



## STAFF REPORT

A new zoning code was adopted April 1, 2024 and became effective a month later. Since adoption, staff has been tracking and evaluating code provisions as we have been implementing the new code on a spectrum of residential and commercial requests. Staff's mission is to continually look for improvements to standards and process to ensure the zoning code meets the ever-evolving needs of the community.

Since the adoption of the code, Gahanna has adopted the Our Gahanna Strategic Plan and Economic Development Strategy. The Plan provides for recommendations to align zoning code with this Plan and the Land Use Plan. As such, changes to the evaluation of projects within the Creekside District are proposed.

The first round of edits was adopted in December 2024. The edits proposed in this report mark the second major effort to update the zoning code. Staff proposes a series of changes that generally fall into one of three categories: Previous or omitted code provisions, revisions to existing code provisions, new code to reflect recommendations from adopted Plans.

### Previous/Omitted Code

During the code rewrite process, some important and valuable language was inadvertently omitted from the new code. This applies to the following code amendments:

- 1109.04 – Buffers and Screening
  - Revise buffer standard “B” to require a continuous six-foot-high screen. Continuous screening is required in the lesser standard “A” and was a requirement in the previous zoning code.
- 1109.06 – Outdoor Lighting
  - Revise illumination values to be .5 foot-candles at property line adjacent to residential. Illumination value is consistent with previous code.
- 1111.05 – General Sign Standards
  - Revise prohibited sign section to include attention-getting devices. Language was inadvertently not carried forward to the new zoning code.
- 1117.04 – Zoning Map or Text Amendments
  - Add requirement for City to post sign on property for rezonings. Language was accidentally not carried forward into the new zoning code. Requirements are the same as the previous code requirements.

### Revised Code

Revised code includes the following:

- 1103.07 – Large Lot Residential (R-1)

- Revise setback language for accessory structures from 10' to 5'.
- A number of variances to the minimum accessory structure setback have been requested and granted. It was recommended that the code be revised to reflect a reduced setback.
- The R-1 zone district did not have an exact match within the previous zoning code. Meaning, the minimum lot size is different than any residential zoning in the old zoning code. The closest matches had either a 10' or 5' accessory setback.
- 1105.01 – Use Table
  - Add Funeral Home/Services to the use table. Use is not currently addressed under existing use categories. Previous zoning code allowed for Funeral Homes/Services in the same/similar zone districts as proposed.
  - Add Electric Vehicle Charging to the accessory use table. Added for clarity as EV charging is already a permitted use.
- 1107.02 – Creekside Mixed Use Standards
  - Building materials revised for consistency between sections.
- 1109.01 – Parking, Access and Circulation
  - Revised parking table to include Funeral Homes/Services. 1 space per 150 square feet is same standard as previous code and consistent with neighboring communities.
  - Revise Electric Vehicle charging to allow for multiple means to comply with the requirement to provide EV spaces. EV ready is simpler to comply with as these spaces have the necessary electrical components but aren't fully functioning. EV supply equipment (EVSE) spaces are fully functioning.
  - Staff proposes this change to address the frequent variance requests to provide EV ready in lieu of EVSE spaces or to eliminate providing any EV spaces.
- 1113.03 – Erosion and Sediment Control
  - Annual review of code compliance with state regulations requires minor revisions. The Ohio Environmental Protection Agency (OEPA) Construction General Permit formula has changed and has been updated to direct users to the official OEPA source to ensure city code aligns with state requirements.
- 1117.01 – Zoning Approval
  - Clarify types of variances. Edits were made to variance regulations as part of the first round of edits in December 2024. Changes to 1117.01 and those proposed to 1117.02 are to further clarify the 2024 variance edits.
- 1117.02 – Variances
  - Clarify variance language. Edits were made in December 2024 that simplified types of variances by treating non-dimensional and dimensional variances similarly. Additional edits are necessary to eliminate these references and to provide clarity.
- 1123.01 – Glossary
  - Revise/add definitions of EV vehicles and funeral home/services.



- Move definition of “portable or modular structure” from section “T” to section “P”.
- Revise definition of trade contractors to allow office uses in commercial/office zone districts. The North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) classifies all activities of a trade contractor, specifically offices, as an industrial use. Code change would treat offices for trade contractors as other general offices.
  - It should be noted that staff have received several inquiries for office use only for trade contractors in recent months.

### New Code

Revisions to the zoning code are proposed in response to the recommendations of the Our Gahanna Strategic Plan and Economic Development Strategy.

- 1103.17 – Creekside Mixed-Use (CMU)
  - Add language to the “Purpose” and “Desired development” sections of the zone district to reflect provisions within the Land Use Plan and Our Gahanna Strategic Plan and Economic Development Strategy.
  - The proposed language provides for a revised way to evaluate projects within CMU that is in line with the Land Use Plan and the newly adopted Our Gahanna Strategic Plan and Economic Development Strategy.
- 1117.07 – Development Plan
  - New language provides for alternative means for evaluating projects within the CMU zone district. Deviations to the strict provisions of the zoning code are evaluated on the project’s consistency and ability to further the goals of the Land Use Plan and the Our Gahanna Strategic Plan and Economic Development Strategy.

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