

CHAPTER 5
COMMERCIAL DISTRICTS
RURAL COMMERCIAL DISTRICT (C-3)

TYPE OF DISTRICT: TRADITIONAL

ARTICLE 3: RURAL COMMERCIAL DISTRICT (C-3)

SECTION 5-3.01: PURPOSE AND INTENT

The Rural Commercial District is oriented to meeting the rural business needs of the area. The Rural Commercial District is in an area that is not serviced by municipal public utilities. The Rural Commercial District has been identified as an area within the Fremont community that is available for small commercial activities that do not require municipal public utilities and are oriented to low volume commercial uses. The District is not intended to provide regional shopping opportunities but rather to be limited in design and scope for community-based businesses. Managing access to individual properties will receive strong consideration during the review of individual sites. The use of combined drives, service drives, and well planned access points will be stressed.

SECTION 5-3.02: USES

The following abbreviations apply to the Table of Uses:

- P: Permitted Use: Land and/or buildings in this District may be used for the purposes listed by right. Site Plan approval is necessary.
- SLU: Special Land Use: Special Land Uses may be permitted by obtaining Special Land Use approval when all applicable standards are met.
- NP: Not Permitted: The use is not permitted in the District.

Rural Commercial - Table of Uses	
P = Permitted Use; NP = Not Permitted; SLU = Special Land Use	
Uses	Classification
Accessory buildings	P
Auction Houses	SLU
Upper floor, accessory apartments as part of a business	NP
Amusement parks, fair grounds and flea markets	SLU
Bank or other financial institution without drive through facility	NP
Banquet hall, catering establishment	NP
Churches	SLU
Commercial kennels	P
Billboards	NP
Commercial mini-storage	SLU
Contractor's office without storage yard	P
Contractor's office with storage yard	SLU
Day care facility	NP
Drive through facility other than a restaurant (e.g., bank, credit union, pharmacy)	NP
Farm implement, assembly, sales & service	NP
Fraternal or social club or lodge	NP
Funeral homes and mortuary establishments	NP
Gas Station/convenience store/vehicle service stations	SLU
Grain elevator/Feedmill/farm supply - retail	SLU
Golf course	NP
Health or exercise club	NP
Hospitals	NP

Rural Commercial - Table of Uses	
P = Permitted Use; NP = Not Permitted; SLU = Special Land Use	
Uses	Classification
Hotels or motels	NP
Laundromat	NP
Lumber yard	SLU
Medical office, including clinic	NP
Municipal and public service activities	SLU
Nursing or convalescent homes	NP
Open air businesses (e.g., used car lot)	SLU
Outdoor recreation developments (e.g., miniature golf)	SLU
Personal service establishment (e.g., salon, tailor, tanning, dry cleaning drop-off site, etc.)	NP
Professional offices	NP
Propane distribution	SLU
Recreation facility, indoor (e.g., arcades, bowling, billiards)	SLU
Restaurants and café with no drive-through	NP
Restaurants, drive-through	NP
Restaurant, seasonal	SLU
Retail establishments (small retail up to 8,000 sq. ft.)	P
Truck and freight terminals	NP
Vehicle body and repair shops	SLU
Vehicle wash establishments, either self-serve or automatic	NP
Veterinary clinics and hospitals	SLU
Video rental and sales (except that video rentals are permitted as an accessory use)	P

Development Requirements – Rural Commercial			
Lot Requirements	Minimum Area		½ acre
	Minimum width		100 ft.
	Maximum width-to-depth ratio		1:4
	Maximum coverage		Ninety percent (90%) maximum lot coverage where storm water is collected; sixty-five percent (65%) maximum lot coverage where storm water is not collected.
Setback Requirements	Front Required Building Line (RBL)		125 feet from center of the road
	Side/Rear	Adjacent to commercial uses and agricultural uses	15 ft.
		Adjacent to residential uses and institutional uses	30 ft.
Building Requirements	Maximum height		35 ft.

SECTION 5-3.03: DESIGN STANDARDS

All commercial uses shall comply with the following architectural guidelines:

1. The applicant shall use quality architecture to ensure that buildings protect the investment of adjacent landowners, blend harmoniously into the streetscape, and maintain a positive image for the Fremont community.
2. Building materials and colors shall relate well and be harmonious with the surrounding area. Subtle colors should be used for building and roofing material.
3. The first floor of commercial buildings facing a road shall be comprised of at least thirty percent (30%) clear glass.
4. Any side of a commercial building facing a road shall be covered with, or constructed of, at least fifty percent (50%) of the following materials:
 - a. Brick
 - b. Decorative concrete block
 - c. Vinyl or wood siding
 - d. Cut or simulated stone
 - e. LogsOther materials may be approved by the Joint Planning Commission as part of the site plan review.
5. In no case shall sheet metal or cement board be considered an acceptable outdoor wall covering on the front wall.
6. Building side and rear walls over one hundred (100) feet in length shall be broken up with varying building lines, windows, architectural accents and trees.

SECTION 5-3.04: PARKING REQUIREMENTS

- a. The number of off-street parking spaces provided shall not exceed Standard Requirements for uses on the parcel by more than ten percent (10%) of the required spaces. Additional parking spaces may be approved with a parking study provided by the applicant demonstrating that the parking will be required to accommodate the use on a typical day. Fewer parking spaces may be approved if a parking analysis submitted by the owner is approved that demonstrates that the spaces planned will be sufficient.
- b. Off-street parking requirements may be met in a shared public or private parking lot located within three hundred (300) feet of the building/structure served.

- c. Parking requirements shall not apply to that portion of seasonal restaurant seating which is outdoors and adjacent to the street and other uses generally considered as accessory to other principal uses on the same lot. Four (4) stacking spaces twenty-four (24) feet in length shall be provided for a drive-through for seasonal restaurants.
- d. Parking lots with more than fifty (50) automobile parking spaces shall set aside an area for bicycle storage spaces at a rate of one storage space for each fifty (50) automobile parking spaces, with a minimum of six (6) spaces. Bike racks are required.
- e. A covered parking area strictly for the purpose of providing shelter to horse drawn conveyances may be constructed in a parking area provided that it may not be used for storage or parking of motor vehicles and must be set back from any other building at least ten (10) feet. Hitching posts or bars are allowed.

Rural Commercial – Parking Requirement	
Uses	Spaces per unit of measurement GFA = gross floor area, UFA = Usable Floor area
Accessory buildings	1 space per building
Auction Houses	One parking space per 2 seats, one parking space per 28 sq. ft. of assembly area or one parking space per 500 square feet of UFA, whichever is most applicable, plus one space per employee.
Amusement parks, fair grounds and flea markets	2 spaces per 3 seats on amusement rides or 20 spaces per ride or attraction with no specific or defined seating.
Churches	1 space per 3 persons by seating occupancy in the largest assembly area; if no assembly area is provided, 1 space per 1000 sq. ft. of UFA.
Commercial kennels	1 space per four hundred (400) sq. ft. of gross floor area, but no fewer than four (4) spaces.
Commercial mini-storage	1 space for each storage unit (adjacent to each unit) plus one per each employee on site.
Contractor's office without storage yard	1 per each employee, plus 1 space for every 1000 sq. ft. of GFA.
Uses	Spaces per unit of measurement GFA = gross floor area,

Rural Commercial – Parking Requirement	
	UFA = Usable Floor area
Contractor's office with storage yard	1 per each employee, plus 1 space for every 1000 sq. ft. of GFA
Gas Station/convenience store/vehicle service stations	2 spaces for each pump plus one space per every 400 ft. UFA
Grain elevator/feedmill/farm supply – retail	1 per employee plus 1 space per each 300 sq. ft. of UFA
Lumber yard	1 per each employee, plus 1 space for every 1000 sq. ft. of GFA
Municipal and public service activities	1 space per each 300 sq. ft. of gross floor area, not including parking areas for municipal vehicles.
Open air businesses (e.g., used car lot)	1 space per each 800 sq. ft. of lot area used of the open air business, plus parking for any main use building and associated accessory uses.
Outdoor recreation developments (e.g., miniature golf)	3 spaces per 500 sq. ft. GFA
Propane distributor	1 per employee plus one per service truck
Recreation facility, indoor (e.g., arcades, bowling, billiards)	1 space for every 3 persons permitted in the structure by fire code
Retail establishments (small retail up to 8,000 sq. ft.)	1 space per each 300 sq. ft. of UFA
Restaurant, seasonal	1 space per each 100 sq. ft. of UFA
Vehicle body and repair shops	1 per employee plus one per service bay
Veterinary clinics and hospitals	1 per examination room plus 1 per employee
Video rental and sales (except that video rentals are permitted as an accessory use)	1 space per each 300 sq. ft. of UFA

SECTION 5-3.05: LANDSCAPING AND SCREENING

Landscaping - Parking areas: In order to enclose the portion of the parking exposed to view of adjacent residential districts or uses, screening must be provided.

Screening: Where drive-in or drive-through lanes are permitted, a combination of trees and shrubs shall be planted along the lanes to screen the lanes from view within the site and from adjacent properties.

Foundations: Trees and shrubs shall be arranged around the foundation of all buildings so that there shall be no portion of any wall in excess of ten (10) feet in width where there are not plantings at least eighteen (18) inches high.

Screening: Exterior trash disposal areas/equipment shall be enclosed by brick, decorative concrete, treated wood, or a material that matches the material of the main building. The enclosure shall be a minimum of six (6) ft. high, with three (3) sides with a gate of similar material on the fourth side. Outdoor mechanical equipment shall be similarly screened, provided that the enclosure need be only as high as necessary to fully screen the equipment.

SECTION 5-3.06: LIGHTING

- Lighting, if installed, shall be pedestrian style lighting along all sidewalks and within parking areas.
- For pole lighting within parking areas, light fixtures shall not exceed a height of twenty (20) feet.
- Higher fixtures not exceeding thirty (30) feet may be permitted for pole lighting if the fixture is located at least two-hundred (200) feet from any adjacent residential district or use property line.
- Building, wall and pole exterior lighting fixtures shall be directed downward in order to reduce glare onto adjacent properties and streets. Any fixtures or structures used in relation to lighting shall be architecturally compatible with the remainder of the structure.
- All outdoor lighting used to light the general area of a specific site shall be shielded to reduce glare and shall be arranged to reflect lights away from all adjacent residential districts or uses. Light shall not exceed more than 0.5 foot candles at a residential property line. Light shall not exceed more than 2.0 foot candles at a non-residential property line. The maximum intensity of lighting internal to the site shall be twelve (12) foot candles. Greater intensities may be allowed where additional security to prevent vandalism or to protect pedestrians or drivers may be needed. A lighting plan shall be submitted as part of a request for greater lighting.

Note: See Chapter 3 “General Provisions” for more lighting requirements.

SECTION 5-3.07: SIGNS

The following signs are permitted in the Rural Commercial District:

- Wall signs: A wall sign totaling no more than ten (10) percent of the front face of the storefront is allowed. Signs may be placed on any face of the structure.
- Internally lit signs: Signs may be internally illuminated, provided that the source of light is directed in a manner that will prevent light from shining directly onto traffic or neighboring properties.
- Monument sign: One monument sign of up to thirty-two (32) square feet is allowed for a single occupancy property; it shall not exceed eight (8) feet in height. Properties with multiple tenants may have a monument sign of up to sixty-four (64) square feet; it shall not exceed eight (8) feet in height. Up to thirty percent (30%) of a monument sign may be dedicated to a reader board, electronic display or time and temperature sign. One additional monument sign may be erected per road frontage when the development has parallel frontage on more than one major road or corner frontages on major roads totaling over five hundred (500) linear feet.
- Window signs: Window signs may be painted, etched or affixed to glass windows or doors provided they pertain to the business conducted on the premises and do not exceed twenty-five percent (25%) of the glass surface area.
- Pole signs: Pole signs are prohibited.
- Political signs: One political campaign sign per issue or candidate of up to six (6) sq. ft. is permitted per parcel, provided that the property contains an occupied structure and the sign is not placed within the public right-of-way.
- Real estate signs: Non-illuminated real estate signs up to twelve (12) sq. ft. are allowed provided there shall be one real estate sign per parcel.
- Miscellaneous signs: Non-illuminated trespassing, safety, directional, caution or announcement signs each not exceeding two (2) square feet in area or signs announcing the sale of produce each not exceeding six (6) square feet in area are allowed.
- Name plates: Name plates of less than two (2) square feet are allowed.
- Road name signs: Road name signs and other signs established by state, county or township units of government when necessary for giving proper directions or otherwise safeguarding the public.

- Non-advertising signs: Non-advertising signs of under two (2) sq. ft. in any district erected by any organization, firm or corporation that are needed to warn the public of dangerous conditions and unusual hazards including: caving ground, drop-offs, high voltage, fire danger, explosives, severe visibility limits, etc. are allowed.
- Menu board signs: Menu board signs, two per use are permitted, each not exceeding sixty (60) sq. ft. and six (6) ft. in height, oriented to a drive-through lane, are allowed for approved drive in and drive through uses.
- Awning or canopy signs: Awning or canopy signs are permitted as long as they satisfy the following requirements:
 - A sign may be painted, stenciled or otherwise affixed flat to the surface or fascia of the awning or canopy and cannot extend vertically or horizontally beyond the limits of the awning.
 - Characters and graphics can take up to no more than fifty percent (50%) of the awning or canopy surfaces that face the primary street.
 - One suspended sign may be hung under an awning or canopy for each business establishment, not exceeding four (4) sq. ft. in area and having a minimum clearance of eight (8) ft. above the sidewalk.

Freestanding Sign Standards

- Sign design shall respect the rural character of the District. As examples, sign colors should be natural and subdued and sign materials should be natural looking (e.g., wood and field stone vs. glossy metals and plastics).
- Signs shall pertain exclusively to the business carried out on the property.
- Signs shall be setback from the road right-of-way a minimum of ten (10) feet and from side property lines a minimum of ten (10) feet.
- Signs shall not project above the roofline or cornice.
- Signs shall not exceed eight (8) feet in height.

Note: See the Chapter 3 “General Provisions” for list of prohibited signs.

SECTION 5-3.08: MISCELLANEOUS REGULATIONS

Access Management: See regulations for Access Management in the Access Management Overlay District.

Sidewalks: A minimum sidewalk width of five (5) feet is required adjacent to storefronts.

Outdoor Display Areas: Outdoor temporary displays are permitted, but shall be limited to the area within three (3) ft. of the façade in the rear or side yard of the building to which it is accessory and shall not extend into adjoining sites. Pedestrian circulation and access to the building entrance shall not be impaired. The displays are also allowed in the front yard at least five (5) feet from the front property line as long as the display does not impair the vision of passing motorists.

Outdoor Inventory: Outdoor inventory is permitted; however, it cannot be displayed in the right-of-way.

Accessory Buildings: A detached accessory building shall be located at least ten (10) feet from the main building.

Fences: See Chapter 3 “General Provisions” for Fencing Requirements

Public Art: Public art is encouraged and may be located in appropriate areas without regard to setbacks, etc. as long as it is not in the right-of-way and does not block vehicular vision.