

**ARTICLE 3
 ESTABLISHMENT OF ZONING DISTRICTS**

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SECTION 3.1 ZONING DISTRICTS ESTABLISHED

Hancock County hereby establishes zoning districts as an integral component of the management of land use and development within the municipal limits; and, categorizes such districts as base zoning districts, overlay zoning districts, or special zoning districts as set forth in Section 3.2, 3.3 and 3.4 of this Article.

SECTION 3.2 BASE ZONING DISTRICTS

Hancock County’s base zoning districts, and the purpose of each, are listed in Table 3.1. The purpose statements for each base zoning district serve as a summary of the intended district character and regulatory intent.

Table 3.1: Base Zoning Districts

Zoning District		Purpose
AR-1	Agricultural Residential	The purpose of this district is to maintain the rural character of areas within Hancock County. This district promotes the use of large lots, allowing for the continuation of agricultural uses and low density housing with varied types of construction and design. It encourages the development of rural areas in a coordinated manner, compatible with the predominantly rural and open space character of this district.
AR-1a	Agricultural Residential	The purpose of this district is to maintain the rural character of areas within Hancock County. This district promotes the use of large lots, allowing for the continuation of agricultural uses and low density housing with varied types of construction and design. It encourages development of rural areas in a coordinated manner, compatible with the predominantly rural and open space character of this district. All development within this zoning district shall be served by public water.
R-1	Residential – Single Family	The purpose of this district is to provide for low density single family residential areas with minimum lot sizes based on site conditions, said areas being protected from the depreciating effects of small lot development and excessive density, and from the encroachment of those uses which are incompatible to a desirable residential environment.
R-1a	Residential – Single Family	The purpose of this district is to provide for low density single family residential areas with minimum lot sizes based on site conditions, said areas being protected from the depreciating effects of small lot development and excessive density, and from the encroachment of those uses which are incompatible to a desirable residential environment. All development within this zoning district shall be served by public water.
R-2	Residential – Single Family	The purpose of this district is to allow and provide for the development of medium density single family areas where public services and utilities are available. All development within this zoning district shall be served by both public water and sewer facilities.

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R-3	Residential – Multi-Family	The purpose of this district is to provide for the orderly development of high density residential areas for two and multi-family dwellings, said areas being protected from the encroachment of those uses which are incompatible to a desirable residential environment. All development within this Zoning District shall be served by public water.
RL-1	Residential Lakeside	The purpose of this district is to provide an opportunity for residential development along Lake Sinclair while simultaneously preventing stream pollution, conserving soils and protecting the water quality of this valuable recreational asset.
RL-1a	Residential Lakeside	The purpose of this district is to provide an opportunity for residential development along Lake Sinclair while simultaneously preventing stream pollution, conserving soils and protecting the water quality of this valuable recreational asset. All development within this zoning district shall be served by public water.
C-1	Local Commercial	The purpose of this district is to serve two (2) primary functions. First, it should provide convenience goods and services, that is, goods and services purchased on a regular and frequent basis by a household, in or adjacent to developed and developing residential areas and at a scope compatible with such residential uses and areas. Second, it should be used to provide more rural areas with convenience goods and services. This district should remain distinct in character from arterial or highway oriented commercial districts that are established to accommodate a broader range of commercial uses including more intense uses than are allowed in this District.
C-2	Highway Commercial	The purpose of this district is to provide for and encourage appropriate development along the county's SR 15 Bypass and its major highways which will include a variety of sales and services that will both accommodate the needs of the county and the traveling public.
I-1	Light Industrial	The purpose of this district shall be to provide and protect areas for those industrial uses which do not create excessive noise, odor, smoke, dust and which do not possess other objectionable characteristics which might be detrimental to surrounding neighborhoods, or to the other uses permitted in the district.
I-2	Heavy Industrial	The purpose of this district is to define and protect areas suitable for mineral extraction, manufacturing and heavy industry; for uses which are potentially incompatible with most other land uses, or for uses which require major rail, truck, or aircraft shipping facilities.

SECTION 3.3 OVERLAY ZONING DISTRICTS

The Hancock County Land Development Code grants the Hancock County Board of Commissioners the authority to create overlay zoning districts. These districts provide the Board of Commissioners of Hancock County the opportunity to address specific circumstances that may exist within a defined geographic area. These circumstances may include, but not be limited to, addressing the following needs: promoting historic preservation, providing for design standards that enhance community character, protecting environmental resources, enhancing economic initiatives, etc.

Overlay zoning districts created and applied to parcels within Hancock County shall not physically replace the underlying base zoning district for such property, but shall be applied and mapped in addition to each applicable parcel's base zoning district. Unless specifically stated in any other article or section of this code, or otherwise creating a conflict between ordinance provisions as provided in Section 1.5 (Rules of Construction) of this Code, the standards of an overlay zoning district shall be applied to applicable parcels in addition to, or to varying degrees in place of, the standards of each parcel's base zoning district.

Table 3.2: Overlay Zoning Districts

Overlay Zoning District		Purpose
C-O	Commercial Overlay	The C-O commercial overlay district is mapped within the zoning districts assigned along Milledgeville Highway and other major roads to serve commercial needs. Unless otherwise specified on the zoning maps, the depth of the C-O overlay district, measured from the center line of the major road on which it is located, is 250 feet. Residential use within the overlay is governed by the underlying residential district. In mixed use buildings within the overlay, commercial use is limited to one floor and must always be located below the residential use. Commercial uses that wish to be located outside of the 250-foot overlay must apply for a variance.
SB	Scenic Byway	The Scenic Byway Overlay district is mapped within the zoning districts assigned along the designated Historic Piedmont Scenic Byway. The purpose of this district is to protect the beauty and character of the byway. Unless otherwise specified on the zoning maps, the depth of the SB overlay district extends the width of the byway. Residential use within the overlay is governed by the underlying residential district.

SECTION 3.4 SPECIAL ZONING DISTRICTS

The Hancock County Land Development Code grants the Hancock County Board of Commissioners the authority to create special zoning districts. These districts provide the Board of Commissioners of Hancock County with the opportunity to create an area to accommodate the development of property in a unique manner on a case-by-case basis that may not otherwise be accommodated by utilizing the existing base zoning districts. Special zoning districts may be structured so that their application to property within Hancock County subject to a detailed and planned process that will allow for the flexible application of dimensional and other general development provisions in exchange for higher quality development, including enhancements not otherwise required by this Code.

Special zoning districts created and applied to parcels within Hancock County shall physically replace the pre-existing base zoning district(s) for such property, and shall be mapped in the same manner as a base zoning district. Once applied, the standards of a special zoning district shall replace in full those of the parcel’s original base zoning district. Each special zoning district applied to property following the approval of the Board of Commissioners may incorporate dimensional and other development provisions that are unique to the applicable parcels.

Hancock County’s special zoning districts, and the purpose of each, are listed in Table 3.3. The purpose statements for each overlay zoning district serve as a summary of the intended district character and regulatory intent.

Table 3.3: Special Zoning Districts

Special Zoning District		Purpose
PUD	Planned Unit Development	<p>The purpose of the planned unit development (PUD) district is to encourage innovative land planning and site design concepts that conform to community quality-of-life benchmarks and that achieve a high level of aesthetics, high-quality development, environmental sensitivity, energy efficiency, and other community goals by:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Reducing or eliminating the inflexibility that sometimes results from strict application of zoning and development standards that were designed primarily for individual lots; (2) Allowing greater freedom in providing a mix of land uses in the same development, including commercial, professional and residential with a mix of housing types, lot sizes, and densities; (3) Allowing greater freedom in selecting the means to provide access, light, open space, and the provision of active recreational activities, for example ball fields, golf courses, swimming pools or tennis courts. (4) Linking areas within the development by providing pedestrian-ways, bike-ways, and transportation systems and connecting to public sidewalks and bike paths as feasible; (5) Promoting quality neighborhood design and environmentally sensitive development by allowing development to take advantage of special site characteristics, locations, and land uses. <p>Proposals for a planned unit development must be compatible with the character of surrounding land uses. It is recognized that some concepts will be more appropriate than others and the approval of an application in one location does not necessarily indicate the development will be suitable in other locations.</p>

SECTION 3.5 OFFICIAL ZONING MAP

The boundaries of all zoning districts in Hancock County are shown on the map entitled the “Official Zoning Map of Hancock County, Georgia” and which may be referenced herein as the “Official Zoning Map.” All notations, references and other information displayed on the Official Zoning Map are part of the Hancock County Land Development Code and have the same force and effect as if described in the text of the Code. The Official Zoning Map shall be kept in the office of the Planning and Zoning Administrator.

SECTION 3.6 ZONING DISTRICT BOUNDARIES

Boundaries of zoning districts herein established, and as displayed on the Official Zoning Map, shall adhere to the following provisions for the purpose of the administration, interpretation, and enforcement of this Ordinance.

1. Where zoning district boundaries are indicated as approximately following the municipal boundaries, such municipal boundaries shall be construed as the zoning district boundaries.
2. Where zoning district boundaries are indicated as approximately following property lines, such property lines shall be construed as the zoning district boundaries.
3. Where zoning district boundaries are indicated as approximately following creeks, rivers, streams or other bodies of water, the centerline of the creek, river, stream or other body of water shall be construed as the zoning district boundaries.
4. Where zoning district boundaries are indicated as approximately following a street, road, highway, railroad, or other utility right-of-way, the centerline of such right-of-way shall be construed as the zoning district boundaries; except that where such right-of-way is officially vacated or abandoned, the zoning district of the property to which it reverts shall apply regardless of the previous right-of-way centerline location.
5. Distances not specifically indicated on the Official Zoning Map shall be determined by the scale of the Official Zoning Map.
6. Where there is uncertainty regarding the exact location of the boundaries of a particular base zoning district, overlay zoning district, or special zoning district as displayed on the Official Zoning Map, a determination shall be made by the Planning and Zoning Administrator. Any such administrative determination is subject to appeal in accordance with Section _____ (Appeals) of this Code.