

Department of Community and Economic Development  
Planning Division  
**ADMINISTRATIVE POLICY/CODE INTERPRETATION**

**ADMINISTRATIVE  
POLICY/CODE  
INTERPRETATION #:**

CI-119

**MUNICIPAL  
CODE SECTIONS:**

RMC 4-3-040, Automall District, and RMC 4-3-100, Urban Design Regulations

**REFERENCE:**

CI-114

**SUBJECT:**

Automall Uses, Street Frontage Landscaping Applicability, and Design District D Exceptions

**BACKGROUND:**

The Automall District overlay was adopted to enable small vehicle sales in certain CA-zoned areas and to encourage the grouping of automobile sales and related uses to a concentrated area with specific development standards. Area "A" of the Automall District was recently expanded (see CI-114) to include CA and industrially zoned properties along East Valley Road; Automall Area "A" was chosen for this expansion in order to require the Area "A" development standards. However, uses permitted in Area "A" are exclusive to small vehicle sales and secondary uses identified in RMC 4-3-040.C, Uses Permitted in the Automall Improvement District, and yet the intent of expanding Area "A" was to enable small vehicle sales rather than create an area exclusive to vehicle sales and related uses.

**JUSTIFICATION:**

Because the recently expanded portion of the Automall is not contiguous with the other Areas, it's appropriate to give it a distinct name (Automall Area "C"). Because Area "C" is not intended to be exclusive to Automall uses, the development standards of the Automall should be applied to Area "C" in the same manner as Area "B," which only requires Automall development standards for Automall uses. Similarly, the exemption from Design District "D" for CA-zoned properties within the Automall (provided by RMC 4-3-100.B.1.b.iv) should only apply to those properties developed as an auto dealership or related use rather than a blanket exemption for all CA zones within the Automall District overlay.

**DECISION:**

Amend RMC as shown below.

**ADMINISTRATOR  
APPROVAL:**

\_\_\_\_\_

C. E. "Chip" Vincent

**EFFECTIVE DATE:**

\_\_\_\_\_

**APPEAL PROCESS:**

To appeal this determination, a written appeal--accompanied by the required filing fee--must be filed with the City's Hearing Examiner (1055 South Grady Way, Renton, WA 98057, 425-430-6515) no more than 14 days from the date of this decision. Section 4-8-110 of the Renton Municipal Code provides further information on the appeal process.

*DISCLAIMER: Excerpts from the Renton Municipal Code shown below may not contain the most recently codified text. In such instances, code amendments implemented through this Administrative Code Interpretation shall be construed to affect the current code and past/future Administrative Code Interpretations not yet codified in the same manner as shown below. Should any conflicts result the Administrator shall determine the effective code.*

**CODE  
AMENDMENTS  
NEEDED TO  
IMPLEMENT  
DETERMINATION(S):**

**4-3-040 AUTOMALL DISTRICT:**

**A. PURPOSE:**

These regulations establish development standards to implement the ~~Commercial and Mixed Use Comprehensive Plan designation and the Renton Automall Improvement Plan District.~~ These regulations by guiding the redevelopment of the Automall District. (Ord. 5191, 12-12-2005; Ord. 5437, 12-8-2008; Ord. 5759, 6-22-2015)

**B. APPLICABILITY – RENTON AUTOMALL DISTRICT:**

**3. Automall Area C:** Those properties bounded by SR-167 on the east, Lind Avenue SW on the west, SW 41st Street on the south, and the approximate course of Panther Creek on the north.

**C. USES PERMITTED IN THE RENTON AUTOMALL ~~IMPROVEMENT~~ DISTRICT:**

The following use provisions take precedence over the underlying zoning:

| <p align="center"><b>1. USES ALLOWED IN AREA A</b><br/> <b>Only the following uses are permitted within Automall Area A</b></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | <p align="center"><b>2. USES ALLOWED IN AREA B AND C</b></p> |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>Within the CA Zone: <del>small vehicle Auto, motorcycle, snowmobile, lawn and garden equipment, and passenger truck sales;</del></p> <p>Secondary uses including: Licensing bureaus, car rentals, public parking, and other uses determined by the <del>Zoning</del> Administrator to directly support dealerships;</p> <p>Within the IM Zone: <del>small vehicle Auto, motorcycle, snowmobile, lawn and garden equipment, passenger truck sales, and existing office;</del></p> <p>Secondary uses including: Licensing bureaus, car rentals, public parking, off-site parking consistent with RMC <del>4-4-080</del> E2 and other uses determined by the <del>Zoning</del> Administrator to directly support dealerships.</p> | <p>All uses permitted by the underlying zoning</p>           |

**D. DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS FOR USES LOCATED WITHIN THE RENTON AUTOMALL – AREAS A, B AND C:**

All permitted uses in Area A and all auto sales and related uses in Area B and C of the Renton Automall shall comply with the following development standards:

|                                        | <p align="center"><b>ALL USES IN AREA A, DEALERSHIPS AND RELATED USES IN AREA B AND C</b></p> | <p align="center"><b><del>NON-DEALERSHIPS AND RELATED USES IN AREA B</del></b></p> |
|----------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p><b>SERVICE AREA ORIENTATION</b></p> | <p>Service areas shall not face public street</p>                                             | <p><del>Service areas shall not face public street frontage.</del></p>             |

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |                                                                                                                                                 |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | frontage.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |                                                                                                                                                 |
| <b>LANDSCAPING – STREET FRONTAGE LANDSCAPING REQUIREMENTS</b><br>for lots which <del>that</del> abut Lind Avenue S.W., S.W. Grady Way, Talbot Road S. (SR-515), <u>East Valley Road,</u> <del>and</del> Rainier Avenue S. | A 15-foot-wide landscape strip along these street frontages. This frontage requirement is in lieu of the frontage requirement listed for the zone in chapter <u>4-2</u> RMC. Unimproved portions of the right-of-way may be used in combination with abutting private property to meet the required 15-foot landscape strip width. The landscaping shall include a minimum 30-inch-high berm and red maples ( <i>Acer rubrum</i> ), or other equivalent tree species required or approved by the Administrator on the City's Approved Tree List per RMC <u>4-4-070L</u> , planted 25 feet on center. | <del>Pursuant to landscaping requirements listed in chapter <u>4-2</u> RMC (requirements for the underlying zone) and RMC <u>4-4-070</u>.</del> |
| <b>LANDSCAPING – MINIMUM AMOUNT AND LOCATION</b>                                                                                                                                                                          | Minimum 2.5% of the gross site area shall be provided as on-site landscaping. Landscaping shall be consolidated and                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | <del>Pursuant to landscaping requirements listed in chapter <u>4-2</u> RMC (requirements for the underlying zone) and RMC <u>4-4-070</u>.</del> |

|                                               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|-----------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                               | located at site entries, building fronts, or other visually prominent locations as approved through the site plan development review process. Minimum landscaping may be reduced to 2% of the gross site area where bioretention, permeable paving, or other low impact development techniques consistent with the Surface Water Design Manual are integrated. |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| <b>LANDSCAPE MAINTENANCE AND TREE REMOVAL</b> | All landscaping is subject to maintenance pursuant to RMC 4-4-070P.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| <b>WHEEL STOPS</b>                            | If frontage landscaping is relocated, then permanent wheel stops or continuous curbs must be installed a minimum of 2.5 feet from sidewalks to prevent bumper overhang of sidewalks. Where these requirements differ from the requirements of the parking, loading and driveway                                                                                | If frontage landscaping is relocated, then permanent wheel stops or continuous curbs must be installed a minimum of 2.5 feet from sidewalks to prevent bumper overhang of sidewalks. Where these requirements differ from the requirements of the parking, loading and driveway regulations of chapter 4-4RMC, these requirements shall govern. |

|                                                            |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                                            | regulations of chapter 4-4 RMC, these requirements shall govern.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| <b>CUSTOMER PARKING</b>                                    | Customer parking shall be designated and striped near entry drives and visible from public streets. Where possible, customer parking shall be combined with abutting dealership customer parking and shared access. Where these requirements differ from the requirements of the parking, loading and driveway regulations of chapter 4-4 RMC, these requirements shall govern. | <del>Customer parking shall be designated and striped near entry drives and visible from public streets. Where possible, customer parking shall be combined with abutting dealership customer parking and shared access. Where these requirements differ from the requirements of the parking, loading and driveway regulations of chapter 4-4 RMC, these requirements shall govern.</del> |
| <b>AUTOMALL RIGHT-OF-WAY IMPROVEMENT PLAN COORDINATION</b> | Development shall be coordinated with the adopted right-of-way improvement plan which addresses gateways, signage, landscaping, and shared access.                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | <del>Development shall be coordinated with the adopted right-of-way improvement plan which addresses gateways, signage, landscaping, and shared access.</del>                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| <b>AUTOMALL IMPROVEMENT PLAN COMPLIANCE</b>                | All development shall coordinate with the Automall Improvement Plan adopted by Resolution No. 3457.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | <del>All development shall coordinate with the Automall Improvement Plan adopted by Resolution No. 3457. The plan addresses potential</del>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |

|                      |                                                                                                                                                |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|----------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                      | The plan addresses potential street vacations, right-of-way improvements, area gateways, signage, landscaping, circulation, and shared access. | <del>street vacations, right-of-way improvements, area gateways, signage, landscaping, circulation, and shared access.</del>                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| <b>MODIFICATIONS</b> |                                                                                                                                                | <del>Where full compliance with these provisions would create a hardship for existing uses undergoing major modifications, the Zoning Administrator may modify them. Hardship for existing uses may result from existing lot coverage, existing siting of buildings, etc., which preclude full compliance.</del> |

**4-3-100 URBAN DESIGN REGULATIONS:**

**B. APPLICABILITY AND CONFLICTS:**

**1. Applicability:**

- a. The following development activities shall be required to comply with the provisions of this Section:
  - i. All subdivisions including short plats;
  - ii. All new structures;
  - iii. Conversion of vacant land (e.g., to parking or storage lots);
  - iv. Conversion of a residential use to a nonresidential use;
  - v. Alterations, enlargements, and/or restorations of nonconforming structures pursuant to RMC 4-10-050, Nonconforming Structures.

vi. Exterior modifications such as facade changes, windows, awnings, signage, etc., shall comply with the design requirements for the new portion of the structure, sign, or site improvement.

b. Any of the activities listed in subsection B1a of this Section and occurring in the following overlay areas or zones shall be required to comply with the provisions of this Section:

**i. District 'A':** All areas zoned Center Downtown (CD).

**ii. District 'B':** All areas zoned Residential Multi-Family (RMF).

**iii. District 'C':** All areas zoned Urban Center (UC) or Commercial Office Residential (COR).

**iv. District 'D':** All areas zoned Center Village (CV) or Commercial Arterial (CA), and mixed use buildings with attached dwelling units in the Commercial Office (CO) Zone, except for those ~~areas~~ properties included in the Automall District and used for small vehicle sales or a secondary use identified in RMC 4-3-040.C.1, Uses Permitted in the Renton Automall District, see RMC 4-3-040. (Ord. 5572, 11-15-2010; Ord. 5675, 12-3-2012; Ord. 5743, 1-12-2015; Ord. 5759, 6-22-2015)

**STAFF CONTACT:**

Paul Hintz, x7436