department shall review and approve a proposed security plan for the facility prior to granting of a Special Permit.
- H. The Fire Marshal Office/Fire Department shall review and approve the planned location(s) for the storage of fertilizers associated with cannabis production and proposed fire detection and suppression systems prior to granting of a Special Permit.
- I. The applicant shall have received a provisional license (or equivalent) approval from the Connecticut Department of Consumer Protection prior to granting of a Special Permit.

3. Add new the following definitions of Cannabis Cultivator and Micro-Cultivators to the Section 19 Use Definitions:

Cannabis Cultivation: A facility run by a person that is licensed to engage in the cultivation, growing and propagation of the cannabis plant at an establishment with not less than fifteen thousand square feet of grow space per CGS Section 21a-420, as amended.

Cannabis Micro-Cultivation: A facility run by a person licensed to engage in the cultivation, growing and propagation of the cannabis plant at an establishment containing not less than two thousand square feet and not more than ten thousand square feet of grow space, prior to any expansion authorized by the Commissioner of Consumer Protection per CGS Section 21a-420, as amended.



City of Bristol Comprehensive Zoning Update

Date: 8/4/25

Recommendation 37: A Zone Bulk Standards

Purpose: To adjust bulk standards to more closely align with the purpose of the zone and existing development in A zones. To allow higher density residential development in A zones that have the infrastructure to support such density.

Description: This amendment would modify bulk standards of Section 7.2.2. It would also allow residential density to be increased from a maximum of 12 units per acre to 20 units per acre for A zone sites abutting a state highway. This requires an amendment of Section 7.2.2 and 7.2.3 of the regulations. This amendment also includes the removal of unnecessary and redundant content from Sections 4.3.20 and 7.2.4.

Geographic Extents: A Zone only.

Potential Impacts: May allow for residential density above levels that are currently permitted in the A zone.

Context: Many developments in the A zone do not conform to existing bulk standards. Additionally, development should be concentrated in areas that have the infrastructure to accommodate a higher density of development. One of the primary impacts of increased density is traffic generation. State highways generally have more capacity to absorb additional traffic than local roads.

Recommended Zoning Amendments:

1. Adjust the bulk requirements of Section 7.2.2 (Lot, Coverage, and Setback Standards) as follows (text to be removed shown in ~~strikethrough~~, text to be added shown in red)

Standard	8 units per acre or less	Greater than 8 units per acre	Single-family subdivisions
A) Minimum Lot Area	2 acres	4 acres	6,000 sf
B) Minimum Lot Frontage (ft)	50	50	60
C) Minimum Lot Width (ft)	150	200	N/A
D) Minimum Front Yard (ft)	40 ^A	40 ^A	15
E) Minimum Side Yard (ft)	25/50* 20 or (30 ^B)	25/50* 20 or (30 ^B)	6
F) Minimum Rear Yard (ft)	25/50* 20 or (40 ^B)	25/50* 20 or (40 ^B)	15
G) Maximum Building Height (ft)	40	40	35
H) Maximum Building Coverage (%)	30	35	40
I) Maximum Impervious Coverage (%)	40 50	50 60	N/A

^A May be reduced to the minimum front yard requirement of the zone or zones abutting and opposite the frontage of the parcel. If abutting or opposite more than one zone, the greater minimum front yard requirement shall apply. In no case shall the front yard requirement be reduced to less than 20 feet.

^B Applicable to yards abutting a single-family residential zoning district.



2. Amend Section 7.2.3 Development Density as follows (new text shown in red, amended text shown in blue):

7.2.3 Development Density

The following regulations are applicable to development in the A Zone:

- A. The maximum density of development of single-family, two-family, three-family or multi-family dwellings that can be approved through a Site Plan Application shall be 8 dwelling units per acre.
- B. Any combination of single-family, two-family, three-family or multi-family dwellings may be permitted subject to Special Permit approval at a density greater than 8 dwelling units per acre up to:
 1. 12 dwelling units per acre, or
 2. 20 dwelling units per acre if the site abuts a state highway.

Such development shall be consistent with the recommendations of the City's Plan of Conservation and Development and subject to referral to the Planning Commission for a binding recommendation in accordance with the provisions of Section 16.2.5.B.

3. Eliminate Section 4.3.20, which is redundant with Section 7.2.3 and renumber subsequent sections.
4. Remove the following sentence from Section 7.2.4 Single-Family Subdivisions which is unnecessary:
"Single-family dwellings on individual lots in the A zone shall be subject to the following lot, coverage, and setback standards:"



City of Bristol Comprehensive Zoning Update

Date: 8/19/25

Recommendation 38: Amend Mixed-Use and Street Wall Requirements of BD Zone

Purpose: To encourage mixed-use development in the BD zone by providing more flexibility in the regulations.

Description: This recommendation relaxes restrictions on the share and location of residential units at street level in a mixed-use development. More specifically, it:

- Removes the street-level restriction on residential units facing Main Street, South Street, and Prospect Street.
- Increases the allowed residential floor area of street-level units on all other streets from 35% to 65%.
- Reduces the share of required non-residential street-facing walls from 60% to 50%.
- Provides regulations controlling dwelling unit access to the street.
- Provides more flexibility in the use of required commercial space in a parking structure and removes the commercial space requirement from parking structures on Main Street.
- Consolidates parking structure regulations specific to the BD and currently located in Sections 4.3.6 and 5.4.18 in Section 8.4.2.

Geographic Extents: BD zone

Potential Impacts: May encourage new mixed-use development in the BD.

Context: Demand for retail and office space is weak due to market trends partially related to the COVID pandemic. This demand is not expected to recover in the near future. By contrast, demand for housing is extremely high.

Recommended Zoning Amendments (text to be removed shown in ~~strikethrough~~, text to be added shown in **red**):

1. Amend the street-level, street-facing wall requirement of Section 8.4.2, Item B.5 as follows:

5. Area of street-level, street-facing walls consisting of windows and public entrance/exit doors ("building fenestration")	Minimum of 60% 50% of such wall area devoted to non-residential uses.	The wall area shall be measured between 2 and 10 feet above the top of the building foundation. Windows and public entrance/exit doors shall contain clear or tinted glass capable of providing an unobstructed view from the outside into the building. In developments containing two or more buildings, each building shall comply with this standard independently of any other building on the lot.
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2. Amend Section 8.4.2, Item B.8 as follows to remove street-level dwelling unit prohibition from Main Street, South Street, and Prospect Street and increase the allowed share of residential from 35% to 65% on other streets. List all streets in the BD subject to the following requirements so as to clearly establish the requirement for each street:

8. Dwelling units at street level	Church Street, Riverside Avenue, North Street, North Main Street, and School Street: Dwelling units are not allowed at street level in that portion of the building facing these streets.	This regulation is intended to preserve street level space for commercial uses.
	Center Street, Federal Street, Foley Street, High Street, Hope Street, Laurel Street, Main Street, Pleasant Street, Prospect Street, Race Street, Summer Street, Upson Street, Valley Street, West Main Street: 65% of the gross floor area of a building's street level, excluding any street-level floor area devoted to structured parking, may be occupied by dwelling units.	

3. Amend Section 8.4.2 to provide the following new Item 9 to control dwelling unit access to the street:

9. Dwelling unit access	Except for the front door of townhouses constructed as part of a mixed-use development, no individual dwelling unit shall have direct access from the street. Access shall be provided through a common entrance that serves multiple units.	This regulation is intended to control direct access between dwelling units and streets for security purposes and to maintain a mixed-use commercial district environment.
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4. Relocate existing Section 5.14.18.I to new Item 10 of the Section 8.4.2.B Table of Building Form Standards as follows, consolidating information in existing Sections 4.3.7 and 5.14.18 and amend as follows to remove the narrow range of permitted uses and allow any non-residential use permitted in the zone:

10. Parking structure frontage	In the BD zone, The street-level frontage of any freestanding parking structure located on Main Street, North Main Street, Church Street, North Street, Riverside Avenue or School Street shall be devoted to permitted retail, personal service, convenience or entertainment uses, non-residential uses permitted in the zone, except for the structure's entrances, and exits, ramps and service doorways.	
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5. Amend Section 4.3.7 Commercial Parking Lots and Structures to remove existing content and replace with a reference to Section 8.4.2.B.10 as follows:

4.3.7 Commercial Parking Lots and Structures

~~In the BD zone, the street level frontage of any freestanding parking structure located on Main Street, North Main Street, Church Street, North Street, Riverside Avenue or School Street shall be devoted to permitted retail, personal service, convenience or entertainment uses, except for the structure's entrance and exit ramps and service doorways.~~ See Section 8.4.2.B.10 for street-level frontage requirements applicable to parking structures in the BD Zone.

6. Amend Section 5.4.18.I to remove existing content and replace with a reference to Section 8.4.2.B.10 as follows:

I. ~~In the BD zone, the street level frontage of any freestanding parking structure located on Main Street, North Main Street, Church Street, North Street, Riverside Avenue or School Street shall be devoted to permitted retail, personal service, convenience or entertainment uses, except for the structure's entrance and exit ramps and service doorways.~~ See Section 8.4.2.B.10 for street-level frontage requirements applicable to parking structures in the BD Zone.



City of Bristol Comprehensive Zoning Update

Date: 8/1/25

Recommendation 39: Update Sign Regulations

Purpose: Simplify the sign regulations and move towards a “content neutral” approach in response to Reed v. Town of Gilbert Supreme Court ruling.

Description: This recommended amendment updates and reorganizes the entire content of Section 14. Notable changes include:

- Removal of regulations based upon the signs content (its message).
- Exemption of political signs (now called campaign signs) from sign regulation.
- Addition of regulations on window signs.
- Real estate and contractor signs now treated as the same sign type (temporary freestanding signs).
- Temporary freestanding signs displayed past 12 months now require a Sign Permit.
- Additional regulations on use of portable business signs.
- Sign types renamed/reclassified as follows:

Existing Sign Type	Recommended Sign Type
Freestanding Sign	Freestanding Sign
Wall Sign	Wall Sign
Projecting Sign	Projecting Sign
Roof Sign	Roof Sign
Canopy Sign	Canopy Sign
Marquee Sign	Marquee Sign
Directional Sign	Internal Use Sign
Identification Sign	Incidental or Freestanding Sign
Billboard	Billboard
Political Sign	Campaign Sign
Real Estate Sign	Temporary Freestanding Sign
Noncommercial Sign	<i>Eliminate Category</i>
Portable Special Event Sign	Portable Sign
Portable Business Sign	Portable Sign
Nameplate Sign	Incidental Sign
Service Club Meeting Sign	Portable Sign
Construction Sign	Temporary Freestanding Sign
Business Signs	<i>Eliminate Category</i>

Section 14 is now organized as follows:

- Section 14.1: Update purpose statement to emphasize zoning authority and the intent to protect freedom of speech.
- New Section 14.2: Provide list of exempt sign types. Include legal obligation signs, internal signs, traffic signs, government signs, and campaign signs.
- New Section 14.3 (formerly 14.5): Update prohibited signs to include signs directly painted on a wall, as is currently prohibited by a subsequent section of the regulations, but exempt murals.



- New Section 14.4 (formerly 14.2): Remove roof sign definition (which is a prohibited sign) add window sign definition. Update visual. Update definitions. Replace or eliminate sign terms as follows:
- New Section 14.5: Organize permitted sign types and permit requirement for all zones in a table format. Consolidates information previously provided in Section 14.6.
- New Section 14.6: Consolidate existing Section 14.6 regulations including all subsections into this single section.
- New Section 14.7: Provide all regulation specific to sign type in this section. Includes existing sign type regulations formerly located in Section 14.6 with amendments to those regulations.
- New Section 14.8: Consolidates regulations from existing Sections 14.3 and 14.9.
- New Section 14.9: Adapted from existing Section 14.7 with minor changes.
- New Section 14.10: Adapted from existing Section 14.8 with minor changes.

Geographic Extents: All zones.

Potential Impacts: Sign content is no longer regulated, which will be more permissive of a wider range of content, but reduces the City's exposure to litigation surrounding freedom of speech.

Context: In the 2015 *Reed v. Town of Gilbert*, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that a regulation that "on its face" requires consideration of the content of a sign is "content-based" and will be subjected to strict scrutiny. A regulation that is facially content-neutral could still be considered content-based if its purpose is related to the message on a sign. A content-based sign regulation is presumed to be unconstitutional and will be invalidated unless a government can prove that the regulation is narrowly tailored to serve a compelling governmental interest. *Reed* does not, however, cast doubt on the content-neutral "time, place or manner" regulations that are fundamental to almost all sign codes, provided they are not justified by or have a purpose related to the message on the sign.

Recommended Zoning Amendments: See following pages.

Section 14. Signs

14.1 Purpose

The purpose of these sign regulations is to balance the need for effective business identification, advertising, and visual communication with the City's responsibility to protect free speech, promote public safety, preserve property values, and reduce visual clutter through appropriately-sized, well-placed, and well-designed signs.

14.2 Exempt Signs

The following types of signs are exempt from these regulations:

- A. Legal Obligations: Any sign required by a valid and applicable federal, state, or local law, regulation, ordinance, or judicial order.
- B. Indoor Signs: Signs contained solely within a building and intended solely for inside use and not for attracting attention from the outside.
- C. Traffic Signs: Any sign or traffic control device installed by an authorized agency or as required or recommended by the Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices.
- D. Government Signs: Signs erected, maintained or otherwise posted, owned or leased by the U.S. government, State of Connecticut, or the City of Bristol.
- E. Campaign Signs: Any temporary sign directly related to a federal, state, or city election or referendum.

14.3 Prohibited Signs

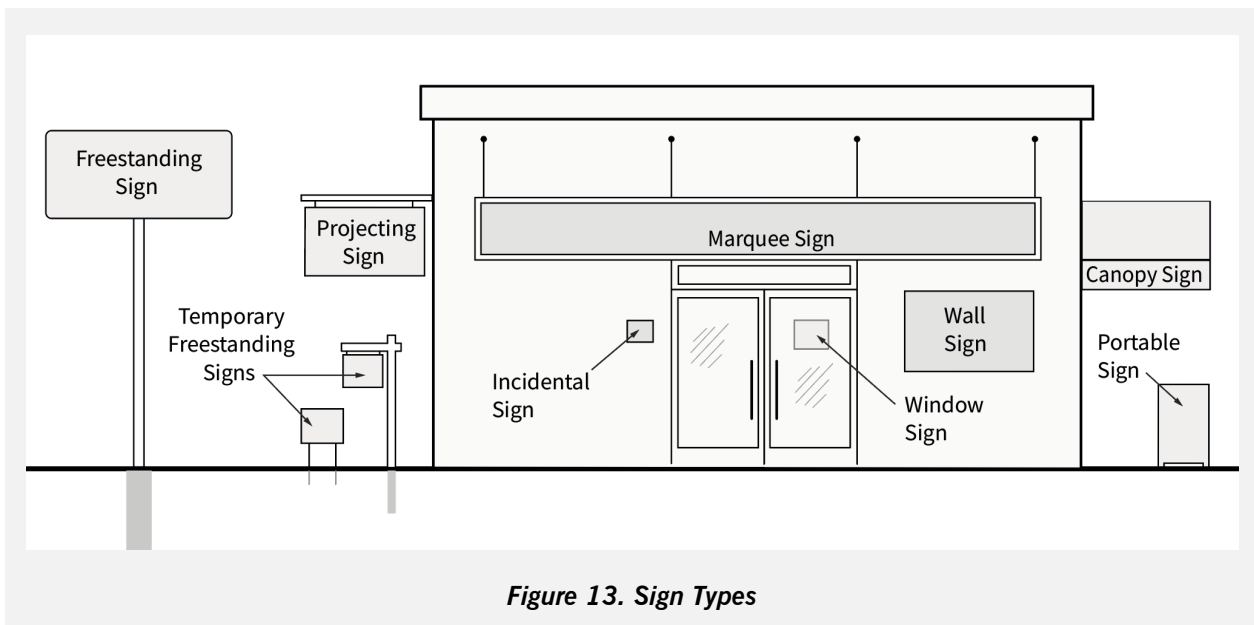
Signs that are not expressly allowed by these regulations are prohibited. Additionally, the following sign types are prohibited in all zones:

- A. Rotating, moving or animated signs. However, electronic or manual message boards shall be permitted, provided that such devices shall be subject to the provisions of these Regulations.
- B. Signs on the exterior of parked vehicles that function primarily as static advertising, where such a vehicle is not regularly used by the business it advertises to transport persons, goods, or materials.
- C. Attention-getting devices such as pennants, valances, flags (except governmental flags), streamers, searchlights, string or festoon lights, flashing lights, balloons or similar devices designed for purposes of attracting attention, promotion or advertising.
- D. Roof signs.
- E. Any sign which could be mistaken for or confused with a traffic control sign, signal or device.
- F. Signs permanently painted, posted or otherwise attached to any rock, fence, tree or utility pole.
- G. Signs painted directly on any wall, excluding artwork meeting the definition of a mural as defined in Section 18.

14.4 Allowed and Permitted Sign Types

- A. Billboard: A large freestanding or wall mounted sign typically oriented to a major transportation corridor and typically unrelated to the use of the property on which it is located.
- B. Canopy Sign: A sign which is part of or attached to an awning, canopy, or other fabric, plastic or structural protective cover over a door, entrance, window, walkway or outdoor service area.
- C. Freestanding Sign: A sign placed on the ground or supported by one or more uprights, poles or other supports placed in or upon the ground.
- D. Incidental Sign: A small wall or freestanding sign typically containing information relevant to the property.

- E. Internal Use Sign: A sign situated within the interior of a property that is typically used to provide direction and orientation to vehicles and pedestrians that have entered a property and convey important information about the use of the property.
- F. Marquee Sign: A sign attached to, or made part of, the vertical face of a building marquee; the marquee being any permanent structure that projects from a wall of a building typically above an entrance.
- G. Portable Sign: A sign which is not permanently affixed to a building, structure or the ground.
- H. Projecting Sign: A sign which is wholly or partly mounted to the exterior of a building perpendicular to the wall.
- I. Temporary Freestanding Sign: A small freestanding sign mounted in the ground for a limited period of time.
- J. Wall Sign: A sign that is wholly or partly mounted to the exterior of a building parallel with the wall.
- K. Window Sign: A sign placed on the inside of a window or the glass portion of a door that is visible from the outside.



14.5 Allowed and Permitted Signs by Zone

Signs are allowed or permitted by zone in accordance with the table below and in addition to the other requirements of this Section 14. Signs are allowed As of Right (R) or require a Sign Permit (P). Signs prohibited within a zone are identified by a dash (—).

Sign Type	R-10, R-15, R-25, R-40, RM-5, A	BN, RT-5	BG, BD, BHC, I	IP-1, IP-3, IP-5	See Section
Billboard	—	—	P (I Zone only)	—	14.7.1
Canopy Sign	—	P	P	P	14.7.2
Freestanding Sign	P ^{1,2}	P	P	P	14.7.3
Incidental Sign ³	R (≤1 sf) P (>1 sf–3 sf)	R (≤1 sf) P (>1 sf–3 sf)	R (≤1 sf) P (>1 sf–3 sf)	R (≤1 sf) P (>1 sf–3 sf)	14.7.4
Internal Use Sign	R	R	R	R	14.7.5
Marquee Sign	—	P	P	P	14.7.6
Portable Sign, Large	P	P	P	P	14.7.7
Portable Sign, Small	—	P	P	P	14.7.8
Projecting Sign	—	P	P	P	14.7.9
Temporary Freestanding Sign ³	R (≤6 sf) P (>6 sf–18 sf)	R (≤6 sf) P (>6 sf–18 sf)	R (≤18 sf) P (>6 sf–32 sf)	R (≤18 sf) P (>6 sf–32 sf)	14.7.10
Wall Sign	—	P	P	P	14.7.11
Window Sign ⁴	R	R	R	R	14.7.12
¹ Limited to use by a civic facility, community youth organization, cultural institution, membership organization, or religious organization or institution. ² Limited to use by a unified residential development, multi-family development with 10 or more units, or open space development. ³ Size limits are per sign. ⁴ Limited to use by commercial establishments only.					

14.6 Number of Signs per Business Establishment

Except as otherwise specified by these regulations, individual business establishments in the BN, RT-5, BG, BD, BHC, I, IP-1, IP-3, and IP-5 zones shall be limited to a combined total of two signs of the following types per individual establishment:

- A. Canopy signs.
- B. Freestanding signs (see Section 14.7.3 for limits on the number of freestanding signs)
- C. Marquee signs.
- D. Projecting signs
- E. Wall signs.

14.7 Standards by Sign Type**14.7.1 Billboards**

- A. Billboards are permitted only in the I Zone, in addition to any other allowed or permitted signs, and require approval by the Zoning Commission.
- B. Only one billboard shall be allowed per lot, provided that the lot has a minimum lot frontage of 100 feet.
- C. Billboards shall not contain more than two signboards per face.
- D. Billboards shall not exceed 30 feet in length.
- E. Billboards shall not exceed 32 feet in height, measured from the ground to the top of the sign.
- F. No billboard shall project into a required front yard unless attached to a building wall already existing in such yard. No part of a billboard attached to a building wall shall project more than 18 inches into a required side yard, other than the illuminating apparatus.
- G. Billboards shall be separated by a distance of at least 500 feet.
- H. Billboards shall not be permitted within 100 feet of any public park, school, playground, cemetery or residential zone.

14.7.2 Canopy Signs

The maximum area shall be equal to one square foot for each linear foot of the canopy face where the sign is applied or attached.

14.7.3 Freestanding Signs

- A. General Standards:
 - 1. Unless otherwise stated in these regulations, only one freestanding sign is allowed per street frontage of a lot with a driveway, regardless of the number of buildings or uses on the lot.
 - 2. No part of any freestanding sign shall be located within 5 feet of any lot line.
 - 3. The height of freestanding signs shall be measured from the ground to the top of the sign.
- B. In all zones: One freestanding sign, not to exceed 32 square feet, is permitted per civic facility, community youth organization, cultural institution, membership organization, or religious organization or institution. As part of the sign area, the freestanding sign may include:
 - 1. A manual message board.
 - 2. An electronic message board, subject to approval by the Zoning Commission.
- C. In the R-10, R-15, R-25, R-40, RM-5, and A Zones:
 - 1. The height of any freestanding sign shall not exceed 6 feet.
 - 2. One freestanding sign, not to exceed 18 square feet, is permitted per unified residential development, multi-family development with 10 or more units, or open space development.
- D. In the BN and RT-5 Zones:
 - 1. The height of a freestanding sign shall not exceed the height of the building it serves or 16 feet, whichever is less. If the lot does not contain a principal building, the sign height shall not exceed 6 feet.
 - 2. Freestanding signs shall be a maximum of 18 square feet each.
- E. In the BG, BD, BHC, I, IP-1, IP-3, and IP-5 Zones:
 - 1. The height of a freestanding sign shall not exceed the height of the building it serves or 16 feet, whichever is less. If the lot does not contain a principal building, the sign height shall not exceed 6 feet.
 - 2. Freestanding signs shall be a maximum of 24 square feet each except that sites with multiple uses or establishments may have one freestanding sign up to 128 square feet in area.

T O C	Article I	Article II	Article III Regulatory Standards	Article IV	Article V	Appendices
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3. A motor vehicle filling station that is fully conforming with these zoning regulations may have one additional freestanding sign, up to 36 square feet in area, above what is otherwise permitted.

14.7.4 Incidental Signs

Incidental signs shall be limited to two signs per principal structure or one sign per dwelling unit in buildings with more than one dwelling unit.

14.7.5 Internal Use Signs

- A. Signs shall be internal to the site, not located to be intentionally visible from a public highway, public right-of-way or abutting residential property.
- B. Signs shall not exceed 3 square feet in area per sign.
- C. Signs shall not be internally illuminated.

14.7.6 Marquee Signs

- A. The maximum area shall be equal to one square foot for each linear foot of the building face (or portion allocated to the establishment) where the sign is attached.
- B. The sign may extend the full length of the marquee but shall not extend beyond the ends of the marquee.

14.7.7 Portable Signs, Large

One large portable sign is permitted for non-residential uses in accordance with the following:

- A. The sign shall not exceed 32 square feet.
- B. The permit number shall be displayed on the face of the sign nearest the street in lettering not less than one inch high.
- C. The permit shall be valid for a period not to exceed 30 days.
- D. No more than four such permits shall be issued to any establishment in any calendar year.
- E. The sign shall be removed within five days after any event for which it is promoting.

14.7.8 Portable Signs, Small

One small portable sign is permitted per commercial establishment, excluding home-based businesses or offices, in accordance with the following:

- A. The sign shall not exceed 8 square feet.
- B. The permit number shall be displayed on the face of the sign nearest the street in lettering not less than one inch high.
- C. The sign shall only be displayed during the normal hours of operation of the establishment and shall be removed and stored indoors when the establishment is not open.
- D. The sign shall not be directly illuminated.
- E. The sign must be located on the subject property or immediately adjacent if placed on a public sidewalk.
- F. If placed on a public sidewalk, the sign shall not block pedestrian access and a minimum of 5 feet of unobstructed pedestrian space shall be maintained past the sign.
- G. No small portable sign shall be displayed at the same time as a large portable sign on the same premises.

14.7.9 Projecting Signs.

- A. The bottom edge of a projecting sign shall be at least 7 feet above ground level when located above an area with pedestrian traffic.
- B. No projecting sign shall extend more than 6 feet from the wall to which it is attached or above the eaves of the building to which it is attached.
- C. In the BN and RT-5 Zones: maximum 8 square feet each.

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D. In the BG, BD, BHC, I, IP-1, IP-3, and IP-5 Zones: maximum 16 square feet each.

14.7.10 Temporary Freestanding Signs

Temporary freestanding signs are allowed in accordance with the following:

- A. No more than two temporary freestanding signs are allowed per street frontage of the lot on which the sign is located.
- B. Signs shall not be directly illuminated.
- C. Signs shall be removed no more than one week following the purpose for which the sign was placed. In no case shall the sign remain in place for more than 12 consecutive months except as provided by Item D below.
- D. A Sign Permit shall be required for the display of a temporary freestanding sign for more than 12 consecutive months and shall only be granted in accordance with the following:
 - 1. The applicant shall demonstrate just cause for continuing display of the sign.
 - 2. The Sign Permit shall authorize the sign for continuance of a period of no more than 12 months or until the sign no longer serves its intended purpose, whichever comes first.
 - 3. No more than one temporary freestanding sign per street frontage may be continued beyond 12 consecutive months at any one time.

14.7.11 Wall Signs

- A. The maximum area shall be equal to one square foot for each linear foot of the building face (or portion allocated to the establishment) where the sign is attached.
- B. Wall signs shall not extend beyond the outer edge of any wall or above the eaves of the building to which it is attached.
- C. A wall sign shall be parallel to the wall to which it is attached and shall not project more than 15 inches from the wall.

14.7.12 Window Signs

- A. Window signs shall only be displayed by commercial establishments.
- B. Window signs shall only be used at the ground or first floor level.
- C. The total area occupied by window signs shall be no more than 25% of an individual or group of windows or doors in which placed or 48 square feet per establishment, whichever is less.
- D. Internally illuminated window signs shall be limited to 3 square feet per establishment.

14.8 General Standards

14.8.1 Sight Lines and Traffic

- A. Signs shall not conflict with the corner visibility requirements of Section 10.2.2B.
- B. Signs shall be so located as to not obstruct or interfere with the visibility of vehicular or pedestrian traffic, or of any traffic control sign, signal, or device.

14.8.2 Sign Illumination

- A. When a sign is internally illuminated, the light source shall be completely covered.
- B. When a sign is externally illuminated, the light source shall comply with the requirements of Section 11.2.
- C. Signs shall not contain flashing or moving lights, except such portions thereof which display the time, temperature and/or date or as related to changes of display of an electronic message board approved in accordance with Section 14.7.3.B.2.

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14.8.3 Sign Maintenance, Compliance or Removal

- A. All signs, together with their supports, braces, guys and anchors, shall be kept in good working order and safe condition.
- B. The owner of the lot on which the sign is located shall be directly responsible for keeping such sign, including its illumination sources, in good working order and safe condition.
- C. Unsightly, damaged, deteriorated signs or signs in danger of falling shall be put in order or removed within 30 days following written notice to the sign owner by the Zoning Enforcement Officer.
- D. Any sign which pertains to a business no longer conducted on the premises where such sign is located shall be removed by the owner of the lot on which the sign is located within 30 days following cessation of the relevant activity.
- E. Any sign which replaces an existing non-conforming sign shall comply with this Section.

14.8.4 Computation of Sign Area

- A. The area of a sign shall be computed from the outer dimensions of the frame, trim or molding by which the sign is enclosed.
- B. When a sign consists of individual letters, symbols or characters, its area shall be computed as the area of the smallest rectangle which encloses all of the letters, symbols or characters.
- C. When a sign consists of two or more faces, only one face of the sign shall be used in computing the sign area if the faces are parallel to and within 12 inches of each other. Otherwise, all faces of the sign shall be used to compute the sign area.

14.8.5 Existing Signs

- A. The number of existing signs on a lot shall be counted toward the maximum number of allowable signs on that lot.
- B. The area of all existing signs on a lot shall be counted toward the maximum sign area allowable on that lot.

14.9 Alternative Signage Program for Large Developments

Due to the complexities of site design and occupancy associated with large developments such as shopping centers, office parks and mixed-use facilities, the owner of a unified non-residential development containing more than 40,000 square feet of gross floor area may submit to the Zoning Commission, for approval of a Sign Permit, an "alternative signage program" differing from the standards contained in this Section 14.

- A. Such signage program shall, at a minimum, contain the information required by Section 14.10 for the issuance of Sign Permits.
- B. In approving such a Sign Permit, the Zoning Commission shall find that:
 - 1. Such signage program would be consistent with the purpose of these Regulations,
 - 2. Such signage program does not include signs prohibited by Section 14.3, and
 - 3. Such signage program would result in a more effective and less visually cluttered display of signs than could otherwise be accomplished under the standards of this Section.

14.10 Sign Permits

- A. Except as otherwise provided herein, no sign shall be constructed, erected, altered or otherwise changed unless a Sign Permit has been issued by the Zoning Enforcement Officer.
- B. The following information shall be provided for all signs except portable and temporary freestanding signs:
 - 1. Plans and specifications of the proposed sign, including its dimensions, area, maximum and minimum height, proposed design, materials, colors, method of construction and method of illumination.
 - 2. For freestanding signs, in addition to the requirements of Item 1 above, a plot plan of the premises and, for any signs attached to structures, a measured elevation drawing of the building facade, each drawn to scale, showing the location, dimensions and area of all existing and proposed signs on the premises.
- C. The following information shall be provided for portable and temporary freestanding signs: a drawing or image showing the dimensions, area, height, materials, colors, method of construction, method of illumination and approximate location on the lot of the sign.



City of Bristol Comprehensive Zoning Update

Date: 8/1/25

Recommendation 40: Expand Outdoor Lighting Regulations

Purpose: Reduce lighting pollution consistent with "Dark Sky" best practices.

Description: This recommendation would expand the existing lighting regulations based upon guidance provided by Lights Out Connecticut Model Outdoor Lighting Regulations for Connecticut. It significantly expands the existing Section 11.2 Outdoor Lighting regulations and reduces the required illumination levels for most uses. More specifically, this expanded regulation does the following:

- Exempts specific types of lighting from regulation.
- Prohibits specific types of lighting.
- Establishes a lighting regulation for all residential uses.
- Establishes more detailed requirements for light shielding and additional restrictions on light trespass.
- Reduces required lighting levels from 3-6 footcandles to 1-3 footcandles and provides more detail about where lighting is required.
- Provides more specific restriction on uplighting to reduce glare and sky glow.
- Provides standards for lighting color temperature.
- Requires lighting to be enabled with automatic lighting control systems.
- Provides athletic field and activity area lighting standards.
- Specifies enforcement protocols.

Geographic Extents: All zones

Potential Impacts: Will reduce excessive outdoor lighting in new projects.

Context: Outdoor light pollution creates a range of environmental, health, and quality-of-life problems. Excessive or poorly designed lighting contributes to skyglow, which obscures views of stars and diminishes the natural night environment. It can disrupt wildlife behavior, particularly for nocturnal species and migratory birds, and interfere with plant growth cycles. Light pollution is linked to sleep disruption and negative impacts on circadian rhythms, which may affect overall health. In urban areas, glare and light trespass can reduce safety by impairing visibility and creating discomfort, especially for drivers and pedestrians.

Recommended Zoning Amendments:

Replace Section 11.2 with the following (see following pages):

11.2 Outdoor Lighting

These lighting regulations are applicable to outdoor lighting of all properties in all zones unless otherwise stated below. The purpose is to reduce light pollution, minimize glare and sky glow, limit light trespass onto neighboring properties, and ensure sufficient illumination for safety and security.

11.2.1 Definitions

- A. ANSI/IES: Lighting standards published by the Illuminating Engineering Society and approved by the American National Standards Institute.
- B. Correlated Color Temperature (CCT): A measure of the color appearance of light, expressed in Kelvin (K).
- C. Fully Shielded: A luminaire constructed so that no light is emitted above a horizontal plane drawn through the lowest light-emitting part.
- D. Light Source: The LED, lamp, bulb or other element from which the light is directly emitted.
- E. Light Trespass: Light emitted by a luminaire that shines beyond the property line onto adjacent properties or the public right-of-way.
- F. Luminaire: A complete lighting unit, including the lamp (bulb), fixture, and related components.
- G. Maximum-to-Minimum Uniformity Ratio: The ratio of the brightest illumination level to the darkest illumination level within a given area

11.2.2 Exempt Lighting

- A. Luminaires that emit 850 lumens or less, except as prohibited by Section 11.2.3 below.
- B. Critical lighting used by the Police Department, Fire Department, or Emergency Services.
- C. State or City roadway lighting.
- D. Temporary lighting authorized by a special event permit for a fair, carnival or similar function.
- E. Temporary holiday lighting provided it is not used for more than 60 days in a 12-month period.
- F. Flagpole lighting, provided all luminaires are shielded so that the light source is not visible from the property line and the CCT does not exceed 2,700K.
- G. Internally lit signs as permitted by Section 14.

11.2.3 Prohibited Lighting

In addition to lighting types prohibited elsewhere in these regulations, the following outdoor lighting shall be prohibited in all zones:

- A. Luminous tube lights or strips of light intended to outline or highlight a structure, whether composed of linear light tubes or a sequence of individual illumination sources.
- B. Light sources that strobe, oscillate, or vary in intensity or color as perceptible to the human eye including such lights placed on the inside of windows and directed to the outside.
- C. Lasers.
- D. Illumination of entire building facades. Facade illumination shall be limited to security lighting or lighting of specific architectural features.

11.2.4 Lighting for Residential Uses

Any outdoor light source for a residential use that emits more than 1,600 lumens shall be fully shielded and positioned so that the light source is not directly visible at a height of 5 feet above ground from any residence on another property.

11.2.5 Lighting of Common Areas

Driveways, parking lots, loading areas, sidewalks, plazas, and other common areas used by vehicles or pedestrians on properties subject to Site Plan or Special Permit approval shall be illuminated in accordance with the following:

- A. The average horizontal maintained illumination shall be no less than one footcandle.
- B. With the exception of gas station canopies, loading areas, and primary building entrances, the average horizontal maintained illumination shall not exceed 3 footcandles, unless otherwise required for safety, security, or operational needs.
- C. The maximum height of the light source shall be 30 feet measured from the surface of the ground. The use of luminaires mounted at lower heights is strongly encouraged.
- D. For parking lots with more than 20 parking spaces, the maximum-to-minimum uniformity ratio shall not exceed 10:1.

11.2.6 Lighting Standards

The following shall be applicable to all uses across all zones subject to a Site Plan or Special Permit approval except for athletic field or activity area lighting that complies with Section 11.2.7:

- A. Illumination Level: Lighting shall provide the lowest level of illumination necessary for safety and intended use as specified by ANSI/IES except as otherwise specified by this Section 11.2. No lighting installation shall exceed the ANSI/IES recommended levels for the specified use.
- B. Light Trespass: Luminaires shall be located, aimed, and optically cutoff so that the light source is not directly visible from an adjacent property or the public right-of-way as measured at a height of 5 feet above ground.
- C. Glare and Sky Glow: Unless otherwise specified, luminaires shall be fully shielded and emit no more than 5% of their total lumen output above 80 degrees as measured from perpendicular to the ground.
- D. Correlated Color Temperature: All light sources shall have a CCT of 3,000K or less.
- E. Lighting Control: All outdoor lighting shall be enabled to be controlled by automatic timers and/or motion sensors. Except where there is a need to maintain lighting levels due to safety, security, or overnight hours of operation, all outdoor lighting shall be:
 - 1. Turned off after 11:00 p.m. and during daylight conditions, and/or
 - 2. Turned off or reduced to 25% of the full illumination level after 15 minutes of no activity.

11.2.7 Athletic Field or Activity Area Lighting

The following shall apply to outdoor athletic fields or other special outdoor activity areas such as sports courts that are subject to a Site Plan or Special Permit approval:

- A. The luminaires shall include internal or external shielding to minimize uplighting and light trespass.
- B. Field or surface lighting shall be provided exclusively for the illumination of the surface of play and viewing stands and not for other applications.
- C. The design and installation of lighting shall follow the illuminance and uniformity guidelines of the Illuminating Engineering Society for the appropriate class of play.
- D. At least 85% of lumens shall be confined to within 60 feet or one pole height, whichever is greater, of the activity surface.
- E. The CCT of the lighting shall not exceed 4,200K.
- F. When the field or surface is used for purposes other than practice or play, lighting shall not exceed 25% of full output. After practice or play, illumination shall be reduced to 25% of full output within one hour and turned off completely within two hours.

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11.2.8 Enforcement

- A. The Zoning Enforcement Officer may inspect any outdoor lighting installation for compliance with this section at any time.
- B. Upon notice of violation of the regulations of this Section 11.2, the responsible party shall correct the violation and provide a written statement to the Zoning Enforcement Officer as to how the violation was corrected within 30 days.
- C. If such statement is not received and/or corrective action is not sufficiently taken within 30 days, the Zoning Enforcement Officer may require a photometric survey and impose additional penalties as authorized by Section 8-12 of the Connecticut General Statutes.



City of Bristol Comprehensive Zoning Update

Date: 8/19/25

Recommendation 41: Overhaul Access Management Regulations

Purpose: Develop a unified access management regulation that is applicable citywide.

Description: This recommendation includes the following amendments:

- Merger of the existing driveway standards of Section 13.11 with Section 12 Access Management.
- Elimination of the Access Management Overlay Zone and removal of the overlay from the Official Zoning Map.
- New Section 12.2: Definitions of access management terms provided.
- New Section 12.3: Driveway standards for all uses provided here. Most of this regulation comes from existing Section 13.11 and from Section 21-51 of the Bristol Code of Ordinances. Provides a reference to the Board of Public Works, which has authority to modify the application of driveway regulations in the Code of Ordinances.
- New Section 12.4.2: Sight line standards modified to require a calculation for local conditions to be conducted based upon AASHTO and CTDOT standards instead of the current 415-foot requirement for all driveways, which exceeds what is needed for most conditions and does not allow for reductions based upon posted speed limit or design speed of the roadway. Reduces the minimum standard to 155 feet instead, which is the absolute minimum distance required for most conditions.
- New Section 12.4.3: Maintains existing intersection distancing requirements based upon intersection traffic control type but amends and simplifies the required measurement technique to be consistent with the technique established by Section 21-51 of the Bristol Code of Ordinances. Establishes an incentive-based reduction in the required distance based upon points earned under the existing Section 12.6 Access Management Scoring System.
- New Section 12.5: The section amends the existing Section 12.6 Access Management Scoring System by simplifying the table and the traffic study/site access analysis requirement. This amended section now requires the Commission to substitute a required traffic study with a site access analysis, but only for projects scoring 10 or more points.
- Relocation of content from Section 12.6 Items D and E to new Section 16.2.4 Traffic Studies as Items A and B respectively.

Geographic Extents: All zones.

Potential Impacts: Will require that all Site Plan Application and Special Permit projects meet minimum standards for distancing from an intersection and for sightlines, which are beyond what is currently required outside the access management overlay zone.

Context: The existing Section 12 access management regulations are only applicable to the access management overlay area along River Street and Riverside Avenue. Citywide regulations specific to the location and design of driveways are located in Section 13.11, but are limited in scope. Additionally, Section 21-51 of the Bristol Code of Ordinances provides standards for driveway location, but Section 13.11 is not consistent with those standards.

Recommended Zoning Amendments: See following pages.

Section 12. Access Management

12.1 Purpose

These access management regulations are intended to facilitate the safe and efficient movement of vehicles, provide safe and convenient access to adjacent development, and minimize the number of potential conflict points along roadways in Bristol by managing the number, location, and design of driveways.

12.2 Definitions

For the purposes of this section, these terms are defined as follows:

- A. Apron: That portion of the driveway that intersects the street and which may include a public sidewalk.
- B. Driveway Apron Radius: The radial measurement of the edge of the driveway or driveway apron that provides a curved transition from the driveway to the street's curb line.
- C. Curb Cut: The location where driveway apron intersects the street's curb line.
- D. Curb Line: The edge of the roadway pavement, delineated by the face of a curb where present.
- E. Driveway Opening: The width of a driveway as measured at and along the street line.
- F. Street Line: The line that delineates the edge of the right-of-way.

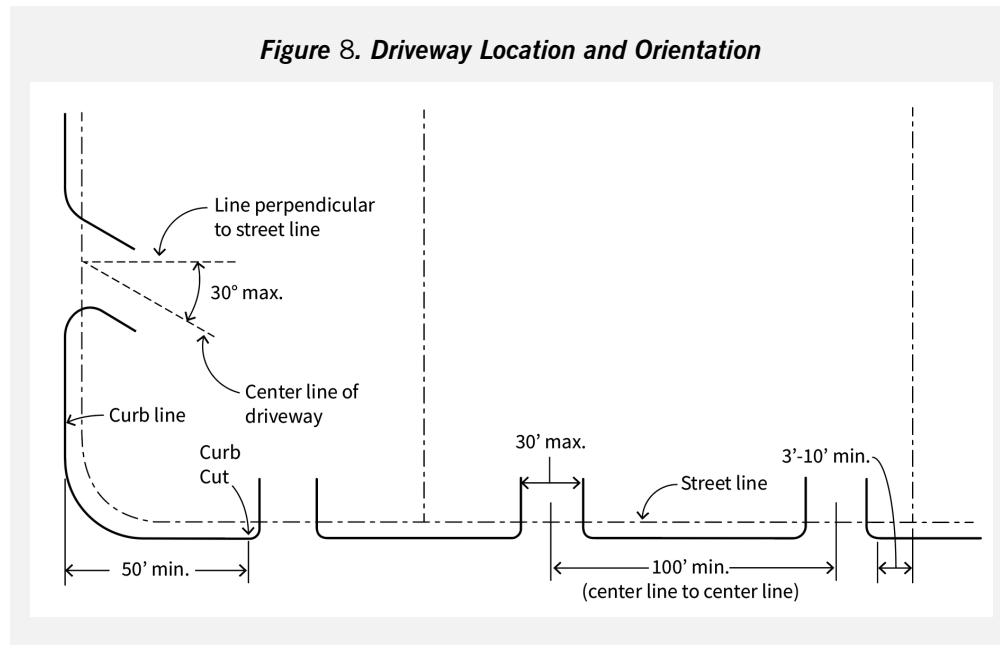
12.3 Driveways Standards for All Uses

The following standards shall apply to all driveways in all zones and may only be varied by the Board of Public Works following a written request to the Board for a modification or by the Commission as stated below.

- A. Driveways shall be constructed in conformity with Sections 21-51 of the Bristol Code of Ordinances.
- B. Driveway width shall be designed to the smallest size that will effectively serve vehicles entering and exiting the site, provided that no driveway opening is less than 12 feet wide.
- C. Except as otherwise provided herein, the maximum driveway opening width (including all entrance lanes, exit lanes, and median islands) shall be 30 feet.
- D. The Commission may allow a driveway opening width greater than 30 feet, provided that:
 - 1. The greater width is recommended or required by the Connecticut Department of Transportation or the State Traffic Commission; or,
 - 2. The applicant shall demonstrate to the satisfaction of the Commission that the greater width is necessary in order to: maintain an adequate level of safety, improve pedestrian safety through the use of a refuge island, accommodate delivery and service vehicles, or accommodate traffic volume.
- E. Driveway aprons shall be designed with the smallest radii that will effectively serve vehicles entering and exiting the site provided that:
 - 1. Residential driveways shall have a driveway apron radius of no less than 3 feet and no more than 5 feet.
 - 2. Non-residential driveways shall have a driveway apron radius of no less than 10 feet and no more than 20 feet.
- F. Driveways shall intersect the street line within 30 degrees of perpendicular as measured between the centerline of the driveway and the street line.
- G. No lot shall have more than one driveway opening per each 85 feet of street frontage or major fraction thereof. The Commission may require that a lesser number of driveway openings serve a lot regardless of the amount of street frontage, if deemed necessary for public safety purposes.
- H. Driveways serving the same lot shall be at least 100 feet apart (measured center line to center line), unless they are one-way driveways.

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- I. For corner lots, driveway openings shall be located as far from the intersection as practical, but in no case shall any curb cut be located within 50 feet of such intersection as measured from the extended curb line of the intersecting street.
- J. In no case shall a curb cut be closer than the following distance from the extended side yard property line:
 - 1. Lots with a frontage of less than 60 feet: 3 feet
 - 2. Lots with a frontage between 60 and 85 feet: 5 feet
 - 3. Lots with a frontage of more than 85 feet: 10 feet

Figure 8. Driveway Location and Orientation

12.4 Driveway Standards for Uses Approved by Site Plan or Special Permit

Any proposed driveway associated with a project subject to Site Plan or Special Permit approval shall comply with the following:

12.4.1 Driveway Design

Each driveway shall be provided with a clearly defined and properly sized opening and clearly delineated and properly marked/signed entrance/exit lanes in accordance with Section 13.11D of these Regulations and Section 21-51 of the Bristol Code of Ordinances.

12.4.2 Sight Lines

- A. General Requirement. Each driveway shall be designed and located to provide safe and unobstructed sight distance for vehicles exiting the property.
- B. Measurement Point and Height. Sight distance shall be measured from a point on the exit lane of the driveway located 10 feet behind the curb line of the intersecting street, at a height of 3.5 feet above the finished surface, representing the typical eye height of a driver in a passenger vehicle.
- C. Obstructions Prohibited. No structure, fence, wall, sign, vegetation, or other obstruction shall be permitted within the sight triangle that would block the required line of sight between the measurement point and the approaching roadway.
- D. Minimum Sight Distance. The minimum sight distance shall be provided in accordance with the stopping sight distance standards set forth in the latest edition of the AASHTO "A Policy on Geometric Design of Highways and Streets", or the CTDOT Highway Design Manual, whichever is more stringent, but in no

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case shall the sight distance be less than 155 feet unless as modified by the Commission as described in Item E below.

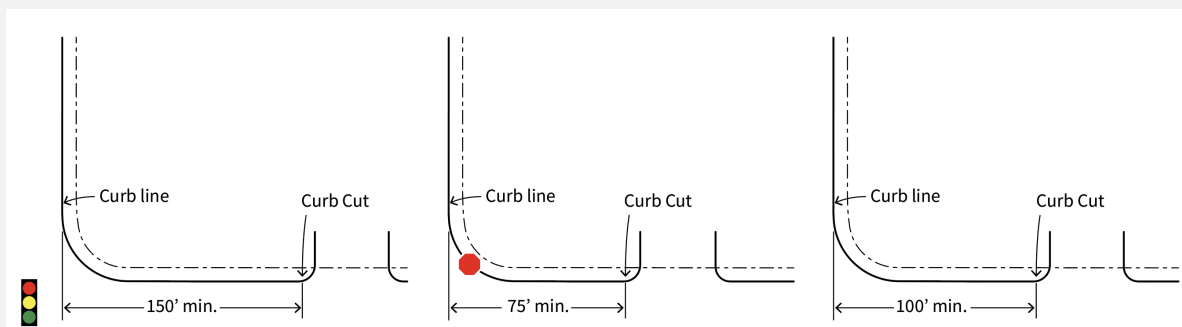
- E. Modification. The Commission may modify the minimum sight distance requirement of Item D above if a qualified traffic engineer demonstrates, to the satisfaction of the Commission, that a lesser distance will not compromise traffic safety due to unique site or traffic conditions, provided such distance shall be as great as feasible.

12.4.3 Un-Signalized Driveways that Serve Corner Lots

The provisions of this Section 12.4.3 shall supersede the requirements of Section 12.2.G and the following shall apply:

- A. The primary driveway shall be located on a local/side street, where feasible.
- B. The driveway shall be located as far as possible from the adjoining street intersection, and shall be spaced the following minimum distance from the nearest extended curb line of the intersecting street to the nearest driveway apron curb cut:
 1. If the adjoining street intersection is signalized: 150 feet minimum.
 2. If the adjoining street intersection is un-signalized and the affected street has a stop sign at the intersection: 75 feet minimum.
 3. If the adjoining street intersection is un-signalized and the affected street is not controlled by a stop sign at the intersection: 100 feet minimum.
- C. The required distance specified in Item B above may be reduced through the use of access management techniques as described in Section 12.5 at a rate of 5% for each point earned except that in no case shall the distance be reduced to less than 50 feet.
- D. If the required distance specified in Item B above is not attainable because of insufficient lot frontage, topography, building location, or other site conditions, and the provision of an alternative point of access is not a feasible option, the Commission may allow a lesser distance, provided such distance shall be as great as feasible.

Figure 9. Corner Lot Unsignalized Driveway Location



12.5 Access Management Incentive

Through voluntary compliance with this Access Management Incentive, an applicant may be exempted from the traffic study requirement of a Site Plan Application, Special Permit, and/or the Section 16.2.3 requirement for high traffic generators.

- A. Using the table below, the Commission shall, upon the request of an applicant, evaluate each project subject to these access management regulations by awarding points based upon the extent of compliance with each of the access management standards contained in the table. The Commission's evaluation shall account for existing driveways proposed to remain unchanged, existing driveways proposed to be modified, and proposed new driveways.

Access Management Technique	Standard	Points
1. Reduction in the number of driveways accessing the same street (existing vs. proposed)	Two or more driveways eliminated	5
	One driveway eliminated	3
2. Separation distance between driveway openings on the same lot (measured in a straight line between the nearest edge of each driveway opening)	> 150 feet	6
	120 – 150 feet	3
3. Common/shared driveway(s) used by two or more adjoining lots (must be built, or agreed to in writing by all affected lot owners)	Yes	4
4. Interior vehicular connection(s) between two or more lots (must be built, or agreed to in writing by all affected lot owners)	Yes	3
5. Separation distance between driveway openings on adjoining lots (measured in a straight line between the nearest edge of each driveway opening)	≥ 50 feet	3
6. Setback of parking spaces from the front lot line (driveway provides direct access to spaces)	> 30 feet	2
	10 – 30 feet	1
7. Alignment of driveway opening(s) with driveway opening(s) on the opposite side of the street (alignment of centerlines)	Yes	2
8. Alignment of driveway opening(s) with traffic signal	Yes	6
9. Full compliance with Section 12.4.2.B	Yes	4

- B. If the project scores 10 or more points, the Commission shall waive a traffic study, if required, and will instead require a site access analysis.
- C. The site access analysis shall include some or all of the elements of a traffic study as determined by the Commission but shall be limited in its scope to the project itself and shall not be required to consider the surrounding roadway network. In determining which elements shall be included in a site access analysis, the Commission shall consider:
1. the design aspects of the site driveway in question;
 2. the professional judgment of the City Engineer in consultation with the City Planner, and
 3. professionally accepted traffic engineering practices.

- F. The Commission may require the submission of such additional information as the Commission deems necessary to make a reasonable review of the application.
- G. A complete Special Permit application must be submitted a minimum of ten days before a regular meeting in order for the Commission to determine that the application is complete and schedule a public hearing thereon. Nothing in this section shall be construed to extend the time limits for action as specified in the CGS.
- H. Any additional information required by the Commission or provided by the applicant shall be submitted a minimum of ten days prior to the public hearing to enable the Commission, staff, public and any consultants contracted by the Commission have adequate time to review the information before the expiration of the time limits set forth in the CGS.
- I. The Commission may choose not to accept any modifications to an application after it has been received and may determine that modifications are significant and require a new application.
- J. Nothing in this section shall prohibit an applicant from submitting reply reports in response to documents submitted by the public, staff, consultants or other sources during the proceeding on the application.
- K. The Commission may deny an application without prejudice where application information or revisions have been received so late in the process as to deny or curtail the opportunity for thorough review and comment by the public, City staff, or other public agencies.

16.2.3 Special Permit Uses Involving High Traffic Generators

- A. All applications for a Special Permit involving the construction of more than 50 dwelling units, 100 parking spaces, or 25,000 square feet of gross floor area, or any development which, in the Commission's judgment, would generate high levels of traffic, shall be accompanied by a traffic study evaluating the impact of the proposal on streets serving and/or affected by the development.
- B. At a minimum, the study shall include data and information on existing and projected average daily vehicle trips on nearby roads, peak hour traffic, adequacy of rights-of-way and travelways, existing roadway capacity, traffic accidents, the traffic impact of the proposed development, traffic generation data, the location of existing roads within 300 feet of the development site, traffic lights and intersections, and recommendations for safe pedestrian and vehicular circulation, including provisions for safe sidewalks and crosswalks for pedestrians. Where applicable, the applicant shall include the written recommendations of the Connecticut Department of Transportation.

16.2.4 Traffic Studies

- A. In determining the need for a traffic study not otherwise required by these regulations, the Commission shall consider the following:
 - 1. whether the site driveway is on a State road or major arterial;
 - 2. whether the site driveway could create traffic impacts that negatively affect intersecting State roads or major arterials or their intersections; and
 - 3. whether the site driveway could result in traffic impacts that are considered to be potentially significant enough to warrant a detailed engineering evaluation.
- B. A traffic study shall:
 - 1. conform to professionally accepted traffic engineering practices;
 - 2. account for the site driveway(s) and all nearby streets, driveways, and intersections reasonably impacted by the project; and
 - 3. include estimates of existing and future traffic volumes; a trip-generation and distribution analysis that includes turning movements into and out of the site's driveway(s); a capacity analysis for both the site's driveway(s) and the adjacent street network; an accident history/safety analysis; an engineering design review; an internal site circulation review; and identification of improvements and recommended strategies intended to mitigate negative traffic impacts of the project.



City of Bristol Comprehensive Zoning Update

Date: 8/1/25

Recommendation 42: Update Landscaping Standards

Purpose: Provide minor updates to landscaping standards to clarify requirements.

Description: This recommendation provides minor amendments to Section 11.1 including the following:

- Specify that the standards are applicable only to projects subject to Site Plan Application or Special Permit approval.
- Remove unneeded reference to American Association of Nurserymen and replace with prohibition on the installation of invasive species.
- Limit Commission approval of tree removal to healthy non-invasive trees.
- Allow for use of deciduous plant materials within a required buffer.
- Specify that screening substituted for a required buffer shall comply with the Section 11.1.3 Screening requirements.
- Other minor modifications for clarity.

Geographic Extents: All zones

Potential Impacts: None.

Recommended Zoning Amendments: See following pages (text to be removed in ~~strikethrough~~, text to be added in red)

Section 11. Landscaping and Site Features

11.1 Landscaping Requirements

The following regulations of this Section 11.1 shall be applicable only to projects subject to a Site Plan Application or Special Permit approval.

11.1.1 Purpose

These landscaping requirements are intended to accomplish the following purposes:

- A. To provide natural visual screening of parking and loading areas;
- B. To reduce surface water runoff and minimize soil erosion through the natural filtering capability of landscaped areas;
- C. To minimize environmental nuisances such as glare and noise;
- D. To moderate the microclimate of parking areas by providing shade, by absorbing reflected heat from paved surfaces and by creating natural wind breaks;
- E. To ensure public safety by using landscaping materials to define parking and loading areas and to manage internal vehicular and pedestrian circulation; and,
- F. To enhance the overall appearance of new development by providing a variety of landscaping materials that are consistent and compatible with the existing natural vegetation in the area.

11.1.2 General Requirements

- A. All disturbed portions of multi-family and non-residential developments not otherwise used for buildings, structures, parking areas, loading areas, walkways or similar purposes shall be suitably landscaped and permanently maintained with trees, shrubs and other landscape materials, as approved by the Commission as part of a required Site Plan.
- B. The development of the site shall conserve as much of the natural terrain and existing vegetation as possible, shall preserve sensitive environmental land features such as steep slopes, wetlands and large rock outcroppings, and shall preserve public scenic views and historically significant features.
- C. ~~Major~~ **Planted** trees shall include a variety of shade trees, flowering trees, or evergreens.
- D. **Planted** ~~Shrubs~~ shall include any of the appropriate varieties of evergreen or deciduous bushes.
- E. All plant material shall be nursery grown ~~and conform to the standards of the American Association of Nurserymen~~ **and the planting of invasive species, as identified by the Connecticut Invasive Plant Working Group, is prohibited.** ~~The provision planting of species native to Connecticut is preferred.~~
- F. At the time of planting, trees shall be of the following minimum size:
 1. Shade trees: 2.5-inch caliper
 2. Evergreen trees: 6-foot height
 3. Flowering trees: single stem – 2-inch caliper, clump form – 8-foot height
- G. Trees and shrubs within 5 feet of any paved areas shall be of such varieties capable of withstanding damage from salt.
- H. Mulched planting beds of an appropriate size shall be placed around all trees and shrubs to retain moisture. Acceptable mulching material shall be shredded bark, woodchips or other organic substitute, at least four inches in depth.
- I. Suitable ground cover shall be placed on all disturbed site areas not covered by paving, buildings or mulching for trees and shrubs. Suitable ground cover shall be grass, turf, stone, gravel or an appropriate substitute. All landscaping shall be done with species that are non-invasive.
- J. No stone or gravel shall be used for ground cover within four feet of walkways unless the material is suitably contained within its area.

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- K. Where feasible, existing trees shall be saved; if grading is required in their vicinity, trees shall be appropriately welled or mounded to protect them from damage.
- L. No ~~healthy, non-invasive~~ trees 5 inches or greater in caliper as measured ~~three~~ 3 feet above ground level shall be removed unless so approved by the Commission.

11.1.3 Screening

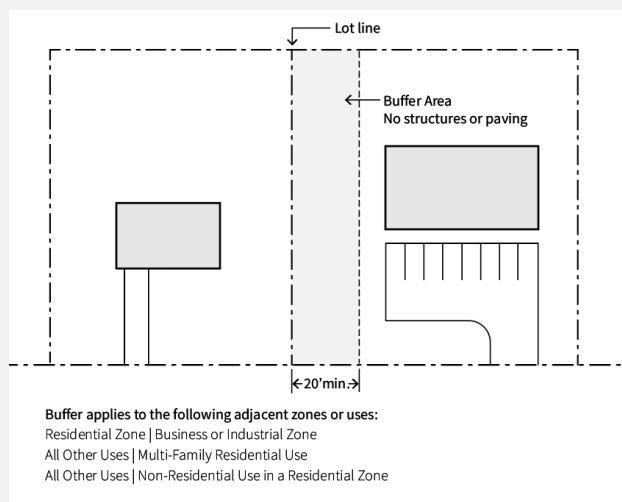
Screening shall be provided for any objectionable areas or views ~~which~~ ~~that~~ are adjacent to residential properties or visible from the street, including but not limited to loading areas, dumpsters, storage areas, and ~~ground-fixed~~ mechanical equipment ~~located on the ground~~. Acceptable screening materials shall include:

- A. Evergreen hedges having a minimum height of 6 feet at the time of planting;
- B. Solid fences or walls having a minimum height of 6 feet, if approved by the Commission;
- C. Earthen berms; or,
- D. Any combination of the above materials.

11.1.4 Buffers

- A. A landscaped buffer shall be provided for any use in a Business or Industrial zone ~~which~~ ~~that~~ is adjacent to or across the street from a residential zone, for any multi-family use, or for any non-residential use in a residential zone.
- B. The buffer shall be a minimum of 20 feet in width.
- C. The buffer shall be ~~of evergreen plantings~~ ~~comprised of deciduous and evergreen trees and shrubs~~ of such species, height and spacing as, in the judgment of the Commission, will effectively screen the use from the view of adjoining properties.
- D. No structures or paving shall be permitted within the buffer.
- E. The Commission may allow ~~a wall or fence~~ ~~screening complying with Section 11.1.3 of appropriate location, height and design~~ to be substituted for all or a portion of the landscaped buffer if, in its

Figure 6. Buffer Requirement



judgment, such ~~wall or fence would provide comparable screening~~ **screening will effectively buffer** ~~of the~~ use from the view of adjoining properties.

11.1.5 Modifications of Landscaping

Where existing topography and/or existing vegetation provides adequate landscaping, ground cover, screening and/or buffers, the Commission may modify the landscaping requirements of this Section.

11.1.6 Maintenance of Landscaping

- A. All landscaping shall be maintained in a healthy growing condition in accordance with acceptable horticultural practices. Landscaping which dies or becomes unhealthy because of accidents, drainage problems, disease or other causes shall be replaced with appropriate new landscaping during the following planting season.
- B. All landscaping shall be controlled by pruning, trimming or other suitable methods so as not to interfere with public utilities, restrict vehicular or pedestrian access or otherwise constitute a traffic hazard.
- C. All landscaped areas shall be maintained in a relatively weed-free condition and kept clear of undergrowth.
- D. Required fences or walls shall be maintained in good condition.

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City of Bristol Comprehensive Zoning Update

Date: 8/1/25

Recommendation 43: Update Fence Regulations

Purpose: Provide minor updates to the fence standards to clarify requirements.

Description: This recommendation provides minor amendments to Section 11.3 including the following:

- Consolidate Sections 11.3.2 and 11.3.3 into one section as they provide exactly the same standards for commercial and industrial zones.
- Section 11.3.4: Allow for the continuance of safety fences for safety purposes.
- Section 11.3.6: Change references from "Zoning Permit" to "Fence Permit".
- Other minor changes to improve clarity and organization

Geographic Extents: All Zones

Potential Impacts: None

Recommended Zoning Amendments: See following pages (text to be removed in ~~striketrough~~, text to be added in red)

11.3 Fences

No fence, wall, or other structure in the nature of a fence shall be constructed, installed or maintained except in accordance with the following provisions:

11.3.1 Fences in Residential Zones

- A. Fences, walls, or other structures in the nature of a fence located within the required front yard shall have a maximum height of 4.5 feet and shall be at least 50% open, **except that chain link fences shall not be allowed in any required front yard.**
- B. Fences, walls, or other structures in the nature of a fence located within the front yard but ~~beyond~~ **outside** of the required front yard, within a side yard, or within the rear yard shall have a maximum height of 6.5 feet.
- C. Support posts or columns shall be no taller than one foot above the highest part of the fence itself. Pedestrian gates, arbors, and similar structures used as entryway features shall have a maximum height of 8 feet.
- D. ~~C. Chain link fences shall not be allowed in the required front yard.~~

11.3.2 Fences in Business ~~zones~~ and Industrial Zones

- A. Fences, walls, or other structures in the nature of a fence located within the required front yard shall have a maximum height of 6.5 feet.
- B. Fences, walls, or other structures in the nature of a fence located within the front yard ~~beyond~~ **but outside** of the required front yard, within a side yard, or within the rear yard shall have a maximum height of 10 feet.

~~**11.3.3 Fences in Industrial zones**~~

- ~~A. Fences, walls, or other structures in the nature of a fence located within the required front yard shall have a maximum height of 6.5 feet.~~
- ~~B. Fences, walls, or other structures in the nature of a fence located within the front yard beyond the required front yard, within a side yard, or within the rear yard shall have a maximum height of 10 feet.~~

~~**11.3.4**~~**11.3.3 Fences Around Recreation Facilities**

On the grounds of a school or on the grounds of a public or private recreation facility, an open fence erected to enclose a playground, playfield, swimming pool, tennis court, golf course, or similar facility may exceed the otherwise applicable height limits but shall not exceed 12 feet in height.

~~**11.3.5**~~**11.3.4 Temporary Construction Fences**

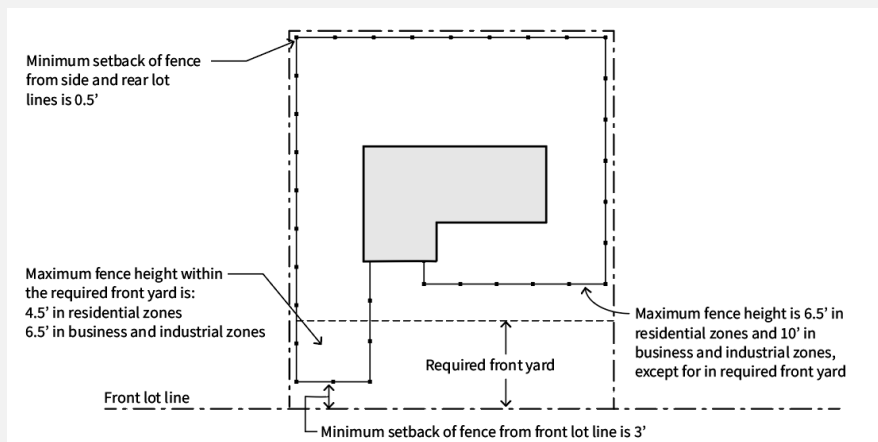
Notwithstanding the provisions of this Section, a temporary fence shall be permitted in any zoning district to enclose a site at which construction activity is underway. Such fence shall be in place only for the duration of the construction activity and shall be removed when construction activity has been completed or has been discontinued for a period of 90 days or more, **unless required for safety purposes.** Such fence shall be located as necessary to protect the public and to secure the construction site, as approved by the Zoning Enforcement Officer.

~~**11.3.6**~~**11.3.5 General Fence Requirements**

- A. The height of a fence shall be measured from the finished grade along the exterior side of the fence to the top of the fence; posts or other supporting members shall not be included in such measurement. If a fence is built on top of a berm or wall, the combined height of the fence and berm/wall shall not exceed the allowable fence height. On sloping ground, the fence shall follow the slope or step with the slope so as not to exceed the allowable height at any point along the fence.

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- B. No fence shall be located closer than 3 feet from the front lot line or closer than 6 inches from any other lot line.
- C. Except as otherwise permitted by Sections 47-47 and 47-48 of the CT General Statutes, barbed wire fences and fencing materials shall be prohibited as permanent fencing.
- D. All gates shall open onto the lot on which they are located.
- E. All fences shall be uniform in material and color. In the case of a fence with a finished side and an unfinished side, the finished or more decorative side shall face outward toward the adjoining lot or the street.
- F. All fences shall be maintained in good condition, free of significant rust, peeling paint, or other damage. Repairs made to fences shall be of the same material as the existing fence. All fences hereafter erected shall be constructed of new materials only.

Figure 7. Fence Standards**11.3.7 11.3.6 Fence Permits**

- A. No fence shall be constructed, erected, altered, or otherwise changed unless a Zoning Fence Permit has first been issued by the Zoning Enforcement Officer.
- B. All applications for a Zoning Fence Permit shall be signed or countersigned by the owner of the lot on which the fence will be located and shall be accompanied by the following:
 1. A plot plan of the premises drawn to scale showing the location of the proposed fence (including any gates) in relation to all lot lines, streets, driveways, sidewalks, and structures within five feet of the lot.
 2. Plans and specifications of the proposed fence, including its type, dimensions, area, height, materials, color, and method of construction.

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City of Bristol Comprehensive Zoning Update

Date: 8/4/25

Recommendation 44: Amend Definition of “Average Finished Grade”

Purpose: The term “Average Finished Grade” is used to establish building height. The current definition provides no guidance on how the grade is to be measured and established. This amended definition would ensure that the average finished grade is measured consistently across projects and that maximum building height standards are effectively enforced.

Description: Amend the definition of average finished grade to require measurement of the grade 6 feet from the exterior of a building instead of where the building meets the ground and require measurements to be taken no more than 20 feet apart and to include the highest and lowest points. Also amend to allow for applicability to structures other than buildings.

Geographic Extents: All Zones

Potential Impacts: None

Context: Zoning regulations across Connecticut vary in how average finished grade is measured. Many communities require the measurement to be taken a specified distance from the exterior wall or foundation with that distance typically ranging from 6 to 10 feet. Most communities require measurements to be taken at several points including the highest and lowest grades.

Recommended Zoning Amendments:

Amend the existing definition of “Average Finished Grade” in Section 18 as follows (text to be removed in ~~strike through~~, new text in **red**):

Average Finished Grade: The final elevation of the average ground level ~~adjoining~~ **around** a building ~~at all exterior walls~~ **or structure as measured at a distance of 6 feet offset from the exterior walls, foundation, or footing (as applicable) at intervals of no more than 20 feet including measurements taken at the lowest and highest grades. The measurement shall be taken at the property line in locations where the property line is located less than 6 feet from the exterior wall, foundation, or footing.**



City of Bristol Comprehensive Zoning Update

Date: 8/19/25

Recommendation 45: Add Animal Grooming Establishments as a Permitted Use

Purpose: Animal grooming establishments are an increasingly common use, but the zoning regulations do not define or specify where this use is permitted or by what type of permit. As a result, it is unclear whether this use would be permitted as a retail use or as a personal service establishment. The definition of this use and the identification of zones where allowed, and permit type required, would allow for the City to manage these uses and would add clarity to businesses seeking to establish in Bristol.

Description: This amendment defines animal grooming establishments and allows them in the BN, BG, and BHC zones through a Site Plan Application and the BD zone with a Zoning Permit. It also provides a parking requirement.

Geographic Extents: BN, BG, BD, and BHC zones

Potential Impacts: May support the development of animal grooming establishments in the City.

Recommended Zoning Amendments:

1. Provide the following definition of Animal Grooming Establishment in Section 19 Use Definitions:

Animal Grooming Establishment: An establishment where domestic pets such as dogs and cats, are bathed, clipped, brushed, styled, or otherwise groomed for hygienic, aesthetic, or show purposes. Such establishments may include incidental sale of pet care products and accessories, but do not provide overnight boarding, veterinary medical treatment, or breeding services.

2. Add Animal Grooming Establishment to the Use Summary Table of Section 4.2 as follows including the following permit requirements specified per zone where allowed:

Principal Use	Commercial, Industrial, and Mixed-Use Districts							
	BN	BG ¹	BD	BHC ²	I	IP-1	IP-3	IP-5
Animal Grooming Establishment	ZP+S	ZP+S	ZP	ZP+S	—	—	—	—

3. Add Animal Grooming Establishment to Section 13.2 Amount of Off-Street Parking Required under Service Based Uses with a requirement of 3.0 spaces per ksf.



City of Bristol Comprehensive Zoning Update

Date: 8/21/25

Recommendation 46: Add Data Centers as a Permitted Use

Purpose: The zoning regulations do not define data centers as a specific use. By default, if treated as an industrial use, data centers would be allowed in the Industrial or Industrial Park zones. Defining this use and identifying zones where allowed, and the permit type required, would allow for better regulation of this use. Additionally, the provision of specific use regulations would ensure that such use does not cause a nuisance to surrounding land uses, particularly residential uses.

Description:

- Define data center as a permitted use.
- Allow data centers between 15,001 and 250,000 square feet in size in the I, IP-1, IP-3, IP-5 zones with a Special Permit.
- Allow data centers up to 15,000 square feet in size in the BHC, I, IP-1, IP-3, IP-5 zones with a Site Plan Application.
- Establish a minimum lot size of one acre for data centers.
- Establish distancing requirements from a residential zone/use: 350 feet in the BHC, 500 feet in the I, IP-1, IP-3, IP-5 zones.
- Require a noise mitigation study, implementation of noise mitigation measures, and monitoring of noise.

Geographic Extents: BHC, I, IP-1, IP-3, IP-5 zones

Potential Impacts: May support the establishment of data centers.

Context: Over the past decade, demand for data centers has surged in response to the rapid growth of cloud computing, streaming services, e-commerce, artificial intelligence, and connected devices. This demand has led to increased interest in establishing small and large-scale facilities in areas where land, power, and cooling resources are more readily available. Noise is a principal concern as these uses generate a constant low level “humming” noise on a 24-hour, 7 day a week basis.

Recommended Zoning Amendments:

1. Add the following definitions of data centers to Section 19 Use Definitions:

Data Center: a facility that is developed, acquired, constructed, rehabilitated, renovated, repaired or operated, to house a group of networked computer servers in one physical location or multiple contiguous locations to centralize the storage, management and dissemination of data and information pertaining to a particular business or classification or body of knowledge. This use excludes call centers and facilities primarily engaged in office functions.



2. Add Data Centers to the Use Summary Table of Section 4.2 as follows including as follows:

Principal Use	Commercial, Industrial, and Mixed-Use Districts							
	BN	BG ¹	BD	BHC ²	I	IP-1	IP-3	IP-5
Data Center (15,000 sf or less)	—	—	—	ZP+S	ZP+S	ZP+S	ZP+S	ZP+S
Data Center (15,001-250,000 sf)	—	—	—	—	SP	SP	SP	SP

3. Add new Section 4.3.25 Data Centers as follows:

4.3.25 Data Centers

- A. The maximum gross floor area shall be 250,000 square feet except in the BHC zone where the maximum gross floor area shall be 15,000 square feet.
- B. The minimum lot size shall be one acre.
- C. Data centers shall be located at least 500 feet from any residential zone as measured by the shortest straight line distance between the data center building and the nearest residential zone boundary, except that in the BHC zone data centers shall be located at least 350 feet from any dwelling in a residential zone as measured by the shortest straight line distance between the data center building and the principal structure of the dwelling. The construction of dwelling in a residential zone within 350 feet of an existing data center in the BHC zone shall not cause the data center to be nonconforming.
- D. The applicant shall provide a vibration/sound analysis by a recognized professional in the field of acoustic engineering who is Board Certified by the Institute of Noise Control Engineering or equivalent that identifies measures to mitigate noise from the Data Center with a specific focus on low frequency sound. Such measures shall be implemented.
- E. The data center operator shall continuously monitor sound emissions in accordance with a plan approved by the Commission and shall maintain the records of such monitoring for no less than the previous 12 months. The operator shall provide monitoring records to the Zoning Enforcement Officer upon request.
- F. Large-scale blank walls where visible from public view shall be mitigated through the use of architectural articulation and/or landscaping.

4. Add Data Centers to Section 13.2 Amount of Off-Street Parking Required in the Industrial and Fleet Uses category with the requirement of 4 spaces + 0.1 spaces per ksf.



City of Bristol Comprehensive Zoning Update

Date: 8/1/25

Recommendation 47: Amend Requirements for the Posting of Properties

Purpose: Adjust the sign posting requirement of Section 17.1.5 Posting of Property to reduce excessive signage and to require signage that is more proportional to the length of the frontage. Remove redundant language.

Description: This amendment makes the following changes to Section 17.1.5 Posting of Property:

- Increases the sign posting distance from 200 feet to 500 feet for all properties.
- Increases the sign posting distance from 200 feet to 1,000 feet for properties with more than 2,000 feet of frontage provided such signage is twice the sign area otherwise required. By example the 2'x2' required sign for a public hearing would need to be provided at approximately 3'x3' and the 4'x4' sign required for a zone change public hearing would need to be approximately 6'x6'.
- Removes the following redundant content, which is fully addressed by the first sentence of the section: "There shall be a minimum of two signs posted on corner and through lots, one facing each street."

Geographic Extents: All zones

Potential Impacts: Reduces burden on applicants

Recommended Zoning Amendments:

1. Amend Section 17.1.5.A.1 as follows (text to be removed in ~~striketrough~~, text to be added in red)

1. A minimum of one such sign shall be posted facing each street on which the subject property has frontage. Signs shall also be so posted approximately every ~~200~~ 500 feet ~~apart~~ along the street frontage of the subject property. ~~Where the frontage is more than 2,000 feet in length, signs may be posted approximately every 1,000 feet provided that such signs are at least twice the size (in area) otherwise required. There shall be a minimum of two signs posted on corner and through lots, one facing each street.~~ In those cases where the subject property does not have frontage on or is not otherwise readily visible from a street, the sign shall be posted in a location deemed suitable by the Zoning Enforcement Officer.



City of Bristol Comprehensive Zoning Update

Date: 8/4/25

Recommendation 48: Provide Minor Text and Formatting Amendments Across the Regulations

Purpose: The purpose of this amendment is to improve the regulations for clarity and consistency and to adjust requirements in response to need.

Description: This recommended amendment does the following:

- Expands the definition of "Commission" to include the Planning Commission in addition to the Zoning Commission since many references to the "Commission" across the regulations are applicable to both or either Commission depending on the application requirement.
- Clarifies the permit requirement for uses requiring a Site Plan Application and approval from the Planning Commission by replacing the "ZP+S" nomenclature intended to refer to the Site Plan requirement before issuance of a Zoning Permit with "SPA" which will indicate a Site Plan Application requirement. This does not impact the current requirements, but seeks to provide more clarity about the application requirement.
- Consolidates the "Boat or Recreational Vehicle Sales and Service" and "Recreational Vehicle Sales" uses groups, which are permitted in the same zones, into the "Boat or Recreational Vehicle Sales and Service" use group.
- Increases allowed projection of a stair or ramp from 3 feet to 4 feet into any required yard.
- Relocates information relevant to building and lot coverage definitions from Section 10.6 to Section 18 Zoning Terminology Definitions.
- Adjusts the parking requirement for manufacturing, wholesale, and distribution uses.

Geographic Extents: N/A

Potential Impacts: None

Recommended Zoning Amendments (text to be removed in ~~strike through~~, text to be added in **red**):

1. Section 1.4, Item N: Amend as follows: "The "Commission" means the **Planning or** Zoning Commission of the City of Bristol, unless otherwise specified." Replace "Zoning Commission" with "Commission" in Sections 1.5, 5.4.18.G, and 16.3.11.B.



2. Sections 4.1, 4.2, 5.1, 5.2: Replace nomenclature for the Site Plan Application requirement currently shown as "ZP+S" with "**SPA**" within the tables and amend introductory paragraphs as follows:

4.1 Principal Use Summary Table: Residential Districts

The table below indicates the permitted principal uses in Bristol by residential district. Uses are permitted by Zoning Permit (ZP), **Site Plan Application (SPA)**, or by Special Permit (SP). Uses prohibited within a district are identified by a dash (—). ~~The provision of a Site Plan, in addition to a required zoning permit is indicated by a (+S). All Special Permits shall require a Site Plan.~~

4.2 Principal Use Summary Table: Commercial, Industrial, and Mixed-Use Districts

The table below indicates the permitted principal uses in Bristol by residential district. Uses are permitted by Zoning Permit (ZP), **Site Plan Application (SPA)**, or by Special Permit (SP). Uses prohibited within a district are identified by a dash (—). ~~The provision of a Site Plan, in addition to a required zoning permit is indicated by a (+S). All Special Permits shall require a Site Plan.~~ See Section 8 for additional permit and site plan requirements specific to each district.

5.1 Accessory Use Summary Table: Residential Districts

As defined in Section 18 of these Regulations, an accessory use is a use that is customarily incidental and subordinate to that of the principal building, structure or use on the same lot. The table below indicates the permitted accessory uses in Bristol by residential district. Uses are permitted by Zoning Permit (ZP), **Site Plan Application (SPA)**, or by Special Permit (SP). Uses prohibited within a district are identified by a dash (—). ~~The provision of a Site Plan, in addition to a required zoning permit is indicated by a (+S). All Special Permits shall require a Site Plan.~~

5.2 Accessory Use Summary Table: Commercial, Industrial, and Mixed-Use Districts

As defined in Section 18 of these Regulations, an accessory use is a use that is customarily incidental and subordinate to that of the principal building, structure or use on the same lot. The table below indicates the permitted accessory uses in Bristol by commercial, industrial, and mixed-use districts. Uses are permitted by Zoning Permit (ZP), **Site Plan Application (SPA)**, or by Special Permit (SP). Uses prohibited within a district are identified by a dash (—). ~~The provision of a Site Plan, in addition to a required zoning permit is indicated by a (+S). All Special Permits shall require a Site Plan.~~

3. Section 4.2: Remove "Recreational Vehicle Sales" from the Section 4.2 Principal Use Summary Table: Commercial, Industrial, and Mixed-Use Districts. Also remove the "Recreational Vehicle Sales" definition from Section 19 Use Definitions. Expand the definition of Boat or Recreational Vehicle Sales and Service in Section 19 Use Definitions as follows to incorporate elements of the existing Recreation Vehicle Sales definition:

Boat or Recreational Vehicle Sales and Service: The display, sale, **lease**, or service of ~~boats or recreational vehicles, including the sale or installation of parts~~ **new or operable used boats, motorhomes, campervans, coaches, caravans, fifth-wheel trailers, popup campers, or truck campers together with associated repair services and parts sales.**



4. Section 10.3.4: Increase allowed projection of a stair or ramp from 3 feet to 4 feet into any required yard.
5. Section 10.6: Eliminate Section 10.6 and relocate applicable content of Section 10.6.1 Porches to Building Coverage Definition in Section 18 Zoning Terminology Definitions. Relocate applicable content of Section 10.6.2 Terraces to Impervious Surface Coverage definition in Section 18 Zoning Terminology Definitions as follows:

Building Coverage: The percentage which the ground floor area of all buildings and structures on a lot bears to the lot area **including porches, whether enclosed or unenclosed, but excluding terraces if unenclosed.**

Impervious Surface Coverage: The percentage which the ground floor area of all buildings, structures, and pavement (impervious surfaces such as concrete, asphalt, and impervious pavers) on a lot bears to the lot area **including terraces provided, however, that such terrace shall be unroofed and without walls, parapets, or other forms of enclosure except for required railings.**

6. Section 13.2: Reduce parking requirements of Section 13.2 Amount of Off-Street Parking Required for the following uses:
 - Manufacturing Facility: Reduce from 1.0 per ksf production/storage space to 0.5 ksf.
 - Public Warehouse: Reduce from 1.0 per ksf indoor distribution/storage space to 0.5 ksf.
 - Wholesale Business: Reduce from 1.0 per ksf indoor distribution/storage space to 0.5 ksf.
 - Wholesale or Distribution Facility: Reduce from 1.0 per ksf indoor distribution/storage space to 0.5 ksf.