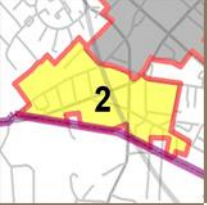


6. Zoning

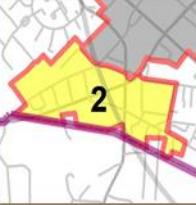


South Washington Street Corridor Planning Opportunity Area 2

Zoning

Overview

- Existing zoning designations provide a framework for redevelopment within the South Washington Street Corridor Planning Opportunity Area (POA).
- Zoning changes should be considered in order to allow for the provision of park/open space for the expansion of Big Chimneys Park and to fix prior changes to zoning designations near The Falls Church.
- A Transfer of Development Rights program may be created for the provision of open space. This would allow developers to transfer height and density from properties recommended for open space to properties in preferred high density mixed-use areas.
- The creation of Planning Overlay Districts could further help to guide redevelopment in order to preserve culturally important neighborhood elements and to help focus density in preferred areas.



Existing Zoning

Land in the South Washington Street Corridor POA is primarily zoned for commercial use. The majority of the area is zoned B-3, General Business. Some properties near the City Center POA between South Washington Street and South Maple Avenue are zoned B-2, Central Business. Other zoning designations within the South Washington Street Corridor POA include T-1, Transitional, O-D, Official Design, and R-M, Multi-Family Residential. Unzoned land, which includes public rights of way such as roadways and sidewalks, constitutes 22 percent of the area within the POA.

B-2, Central Business

Parcels zoned B-2 are located in the blocks between South Washington Street and South Maple Avenue from Tinner Hill Street to the City Center POA. This includes the historic Henderson House property.

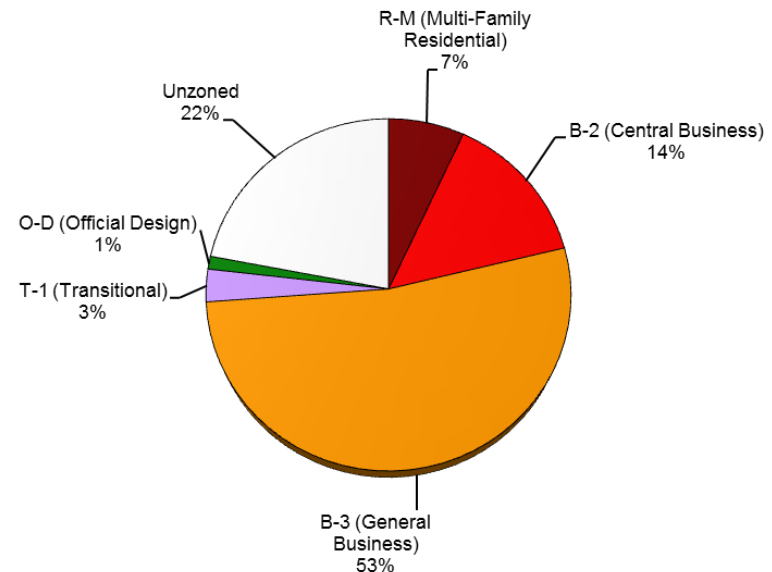
The City of Falls Church Zoning Code states:

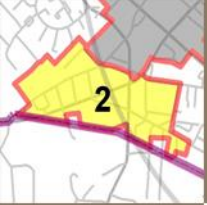
“The intent of the B-2, central business district is as follows:

- (1) To create a downtown business area which will provide a range of commercial activities at a level of development more concentrated than other commercial areas.

Existing Zoning

Zoning District	Total Acreage	% Total Area
Residential		
R-M (Multi-Family Residential)	3.00	7%
Commercial		
B-2 (Central Business)	6.18	14%
B-3 (General Business)	22.76	53%
Multi-Purpose/Mixed-Use		
T-1 (Transitional)	1.29	3%
O-D (Official Design)	0.51	1%
Unzoned		
Unzoned	9.52	22%
Total	43.26	100%





South Washington Street Corridor Planning Opportunity Area 2

- (2) To ensure that development is responsive to spatial, visual and pedestrian considerations.
- (3) To promote an environment to attract new businesses and retain existing businesses.
- (4) To provide the community with a variety of retail and service-oriented businesses that will respond to various community and consumer needs.”

The B-2 zoning district allows the highest density by right and by special exception in the City. Mixed-use development is also allowed by special exception. Height and density bonuses of up to 40 feet may be given for conformance to the previously listed specific points and preferred uses listed in the Zoning Code. Preferred uses include entertainment, theaters, public health clubs, theaters, art galleries, antique stores, clothing stores, and restaurants with outdoor dining facilities. Maximum height of buildings allowed in the B-2 zoning district by right is 75 feet and with special exception can reach up to 115 feet.

B-3, General Business

The majority of land in the South Washington Street POA is zoned B-3. This includes the Pearson Square/Tax Analyst property, all properties west of Tinner Hill Street, and a large majority of properties south of South Washington Street.

The B-3 zoning district allows office, retail, restaurant, and motor vehicle repair and sales, among other uses. Mixed-use redevelopment is

allowed by special exception. The Pearson Square/Tax Analyst property is zoned B-3 and was redeveloped into a dense mixed-use development with a special exception. Building heights may reach 55 feet by right and 85 feet with a special exception within the B-3 zoning district.

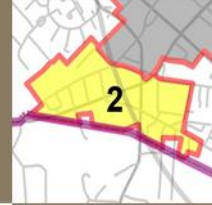
R-M, Multifamily Residence

Land in the Virginia Village neighborhood is zoned R-M, Multifamily Residence. Within the South Washington Street POA, this is a 3.4 acre area consisting of 16 buildings on individual parcels located east of the Pearson Square/Tax Analyst property and north of South Maple Avenue along Gibson Street and Shirley Street.

According to the City Zoning Ordinance the R-M, Multifamily Residence zoning district,

“...is created for the purposes of maintaining the residential character of the city and meeting the residential needs of the population by providing apartment homes in a variety of sizes, styles, densities and forms of ownership. The multifamily district is intended to provide creativity in residential design, in locations that are near major transportation services, stores, offices and community facilities.”

The R-M district allows all principal uses as permitted in the R-1B district. Multifamily structures may reach a maximum of three stories, or 35 feet.



Buildings for other uses may reach a height of 45 feet at three stories. Mixed-use redevelopment is permitted in the R-M district with a special exception.

O-D, Official Design

The intent of the O-D, Official Design zoning district is described in the Zoning Ordinance:

“...the specific intent of this section is to produce an orderly, harmonious and appropriate development of the areas with due regard to their special characteristics and peculiar suitability for particular uses, so that no building can be placed or built without considering its total effect on the whole design.”

The O-D district allows any principal uses permitted in the T-1, Transitional 1, and B-2, Central Business, districts as well as single family dwellings, public buildings, parks and community centers, and professional office buildings with ground-floor retail. Aligning with the intent of the district, applications for development must be reviewed at the initial and preliminary stages by the Planning Commission. The Planning Commission will review the application based on the objectives of architecture and land uses for the specific properties in any O-D district. Mixed-use redevelopment of properties designated O-D may be allowed upon review by the Planning Commission.

Within the South Washington Street Corridor POA an O-D zoning designation is present across one full parcel and a portion of two others. A parcel at the southern corner of the South Washington Street and Fairfax Street intersection is zoned O-D. The northern portion of a parcel located at the southern corner of the intersection of South Washington Street and Annandale Road also has an O-D zoning designation. A 40 foot “pipestem” of land along the northern border of the shopping center parcel located north of the intersection of Hillwood Avenue and Douglass Avenue is also designated as O-D.

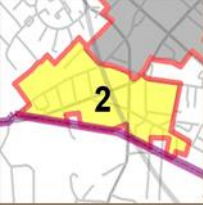
This small area of O-D zoned property is left over from a prior rezoning. In 2002, The Falls Church purchased 1.7 acres of property on two parcels zoned O-D at the corner of Douglass Street and Fairfax Street. The City rezoned the properties to B-3 in 2003. The rezoning was part of a proffered conceptual development plan submittal for a Parish Life Center that would be an extension of the church. The plan was never realized and has expired after nine years of inactivity. The current partial O-D zoning is a remnant of the rezoning combined with the property holdings of the time.

T-1, Transitional 1

Two properties at the extreme southeastern edge of the South Washington Street POA are designated as T-1. These properties are located at

South Washington Street Corridor

Planning Opportunity Area 2



the corner of the intersection of Hillwood Avenue and Hunton Avenue. The T-1 zoning district allows uses such as low-density residential development, religious facilities, institutional uses, offices, and lodging. Currently on these two parcels are a three-story office building at the corner of the intersection of Hillwood Avenue and Hunton Avenue, and the neighboring Falls Church Music Conservatory along Hillwood Avenue.

Recommended Zoning Changes

In order to promote redevelopment at the recommended densities and with desired uses it may be necessary to consider zoning changes throughout the South Washington Street Corridor POA. The density suggestions in Chapter 5, Proposed Land Use, are based on the current zoning districts within the South Washington Street Corridor POA. In addition, the prior rezoning established for the now abandoned Parish Life Center changed the zoning district near Fairfax Street to an odd configuration that may necessitate rezoning.

B-3, General Business, to O-D, Official Design

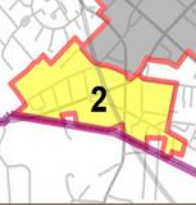
The two parcels along Fairfax Street and Douglass Avenue zoned B-3, General Business, as part of

the now defunct Parish Life Center project could be reverted back to O-D, Official Design. The properties were initially zoned O-D due to their proximity to The Falls Church. The increased review of plans for new construction by the Planning Commission as part of the O-D application process may lead to more compatible architectural elements with The Falls Church.

The Virginia Tech study, “Tinner Hill Arts and Cultural District,” recommends this option to rezone to O-D. It also includes a recommendation for the expansion of the O-D zoning designation to adjacent properties in order to better protect the character of The Falls Church.

Park Zoning Designation

The addition of a zoning designation that reserves certain land for public parks should be considered. Currently, existing parkland is zoned for development at the level of one of the existing zoning districts according to the City’s Official Zoning Map. Creating a district to reserve land for parks could help to provide a method for the City to preserve existing parkland, create new parkland in the future, and reduce any confusion caused by the current zoning configuration. An option should be considered that would allow the City to rezone currently developed land for parks with the ability for the owner to transfer development rights from that property. This is particularly relevant within the South Washington Street Corridor POA if an



expansion of Big Chimneys Park into the Virginia Village neighborhood is pursued.

Transfer of Development Rights

A Transfer of Development Rights program should be considered to promote the creation of open space in exchange for higher densities on redeveloped properties in the Core Commercial Area. Such a program would be particularly important in creating open space for events and a community center adjacent to the existing Big Chimneys Park. It may also be used in other areas of the South Washington Street Corridor POA where open space is desired. The creation of such a program would require zoning ordinance changes to allow owners of properties slated for public space or conservation to sell development rights to other property owners or to shift development rights to other parcels that they own. This would allow higher densities in the recommended areas, while not penalizing landowners for setting land aside for public open space.

Planning Overlay District

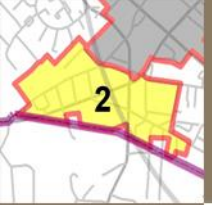
Establishing overlay districts within the South Washington Street Corridor POA has the potential to preserve the historic character of the area while focusing higher intensity redevelopment into specified corridors. Zoning overlays can provide an opportunity for the City to modify specific areas to

meet certain guidelines for form and character without changing existing zoning designations. The Union Square Arts Overlay District in Somerville Massachusetts is an example of one such district that is used to preserve and promote the arts by providing incentives for high-density retail, commercial, and housing with arts-related benefits.

Historic & Cultural Conservation District

One structure in, and several adjacent to, the South Washington Street Corridor POA are covered under the existing Historic & Cultural Conservation (HCC) District. These structures are named and described in Chapter 3, Arts, Culture & Historic Preservation. The HCC designation is used to “preserve and protect the architectural, cultural, and historic heritage of the City and encourage and assist in the preservation of historically, architecturally, and culturally significant sites and structures,” according to the City Zoning Code.

The Virginia Tech study titled, “Tinner Hill Arts and Cultural District,” recommends the expansion of the HCC District into an overlay district along the route proposed for the Tinner Hill Heritage Trail. Creating an overlay district has the potential to raise property values as well as create opportunities for tourism and investment, according to the study. Such a district could include provisions that would enhance the Tinner Hill area, such as integrated trails, connectivity between



South Washington Street Corridor

Planning Opportunity Area 2

historic sites, and educational opportunities that could be implemented by existing businesses or with redevelopment.

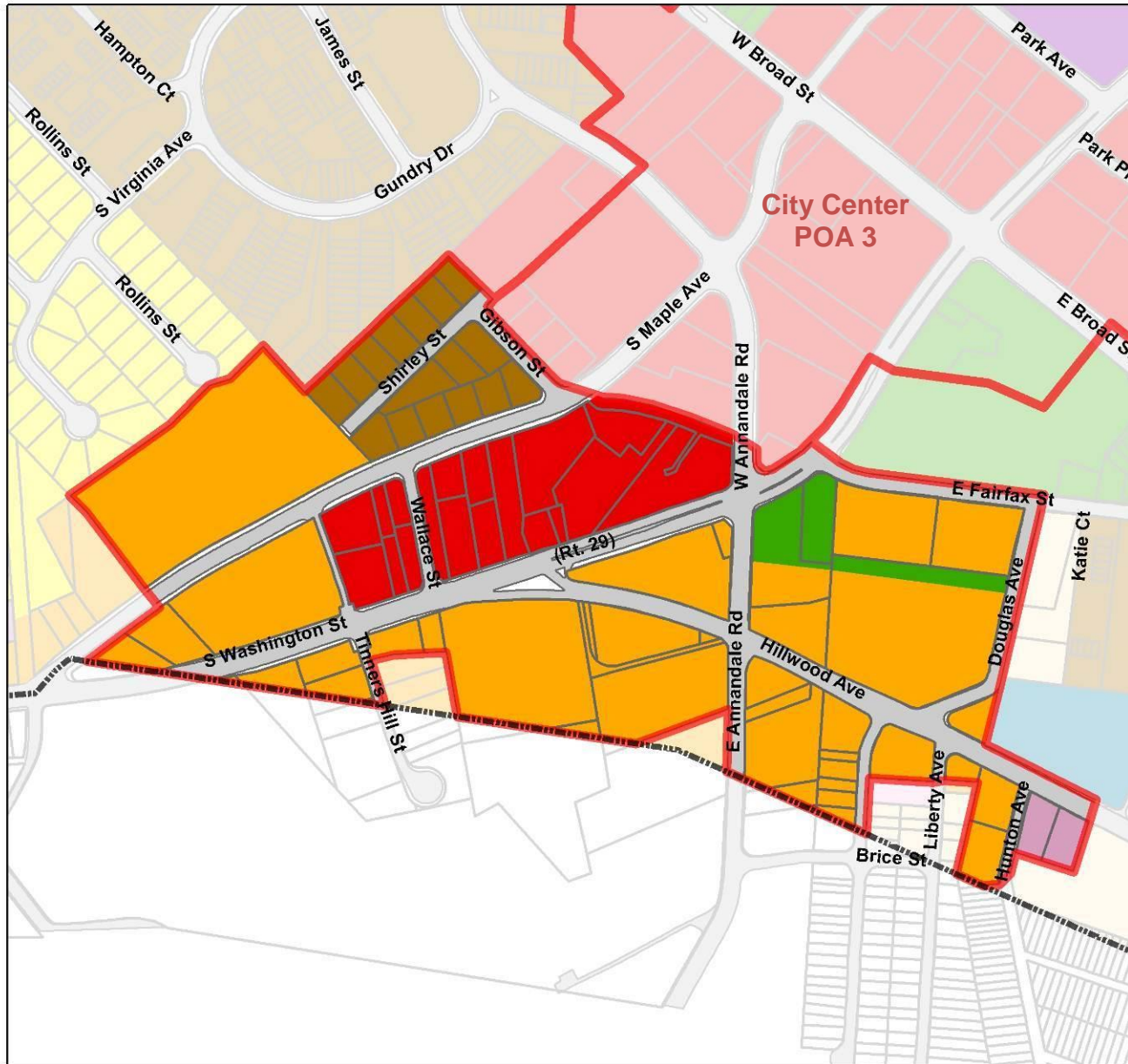
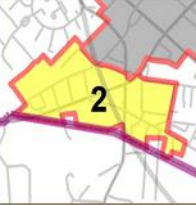
Core Commercial Area

An overlay district for the proposed Core Commercial Area would include the portion of the Area in the South Washington Street Corridor POA as described in Chapter 5, Proposed Land Use as well as an area in the City Center POA between South Washington Street, West Broad Street, and South Maple Avenue. A designated overlay district for this area has the potential to provide incentives to developers for parcel consolidation and the provision of high-density, majority office redevelopment that conforms with the character of the area, the desired uses, and the City Design Guidelines.

A special overlay for the Core Commercial Area should be considered that allows higher intensity mixed-use redevelopment than what is currently allowed in the City. This could include FAR allowances of up to 4.5 on some properties combined with increased height allowances. Allowing higher FAR and height options on these centrally located properties would allow the peripheral properties adjacent to residential areas to be lower density while still achieving an average 2.5 FAR for the entire South Washington Street Corridor POA as recommended by the Urban Land Institute for suburban mixed-use districts. An

overlay district could also include restrictions on types of uses, public improvement requirements, minimum density requirements, LEED Certification requirements, and others as desired by the City in order to ensure compatibility with the needs and character of the area and the City.

South Washington Street Corridor Planning Opportunity Area 2

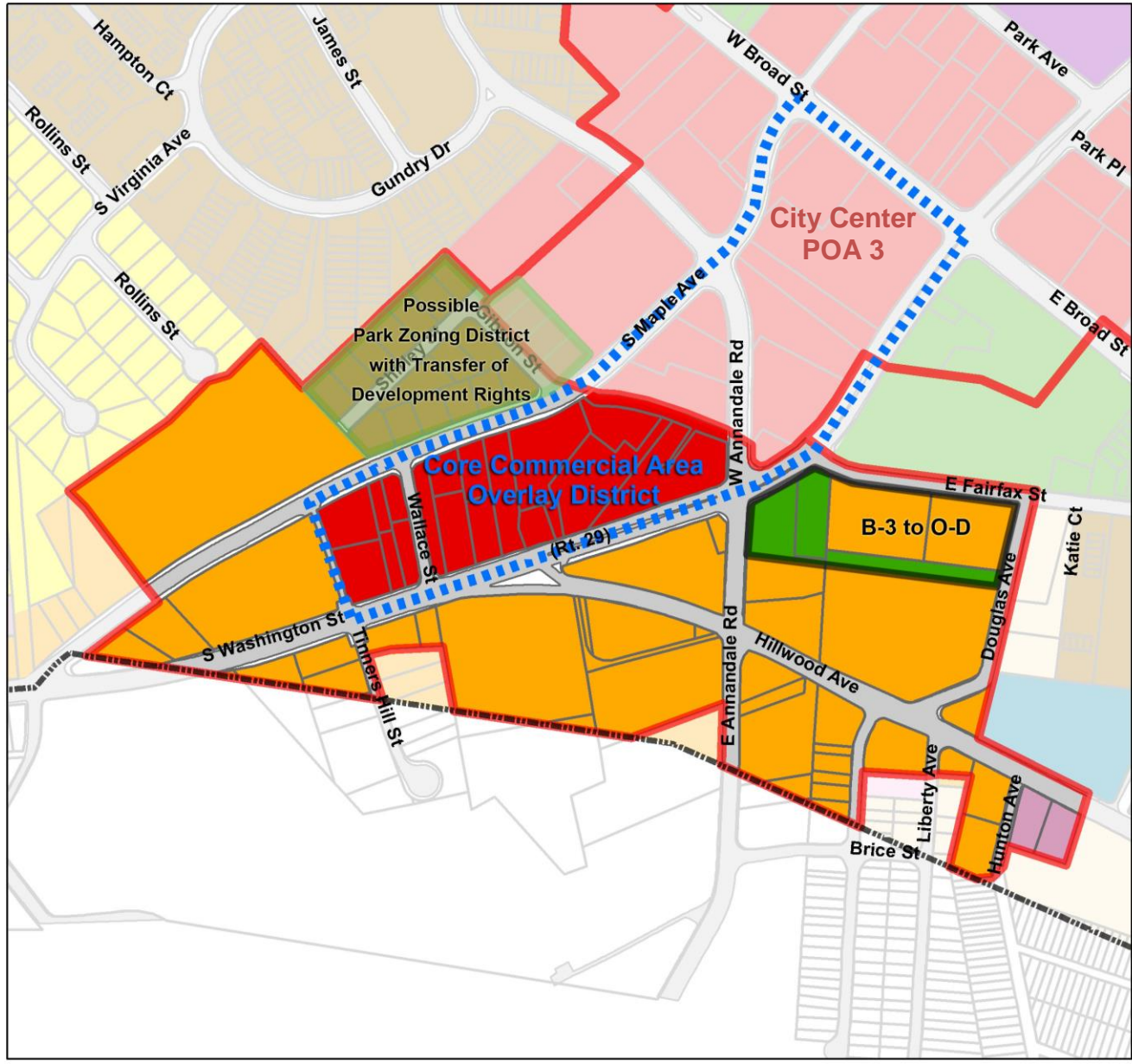


Existing Zoning	
S Washington St Corridor	
Planning Opportunity Area 2	
City of Falls Church	
Legend	
	Planning Opportunity Area
	Parcel
	City Boundary
Zoning	
	B-1, Limited Business
	B-2, Central Business
	B-3, General Business
	C-D, Creative Development
	M-1, Light Industry
	O-D, Official Design
	R-1A, Low Density Residential
	R-1B, Medium Density Residential
	R-C, Cluster Residence
	R-M, Multi-Family Residence
	R-TH, Townhouse Residence
	T-1, Transitional 1
	T-2, Transitional 2

Zoning

South Washington Street Corridor Planning Opportunity Area 2

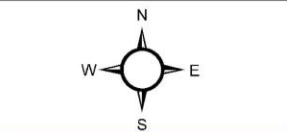
Zoning



Recommended Zoning Changes

S Washington St Corridor

Planning Opportunity Area 2



City of Falls Church

Legend

- Planning Opportunity Area
- Parcel
- City Boundary
- Zoning**
- B-1, Limited Business
- B-2, Central Business
- B-3, General Business
- C-D, Creative Development
- M-1, Light Industry
- O-D, Official Design
- R-1A, Low Density Residential
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- T-1, Transitional 1
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