



CITY OF ALEXANDRIA

Discussion:
**Commercial Use Zoning Ordinance
Text Amendments**

Planning Commission
October 9, 2025





Purpose

Streamline use approvals for commercial businesses while managing neighborhood impacts through standards established in Zoning Ordinance

- Recommendations based on staff experience administering the regulations and on an analysis of enforcement history
- Approved as Long Range Planning Interdepartmental Work Plan project



Types of Zoning Use Approvals

Special Use Permit (SUP)

- Three-month process
- Planning Commission and City Council public hearings
- City Council approval required

Administrative SUP for New Use

Administrative SUP for Minor Amendment

Administrative SUP for Change of Ownership

- 30-35 day process
- Staff administrative review
- City Council approved conditions

Permitted/By-right

- No required zoning use review



Potential Amendments

Administrative SUP to By-right Use

Restaurant

- Same zoning regulations would apply: SUP land use conditions added to Article VII Supplemental Zone Regulations allows for application of consistent regulations for all restaurants



Potential Amendments SUP to By-right

- Indoor live entertainment
- Private academic schools with approved pick-up and drop off plan
- City and ACPS operated trailers
- Salons and spas over 30-foot frontage in King Street Retail/KR and Mount Vernon Overlay zones
- Fraternal/private clubs
- Funeral homes



Potential Amendments SUP to Administrative SUP

Nonresidential temporary trailers

- Three-year term with option to reapply for an additional two years
- One trailer per lot
- Must remain in use for 90 consecutive days



Potential Amendments

SUP Change of Ownership

Reduce processing to two weeks or less

- Applies to new businesses taking over an existing SUP
- Streamlines process for new business start-ups



Other Recommendations: Minor Updates

Modernize Use Limitations sections to reflect current regulatory and enforcement standards, including:

- Uses allowed in the zone, in addition to those already designated for outdoor operation, would be allowed to take place outdoors with special use permit approval
- Delete outdated restrictions on sale and repair of large appliances, use of one small truck, and manufacturing

Update and modernize use definitions including:

restaurant, trailer, congregate home, retail, personal service, motor vehicle parking and storage, and church



Other Recommendations: Minor Updates

Add child and elder care homes to commercial zones

Add ground floor uses in medium and high-density apartment zones (RCX, RC, RD, RMF) to align with CRMU/Mixed Use allowed uses

- Current uses are generally limited to specific retail and personal service uses rather than to all uses falling under the retail and personal service definitions as in CRMU/Mixed Use zones
- Change would allow for consistency among all mixed-use buildings



Other Recommendations: Commercial Use Parking Standards

Delete the Sec. 8-200(F)(4)(a) requirement to comply with current parking standards when renovation costs exceed one-third of building market value

Reduce the parking requirement for indoor and outdoor recreation and entertainment uses

- ***Current requirement:***

Indoor one space for every 200 sf

Outdoor one space for every 400 sf

- ***Proposed:***

Within enhanced transit area minimum one space and maximum three spaces for every 1,000 sf

Outside enhanced transit area minimum one space and maximum four spaces for every 1,000 sf

Allow commercial use required parking also on nonresidential properties within 1,000 feet of business



Public Engagement

October 9, 7 p.m., City Council Chambers

Planning Commission work session

October 22, 7 – 9 p.m., City Hall, Room 1900

Discussion and Open House on Historic Preservation, Residential, and Commercial Zoning Ordinance Text Amendments

Zoning Text Amendments website

<https://www.alexandriava.gov/zoning/zoning-amendments>

December 2, 7 p.m., City Council Chambers

Planning Commission public hearing

December 13, 9:30 a.m., City Council Chambers

City Council public hearing