

#D-123 SETBACKS IN COMMERCIAL ZONES

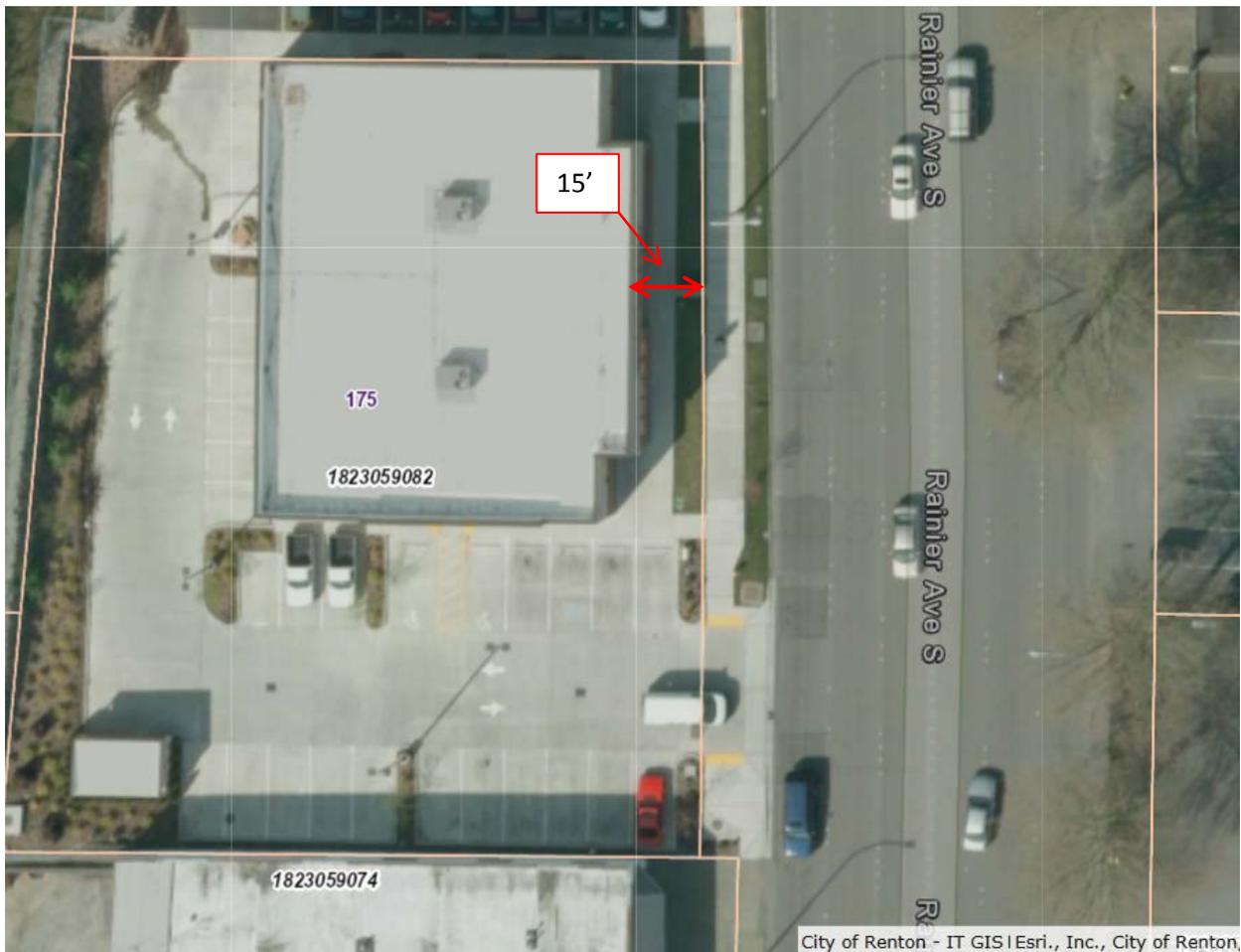
General Description

Staff was directed to review building setbacks in commercial zones with consideration of the effect on the public realm and other development regulations.

CN, CV, and CA Zones

Planners whom implement Title IV regulations have noted the difficulty in requiring a ten feet-wide landscaping strip and a minimum five feet-wide pedestrian walkway within any given lot due to the *maximum* setback of 15 feet in the CN, CV, and CA zones.

The building located at 175 Rainier Ave South (occupied by AutoZone) is a prime example of the constraint resulting from the provision of a landscaping strip and pedestrian walkway within the *maximum* allowed setback of 15 feet (shown below). The combination of these development regulations limits a developer to an exact setback of 15 feet with no ability to accommodate site constraints or underground utilities that are often located in front of a building.



In addition to a conflict of development regulations, staff considers this particular building to be too close to the public right-of-way despite it being set back the maximum distance. Below is a “street view” image of the building for reference.



Staff proposes increasing the minimum front yard and side yard along a street (i.e., secondary frontage on corner lots) setbacks of the CN, CV, and CA zones from ten feet to fifteen feet, and increasing the maximum setback distance to 20 feet.

UC Zone

Staff has also noted the obsolescence of the current UC zone setbacks. RMC 4-9-200.B.1, Master Plan Review, requires all development within the UC and COR zones be governed by a Master Plan. While setbacks of the COR zone are “determined through site plan review,” front yard setbacks of the UC zone are prescribed as five feet for townhouses and zero feet for all other development. However, because all aspects of a UC zone development are determined through Master Plan Review, providing setback standards is misleading and inaccurate. Therefore, staff proposes setbacks for the UC zone be “determined through site plan review.”

Conclusion

Staff did not identify other commercial setbacks that should be revised. For reference, the current front and side yard along a street (i.e., secondary frontage on corner lots) setbacks for commercial zones are as follows (footnotes were omitted for simplicity):

	CN	CV	CA	UC	CD	CO	COR
Minimum Front Setback				Townhouses: 5' All other uses: 0'	none	Residential Mixed Use Buildings: 0' Buildings less than 25' in height: 15' Buildings 25' to 80' in height: 20' Buildings over 80' in height: 30'	Determined through site plan review.
Maximum Front Setback				5'	15' for buildings 25' or less in height	Mixed use: 15' other: 0'	Determined through site plan review.
Minimum Side Yard Along a Street				Townhouses: 10' All other uses: 0'	none	Residential Mixed Use Buildings: 0' Buildings less than 25' in height: 15' Buildings 25' to 80' in height: 20' Buildings over 80' in height: 30'	Determined through site plan review.
Maximum Side Yard Along a Street				5'	15' for buildings 25' or less in height	Mixed use: 15' other: 0'	Determined through site plan review.

Impact Analysis

Effect on rate of growth, development, and conversion of land as envisioned in the Plan

N/A

Effect on the City's capacity to provide adequate public facilities

N/A

Effect on the rate of population and employment growth

N/A

Whether Plan objectives are being met as specified or remain valid and desirable

N/A

Effect on general land values or housing costs

N/A

Whether capital improvements or expenditures are being made or completed as expected

N/A

Consistency with GMA, the Plan, and Countywide Planning Policies

N/A

Effect on other considerations

N/A

Staff Recommendation

Amend Renton Municipal Code as described to increase the minimum and maximum setbacks of the CN, CV, and CA zones to 15 feet and 20 feet respectively. Staff also proposes that all setbacks for the UC zone be “determined through site plan review.”

Implementation Requirements

Adopt an ordinance amending RMC 4-2-120.A, Development Standards for Commercial Zoning Designations (CN, CV, CA, & UC), and RMC 4-2-120.B, Development Standards for Commercial Zoning Designations (CD, CO, & COR).