
**Form-based code for the
Urban Core District**

§ 285-66.4 Urban Core District
(including the Sub-district)

A. Intent

The purpose of the Urban Core District is to create a dense, mixed-use neighborhood with a vibrant, pedestrian-oriented character. The district is designed to complement and enlarge the existing central business district by offering sizes and classes of retail, residential and commercial space not traditionally available in Troy's downtown. The Urban Core District is also intended to open additional pedestrian access to Prospect Park.

Application of this chapter shall be done in accordance with the *Reweaving Troy's Urban Landscape: Congress Street and Ferry Street Corridor (2009. Master Plan.*

B. Building placement and form

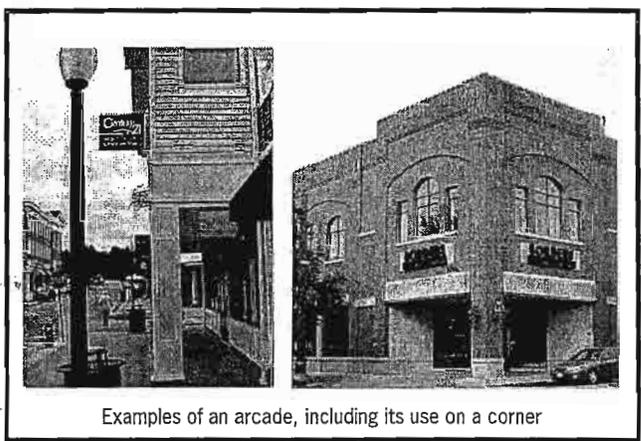
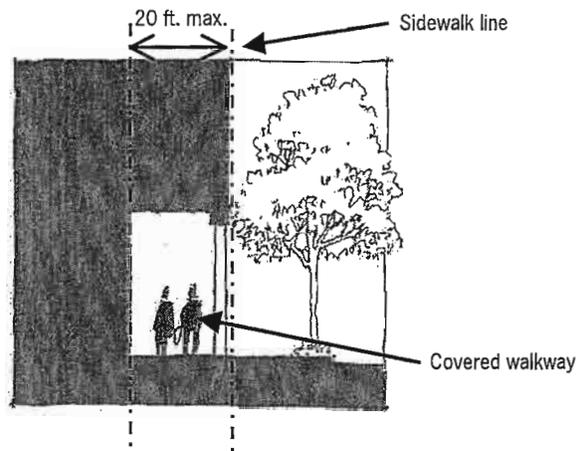
1. Building Height	
Minimum stories permitted	Three stories
Maximum stories permitted, except as follows:	Eight stories
Within the T-5a Sixth Avenue Sub-district	Six stories
Maximum height permitted, except as follows	95 feet
Within the T-5a Sixth Avenue Sub-district	80 feet
First floor ceiling height	10-foot minimum clear

2. Location	
Front setback	0-foot maximum from the sidewalk line (except as required for Frontages Allowed found in subsection C.)
Side setback	0-foot maximum from the sidewalk line unless providing access through buildings for pedestrians or automobiles
Rear setback	0-foot minimum from the sidewalk line
Additional requirement:	Buildings with sides on more than one street (e.g. a corner lot) must treat each of those sides as a front. When one side faces a designated alley, that side shall be considered the rear.

3. Sidewalks
Except for curb cuts required by new construction, any reconstruction of sidewalks must follow the route and must meet or exceed the width, quality, and landscaping designs of the Congress and Ferry Street Corridor Master Plan.

C. Frontages Allowed

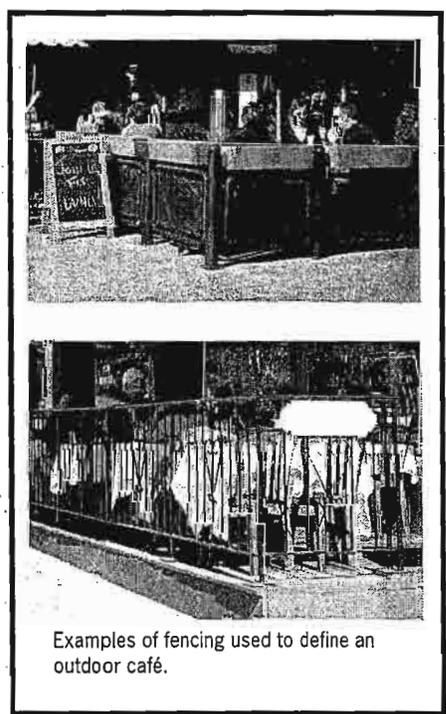
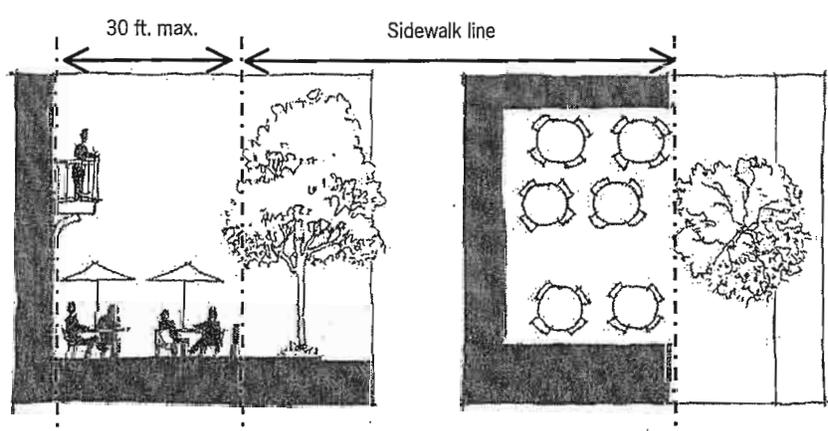
1. Arcade



Arcade Requirements

- Building shall not be setback more than 20 feet from the sidewalk line.
- No elements of the arcade shall cross the sidewalk line.
- Arcade must be defined by a series of evenly spaced columns
- Arcade may be used for outdoor seating.
- Arcade may be used along a building or at a building's corner.

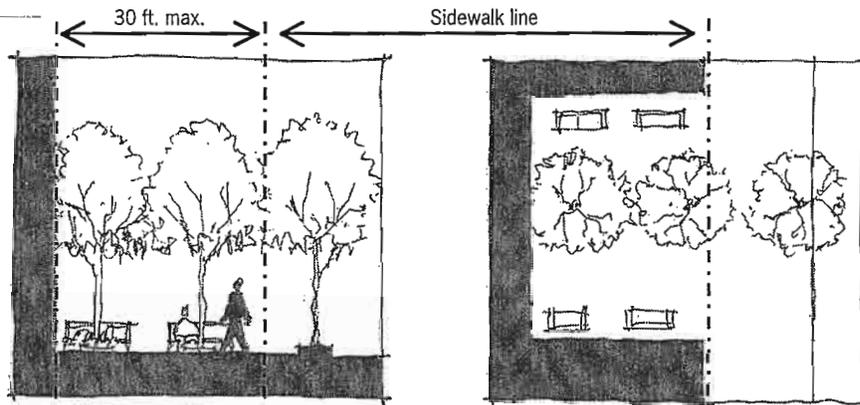
2. Outdoor Café



Outdoor Café Requirements

- Building shall not be setback more than 30 feet from the sidewalk line.
- No elements of the café shall cross the sidewalk line without the permission of the planning board.
- Café may be defined by a fence no higher than 36 inches.
- Café may be along a building or at a building's corner.

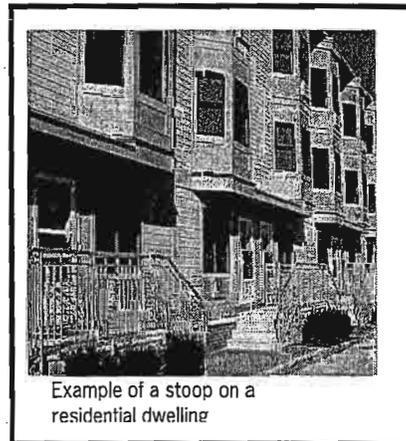
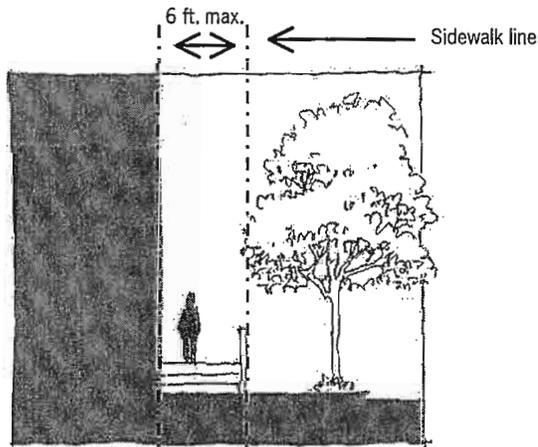
3. Plaza



Plaza Requirements

- a. Building shall not be setback more than 30 feet from the sidewalk line.
- b. No elements of the plaza shall cross the sidewalk line.
- c. Plaza shall not be fenced or walled off.
- d. Plaza may be used for outdoor seating, artwork or other streetscape elements.

4. Stoop



Example of a stoop on a residential dwelling

Stoop Requirements

- a. Building shall not be setback more than 6 feet from the sidewalk line.
- b. No elements of the stoop shall cross the sidewalk line.
- c. Stairs of stoop shall not be fenced or walled off.

4. Store front



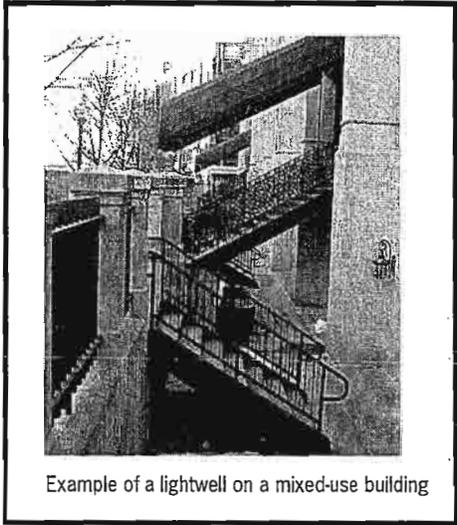
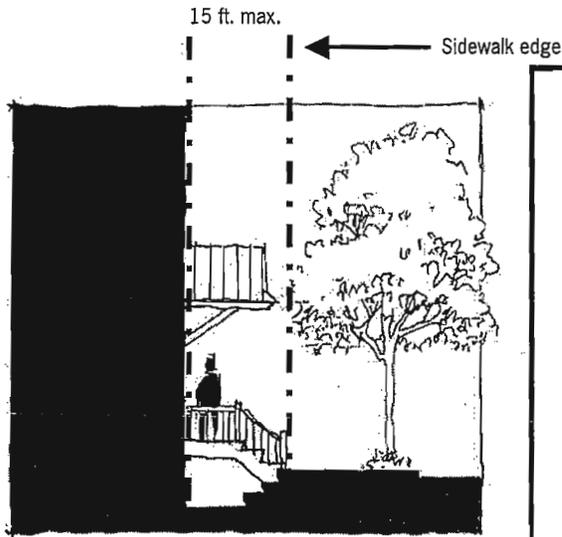
Average distance between sidewalk and windowsill top is 36 inches with none being higher than 48 inches.

Glass in windows and doors must make up at least half of the first floor façade.

Storefront Requirements

- a. 0-foot maximum setback from the sidewalk line unless used in conjunction with another frontage type.
- b. Required for all first, floor, office and retail uses.
- c. Glass in windows and doors must make up at least 50 percent of the surface area of the first floor façade.
- d. Windows shall not be opaque or mirrored.
- e. The top of windowsills shall average 36 inches above the sidewalk with no windowsills higher than 48 inches.
- f. Window treatments and displays should not substantially limit visibility into the building.

5. Lightwell



Example of a lightwell on a mixed-use building

Lightwell Requirements

- a. Building shall not be setback more than 15 feet from sidewalk edge.
- b. No elements of the lightwell shall cross the property line.

6. Additional frontage requirements

- a. Parking is not allowed in the front of buildings.
- b. The front of buildings, excluding parking garages, must have entrances at least every 50 feet.
- c. Blank walls (i.e. no windows or no doors) on the fronts of all buildings shall not exceed more than 20 feet in length.
- d. Awnings shall extend no further than seven feet from the building facade and shall be a minimum of nine feet from the ground.

D. Land uses

> Uses not listed below are not permitted.

> For the uses listed below as requiring a District Site Plan Review, the criteria for that review is described in §285-66.4G.

1. Allowable use codes	
Permitted	P
District Site Plan Review required	DSP
Special Use Permit required	SUP

2. T-5a Sixth Avenue Sub-district	
The T-5a Sixth Avenue Sub-district is intended to become a vibrant retail and entertainment spot. Ideally, the ground floor of all buildings should contain a Retail and Personal Services use, though an office use is allowed with a District Site Plan Review.	

3. Residential	
Dwelling: Multi-unit rowhouse	DSP
Dwelling: Multi-unit building	DSP
Home occupations: off-site	P
Home occupations: on-site	DSP

4. Office	
Business or service, except with any of the following:	DSP
On-site manufacture of items	SUP

5. Retail, Restaurant, and Personal Services	
Retail and Personal Services except with any of the following:	DSP
On-site manufacture of items	SUP
Bar or nightclub	DSP
Restaurant	DSP
Membership organizations	DSP

6. Lodging	
Hotel and all associated facilities located within the hotel	DSP
Conference facility	DSP

7. Other	
Educational instruction	DSP
Movie Theater	DSP
Surface parking lot	DSP
Parking structure	DSP

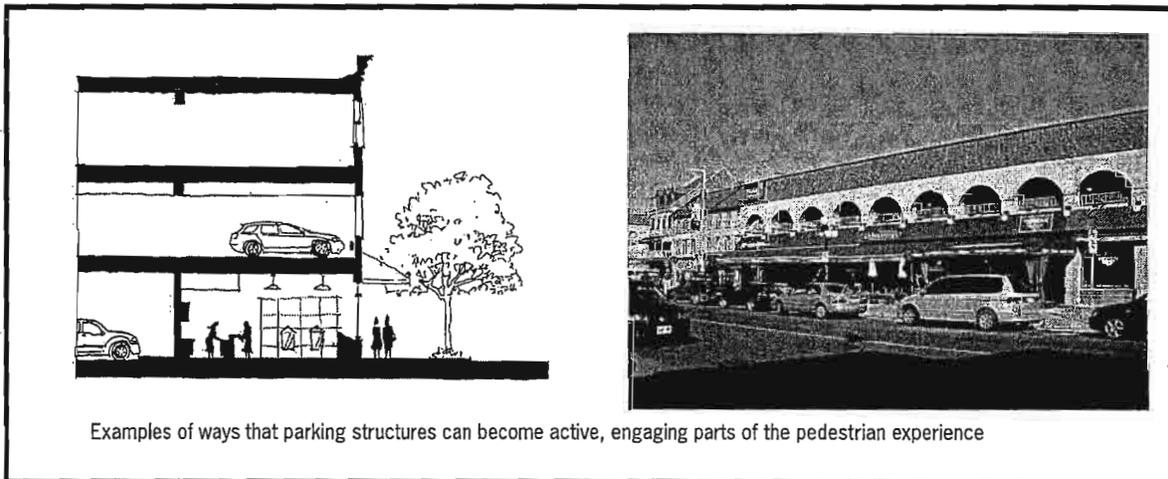
E. Parking

1. Intent

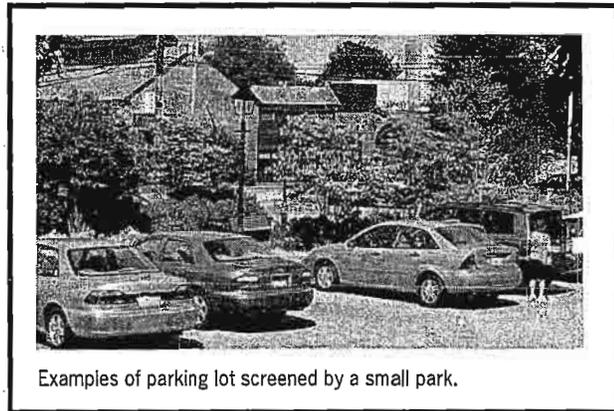
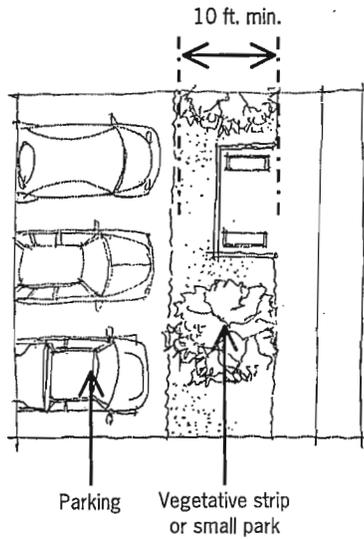
Despite the pedestrian-oriented character of the T-5 Urban Core District, automobiles will have to be accommodated. As a dense urban area, projects must work to minimize the impact of parking on the neighborhood. This can be accomplished by reducing, as much as possible, the number of parking spaces provided in the district, encouraging the use of proximately located public or private parking structures, and designing parking facilities (stand alone or associated with a building) to minimize their negative impacts on the pedestrian environment.

2. Parking in the Urban District (including the Sixth Avenue Sub-district)

- a. There is no fixed parking requirement in this district.
- b. Acceptable forms of parking include on-street parking, public parking surface lots or garages and private parking surface lots or garages. Surface lots, either stand alone or associated with a building, must meet the standards described in §285-66.4.E.2.f and §285-66.4.E.2.g.
- c. Acceptable locations of parking need not be on-site or adjacent to a site. Parking, especially for customers, can be considered in any lot within the district or its surroundings.
- d. Shared parking is encouraged to reduce the total number of spaces. Some uses (e.g. lodging and offices) need spaces at different times.
- e. The planning board shall have the final decision regarding the adequacy of the parking plan to provide the needed number of spaces while maintaining the district's pedestrian-oriented character. The planning board is encouraged to approve the absolute minimum parking necessary.
- f. To the extent possible, the front of the first level of all parking structures shall be contain functional liner buildings with Retail, Personal Service or Office Uses. It is particularly important that parking structures be set back and screened on Sixth Avenue, Congress and Ferry Streets – those primary streets where pedestrian activity is expected.



g. All surface parking lots shall be setback in the front a minimum of 10 feet from the sidewalk line by a combination of vegetative buffers, seating areas, public green space, public gathering spaces, and/or decorative fences and walls.



F. Definitions

(Editor's Note: These definitions apply to this district, but should eventually be integrated into the definitions section of the code.)

Arcade – An area contiguous to a sidewalk or plaza that is open and unobstructed to a height of not less than 10 feet and that is accessible to the public at all times. An arcade may provide public access to building entrances, retail space and/or public space.

District – Any specifically delineated area established by this Chapter for which regulations contained in this Chapter govern land use and development.

Home Occupation: Off-site – A home occupation in which the owner typically meets customers off the premises or electronically and thus does not generate additional automobile traffic.

Home Occupation: On-site – A home occupation in which the owner typically meets customers on the premises and thus the business generates additional automobile traffic.

Hotel – A building containing rooms, which are hired to transient guests on a nightly basis. Restaurant, spa, physical fitness, gift shop, travel, business center and other associated services may be included as long as they are in the same structure.

Lightwell – A depression or well around a building below grade, which provides light and air to the below grade level.

Liner Building – A functional building specifically designed to mask a parking structure from a frontage using a mix of residential, office and/or retail uses that activate the street edge.

Membership Organizations – An association or persons for the promotion of some lawful nonprofit common objective, such as literature, science, politics, good fellowship, or community service, which meets periodically, is limited to members and not primarily operated to render a service that is customarily carried on as a business. Examples include but are not limited to: the Knights of Columbus and the Lions Club.

Outdoor Café – A temporary outdoor seating area associated with a restaurant, and which may be located adjacent to a public sidewalk.

Personal Service Use – A use providing non-medically related services, including but not limited to beauty and barbershops; clothing rental, dry cleaning pick-up stores; laundromats (self-service laundries); shoe repair shops, tanning salons and other similar establishments. These uses may also include accessory retail sales of products related to the services provided.

Plaza – An area generally open to the public at ground level and wholly or partially enclosed by a building or buildings with openings to the sky. They can be used for passive recreational activities and relaxation. Plazas are typically paved areas with amenities, such as seating, drinking and ornamental fountains, art, trees, and landscaping, for use by pedestrians.

Sidewalk line – The edge of the sidewalk closest to the building site or building as fixed by the Congress and Ferry Street Corridor Master Plan.

Stoop – A structure intended to provide ingress and egress to residential buildings.

Sub-District – See District

G. District Site Plan Review

District Site Plan Use – A use of land, buildings, or structures that meets the intent and purpose of the zoning district and is specifically authorized by this Chapter, but which requires additional review and approval in order to ensure that any adverse impacts on adjacent uses, structures or public services and facilities that may be generated by the use can be, and are, mitigated.

The Planning Board, in reviewing site plans for District Plan Uses shall consider, among other requirements of this Chapter, the requirements set forth below.

1. The proposed use shall be in harmony with and promote the goals and objectives of the *Congress and Ferry Street Corridor Master Plan* and shall be in compliance with this Chapter.
 2. The proposed use is consistent with the intent and purpose of the zoning district and will not unduly prohibit or discourage future planned growth in the area.
 3. Individual structures on a site should be compatible with each other and with traditional structures in the surrounding area in architecture, design, massing, materials, and placement.
 4. All uses shall have convenient pedestrian and vehicular access to and from adjacent properties, and shall, wherever possible, be laid out in a pattern consistent with the traditional urban forms found in the City of Troy. The Planning Board reserves the right to require the construction of alleys, service roads, sidewalks, and public streets, where appropriate.
 5. There shall be sufficient infrastructure and services, including utilities, public facilities and services, available from the proposed use or that the project extends or provides infrastructure and services for the area where the proposed use is located. There shall also be facilities and services implemented by the applicant to appropriately control any potential nuisances from the operation of the use such as control of litter or trash, loitering and crime prevention, and any other features or aspects of the operation of the proposed use that may affect the public safety, health and general welfare.
 6. Materials and design of paving, light fixtures, retaining walls, fences, curbs, benches, etc., shall be consistent with the preferred architectural style elsewhere in the City, attractive and easily maintained.
 7. For a facility operating between the hours of 9pm and 7am, the planning board shall review and consider impacts on other properties in the vicinity.
 8. For a facility seeking to sell or serve alcoholic beverages, the planning board shall review and consider impacts on other properties in the vicinity.
- C. **Findings Required.** In approving or disapproving Site Plans for a District Site Plan Use, the Planning Board shall take into consideration all eight items listed above as well as any others deemed appropriate due to the type, scale and intensity of the proposed project, the surrounding area, the possible impact of the proposed project on nearby properties and uses, and the requirements and purposes of this Chapter. The Planning Board shall set forth its findings in writing as part of its decision-making process.