

C1-C2

C3

C4

C5

C6

C7



C8

Commercial Districts

Zoning regulations for *Commercial Districts* lay out the rules governing the wide variety of commercial places in the city, including regional centers in Manhattan, shopping centers along arterial highways and the local retail streets found throughout the city's neighborhoods.

Today's Commercial Districts are the successor to the Business Districts in the 1916 Zoning Resolution, which were created primarily to exclude industrial uses that were deemed to be a nuisance, without precluding the possibility of mixed-use neighborhoods with residences. The city's Commercial Districts today permit a wide

range of uses, often including residences and *community facilities*. They also broadly reflect the wide range of densities found in these areas, by permitting development at a variety of scales and building types, from one-story shopping centers with parking lots in peripheral areas to high density commercial office towers in the region's core. There are more types of Commercial Districts (more than 80) than there are *Residence* and *Manufacturing Districts* combined (more than 40 and 20, respectively), even though they occupy the least amount of land area of the three.

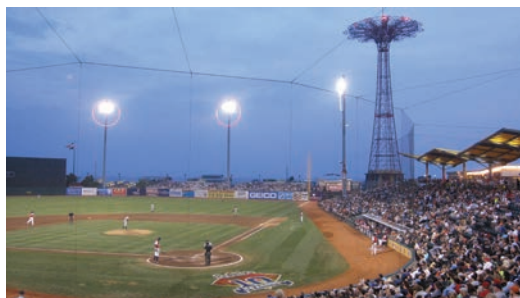
Basic Types



Neighborhood Commercial District



General Commercial District



Specialty Commercial District

There are eight basic types of Commercial Districts, ranging from C1 to C8, which can be grouped into three general types: neighborhood, general and specialty. As with Residence Districts, each of these base districts is further divided into individual districts indicated by the alphanumeric suffixes which relate to different *use*, *bulk*, parking and *streetscape* regulations.

C1 and C2 Districts

New York's residential neighborhoods often contain streets or areas lined with a broad mix of *commercial uses* containing the variety of retail shops and other businesses that primarily serve a neighborhood's commercial needs. These uses are frequently found either in one- to two-story commercial buildings or on the lower floors of *mixed buildings*. C1 and C2 Districts are neighborhood commercial districts that were created to reflect and continue this condition at the full range of overall densities found across the city. They have a low commercial *floor area ratio (FAR)* and permit a relatively limited range of commercial uses that are commonly found in residential buildings with ground floor commercial activity and are subtly distinguished from each other by the uses allowed in each. There are two types of C1 and C2 Districts: *commercial overlays*, which are always mapped within Residence Districts, and stand-alone districts.

C4, C5 and C6 Districts

Other commercial areas serve a population larger than a single neighborhood and have a wider range of commercial uses, including large retail stores, office buildings or movie theaters. These regional and central business districts range in type from shopping centers along arterial highways to neighborhood centers to the commercial core of Midtown Manhattan. C4, C5 and C6 Districts, were created to accommodate these types of commercial areas at an appropriate scale and location.

C4 Districts are mapped in the widest range of conditions, from suburban-style shopping centers in Staten Island to bustling areas such as The Hub in the Bronx. C5 and C6 Districts accommodate the city's highest density commercial areas. C5 Districts were designed for a particular type of high density business location containing offices and continuous retail frontages, as on Fifth Avenue and the east side of Midtown around Grand Central Terminal. They do not permit entertainment uses and have more stringent signage rules. C6 Districts have more permissive use and signage rules and are found in a wide range of business areas including the western part of Midtown and portions of Downtown Brooklyn. To reflect this range of conditions, C4, C5 and C6 Districts are subdivided into a large number of districts through alphanumeric suffixes.

C3, C7 and C8 Districts

These three districts were included as part of the 1961 Resolution to meet special commercial needs.

C3 Districts are mapped along the waterfront in a limited number of places, and allow a narrow range of waterfront-related, low-density recreational and commercial activities. C7 Districts are mapped in limited major regional amusement districts, such as Coney Island in Brooklyn.

C8 Districts permit automotive and other heavy commercial uses, as well as a full range of other commercial uses, and sometimes act as a bridge between Manufacturing Districts and other Commercial Districts. In 1961, they were often mapped along arterial highways, reflecting expectations at the time about the increasing prominence of automobiles in the city. Today they often contain a commercially diverse set of activities including automobile showrooms, repair shops, and gas stations, along with other retail uses, offices, hotels and warehouses.

Commercial Districts

- C1, C2 Neighborhood Commercial Districts
- C4, C5, C6 General Commercial Districts
- C3, C7, C8 Specialty Commercial Districts



Permitted Uses

Commercial Districts allow a range of commercial uses and, with limited exceptions, residential and community facility uses. In addition to the *use groups* permitted in Residence Districts (Use Groups 1 through 4), Commercial Districts permit, as-of-right, different combinations of Use Groups 5 through 16 to suit a variety of planning objectives. The list of permitted uses in each use group can be quite long and detailed and, in some instances, the uses in each use group are also further categorized into more specific groupings through the use of additional letter suffixes, such as Use Group 10A. When new commercial activities emerge that may not be specifically listed in any of the use groups, the Department of Buildings includes it with the most similar use that is listed in the Zoning Resolution. For example, tattoo parlors, which are not listed in the Zoning Resolution, are considered similar to beauty parlors and therefore treated as Use Group 6A in terms of their land use characteristics.

In addition, a number of uses are permitted only by *special permits* granted by either the *Board of Standards and Appeals (BSA)* (ZR 32-31) or the *City Planning Commission (CPC)* (ZR 32-32). For example, automotive service stations are permitted in C2 Districts through a BSA special permit, while large arenas are permitted in certain Commercial Districts only by a CPC special permit. The specific special permits for the BSA and the CPC are found in Article VII, Chapters 3 and 4, respectively.

Where residential uses are permitted, they cannot be located as-of-right on a floor below any commercial use (ZR 32-42). Many of the bulk provisions described next are consistent with this key requirement.

C1 and C2 Districts

The primary, albeit minor, difference between C1 and C2 Districts is the range of commercial uses permitted in each district. C1 Districts are intended to serve local shopping

needs and maintain the highest level of retail continuity. They permit a variety of retail stores and personal service establishments, such as grocery stores, restaurants, hair salons, drug stores and small clothing stores (Use Group 6) that cater to the needs of the surrounding neighborhood. C2 Districts were designed for a wider range of locations where retail continuity may be less important. They allow Use Group 6 uses as well as other local establishments not regularly visited in day-to-day activities, such as funeral homes, movie theaters and repair services for bicycles, for example (Use Groups 7, 8, 9 and 14). In C1 and C2 Districts, a handful of retail uses, including clothing and furniture stores are limited to 10,000 square feet per zoning lot.

The districts also permit the full range of residential and community facility uses (Use Group 1 through 4). In some limited conditions, hotels (Use Group 5) are also permitted in certain C1 and C2 Districts (ZR 32-14).

In addition to the type of uses permitted in these districts, there are restrictions on the location of such uses within a building. In buildings that contain only commercial uses, these uses are restricted to a maximum of two stories or 30 feet in height, whichever is less. This restriction does not apply to Use Group 5 (where permitted). In buildings with residences or community facilities, commercial uses are restricted to the ground floor, although commercial uses on the second floor of buildings constructed after 1970 are permitted in C1 and C2 Districts mapped within R9 and R10 Districts and their equivalents (ZR 32-421).

C4, C5, and C6 Districts

All three of these districts permit a broad range of commercial uses including retail and department stores, entertainment uses, offices and hotels. These include all commercial uses permitted in C1 Districts (Use Groups 5 and 6), as well as business services like printers (Use Group 9) and larger retail establishments such as

department stores (Use Group 10) and larger clothing or furniture stores. C4 Districts also permit some amusement and entertainment uses, including bowling alleys and skating rinks (Use Groups 8 and 12). C5 Districts do not permit these amusement or entertainment uses, but do allow specialized custom manufacturing like jewelry-making (Use Group 11) which, historically, was found in high-density central business districts of the city. C6 Districts are the most permissive of these districts as they permit all the uses allowed in both C4 and C5 Districts as well as home maintenance and repair services, such as plumbing shops (Use Group 7) (ZR 32-10). All three districts also permit residences and community facilities (Use Groups 1 through 4).

C3, C7 and C8 Districts

C3 Districts only allow commercial uses related to boating and other waterfront recreational activities, such as docks and mooring facilities, bicycle shops and candy stores, in addition to the full range of residential and community facility uses (Use Groups 1 through 4).

C7 Districts allow for a wide variety of entertainment and amusement facilities (Use Groups 12 through 15) and include uses convenient to the customers of the entertainment facilities, such as ice cream parlors, restaurants, delis, gift shops and toy stores. They permit no other commercial, community facility or residential uses.

C8 Districts permit all commercial and general services (Use Groups 5 through 16, but not Use Group 15). Additionally, they allow certain Use Group 4 community facility uses, although residences are not permitted. Semi-industrial uses (Use Groups 11A and 16) are required to comply with the performance standards applicable to Manufacturing Districts (as described in Chapter 5) (ZR 32-10).

Permitted Use Groups

		Residential		Community Facility		Retail and Commercial										General Service	Manufacturing		
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
		Commercial Districts																	
C1 C2 C3 C4 C5 C6 C7 C8		•	•	•	•	•	•												
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Use Group 5 — Hotels **(ZR 32-14)**

Use Group 6 — Retail and service establishments that serve local shopping needs, such as food and small clothing stores, beauty parlors and dry cleaners, as well as offices **(ZR 32-15)**

Use Group 7 — Home maintenance and repair services, such as plumbing and electrical shops which serve nearby residential areas **(ZR 32-16)**

Use Group 8 — Amusement establishments such as movie theaters and small bowling alleys, service uses such as appliance repair shops, as well as car rental and public parking facilities **(ZR 32-17)**

Use Group 9 — Business and other services, such as printers or caterers **(ZR 32-18)**

Use Group 10 — Large retail establishments that serve a large area, such as department stores and appliance stores **(ZR 32-19)**

Use Group 11 — Custom manufacturing activities such as for jewelry or clothing **(ZR 32-20)**

Use Group 12 — Large entertainment facilities that draw large numbers of people such as arenas and indoor skating rinks **(ZR 32-21)**

Use Group 13 — Low coverage or open amusement uses, such as golf driving ranges, and children's small amusement parks, camps **(ZR 32-22)**

Use Group 14 — Facilities for boating and related activities which are suitable in waterfront recreation areas **(ZR 32-23)**

Use Group 15 — Large commercial amusement establishments, including typical amusement park attractions such as Ferris wheels and roller coasters **(ZR 32-24)**

Use Group 16 — Automotive and semi-industrial uses, such as automotive repair, gas stations, custom woodworking and welding shops **(ZR 32-25)**

Permitted Bulk

Commercial Districts establish many different *bulk* parameters, which control the maximum size and placement of buildings on the zoning lot. As in Residence Districts, bulk rules in Commercial Districts are dependent on whether the building contains commercial or community facility uses, residential uses or some combination of both. The bulk rules are also dependent on whether the zoning district is a contextual or a non-contextual zoning district.

The bulk regulations for buildings in Commercial Districts that contain only commercial or community facility uses are found in Article III, Chapter 3, while the regulations for purely residential buildings in Commercial Districts are found in Article III, Chapter 4. Buildings that contain a mixture of both – such as a residential building with ground floor retail – follow the rules in Article III, Chapter 5. As with buildings with more than one use in Residence Districts, one generally applies the residential bulk rules to the residential portion and the commercial or community facility rules to the non-residential portion.

In Commercial Districts that permit residential uses, a *residential district equivalent* is used to determine the rules for residences (ZR 34-112). For example, the residential district equivalent of a C4-3 District is R6, and any residences in a C4-3 District must comply with the bulk regulations of an R6 District. In all these instances, the Commercial District regulations modify the Residence District rules to accommodate residential or *mixed buildings* within their commercial contexts. This is also true of the C1 and C2 overlay districts, which modify the rules of the Residence District mapped below it. For example, no front or side yards are required in low density Residence Districts mapped with a commercial overlay. Also, in contextual Commercial Districts, such as C6-3A, the overall building envelope is determined by the applicable residential district equivalent which, in this instance, is R9A.

Commercial and Community Facility Rules

Whereas Residence Districts include a wide variety of lot coverage, yard, and minimum lot size requirements to regulate where buildings can be placed on the zoning lot, the rules for commercial and community facility uses in Commercial Districts are far simpler. Here, the interaction of height and setback regulations and required rear yards (the only yards required in Commercial Districts) create the permitted building envelope, while other bulk regulations, such as permitted floor area, further determine the shape, size and position of the building. In total, they reflect the wide range of building sizes and configurations in the city.

The *floor area ratio* (FAR) permitted in Commercial Districts ranges from 0.5 in C3 Districts for commercial uses, to 15.0 for both commercial and community facility uses in a number of high density C5 and C6 Districts (ZR 33-12). They can generally be grouped as follows:

- C1 and C2 Districts – These districts have a low commercial FAR. For C1 and C2 overlay districts mapped within low density Residence Districts (R1 through R5), the permitted commercial FAR is limited to 1.0. Where the underlying Residence District or the residential district equivalent is a medium or high density district (R6 through R10), the commercial FAR for C1 and C2 Districts is limited to 2.0.
- C4, C5 and C6 Districts – C4 Districts have commercial FAR ranging from 1.0 to 10.0, while C5 and C6 Districts permit commercial FAR ranging from 4.0 to 15.0 and from 6.0 to 15.0, respectively. Districts with higher numerical suffixes such as C5-5 or C6-9 generally denote higher permitted densities.
- C3, C7 and C8 Districts – In C3 Districts, the maximum commercial FAR is 0.5. The maximum commercial FAR is 2.0 in C7 Districts. In C8 Districts,

the maximum commercial FAR ranges between 1.0 and 5.0, with the higher number suffixes, such as C8-3 and C8-4, denoting higher permitted densities.

In certain districts, incentives exist for *public plazas*, *arcades* and deep *front yards*. These enable the permitted FAR to be increased by a maximum of 20 percent, subject to the specific conditions included for each type of open space (ZR 33-13, 33-14, 33-15).

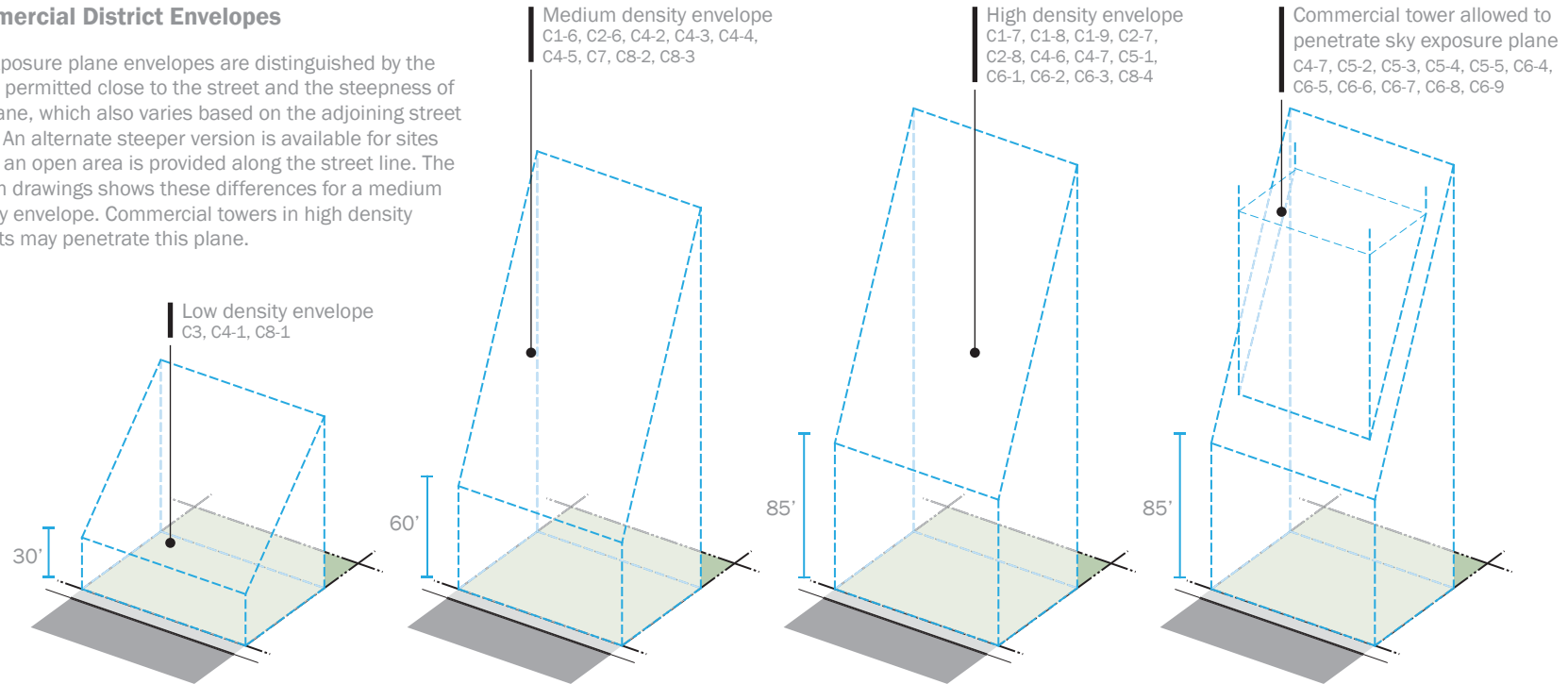
In all Commercial Districts there are no requirements for front or *side yards*, and *rear yards* for non-residential portions of a building are required to be 20 feet deep as measured from the *rear lot line*, while *through lots* require a 40 foot rear yard equivalent (ZR 33-20). These rules are modified in some limited circumstances. For example, if the Commercial District is located next to a Residence District, there are requirements for deeper rear yards and minimum side yards to provide sufficient separation between buildings in the two districts (ZR 33-29). In a number of high density Commercial Districts, to accommodate buildings with larger footprints, rear yard equivalents are not required for through lots. In addition, except for towers as described below, there are no lot coverage limitations for non-residential buildings or portions of buildings in any Commercial District.

Height and setback regulations in Commercial Districts utilize a variety of “envelopes” to control shapes of buildings. Some districts follow contextual regulations, while others are governed by *sky exposure planes*. Towers without height limits are typically permitted in the highest density Commercial Districts.

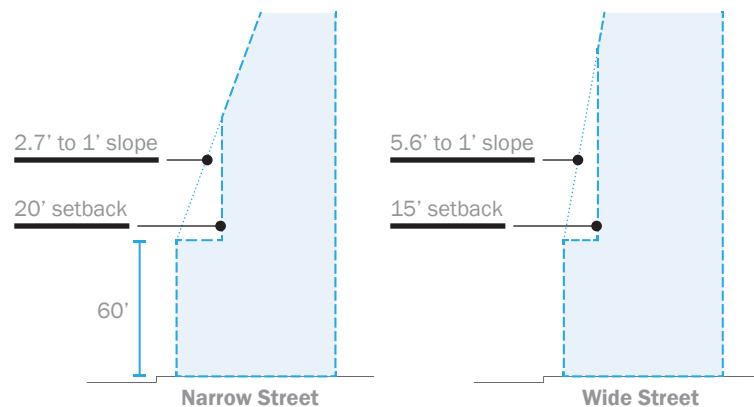
Buildings in non-contextual Commercial Districts that contain only commercial or community facility uses are governed by a sky exposure plane (ZR 33-40). These envelopes favor development set back from the sidewalk by permitting only limited development close to the

Commercial District Envelopes

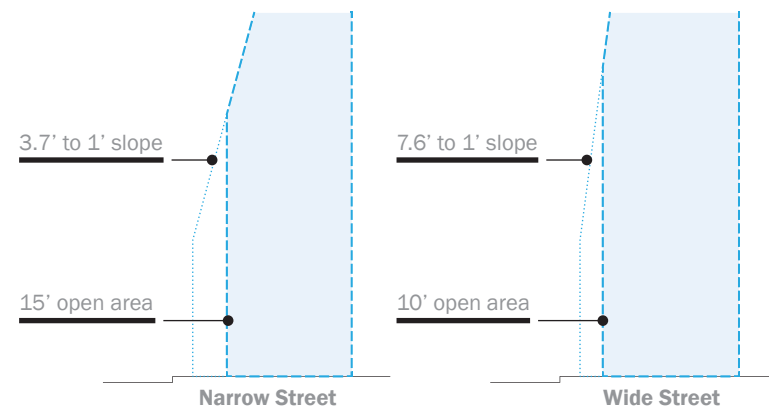
Sky exposure plane envelopes are distinguished by the height permitted close to the street and the steepness of the plane, which also varies based on the adjoining street width. An alternate steeper version is available for sites where an open area is provided along the street line. The bottom drawings show these differences for a medium density envelope. Commercial towers in high density districts may penetrate this plane.



Basic Sky Exposure Plane



Alternate Sky Exposure Plane



street up to a maximum height, above which the *building envelope* is limited by a sky exposure plane that rises at a prescribed angle away from the street. To ensure access to light and air below, the building must be constructed behind this invisible plane, except where permitted obstructions, including window-washing equipment and elevator bulkheads, may extend beyond (ZR 33-42).

There are different sets of sky exposure planes for low, medium and high density Commercial Districts (ZR 33-43) that vary in the maximum height permitted close to the street (highest in high density districts) and the steepness of the sky exposure plane (which depends on the width of the adjoining street, and is steepest in high density districts). As in Residence Districts, there is an alternate, steeper sky exposure plane available for sites where open space is provided along the street line (ZR 33-44). The medium density commercial height and setback rules produce mid-rise office buildings and hotels in the city's regional business districts, such as Downtown Flushing in Queens. In the highest density districts, towers are permitted to penetrate the sky exposure plane as long as they meet certain size and locational standards (ZR 33-45). These rules typically produce high-rise commercial office towers and hotels. The lot coverage of towers is generally limited to 40 percent, but may increase to 50 percent on smaller lots. Special purpose districts within many of the city's central business districts, such as Midtown and Downtown Brooklyn, often include special rules to refine these bulk regulations (see Chapter 7).

Buildings in medium and high density contextual districts that only contain commercial or community facility uses follow the height and setback regulations for their respective residential district equivalent, as modified in Article III, Chapter 5 of the Zoning Resolution.

Residential Rules

The Zoning Resolution includes special rules for purely residential buildings developed in Commercial Districts. These first specify the applicable Residence District if the building is located in a commercial overlay (ZR 34-111) and the *residential district equivalent* if the building is located in another Commercial District (ZR 34-112). Article III, Chapter 4 then modifies some of the bulk regulations specified by the applicable Residence District. For example, buildings in low density districts are exempt from having to provide front or side yards (ZR 34-23) and the height and setback regulations for a number of zoning districts are modified (ZR 34-24). In some low density Commercial Districts these modifications allow residential buildings to use the building envelope of a more flexible higher density Commercial District. For example, when commercial overlays are mapped within R3 or R4A Districts, the height and setback regulations of the R4 District are applicable. Bulk regulations are also modified for Quality Housing buildings in medium and high density districts, particularly with regard to the street wall location rules.

Rules for Mixed Buildings

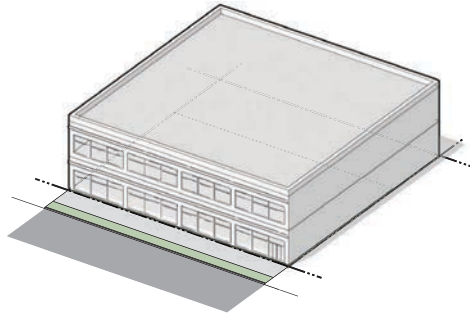
Buildings on retail streets in Commercial Districts often include a mix of residential uses and commercial or community facility uses. This type of building is called a *mixed building*.

Zoning rules treat the residential portion of the building separately from the commercial or community facility portion and subject the entire building to special modifications in Article III, Chapter V, which were created to clarify how these separate sets of requirements interact. Similar to how fully residential buildings are treated, these rules specify the applicable Residence District if the building is in a *commercial overlay* (ZR 35-22) and the residential district equivalent for other Commercial Districts (ZR 35-23). The modifications in that chapter

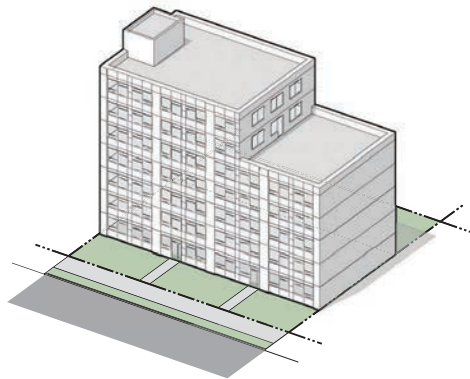
include clarifications of how permitted FAR, open space requirements and density are determined (ZR 35-31, 35-33, 35-40). These regulations also exempt mixed buildings in low density districts from front or side yard requirements and clarify that the deeper 30-foot rear yard required for residential uses is only required at the lowest floor used for dwelling units (ZR 35-50).

There are also special bulk regulations for *mixed buildings*. In low density districts, these include modifications to eliminate front yard requirements in mixed buildings and to provide a small increase in the district height limits to allow ground floor retail uses with higher ceilings (ZR 35-62). To reflect their context in medium and high density commercial areas, these alterations include modifications to the tower rules in the highest density districts (ZR 35-64), and, for Quality Housing buildings (ZR 35-65), modifications that adjust the street wall location provisions and the supplemental rules for *qualifying ground floors*. The specifics of these rules are described in the streetscape section of this chapter.

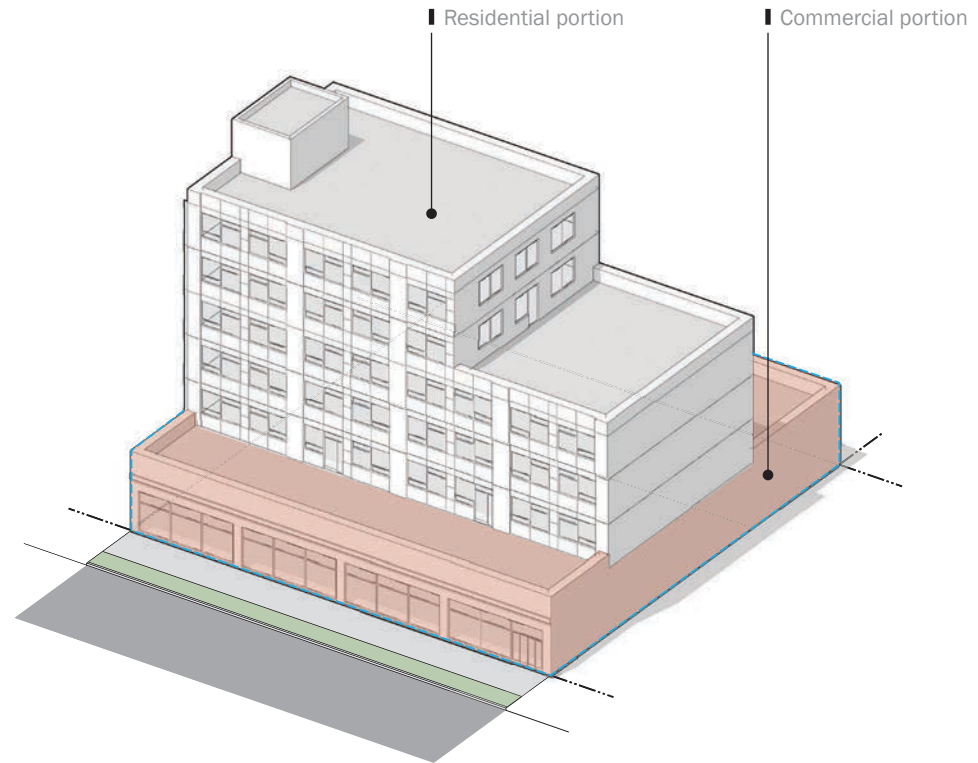
Mixed Building Bulk Controls



Commercial building



Residential building



Mixed building

In Commercial Districts, bulk rules differ based on the uses included in a building, with different chapters of the Zoning Resolution devoted to each situation. In mixed buildings, zoning rules treat the residential portion separately from the commercial or community facility portion.

Parking and Loading

The parking and loading regulations in Commercial Districts are highly complex, reflecting an effort to distinguish the number of vehicle trips likely to be generated by various commercial uses and how this relates to the characteristics of the zoning districts in which they are located. These requirements are found in Article III, Chapter 6 of the Zoning Resolution. In low density districts, these regulations often act as an effective limit on the size of buildings, even if bulk regulations would nominally permit larger buildings.

Permitted and Required Parking Spaces

Most Commercial Districts require a certain minimum number of spaces (**ZR 36-20**), and all limit (**ZR 36-10**) the number of *accessory* parking spaces that may be provided beyond what is required.

To determine the amount of parking required in different parts of the city, commercial uses are divided into eight *parking requirement categories (PRC)*. In addition, Commercial Districts are further divided into five parking requirement levels, four with gradually decreasing parking requirements and the fifth with no required parking. Each level has specific requirements for each PRC. These rules are intended to match appropriate minimum parking requirements with uses located in different areas of the city. Districts with a low parking requirement are typically mapped in areas where employees or customers are less likely to use cars or require dedicated off-street parking, and the highest parking requirement districts are intended to be mapped in areas where auto use and the need for a supply of parking spaces are likely to be highest.

The specific PRC assigned to each use can be found in brackets after its listing in its use group in Article III, Chapter 2. Within each PRC, the size of the development and the intensity of the zoning district determine the minimum *accessory* parking requirement for commercial and community facility uses (**ZR 36-21**). The requirements

are often expressed in terms of the specific amount of space that generates a requirement for a single accessory parking space – for example, one space per 500 square feet of floor area. For some uses, required parking is based on other relevant measures such as the number of employees or guest rooms.

Minimum parking requirements can be reduced in certain circumstances. When the calculation of requirements results in a small number of spaces, for example, the parking requirement can be waived (**ZR 36-23**). This threshold varies from 10 spaces in districts with high parking requirements to 40 spaces in districts with very low requirements.

In general, developments in low density districts are required to provide parking unless they are very small, while only very large developments in medium and high density districts are required to provide parking. To illustrate, the following describes the parking requirements in various Commercial Districts for PRC B1, general retail or office use:

- C1 and C2 Districts – Parking requirements in C1 and C2 Districts vary by the district's numeric suffix. As the suffix increases, parking requirements decrease and the number of spaces that may be waived increases. Requirements are highest in districts with -1 overlays and lowest in -4 overlays (ranging from one space per 150 square feet to one space per 1,000 square feet, respectively). No parking is typically required in districts with -5 or higher suffixes.
- C4, C5 and C6 Districts – Parking requirements differ greatly among the three districts: in C4 Districts they range from one space per 150 square feet in districts with -1 suffixes to one space per 1,000 square feet in those with -4 suffixes. Similarly, the higher the numeric suffix, the greater the number of spaces that may be waived. Generally, for C4-5 through C4-7 Districts,

no parking is required. C5 and C6 Districts have no parking requirements since they are meant for high density areas with a range of public transportation options.

- C3, C7 and C8 Districts – C3 Districts, which are intended to accommodate waterfront-oriented uses in low density areas, have high parking requirements (1 per 150 square feet). Parking requirements are relatively low in C7 Districts. In C8 Districts, as the suffix increases, parking requirements decrease and the waiver threshold increases. Parking requirements range from one space per 300 square feet in districts with -1 suffixes to one space per 1,000 square feet in districts with -3 suffixes). There are no parking requirements in C8-4 Districts.

The parking requirements for residential uses are calculated separately (**ZR 36-30**), but generally follow the requirements for the residential district equivalent for required parking and permitted waivers.

As with Residence Districts, Commercial Districts limit the maximum amount of permitted accessory parking that can be provided on a zoning lot — for all uses the maximum is 225 spaces (300 for *Quality Housing* buildings). Required parking is not subject to these limits (**ZR 36-13**).

Additional Parking Provisions

Aside from establishing the permitted and required parking amounts, Commercial District regulations also have corresponding provisions for the use and design of the spaces, as well as requirements for bicycle parking and for loading berths.

To recognize conditions where it may be difficult to accommodate all the required spaces on the zoning lot, special provisions allow for off-site parking in Commercial or Manufacturing Districts, within a certain radius of the

zoning lot generating the need for parking (ZR 36-40). Many districts allow accessory spaces for residences to be rented to other users should the primary uses not utilize all the required parking (ZR 36-46).

Public parking garages and public parking lots with a capacity of up to 150 spaces are allowed as-of-right in many Commercial Districts (Use Group 8C) (ZR 32-17). Public parking garages and public parking lots with more than 150 spaces in lower and medium density districts require a special permit from the BSA. In C1 Districts and high density central areas, public parking garages and parking lots with some size limitations are allowed only by CPC special permit.

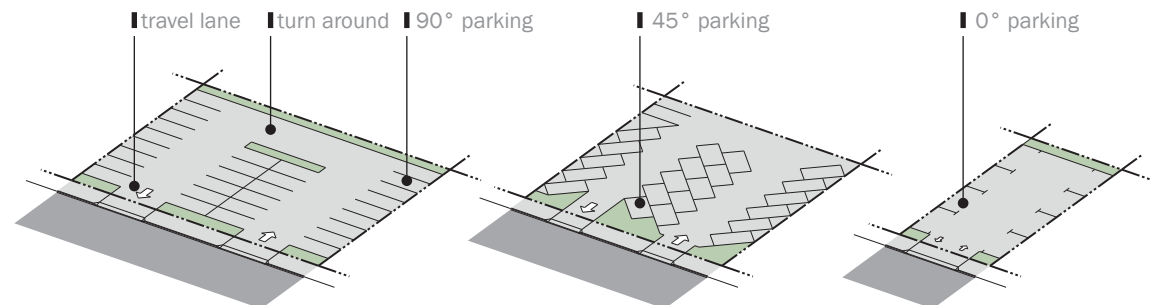
Loading berths (ZR 36-60) are required for certain commercial uses, such as office buildings or large retail establishments, to accommodate the loading and unloading of trucks and other vehicles. For some uses, loading requirements are uniform across all districts; for other uses there are two categories of loading berth requirements with the lower requirement corresponding to zoning districts with very low or no parking requirements, and the higher requirement applying to other Commercial Districts. Generally, more berths are required in lower density districts than in higher density districts for the same amount of floor area.

Accessory bicycle parking for employees (ZR 36-70) is required for new developments, significant enlargements or residential conversions. One bicycle parking space is required per 7,500 square feet of floor area for commercial offices, or per 10,000 square feet of retail and most other commercial uses. Bike parking requirements can be waived in all Commercial Districts if three or fewer bicycle parking spaces are required. Enclosed areas used for bike parking may be exempted from floor area calculations.

Parking Requirement Categories (PRC)

Parking Requirement Category (PRC)	Types of Uses	Traffic Volume	Examples
A	Food stores (larger than 2,000 sf)	High	supermarkets
B	Local retail or service uses	High	restaurants, department stores
B1	Offices and stores that sell large items	Low	furniture, carpet, appliance stores
C	Miscellaneous	Low	court houses, auto showrooms
D	Places of assembly	High	theaters, bowling alleys, stadiums
E	Outdoor amusement areas	High	amusement parks
F	Light manufacturing	Moderate	ceramics, dental products, commercial laundry
G	Storage uses	Low	warehouses, trucking terminals
H	Other uses	Unique	hotels, funeral parlors, post offices

Parking Maneuverability



Parking Angle	Minimum Length	Minimum Width	Minimum Travel Lane	Minimum Turnaround
0 (one way)	8'6"	20'0"	13'2"	N/A
0 (two way)	8'6"	20'0"	23'2"	N/A
45	17'1"	8'6"	12'10"	18'0"
50	17'8"	8'6"	13'2"	17'6"
55	18'1"	8'6"	13'7"	17'3"
60	18'5"	8'6"	14'6"	17'0"
65	18'7"	8'6"	15'4"	17'3"
70	18'8"	8'6"	16'5"	17'6"
75	18'7"	8'6"	17'10"	18'0"
90	18'0"	8'6"	22'0"	22'0"

Streetscape

Streetscape regulations exist in Commercial Districts to promote buildings that improve the quality of the public street environment. These regulations are found throughout the Zoning Resolution and are comprised of use regulations such as sign provisions or ground floor use requirements, as well as requirements for street trees or other forms of planting, bulk rules that specify the location of street walls and parking regulations that seek to limit the impact of vehicles on the sidewalk.

Signage plays an important role in identifying commercial establishments and zoning regulations are intended to ensure that new **signs** are appropriate to the objectives of the zoning district (ZR 32-60). The Zoning Resolution sets limits on the sign type, size, and degree of illumination that is permitted in each district. Most Commercial Districts only permit **accessory signs** (signs for businesses or activities located on the particular zoning lot). **Advertising signs** are limited to only certain entertainment-oriented Commercial Districts or ones that allow quasi-industrial uses, and are further restricted by locational rules. For example, they are not permitted to directly face adjoining Residence Districts. Some Commercial Districts restrict **illuminated signs** – those lit by artificial or reflected light – while districts that permit them often place special restrictions on the size of **flashing signs** (illuminated signs that change light or color). Standards for maximum sizes and heights as well as lighting types vary by zoning district and are described in the separate sections below. Most districts determine a maximum surface area for signs by multiplying a specified factor by the amount of street frontage the zoning lot has (ZR 32-641, 32-642). If a zoning lot has multiple retail establishments, the surface area of a sign is calculated using the street frontage of each establishment as if each were a separate zoning lot (ZR 32-64). In most districts, permitted signs may project over the street line by 12 inches, or 18 inches for double- or multi-faced signs. Accessory commercial signs on buildings containing

residences are limited to the commercial portion of the building. In addition, signs are not permitted to be located on a roof in most zoning districts. Accessory signs on awnings and canopies that project over the sidewalk are also regulated (ZR 32-653). Signage rules in the different zoning districts can generally be grouped as follows:

- C1 and C2 Districts – Signs are restricted to small accessory signs in C1 and C2 Districts (150 square feet maximum) with limited provisions for illumination, given their location in residential neighborhoods.
- C4, C5 and C6 Districts – Signs in C4 and most C6 Districts can be larger than in C1 or C2 Districts (up to 500 square feet) and may be illuminated or flashing, but they are still limited to **accessory signs**. However, in C6-5 and C6-7 Districts, generally found around Times Square, signs of all types are permitted without restriction as to size, location or illumination. C5 Districts have more restrictive signage regulations (200 square feet) than C4 or C6 Districts, reflecting their more staid character. Except in C5-4 Districts, no signs in C5 Districts can be illuminated or flashing.
- C3, C7 and C8 Districts – In C3 Districts, sign sizes are more limited (50 square feet) and cannot be illuminated because of their proximity to the waterfront and to low-density residential areas. Consistent with the character of amusement areas, sign regulations are quite permissive in C7 Districts, with flashing, illuminated and advertising signs allowed and no size or height restrictions. C8 Districts permit signs generally similar to those found in Manufacturing Districts (500-750 square feet), with a broad range of signs, including large illuminated or flashing signs permitted.

Street trees are required for new developments or significant enlargements in a Commercial District, at a rate of one tree per every 25 feet of street frontage (ZR 33-03).

Some Commercial Districts or specified geographies in the city require or restrict certain uses on the ground floor and often require minimum amounts of transparency to ensure an active streetscape (ZR 32-43). These rules are particularly concentrated in the highest density districts but also in Staten Island where special requirements apply (see **lower density growth management areas** in Chapter 6). Special regulations also restrict the location of business entrances, show windows and signs, when located adjacent to a Residence District (ZR 32-51). These requirements are intended to maintain the character of residential block fronts and minimize commercial intrusions on the nearby residential area.

The street wall location requirements for Quality Housing buildings are modified in Commercial Districts to reflect the typical relationship between commercial activity and the street (ZR 35-65). In medium density Residence Districts (generally R6 and R7), these requirements simplify street wall location provisions by requiring that 70 percent of the building be located within eight feet of the street. In high density Residence Districts (generally R8 through R10), these modified provisions require that, except for minor articulation allowances, the building be located on the street line.

Similar to Residence Districts, Quality Housing buildings in medium and high density Commercial Districts are eligible for an additional five feet in overall building and maximum base height if they include a **qualifying ground floor**. For buildings in most contextual districts outside the **Manhattan Core** that are not providing Inclusionary Housing or affordable senior housing, the qualifying ground floor must include commercial or community facility uses and comply with supplemental use provisions to be eligible for the additional height. For example, in Commercial Districts a qualifying ground floor must contain commercial or community facility space with a depth of 30 feet and minimum transparency along a

substantial portion of the *primary street frontage*. Any parking provided on a qualifying ground floor needs to be wrapped by floor area consisting of the commercial or community facility space. On *secondary street frontages*, there are no use restrictions except that parking must be either wrapped by floor area or screened so that it is not possible to see it from the sidewalk (ZR 35-652).

To ensure that parking and loading do not compromise the quality of the streetscape, and to promote pedestrian safety and minimize disruption of sidewalk activity, special parking and loading design requirements restrict the location and size of curb cuts, as well as require surfacing and screening for the facilities (ZR 36-50, 36-60).

Large public parking lots and accessory parking lots for new commercial or community facility uses are required to comply with parking lot landscaping regulations that are intended to improve the appearance of the lot and to promote sustainable storm water management. The standards mandate perimeter landscaping along the edge of the parking lot, and for larger lots landscaped planting islands throughout the parking area (ZR 36-58, 37-90).

Commercial Streetscape



A series of Commercial District streetscape allowances and requirements help ensure new buildings contribute to their neighborhoods.

1. On primary streets, ground floor use regulations may require certain uses and minimum levels of transparency on show windows.
2. Qualifying Ground Floor regulations allow additional building height in exchange for taller ground floors.
3. Street wall regulations establish the relationship between the building facade and the sidewalk. In Commercial Districts, these generally allow or, in some instances, require buildings to be located close to the sidewalk.
4. Signage rules allow businesses to direct attention to their stores subject to various standards and allow advertising signs in some districts.
5. Parking is often required to be located off the primary street and wrapped or screened when located on secondary streets.
6. Planting regulations include rules for street tree planting.

C1 and C2

C1 and C2 Districts are mapped within residential neighborhoods along streets that serve local retail needs. They are found extensively throughout the city's lower and medium density areas and occasionally in higher density areas, and can either be mapped as commercial overlays or stand-alone districts.

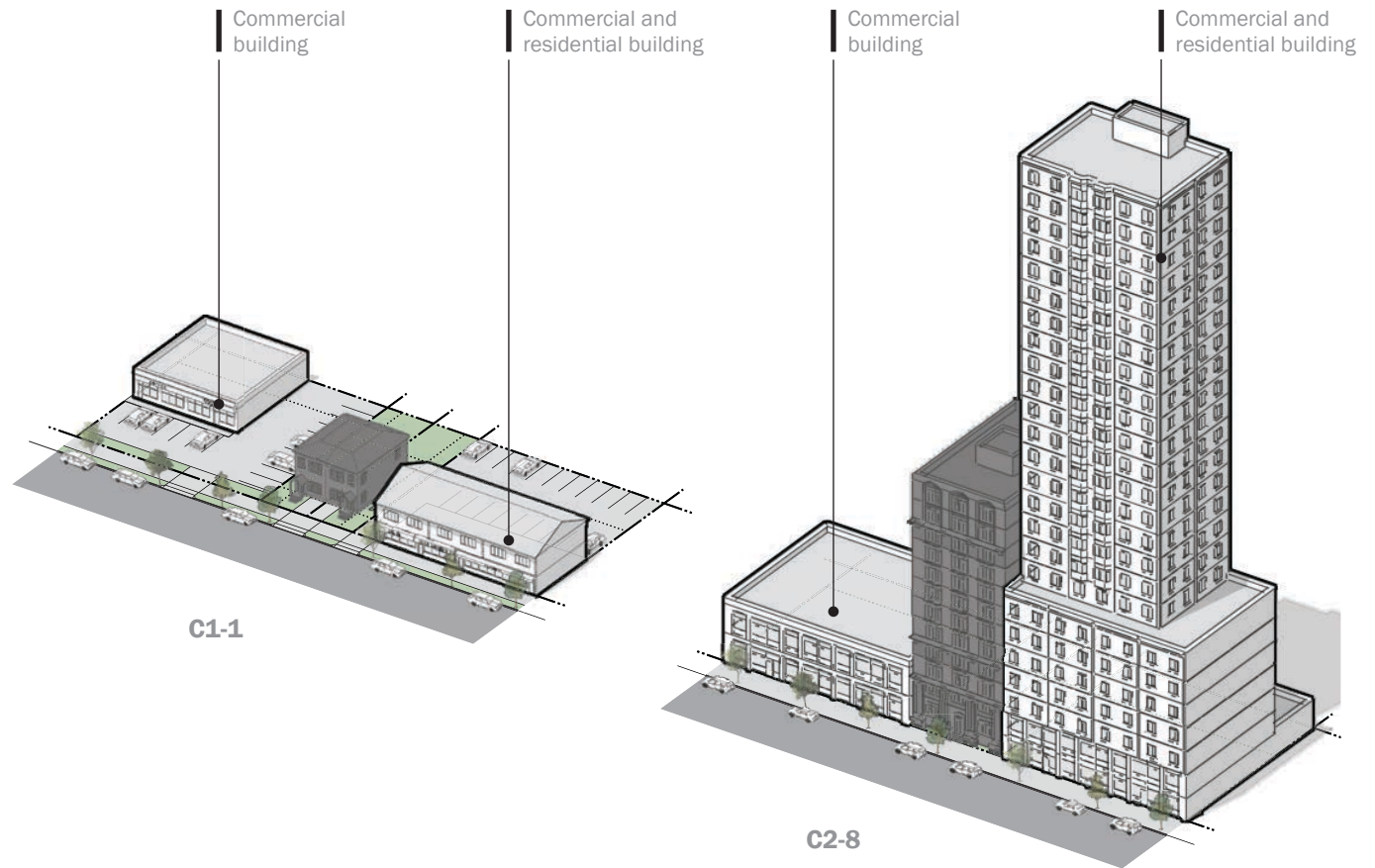
Commercial Districts with -1 and -2 suffixes are commonly found in lower density areas of the city such as Staten Island, eastern Queens and southern Brooklyn, while districts with -3 and -4 suffixes are found in portions of central Brooklyn, upper Manhattan and southern portions of the Bronx. Districts with -5 suffixes or higher are almost exclusively found in central portions of Manhattan along major avenues.



Jackson Heights, Queens



Cobble Hill, Brooklyn



C1 and C2 Overlays

C1 and C2 Overlays	C1-1	C2-1	C1-2	C2-2	C1-3	C2-3	C1-4	C2-4	C1-5	C2-5
Commercial FAR within R1-R5	All districts have a commercial FAR of 1.0									
Commercial FAR within R6-R10	All districts have a commercial FAR of 2.0									
Depth of Overlay District (in feet)	200	150					100			
Required Accessory Parking PRC-B	1 per 150 sf		1 per 300 sf		1 per 400 sf		1 per 1,000 sf		none	
Permitted Signage	3 x street frontage (150 sf total maximum)									

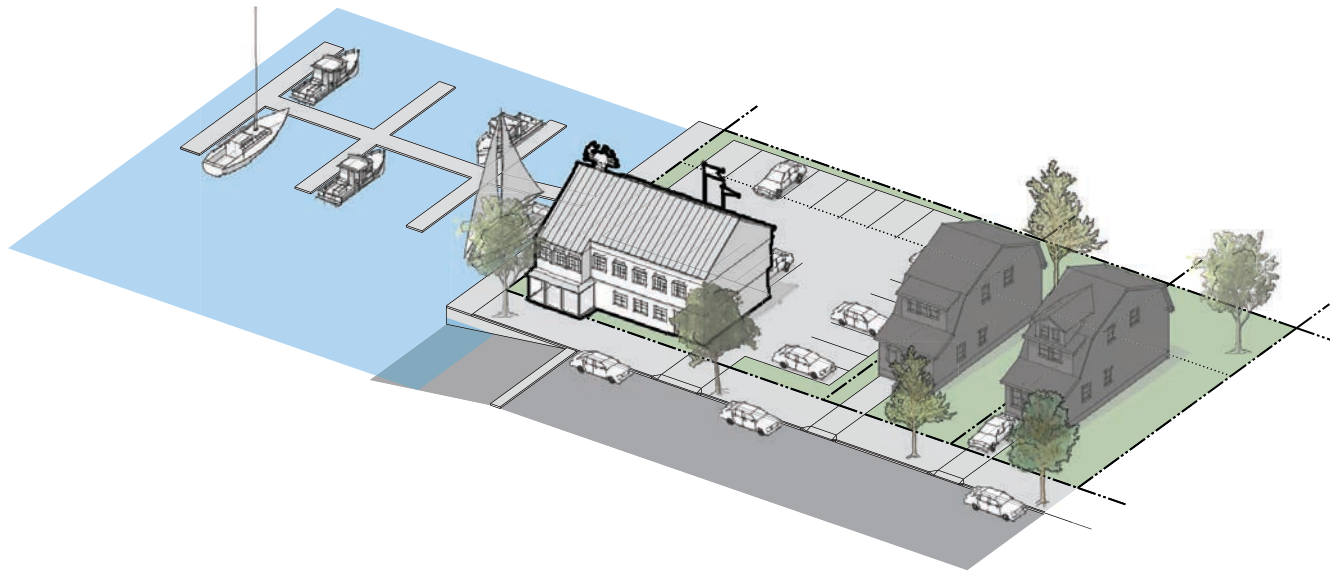
Local Retail and Local Service District

C1 and C2

	C1-6	C1-7	C2-7	C2-8	C1-6A	C1-7A	C2-7A	C2-7X	C2-8A
	C2-6		C1-8	C1-9	C2-6A		C1-8A	C1-8X	C1-9A
Commercial FAR	All districts have a commercial FAR of 2.0								
Residential District Equivalent	R7-2	R8	R9	R10	R7A	R8A	R9A	R9X	R10A
Required Accessory Parking PRC-B	None								
Permitted Signage	3 x street frontage (150 sf total maximum)								

Local Retail and Local Service District

C3 Districts permit waterfront recreational activities, primarily boating and fishing, in areas along the *shoreline* that are adjacent to Residence Districts. The non-contextual C3 District, which originated with the 1961 Zoning Resolution, and the more recent C3A contextual districts are commonly found in low density areas along the city's *waterfront areas*: C3 Districts are found on City Island in the Bronx and along Mill Basin in Brooklyn, while C3A Districts are found in Staten Island near Great Kills Harbor and the Throgs Neck area of the Bronx.



City Island, The Bronx



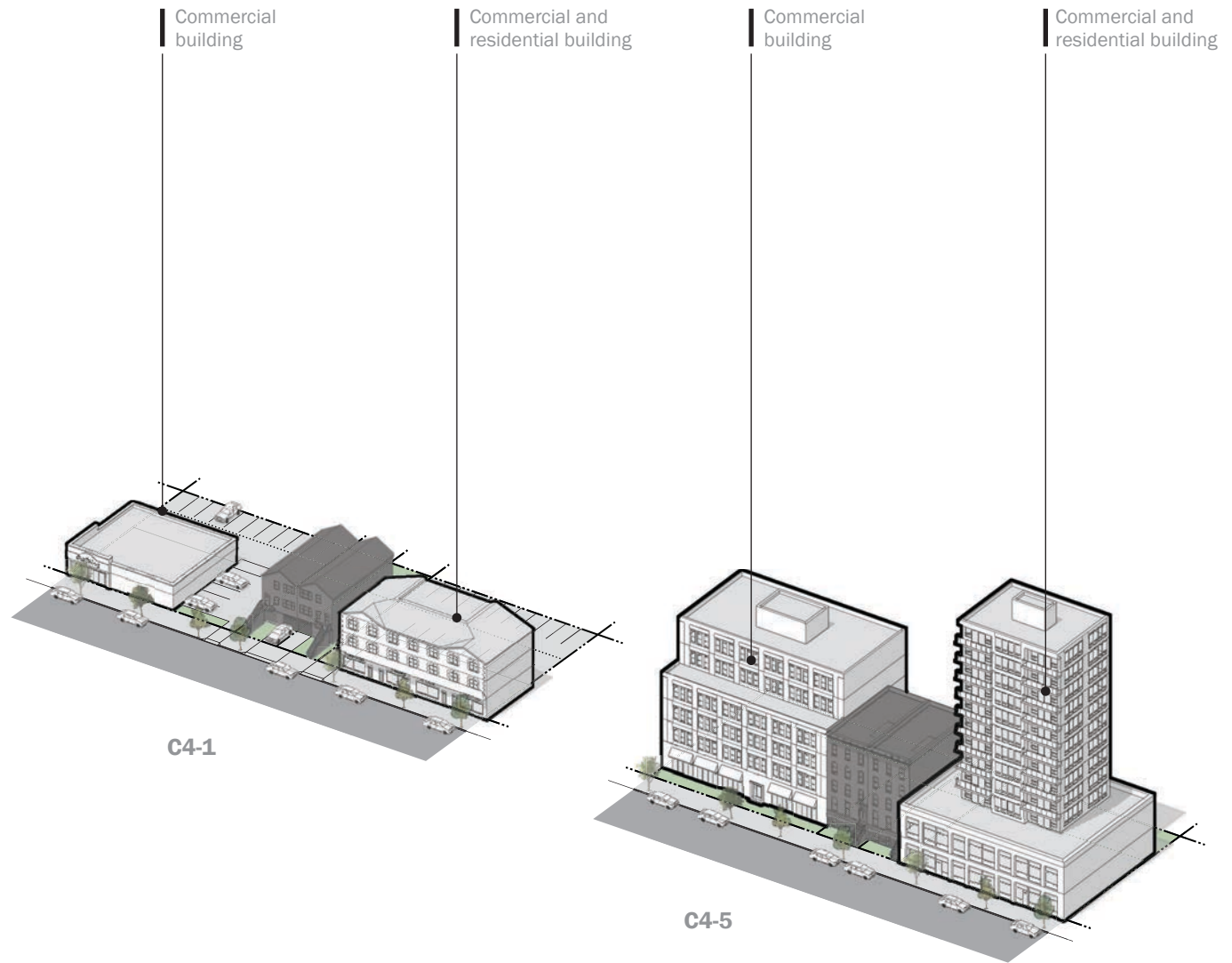
Eltingville, Staten Island

C3	Waterfront Recreation District	
	C3	C3A
Commercial FAR	All districts have a commercial FAR of 0.5	
Residential District Equivalent	R3-2	R3A
Required Accessory Parking PRC-B	1 per 150 sf	
Permitted Signage	50 sf (maximum)	

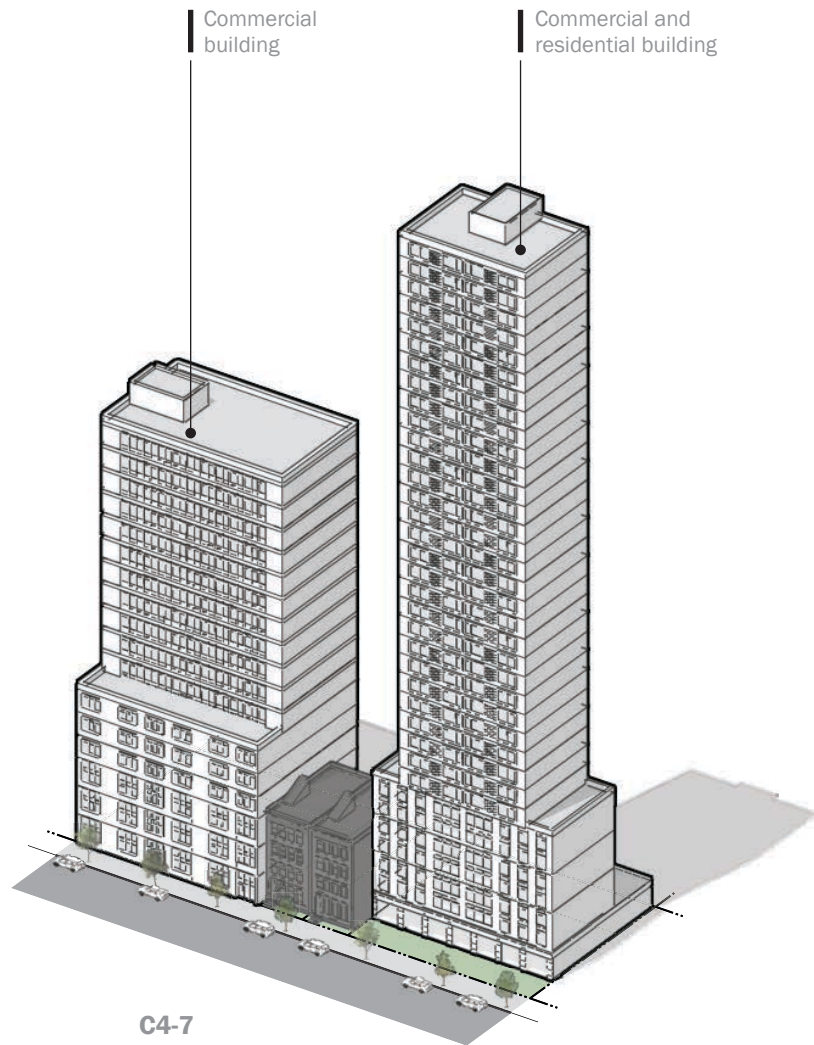
C4

C4 Districts are mapped in regional centers located outside of central business districts where specialty and department stores, theaters and office *uses* serve a larger region than neighborhood shopping areas. Although established by the 1961 Zoning Resolution, they have evolved to cover a very wide range of densities. A large number of individual C4 Districts have been created over time to address a range of conditions designated by different suffixes. In general, the higher the numeric suffix is, the higher the permitted density and the lower the commercial parking requirement. C4 Districts with a letter suffix are contextual districts that require a contextual building form.

C4-1 Districts are mapped in outlying areas, such as the Staten Island Mall, that require large amounts of parking. C4-2 through C4-5 Districts are mapped in more densely built areas, such as Steinway Street in Astoria (C4-2A), Fordham Road (C4-4), and parts of Jamaica (C4-5X). C4-6 and C4-7 Districts are mapped in densely built areas of Manhattan, including most of Broadway on the Upper West Side (C4-6A) and portions of central Harlem (C4-7).



C4	Non-contextual General Commercial District						
	C4-1	C4-2	C4-3	C4-4	C4-5	C4-6	C4-7
Commercial FAR	1.0	3.4					10.0
Residential District Equivalent	R5	R6		R7-2		R10	
Required Accessory Parking PRC-B	1 per 150 sf	1 per 300 sf	1 per 400 sf	1 per 1,000 sf	None		
Permitted Signage	5 x street frontage (500 sf maximum)						



C4-7

C4

Contextual General Commercial District

C4	C4-2A	C4-3A	C4-4A	C4-5A	C4-6A	C4-7A	C4-4D	C4-5D	C4-5X
Commercial FAR	3.0		4.0		3.4	10.0	3.4	4.2	4.0
Residential District Equivalent	R6A		R7A		R10A		R8A	R7D	R7X
Required Accessory Parking PRC-B	1 per 400 sf		None				1 per 1,000 sf		None
Permitted Signage	5 x street frontage (500 sf maximum)								

C4



Staten Island Mall, Staten Island



Mott Haven, The Bronx



Upper West Side, Manhattan

C5 and C6

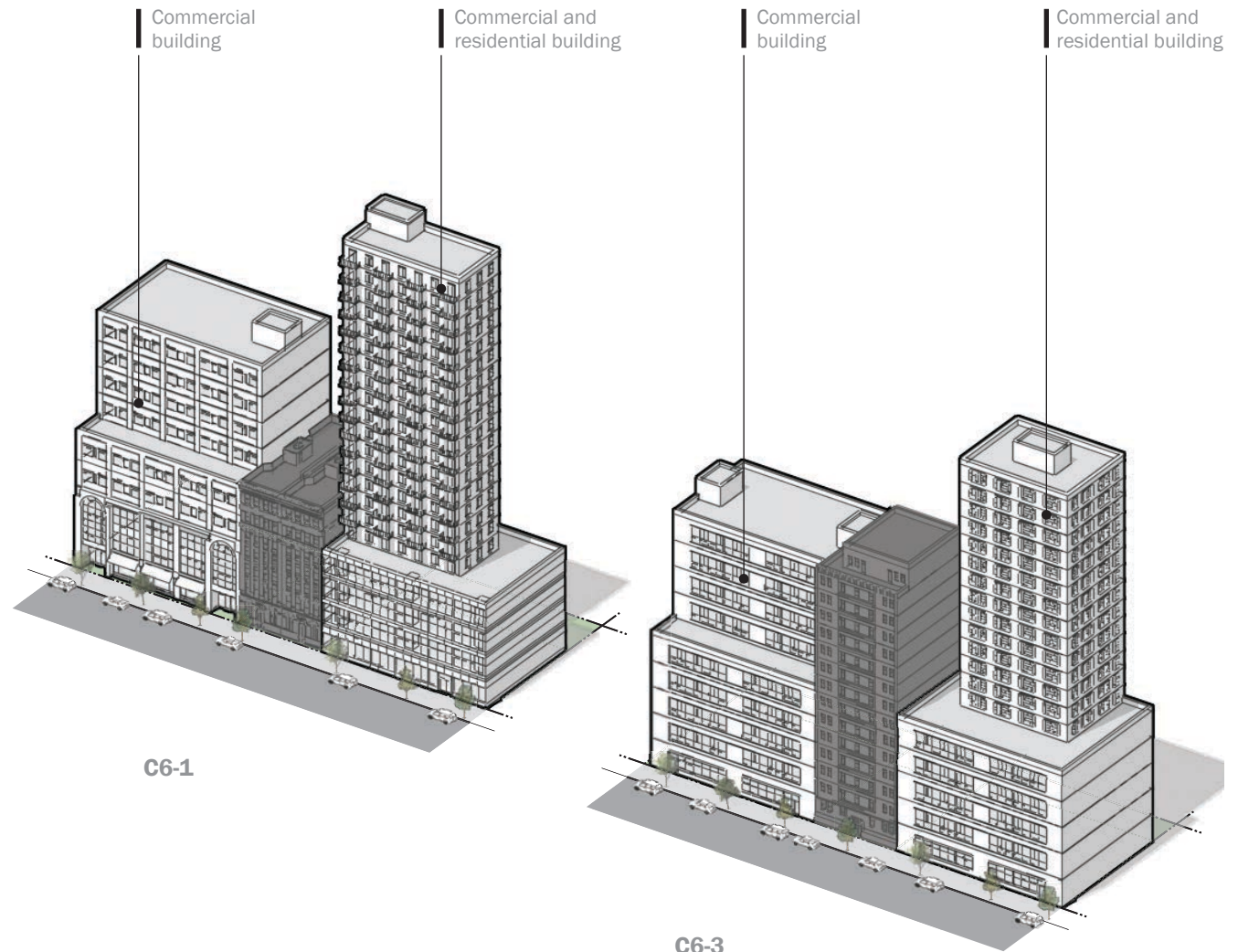
C5 and C6 Districts are both high density areas intended for commercial uses that require central locations or serve the entire metropolitan region. Mainly distinguished by differing use and sign regulations, both districts are most often found in Lower and Midtown Manhattan, Downtown Brooklyn, Long Island City and Downtown Jamaica.

C5 and C6 Districts are distinguished by individual suffixes. In general, the higher the numeric suffix, the higher the permitted commercial density. Both are original to the 1961 Resolution, but some of the districts with suffixes have been created over time to address different planning needs.

C5-1 Districts are found on the edges of Midtown Manhattan, while C5-2 and C5-4 Districts are found in Midtown and Downtown Brooklyn. C5-3 Districts are located in the eastern part of Midtown and Lower Manhattan as well as in Long Island City. C5-5 Districts are found exclusively in Lower Manhattan.

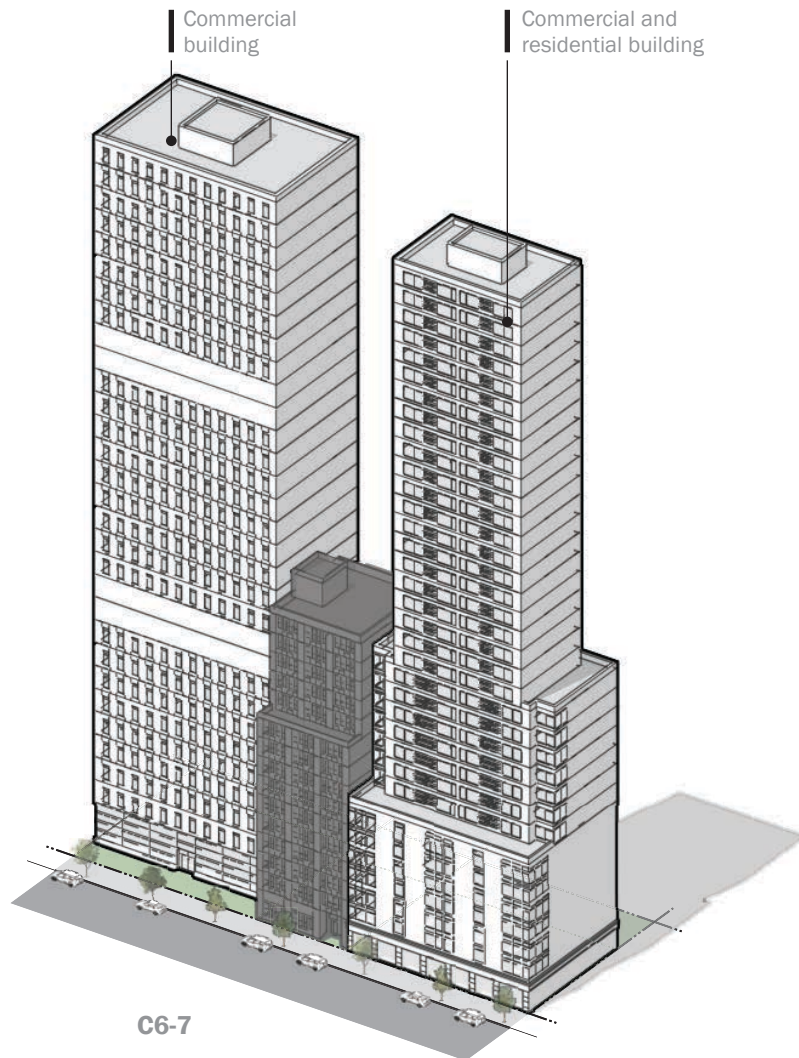
C6-1, C6-2 and C6-3 Districts are typically found in areas outside of *central business districts*, such as the Lower East Side and Chelsea in Manhattan. C6-4 Districts are mapped in a variety of locations in Manhattan and in core areas of Brooklyn and Queens. Districts with higher suffixes are typically located in Midtown or Lower Manhattan.

C5 and C6 Districts are widely mapped within *special purpose districts* or other areas with special rules. For example, C6-6.5 Districts are mapped only within the *Special Midtown District* and have unique *floor area ratio* rules, while C6 Districts with G or M suffixes have special rules for the conversion of non-residential space.



Non-contextual Restricted and General Central Commercial District

C5 and C6	C5-1	C6-1	C5-2	C6-2	C5-3	C6-3	C5-4	C6-5	C6-6	C6-7	
					C5-5		C6-4		C6-9		
							C6-8				
Commercial FAR	4.0	6.0	10.0	6.0	15.0	6.0	10.0		15.0		
Residential District Equivalent	R10	R7-2	R10	R8	R10	R9	R10				
Required Accessory Parking PRC-B	None										
Permitted Signage	3 x street frontage (200 sf max.)	5 x street frontage (500 sf max.)	3 x street frontage (200 sf max.)	5 x street frontage (500 sf max.)	3 x street frontage (200 sf max.)	5 x street frontage (500 sf max.)		No restriction	5 x street frontage (500 sf max.)	No restriction	



C5 and C6



Long Island City, Queens



Midtown, Manhattan



Columbus Circle, Manhattan

C5 and C6

Contextual Restricted and General Central Commercial District

	C5-1A	C6-1A	C5-2A	C6-2A	C6-3A	C6-3D	C6-3X	C6-4A	C6-4X
Commercial FAR	4.0	6.0	10.0	6.0		9.0	6.0	10.0	
Residential District Equivalent	R10A	R6	R10A	R8A	R9A	R9D	R9X	R10A	R10X
Required Accessory Parking PRC-B	None								
Permitted Signage	3 x street frontage (200 sf max.)	5 x street frontage (500 sf max.)	3 x street frontage (200 sf max.)	5 x street frontage (500 sf max.)					

C7

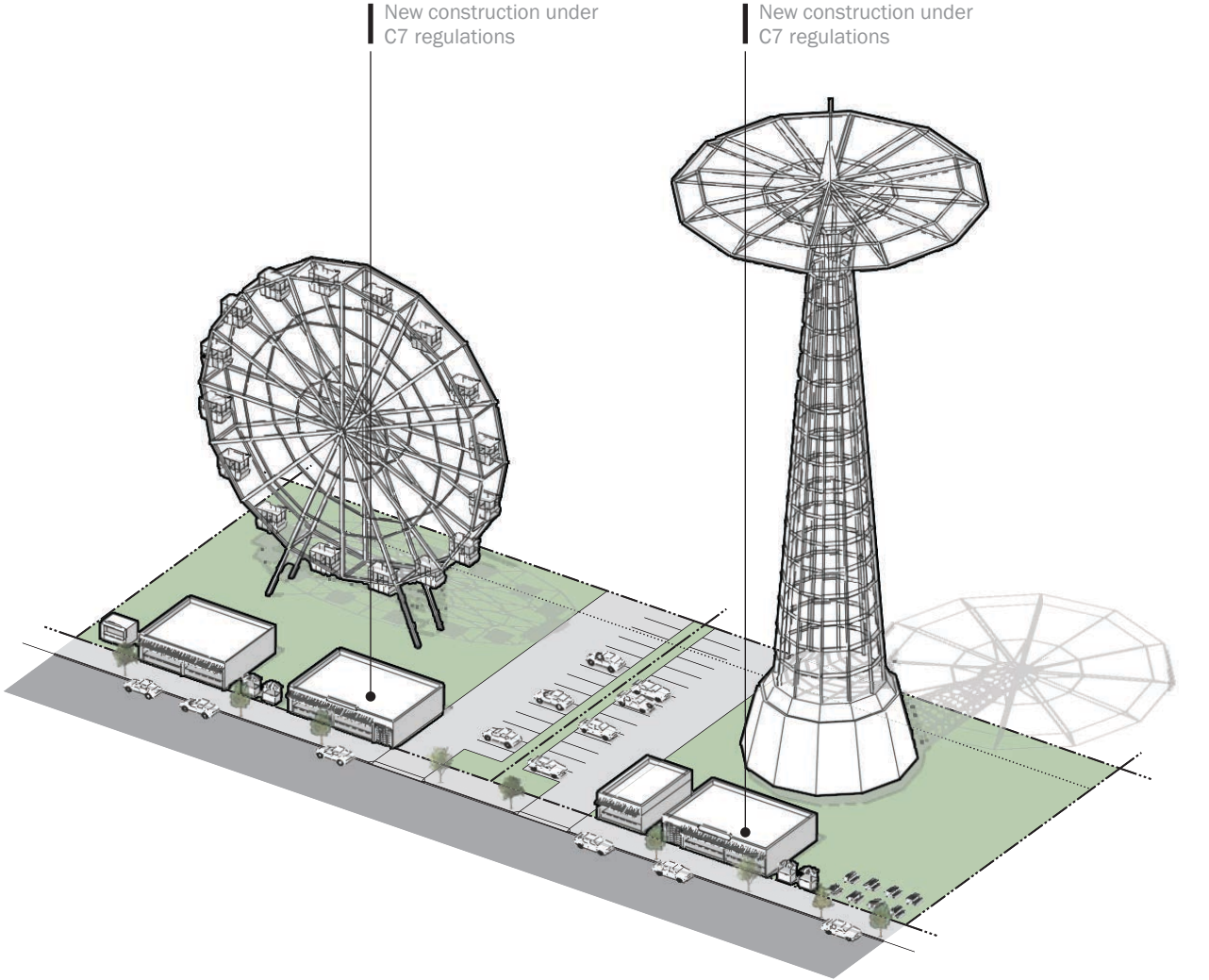
C7 Districts are specifically designated for large open amusement parks. The district is located inlocated in just three areas of the city, the largest being the Coney Island amusement area in Brooklyn, while two smaller areas are located in Brooklyn and the Bronx. It is original to the 1961 Resolution.



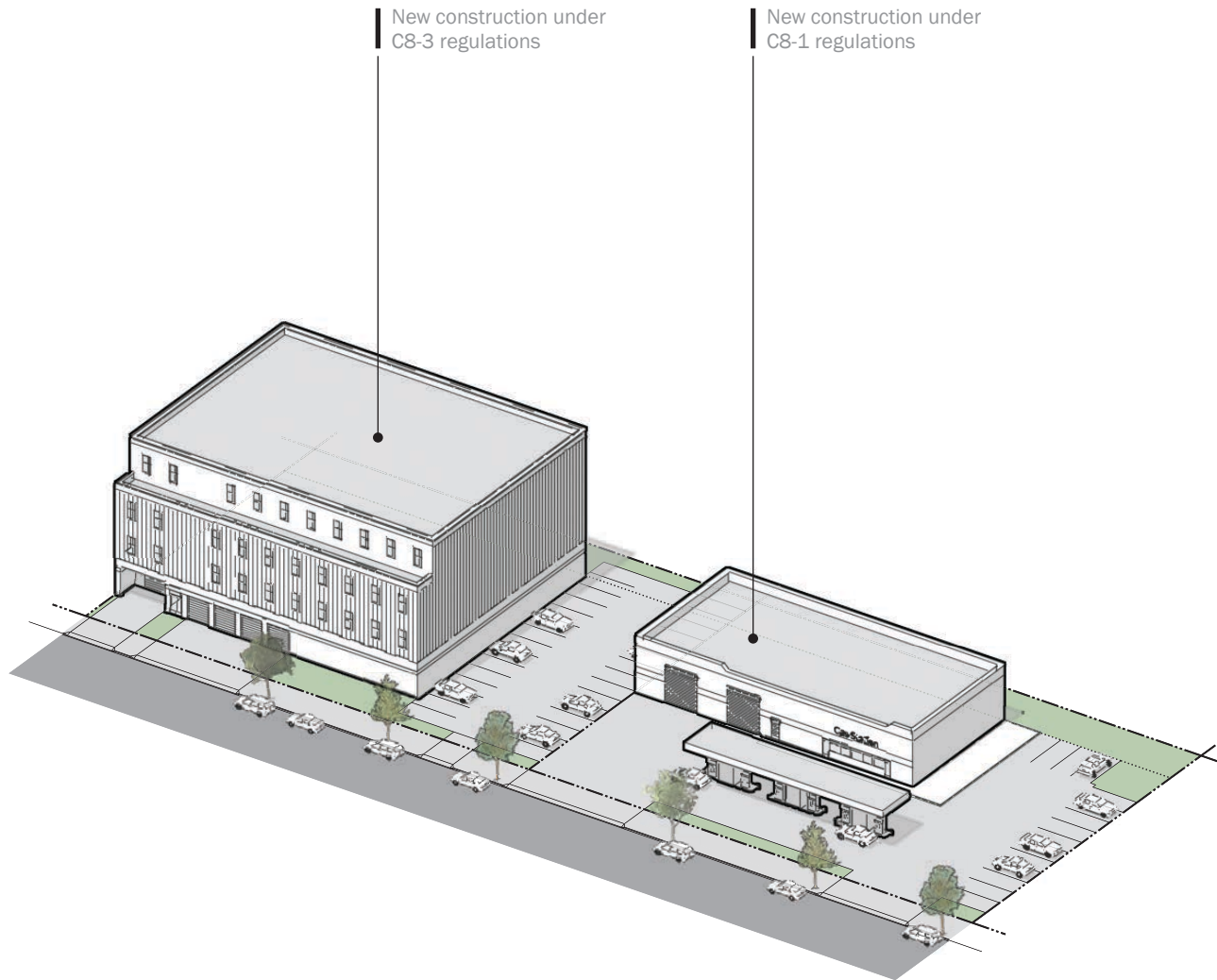
Coney Island, Brooklyn



Coney Island, Brooklyn



C7	Commercial Amusement District
Commercial FAR	C7 2.0
Residential District Equivalent	None
Required Accessory Parking PRC-B	1 per 400 sf
Permitted Signage	No restriction



C8 Districts, which bridge commercial and manufacturing uses, provide for automotive and other heavy commercial services that often require large amounts of land. They are mapped mainly along major traffic arteries where concentrations of automotive uses have developed. There are four types, each designated by a numeric suffix that increases along with increasing density. All are original to the 1961 Resolution.

C8-1 Districts are typically found in Staten Island, southern Brooklyn and eastern Queens. C8-2 Districts are found in central Brooklyn, while C8-3 Districts are typically found in northern Manhattan and southern portions of the Bronx. C8-4 Districts are only found in the central portions of Manhattan.



Park Hill, Staten Island



Bay Ridge, Brooklyn

C8	General Service District			
	C8-1	C8-2	C8-3	C8-4
Commercial FAR	1.0	2.0		5.0
Residential District Equivalent	None			
Required Accessory Parking PRC-B	1 per 300 sf	1 per 400 sf	1 per 1,000 sf	None
Permitted Signage	6 x street frontage			

C1-C4 Commercial Districts

Local Retail and Service Overlay	Depth of Overlay	Required Accessory Parking PRC-B	Commercial FAR	Community Facility FAR	Signage											
					Size (individual)	Size (maximum)	Size (illuminated)	Height above street level								
C1-1	200 ft	1 per 150 sf	R1-R5: 1.00 R6-R10: 2.00	Residential Equivalent	150 sf	3 x street frontage (150 sf maximum)	3 x street frontage (50 sf maximum)	25 ft								
C1-2	150 ft	1 per 300 sf														
C1-3		1 per 400 sf														
C1-4		1 per 1000 sf														
C1-5	100 ft	None														
C2-1	150 ft	1 per 150 sf														
C2-2		1 per 300 sf														
C2-3		1 per 400sf														
C2-4	100 ft	1 per 1000 sf														
C2-5		None														
Local Retail and Service	Residential Equivalent	Required Accessory Parking PRC-B	Commercial FAR	Community Facility FAR	Size (individual)	Size (maximum)	Size (illuminated)	Height above street level								
C1-6	R7-2	None	2.00	6.5	150 sf	3 x street frontage (150 sf maximum)	3 x street frontage (50 sf maximum)	25 ft								
C1-7	R8			10												
C1-8	R9															
C1-9	R10															
C1-6A	R7A								4							
C1-7A	R8A								6.5							
C1-8A	R9A								7.5							
C1-8X	R9X								9							
C1-9A	R10A								10							
C2-6	R7-2								6.5							
C2-7	R9								10							
C2-8	R10								4							
C2-6A	R7A								7.5							
C2-7A	R9A								9							
C2-7X	R9X								10							
C2-8A	R10A															
Waterfront Recreation	Residential Equivalent								Required Accessory Parking PRC-B	Commercial FAR	Community Facility FAR	Size (individual)	Size (maximum)	Size (illuminated)	Height above street level	
C3	R3-2	1 per 150 sf	0.5	1	50 sf	50 sf	Not permitted	25 sf								
C3A	R3A															
Non-contextual General Commercial	Residential Equivalent	Required Accessory Parking PRC-B	Commercial FAR	Community Facility FAR	Size (individual)	Size (maximum)	Size (illuminated)	Height above street level								
C4-1	R5	1 per 150 sf	1.00	2	500 sf	5 x street frontage (500 sf maximum)	5 x street frontage (500 sf maximum)	40 ft								
C4-2	R6	1 per 300 sf	3.40	4.8												
C4-3		1 per 400 sf		6.5												
C4-4		1 per 1,000 sf														
C4-5	R7-2	None	10.00	10												
C4-6	R10															
C4-7																

C4-C8 Commercial Districts

Contextual General Commercial	Residential Equivalent	Commercial FAR	Community Facility FAR	Required Accessory Parking	Size (individual)		Signage Size (maximum)	Size (illuminated)	Height above street level	
C4-2A	R6A	3.00	3	1 per 400 sf	500 sf		5 x street frontage (500 sf maximum)	5 x street frontage (500 sf maximum)	40 ft	
C4-3A										
C4-4A	R7A	4.00	4	None						
C4-5A										
C4-6A		R10A	3.40							10
C4-7A	10.00									
C4-4D	R8A		3.40	6.5						
C4-5D	R7D	4.20	4.2							
C4-5X	R7X	4.00	5	None						
Restricted Central Commercial	Residential Equivalent	Commercial FAR	Community Facility FAR	Required Accessory Parking	Size (individual)		Signage Size (maximum)	Size (illuminated)	Height above street level	
C5-1	R10	4.00	10	None	200 sf	3 x street frontage (200 sf)	Not permitted	25 ft		
C5-2	R10	10.0								
C5-3	R10	15.00								
C5-4	R10	10.00	10		500 sf	5 x street frontage (500 sf maximum)	5 x street frontage (500 sf maximum)	40 ft		
C5-5		15.00	15		200 sf	3 x street frontage (200 sf)	Not permitted	25 ft		
C5-1A	R10A	4.00	10							
C5-2A		10.00								
General Central Commercial	Residential Equivalent	Commercial FAR	Community Facility FAR	Required Accessory Parking	Size (individual)		Signage Size (maximum)	Size (illuminated)	Height above street level	
C6-1	R7-2	6.00	6.5	None	500 sf	5 x street frontage (500 sf maximum)	5 x street frontage (500 sf maximum)	40 ft		
C6-2	R8									
C6-3	R9									
C6-4	R10	10.00	10		500 sf	5 x street frontage (500 sf maximum)	5 x street frontage (500 sf maximum)	40 ft		
C6-5	R10									
C6-6	R10								15.00	15
C6-7	R10	10.00	10		500 sf	5 x street frontage (500 sf maximum)	5 x street frontage (500 sf maximum)	40 ft		
C6-8	R10								15.00	15
C6-9	R10								6	6.5
C6-1A	R6	6.00	7.5		500 sf	5 x street frontage (500 sf maximum)	5 x street frontage (500 sf maximum)	40 ft		
C6-2A	R8A		9							
C6-3A	R9A		10							
C6-3D	R9D	9.00	10							
C6-3X	R9X	6.00								
C6-4A	R10A	10.00								
C6-4X	R10X									
Commercial Amusement	Residential Equivalent	Commercial FAR	Community Facility FAR		Required Accessory Parking	Size (individual)		Signage Size (maximum)	Size (illuminated)	Height above street level
C7	None	2.00	N/A	1 per 400 sf	No restriction					
General Service	Residential Equivalent	Commercial FAR	Community Facility FAR	Required Accessory Parking	Size (individual accessory)	Size (individual advertising)	Signage Size (maximum)	Size (illuminated)	Height above street level	
C8-1	None	1.00	2.4	1 per 300 sf	Illuminated: 500 sf Non-illuminated: 750 sf	Indirect illumination: 500 sf Non-illuminated: 500 sf	6 x street frontage	5 x street frontage	40 ft illuminated; 58 ft non-illuminated	
C8-2		2.00	4.8	1 per 400 sf						
C8-3		2.00	6.5	1 per 1,000 sf						
C8-4		5.00		None						