

611. **General Commercial District (GC).**

Intent. It is the intent of this section that the General Commercial District be established and appropriate land reserved for general business purposes with particular consideration for the automobile-oriented commercial development existing or proposed along the County's roadways. The regulations which apply within this district are designed to encourage the formation and continuance of a compatible and economically healthy environment for business, financial, service and professional uses which benefit from being located in close proximity to each other; and to discourage any encroachment by industrial or other uses capable of adversely affecting the basic commercial character of the district.

611.1 **Permitted Uses.** The following uses shall be permitted in any General Commercial District:

- 611.101 Retail business involving the sale of merchandise on the premises in permanent buildings specifically including:
 - 611.1011 Antique store, gift or curio store;
 - 611.1012 Appliance, household furnishings, radio and/or television store;
 - 611.1013 Art supply, book, magazine, newspaper, photographic and camera supply and service, office supply and equipment, hobby and toy store;
 - 611.1014 Clothing, millinery or hat and shoe store;
 - 611.1015 Hardware, paint or sporting goods store;
 - 611.1016 5 and 10 cent general or variety store, music and/or record store;
 - 611.1017 Drug, grocery, fruit, nut, candy and vegetable store; and,
 - 611.1018 Florist shop and package liquor store.
- 611.102 Business involving the rendering of personal or professional service or the repair and servicing of small equipment specifically including: *(Amended Ord. 2009-51)*
 - 611.10201 Appliance, radio and/or television repair shop;

611.10202	Bank, savings and loan association, personal loan agency and branch facility;
611.10203	Barber and beauty shop;
611.10204	Bicycle repair and sales shop;
611.10205	Dressmaker, seamstress or tailor;
611.10206	Self-service laundry facility, dry cleaning pick-up station and dry cleaning establishment that utilizes cleaning solvents that meet the class four rating by the National Fire Code, as amended;
611.10207	Insurance and/or real estate agency;
611.10208	Locksmith or gunsmith;
611.10209	Medical or dental clinic and/or laboratory;
611.10210	Office for governmental, business, professional or general purpose;
611.10211	Photographic studio;
611.10212	School offering instruction in art, music, dancing, drama, or similar cultural activity;
611.10213	Secretarial and/or telephone answering service;
611.10214	Shoe repair;
611.10215	Funeral home; and,
611.10216	Community hospital and/or clinic.
611.103	Theater, bowling alley and skating rink; (<i>Amended Ord. 2013-24</i>)
611.104	Radio and/or television station;
611.105	Private or semi-private club, lodge union hall or social center;
611.106	Off-street commercial parking lot;
611.107	Single-family dwelling, (including mobile homes, group dwellings and assisted living facilities);

- 611.108 Restaurant including drive-in or drive thru;
- 611.109 Day care center;
- 611.110 Public building, facility or land; and,
- 611.111 Accessory uses, including telephone booths. Where fuel tanks are determined to be an accessory use, such tanks shall meet the setback and minimum separation requirements as established in the adopted version of the International Fire Code, Table 3804.3. Additionally, if the tanks are located in the Waccamaw Neck Architectural Overlay District, such tanks shall be screened from view from any street right-of-way by use of vegetation or an architecturally acceptable fence. *(Amended Ord. 2010-36)*
- 611.2 Conditional Uses. The following uses shall be allowed on a conditional basis in any General Commercial District, subject to the conditions set forth:
- 611.201 Motor vehicle service station and associated bulk storage tanks provided that: *(Amended Ord. 2010-36)*
- 611.2011 All pumps and tanks are set back at least twenty-five (25) feet from any street right-of-way; *(Amended Ord. 2010-36)*
- 611.2012 All supporting structures for gas canopies will be set back at least twenty five (25) feet from any street right-of-way. In no event shall a canopy extend beyond the property line over the right-of-way or any other separate parcel. *(Amended Ord. 2009-43)*
- 611.2013 Storage and/or service areas are separated from adjoining properties by a buffer strip, fence or wall at least seven (7) feet in height; and,
- 611.2014 Any area where wrecked or disabled vehicles with current license plates are stored be limited to no more than ten (10) vehicles.
- 611.202 Enclosed mall for the sale of arts and crafts materials and handwork and similar products provided that all operations and sales are conducted within a fully enclosed building.
- 611.203 Garage for the major repair of motor vehicles provided that all operations are conducted within a fully enclosed building and that there is no open storage of junked vehicles, dismantled parts, scrap

parts or other salvage other than disabled vehicles as provided for in Section 611.201 above. Servicing shall be conducted in an area that can be cleaned.

- 611.204 Combination of a residential structure with any use allowed herein provided that the dwelling unit has direct access to the street. The connection of two buildings by means of an open porch, breezeway, carport or other such open structure, with or without a roof, shall not be considered as one building.
- 611.205 Car wash provided that off-street paved parking areas capable of adequate storage for waiting vehicles is suitably located and maintained on the premises; and provided that no safety hazard or impediment to traffic movement is created by the operation of such an establishment.
- 611.206 Animal hospital and/or boarding facility provided that all boarding arrangements are maintained within a building and all the provisions of the Georgetown County Zoning Ordinance are met. Outdoor runs may be utilized for exercise but housing and sheltering of animals shall be inside a fully enclosed building.
(Amended Ord. 2013-58)
- 611.207 Auto sales, mobile home sales, boat sales and, open yard use for the sale, rental and/or storage of materials or equipment excluding junk or other salvage provided that such uses are separated from adjoining residential properties by a suitable planting screen, fence or wall at least six (6) feet in height above finished grade.
- 611.208 Building materials storage provided that all outdoor storage is enclosed by a fence or wall.
- 611.209 Commercial marina provided that such use meets all the requirements contained in Section 609.202 of this Ordinance.
- 611.210 Self-service storage facilities, provided that:
- 611.2101 Such use is located on a tract not less than one acre in area;
- 611.2102 A site plan which shows landscaping, interior driveway, density, structure size, compatible architectural design and environmental considerations such as drainage shall be submitted for review and approval;

- 611.2103 Such a facility is used for dead storage only and the following activities are specifically prohibited: the storage of toxic or explosive substances; auctions, commercial, wholesale or retail sales or miscellaneous or garage sales; the servicing, repair or fabrication of motor vehicles, boats, trailers, lawn mowers, appliances or other similar equipment, the operation of power tools, spray painting equipment, table saws, lathes, compressors, welding equipment, kilns or other similar equipment; the establishment of a transfer and storage business; and, any use that is noxious or offensive because of odors, dust, noise, fumes or vibrations;
- 611.2104 All storage on the property shall be kept within an enclosed building;
- 611.2105 Parking shall be provided by parking/driving lanes adjacent to the building and these lanes shall be at least twenty-six (26) feet wide when cubicles open onto one side of the lane only and at least thirty (30) feet wide when cubicles open onto both sides of the lane.
- 611.211 *(Removed Ord. # 2004-57).*
- 611.212 Cabinet-making shops provided that all operations are conducted within a fully enclosed building and that there is no open storage of lumber or scrap materials on the premises.
- 611.213 Combination of retail sales and wholesale/distribution sales of souvenirs, novelties, shells and gift items to (resort related) merchants, provided that:
- 611.2131 Retail sales area must be maintained with appropriate display of items available for sale to the general public and constitute more than fifty percent of the gross floor area of the building.
- 611.2132 All operations and sales are conducted within a fully enclosed building with no open storage of materials or refuse.
- 611.214 Vendors provided that *(Amended Ord.2009-63)*:
- 611.2141 All vending operations shall be conducted a

- minimum of twenty (20) feet beyond any street right-of-way and space to park at least two (2) cars shall be provided.
- 611.2142 Only one vendor shall be allowed for each one hundred (100') feet that a property fronts upon a street. Corner lots are only allowed to count the frontage on the primary street. Additionally, in the Waccamaw Neck Commercial Corridor Overlay Zone, only one vendor may be located on a single parcel, except for those issued a Temporary Certificate of Zoning Compliance. Vendors may only utilize property zoned General Commercial in the Waccamaw Neck Commercial Corridor Overlay Zone.
- 611.2143 Electronic or illuminated signs shall not be used by vendors.
- 611.2144 No goods or merchandise to be offered for sale may be stored in, or sold from a tractor trailer on the vending site. All tractor trailers related to the vending operation must be removed from the site
- 611.2145 Only one sign per vendor shall be allowed, regardless or where it is placed. Advertising materials attached to or painted onto automobiles are construed to be signs. Signs shall not exceed ten (10) square feet in area and shall meet all sign standards contained in the Zoning Ordinance. No free standing sign shall be placed closer than ten (10) feet from the property line. In no case shall a sign be placed in a public right-of-way. *(Amended Ord 2003-86)*
- 611.2146 The applicant must submit a site plan showing the proposed location of the vending operation on the plan. The Zoning Administrator must find that the proposed operation complies with all applicable provisions of this Section, and that the proposed operation will not adversely affect public safety. No portion of the vending operation shall be allowed to occupy or obstruct access to any parking stall required by the Zoning Ordinance. Upon the issuance of a permit, the site plan as approved must be attached to the permit, and the operation shall not vary from the approved plan. Any variation from the approved site plan shall immediately void the subject permit.
- 611.2147 Vendors shall be required to obtain a vendor's permit prior

to the commencement of any vending operation. Proof of approval of the property owner and a Federal Tax Identification or Social Security number must be provided. If applicable, the applicant must provide a copy of the approved County hospitality tax application and a State sales tax number to the Zoning Administrator before any vending permit is issued. Both the vendor and the property owner shall provide a hold-harmless agreement releasing the County of all liability.

611.2147.1 Vendor permits shall be issued for one ninety (90) day period for \$50.00 or annually for \$100.00.

611.2147.2 Additional vendor permits may be issued during a calendar year provided no violations had been cited during the first permit issue.

611.2147.3 The Zoning Administrator or his/her designee shall have the authority to issue and administer vending permits, and the authority and responsibility to continuously oversee and monitor vending operations permitted hereunder to assure compliance with the requirements of the ordinance. The Zoning Administrator shall have the authority, upon the occurrence of a violation of the terms and requirements of this ordinance and after giving reasonable notice to the violating permittee and the violating permittee not having remedied the subject violation within a reasonable time, to cancel, void, rescind, terminate, nullify the subject vending permit and order the vending operation ceased immediately thereupon.

611.2147.4 Vendor permits shall not be required for vending operations associated with a festival that has been issued a Temporary Certificate of Zoning Compliance.

611.2148 Violations of any requirement contained in Section 611.214 shall be subject to the following remedies:

611.2148.1 The Zoning Administrator, in the event of a violation of this ordinance, shall

immediately upon becoming aware of the violation, issue a notice to the violator setting forth the particulars of the violation and ordering immediate remediation as needed to bring the violator into compliance. Immediate remediation shall be subject to a test of reasonableness with respect to the interval of time needed and the required action to be taken, related to the nature of the violation. If the violator fails to remediate the violation as described in the notice, then the Zoning Administrator shall take further action as described in 611.2147.3 of this section.

611.2148.2 Failure to comply with a written order to remedy regarding the violation or a second offense of the same nature shall result in the revocation of the permit by the Zoning Administrator or his/her designee for the calendar year.

611.2148.3 The Zoning Administrator or his/her designee shall further have the authority to take lawful action as provided for in Article XI, Section 1504 for any continuing offense. *(Amended Ord. 2003-86)*

611.215 Seafood distribution centers provided that:

611.2151 No processing of seafood is allowed.

611.2152 Such uses shall only be allowed on arterial streets as depicted in figure 8.1 in the Comprehensive Plan.

611.216 Taverns, nightclubs or billiard halls provided that the property on which such use is located is at least 300 feet from any residentially zoned property.

611.217 Amenity, subdivision provided that: *(Amended Ord. 2007-03)*

611.2171 Parking shall be provided at a rate of one half that required in Article XI of the Zoning Ordinance

611.2172 Adjacent residential properties must be buffered from any recreational amenity other than a passive

park which contains no structures. Such buffer shall, at a minimum, be a Type 2 as identified in Article XII of the Zoning Ordinance.

- 611.2173 The amenity must be owned and maintained by a homeowners association, similar entity or developer and be primarily used by the residents of the subdivision.
- 611.218 Hotel provided such use: *(Amended Ord. 2009-51)*
- 611.2181 Shall be open to the public generally;
- 611.2182 Shall provide a centralized public lobby and guest registration desk;
- 611.2183 Shall provide full-time on-site management, telephone service and maintenance to all guest rooms;
- 611.2184 Shall not have individual utility connections metered separately to individual guest rooms;
- 611.2185 Shall not have individual washer and dryer connections in each guest room;
- 611.2186 Shall meet all other relevant Sections of the Zoning Ordinance such as parking and signage;
- 611.2187 Shall provide a minimum lot area per room of one thousand (1000) square feet.
- 611.2188 Interconnectivity with adjoining commercial properties shall be developed and permitted by the developer/owner.
- 611.2189 Any free-standing restaurant, entertainment facility or other commercial uses associated with the hotel on the same property shall have a site plan reviewed by the Planning Commission, approved by County Council and shall comply with Section 609.2041 of this Ordinance. *(Amended Ord. 2011-41)*
- 611.21810 Shall have a maximum building height of 35 feet or 45 feet in a flood zone as provided for in Section 806 of this Ordinance .

- 611.219 Office Parks provided they meet all the requirement of Section 419, a site plan is reviewed by the Planning Commission, approved by County Council and complies with Section 610.205 of this Ordinance. *(Amended Ord. 2011-41)*
- 611.220 Shopping Centers provided they meet all the requirements of Section 419, are reviewed by the Planning Commission, approved by County Council and comply with the following: *(Amended Ord. 2011-41)*
- 611.2201 The applicant shall submit to the Planning Commission, as part of the application, letters addressed to each property owner within four hundred (400) feet of the subject property containing information adequate to notify such owners of the intention to develop, and when and where a public hearing will be held by the Planning Commission. Such letters shall be placed unsealed, stamped and addressed envelopes, ready for mailing by the Planning Commission. The Planning Commission's address shall appear as the return address on the envelopes. A list of all property owners, as reflected by the tax records, to whom letters are addressed shall accompany the application.
- 611.2202 The required letters of notification shall be mailed to the affected property owners by the Planning Commission at least twenty-one (21) days prior to the public hearing. The Commission Staff shall certify the mailing date. Failure to strictly comply with the notification requirements contained in this section shall not render the rezoning of the property invalid.
- 611.2203 Conspicuous notices shall be posted on the affected property that shall be visible from each public street that borders the property. The notice shall be posted at least fifteen (15) days prior to the public hearing date.
- 611.2204 Before taking any action, the Planning Commission shall hold a public hearing thereon, notice of the time and place of which shall be published in a newspaper of general circulation in the County at least fifteen (15) days in advance of the scheduled public hearing date. The Commission will then

- forward its recommendation to County Council for their final approval.
- 611.2205 Such projects shall comply with all other applicable ordinances including, but not limited to signage, access management, parking and buffering requirements.
- 611.221 Bingo Parlors provided that: *(Amended Ord. 2013-24)*
- 611.2211 Verification of a license from the State of South Carolina is presented to the Zoning Administrator prior to approval for a Certificate of Occupancy or change of tenant.
- 611.2212 One parking space shall be required for every four seats in the parlor or every 100 square feet of floor area whichever is greater. If the proposed bingo parlor is located in a shopping center with other uses, parking must be provided and calculated separately for each individual use unless such uses have differing hours of operation.
- 611.2213 Sign shall be allowed based on Article X of this Ordinance.
- 611.2214 Hours of operation shall be limited to 12:00 noon until 2:00 AM as mandated by the State of South Carolina.
- 611.222 Commercial Outdoor Shooting Ranges provided that: *(Amended Ord. 2016-15)*
- 611.2221 All ranges must be designed to the greatest degree possible in compliance with standards established by the National Rifle association or the National Outdoor Shooting Sport Association. A written plan must be submitted to the County Planning Department describing how the range conforms to the above noted standards and the areas in which it does not;
- 611.2222 Any range under the provisions of this section shall apply for and receive a Certificate of Zoning Compliance before beginning operation;

- 611.2223 No commercial outdoor shooting range created after the enactment of this Ordinance, September 13, 2016, shall be located on a parcel less than ten (10) acres in size;
- 611.2224 All commercial outdoor shooting ranges accommodating rifles shall be located such that any shooting station is at least two thousand (2,000) linear feet in a straight line from any habitable dwelling, church, school, park, hospital, nursing home or office. Ranges dedicated to shotguns shall meet a minimum separation requirement of five hundred (500) linear feet. Dwellings located on the same parcel as the shooting range and dwellings owned by an owner of the subject shooting range are not included in this separation requirement. Additionally, the separation requirement from a dwelling may be waived if the owner of the dwelling provides an affidavit agreeing to waive such requirement in perpetuity. An applicant may request County Council in writing to reduce the above separation requirements due to conditions found on a particular parcel that mitigate noise issues or demonstrate that features will be added that mitigate such noise;
- 611.2225 All ranges, except those only used for shooting trap, sporting clays and skeet with shotguns, or firing shotguns in any manner, shall utilize a backstop and safety baffles. Ranges must be designed to keep all projectiles within the range;
- 611.2226 A level 3 landscaped buffer shall be planted across the front of the parcel that is used as a shooting range. Natural vegetation may be counted toward meeting the buffer requirement;
- 611.2227 Outdoor shooting shall cease each day at 8:00 PM and not begin in the morning until 8:00 AM; and,
- 611.2228 An indoor shooting range may be considered as an accessory to an outdoor shooting range but an outdoor shooting range may not be considered as an accessory use to an indoor range.

611.3 Other Requirements.

- 611.301 All uses allowed in General Commercial Districts shall conform to the area, yard and height requirements as set forth in the Article VII.
- 611.302 Uses allowed in General Commercial Districts shall meet all standards set forth in Article XI, pertaining to off-street parking, loading and other requirements.
- 611.303 Signs permitted in General Commercial Districts including the conditions under which they may be located, are set forth in Article X.
- 611.304 All new commercial developments will be required to provide a means of interconnecting with adjoining property to allow for the movement of vehicles from one property to another without using the street system. (*Amended Ord. 2003-83*).