

I-4. Land Use and Zoning

This chapter discusses Port Chester’s current land use patterns and existing Form Based Zoning Code.

Land use describes existing activities and conditions on the ground. Zoning is the regulatory tool municipalities use to guide land use and control building form, design, and development outcomes for new construction and renovations.

Key Takeaways

- Most land in the Village is residential (48% of the land area), with low-density neighborhoods in the north, and medium and high-density development in the center and south.
- Commercial uses are concentrated in the eastern and southern portions of the Village along major roadways: Boston Post Road/Route 1, Main Street, Pearl Street, Westchester Avenue, and Purdy Avenue.
- Parks and open space are limited to only 3.6% of the Village’s land area.
- Port Chester adopted a Form Based Zoning Code in 2020 which establishes 16 zoning districts: 13 Character Districts, two Special Districts, and a Civic District.
- Character Districts regulate the land use, building form and type, building facades, parking, private landscaping, fences and walls, signs, and encroachments of development.

Existing Land Use Patterns

Port Chester is a densely populated Village that is home to a diverse mix of land uses. Since the last comprehensive plan, there has been residential, commercial, and mixed-use growth, further spurred by the adoption of the Form Based Zoning Code in 2020. This growth is primarily concentrated in the Village’s downtown around Main Street and the Train Station and consists mainly of mixed-use and multi-family development.

Residential is the most common land use in the Village, occupying 48% of the Village’s land area, with low-density single-family uses primarily located in the northern portion of the Village, and medium and high-density residential concentrated in the central and southern areas of the Village (see Table 4-1 and Figure 4-1).

Commercial uses are primarily concentrated in the eastern and southern portions of the Village along major roadways: Boston Post Road/Route 1, Pearl Street, Westchester Avenue, North Main Street, and Purdy Avenue. Other neighborhood-level commercial nodes are dispersed throughout the Village, like the Biltmore Shopping Center on Westchester Avenue and Merritt Street and the retail/restaurant strip along Putnam Avenue east of Lyon Park.

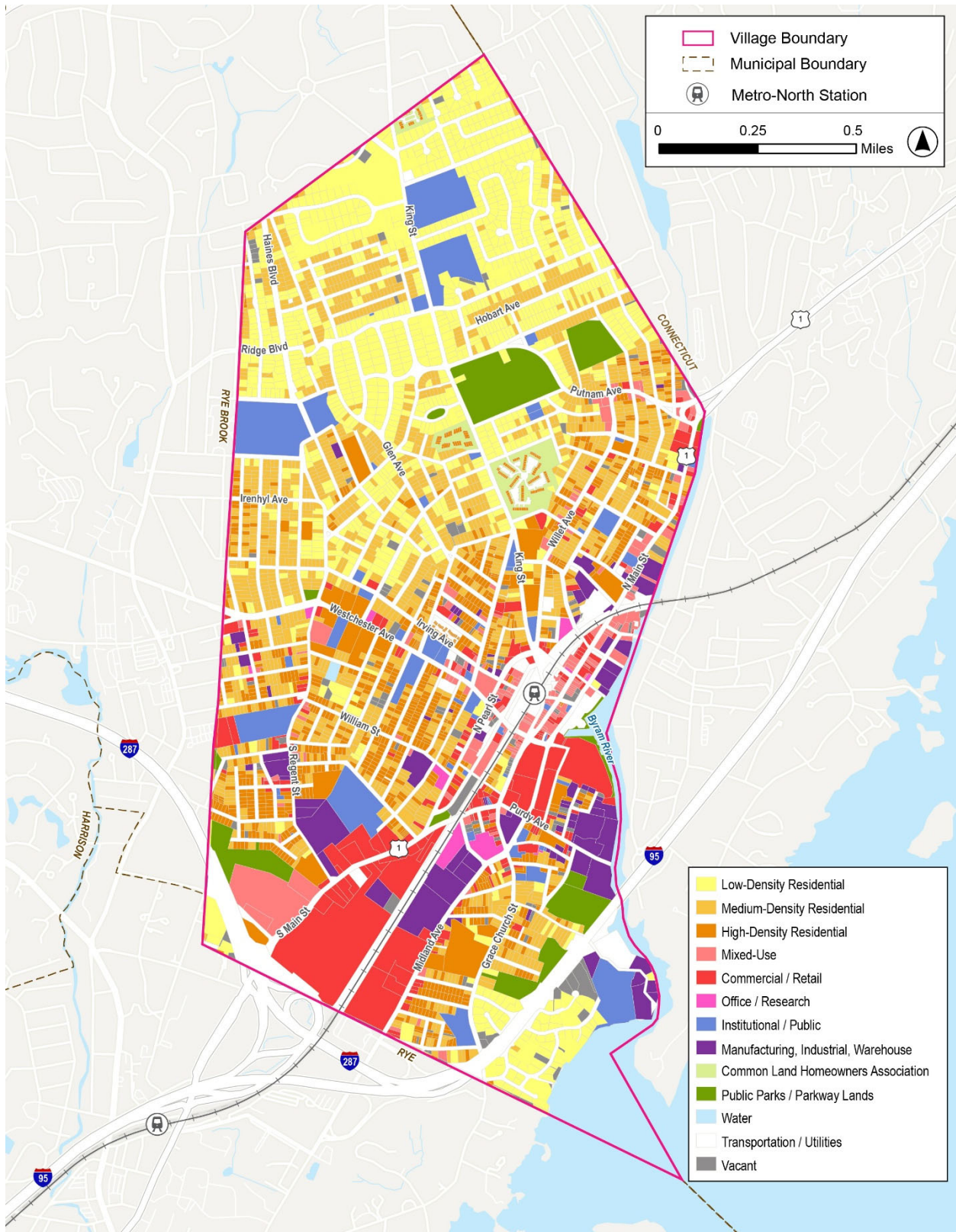
The Village's waterfront is primarily characterized by commercial and industrial uses, such as the Village's Department of Public Works facility and Costco. One exception is a low-density single-family neighborhood in the southeast corner of Port Chester below Fox Island.

At only 3.6%, Port Chester has a very limited amount of public park and open space land. There is limited vacant land to increase the inventory.

Table 4-1: Land Use by Type and Coverage

Land Use	Acres	Percent
Low Density Residential	305.7	20.2%
Medium Density Residential	261.3	17.3%
High Density Residential	152.7	10.1%
Mixed Use	47.2	3.1%
Commercial-Retail	120.8	8.0%
Office and Research	7.7	0.5%
Institutional and Public Assembly	87.7	5.8%
Manufacturing, Industrial, Warehouse	66.6	4.4%
Common Land Homeowners Association	13.9	0.9%
Public Parks, Parkway Lands	54.8	3.6%
Water Supply Lands	0.8	0.1%
Transportation, Communication, Utilities	362.6	24.0%
Total	1,509	100.0%

Figure 4-1: Existing Land Use (2025)



Sources: Port Chester, NYS GIS, Westchester County GeoHub, BFI Planning

Zoning

The primary law governing land use in Port Chester is the Village's Form Based Zoning Code (see § 345 in the Village Code), which regulates the physical form and use of all parcels. The Form Based Code was adopted in 2020, following a planning initiative called Plan the Port (see Chapter I.2 for more information). Port Chester has 16 zoning districts: 13 Character Districts, two Special Districts, and a Civic District (see Table 4-2 and Figure 4-2).

Table 4-2: Zoning Districts

District	Acres	Percent
C1	1.8	0.9%
CD-3.R20	1.7	0.9%
CD-3.R7	53.4	28.0%
CD-3.R5	29.1	15.2%
R2F	34.3	18.0%
CD-4	17.1	9.0%
CD-4MU	17.1	9.0%
CD-4MU/ CD-5T	1.1	0.6%
CD-5	9.5	5.0%
CD-5W	7.7	4.0%
CD-6	3.6	1.9%
CD-6T	0.5	0.3%
CV	8.6	4.5%
SD-PMU	2.5	1.3%
SD-PRD	2.8	1.5%

Character Districts

The intended form and character of a neighborhood is the guiding principle of these districts. Through regulating form and land use, character districts help ensure compatibility between uses and reinforce the intended character of an area. Character districts regulate standards such as building facades, building form and type, parking, private landscaping, fences and walls, signs, encroachments, and use.

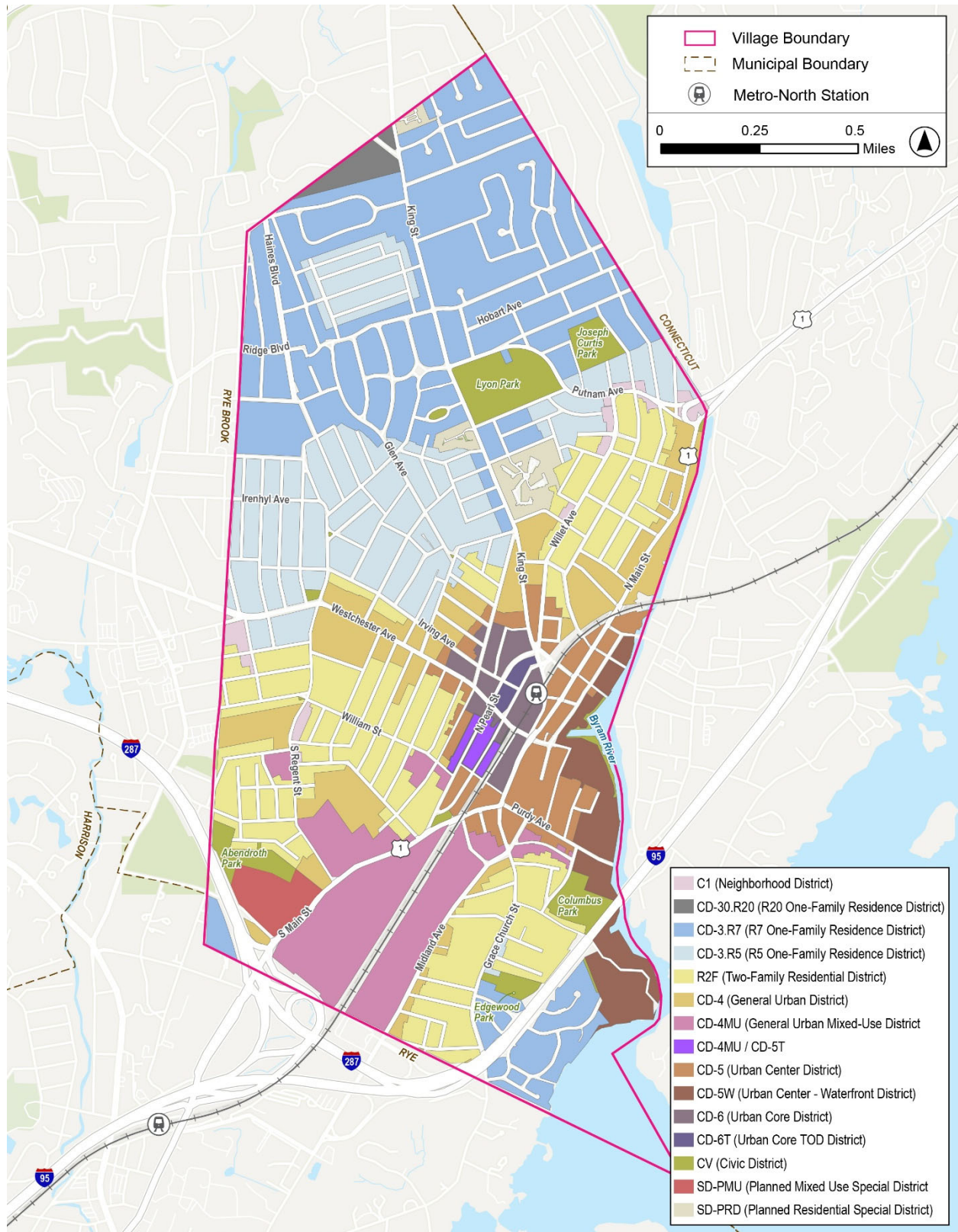
C1 Neighborhood District

The C1 district supports small-scale commercial and mixed-uses in select pockets throughout the Village, including the shopping center at Putnam Avenue and Willet Avenue, the Biltmore Shopping Center at Westchester Avenue and Merritt Street, and neighborhood level. C1 permits up to 90% impervious surface coverage, limits building height to two stories, and requires a minimum of 60% façade frontage build out.

The Form Based Zoning Code

The Form Based Zoning Code, also called Character Based Zoning Code, aims to enhance and streamline the regulation of Port Chester's diverse, mixed-use environments by aligning with the community's goals and vision for the built environment as expressed in prior plans and public outreach conducted in the Plan the Port process. As opposed to a conventional zoning code, a form based code emphasizes the physical character of places and desired form of development rather than the use. In other words, it aims to create well-designed, consistent neighborhoods by regulating elements such as facades, building shapes, and landscaping while still determining where uses, such as retail or industrial, are appropriate.

Figure 4-2: Existing Zoning (2025)



Sources: Port Chester, NYS GIS, Westchester County GeoHub, BFI Planning

CD-3 (Neighborhood)

Character District CD-3 consists of detached single-family homes. This district is characterized by medium to wide front and side setbacks. Roadways in the district have sidewalks or street trees and houses sit on medium to large blocks.

CD-3.R20 One-Family Residence District

CD-3.R20 One Family Residence District is the former R20 zoning district, encompassing a small residential area in northern Port Chester. CD-3.R20 is characterized by low-density, single-family detached houses along Woodland Drive and Beechwood Boulevard, with a maximum building height of two stories. The minimum lot size is 20,000 square feet and there is a minimum usable open space requirement of 5,000 square feet per unit. There are no sidewalks, and lots are set back from the street.

CD-3.R7 One-Family Residence Character District

The CD-3.R7 is the largest zoning district in the Village, covering 28% of Port Chester. The former R7 district occupies the northern third of the Village, excluding areas zoned as CD-3.R5 and CD-3.R20. The low-density residential district requires a minimum lot size of 7,000 square feet, has a minimum usable open space requirement of 3,500 square feet, and a two-story building height limit. The CD-3.R7 district is characterized by single-family detached homes on sidewalk-lined streets; Port Chester High School is in this district.

CD-3.R5 One-Family Residence District

Approximately 15% of Village land is zoned CD-3.R5, the former R5 zoning district. This single-family residential district encompasses three neighborhood areas in the northern half of Port Chester:

- The area south of Port Chester High School, extending from the Village border to King Street;
- The area between Putnam Avenue and Joseph Curtis Park, and south of Lyon Park; and
- Robert Avenue, Shelley Avenue, Hawley Avenue, and Adams Avenue from Glen Avenue to Munson Street.

The district has a minimum lot size requirement of 5,000 square feet and a minimum usable open space requirement of 2,000 square feet. There is a two-story maximum height limit, yard setbacks are medium to small, and streets typically have sidewalks in the CD-3.R5 district.

R2F Two-Family Residential Character District

R2F is the second most common district in the Village, representing 18% of land area. The district is defined by low to medium density single-family and two-family detached residential units. It has a minimum lot size of 5,000 square feet and a minimum usable open space requirement of 800 square feet per unit. R2F is primarily found in three areas of the Village: the southwestern corner from Boston Post Road northwest to Westchester Avenue; the Purdy's Grove neighborhood in the southeastern corner; and the east-central area spanning from Highland Street north to Putnam Avenue.

CD-4 General Urban Character District

CD-4 is a mixed-use district that permits single-family, two-family, and multi-family dwellings, as well as a variety of retail, office, and civic uses. The district limits impervious surface coverage to 70%, limits building heights to three-stories, and requires a minimum façade frontage build out of 60%. The CD-4 district along Westchester Avenue is characterized by civic institutions such as the YMCA, Knights of Columbus, Public Library, and Church of Our Lady of Mercy. Along North Main Street, the district is comprised of retail, restaurant, and residential uses. Corpus Christi School and John F. Kennedy Elementary School are in CD-4 districts.

CD-4MU General Urban Mixed-Use Character District

CD-4MU is a mixed-use district comprised of larger lots in the Village core surrounding Boston Post Road/Route 1. The district permits single-family, two-family, and multi-family dwellings. Development standards include a minimum façade frontage build out of 60%, a maximum building height of three stories, and a maximum impervious surface coverage of 80%. CD-4MU is largely defined by big box retail, like the Kohl's shopping center.

CD-5 Urban Center Character District

CD-5 is a higher-density mixed-use district in the core of the Village, characterized by a tight street network with sidewalks and lighting. It primarily encompasses the east side of South Main Street from Purdy Avenue to Westchester Avenue, as well as both sides of North Main Street from Westchester Avenue to Mill Street. Buildings in the district must be at least two stories tall with a maximum height limit of six stories. District requirements include a minimum façade build out of 80% and a maximum impervious surface coverage of 100%. The district also regulates façade articulation. Green civic spaces are not permitted.

CD-5T Urban Center-Transit

The CD-5T, adopted in 2024, serves as a transitional, high density mixed-use district between the CD-6 and CD-5 districts. CD-5T is currently mapped in conjunction with CD-4MU; this joint district spans three blocks in the Village core, extending from the west side of South Pearl Street to the east side of North Broad Street, between William Street and Westchester Avenue. Any regulations from either district apply in the CD-4MU / CD-5T zone. The area is defined by a mix of uses including auto-repair shops, two-family homes, and restaurants.

CD-5W Urban Center-Waterfront Character District

The CD-5W is a higher-density mixed-use district along the Byram River waterfront, extending from Fox Island north to Mill Street. The area is defined by the Village Department of Public Works facility, the Costco shopping center, light industrial uses like storage facilities, auto repair, and construction, as well as water-dependent uses like marinas. District requirements stipulate 80% maximum impervious surface coverage, and 60% façade frontage build out; the district also regulates façade articulation. CD-5W requires a minimum building height of two stories and allows up to six stories, except along the Byram River, where the maximum height is limited to four stories.

CD-6 Urban Core Character District

The CD-6 is the highest density district in the Village. This district is characterized by a variety of civic, retail, office, residential, and mixed-uses, as well as the Port Chester Metro-North Station. Regulations require a minimum of six stories up to a maximum of 12 stories, frontage façade build out of 80%, and permits 100% impervious surface coverage. The CD-6 also regulates façade articulation.

CD-6T Urban Core TOD Character District

The CD-6T encompasses two blocks in the core of the Village – extending east from North Pearl Street to Broad Street, between Westchester Avenue and King Street. This district is immediately west of the Port Chester Metro-North Station and is largely defined by the Capitol Theatre, retail, restaurants, and multi-family housing. CD-6T has a minimum height requirement of six stories and allows up to 15 stories. The district requires 80% façade frontage build out and regulates façade articulation. 100% impervious surface coverage is permitted.

Civic Districts

Civic Districts are areas designated for civic buildings or spaces.

CV Civic District

Port Chesters CV zones are defined by public parks such as Abendroth Park, Joseph Curtis Park, Columbus Park, Edgewood Park, and Lyon Park.

Special Districts

Special District zoning is used for areas which cannot conform to the requirements of the applicable Character District due to size, use, or configuration.

SD-PMU Planned Mixed-Use Special District

The SD-PMU is a planned mixed-use special district. The one area zoned SD-PMU encompasses the Hospital complex off Boston Post Road. This site is being redeveloped as a mixed-use community consisting of 25,00 square feet of commercial and 975 residential units, including 200 age-restricted units and 100 assisted living apartments.

SD-PRD Planned Residential Development

The SD-PRD supports planned residential developments incorporating a variety of housing typologies. Current SD-PRD districts include the Village Green townhome development and the Lyon Farm Village townhome community, adjacent to Lyon Park. To be eligible for SD-PRD, the site must have a minimum of 10 contiguous acres of land. Regulations also require that no single dwelling type exceeds 70% of the total units and mandate a minimum of 3,500 square feet of usable open space per unit. The district allows buildings up to two and half stories.

Area and Bulk Requirements

For each district, the Village's Code establishes area and bulk requirements. Table 4.3 provides a summary of these regulations, including the minimum lot size, maximum building height, maximum impervious coverage, minimum usable open space, façade frontage build out, and Floor Area Ratio (FAR). FAR refers to the total floor area of a development in relation to the lots size.

Table 4.3. Area and Bulk Requirements Summary

District	Min Lot Size	Building Height	Max Impervious Coverage	Min Usable Open Space	Façade Frontage Build out	FAR
C1	-	2 stories or 35 ft	90%	-	60%	1.0, or .35 for 1 story
CD-3	-	2 stories	60%	-	40%	-
CD-3.R20	20,000 sf	2 stories or 35 ft	-	5,000 sf / unit	-	0.35
CD-3.R7	7,500 sf	2 stories or 35 ft	-	3,500 sf / unit	-	0.5
CD-3.R5	5,000 sf	2 stories or 35 ft	-	2,000 sf / unit	-	0.6
R2F	5,000 sf	2 stories / 30 feet	65%	800 sf / unit	-	0.7
CD-4	-	1 story min 3 stories max	70%	-	60%	-
CD-4MU	-	1 story min 3 stories max	80%	-	60%	-
CD-5	-	2 stories min 6 stories max	100%	-	80%	-
CD-5T	-	3 stories min 9 stories max	100%	-	80%	-
CD-5W	-	Second Lot Layer: 2 stories min, 6 stories max*	80%	-	60%	-
CD-6	-	6 stories min, 12 stories max	100%	-	80%	-
CD-6T	-	6 stories min, 15 stories max	100%	-	80%	-