RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS

This poster presents information on existing residential development standards in Harris County. These standards vary slightly between zoning districts in Harris County and regulate the minimum size of lots, lot dimensions, building setbacks from front, side and rear property lines, and buildings heights. Be sure to review the "Lot Standards Exhibit" poster to better understand the application of these standards to residential development in Harris County.

VIRTUAL PARTICIPANTS: Please email your comments to zoningcode@harriscountyga.gov

TYPES OF RESIDENTIAL LOTS

The following graphics depict various examples of lot types and illustrate how the type of lot may affect what types of yards a property has (front, side, rear). A typical lot that has frontage on one street, will have a front yard along the street, side yards along the side property lines, and a rear yard along the rear property line. A corner lot typically does not have a rear yard, only front and side yards since it has frontage on two streets. Similarly, a double frontage lot also only has front and side yards.
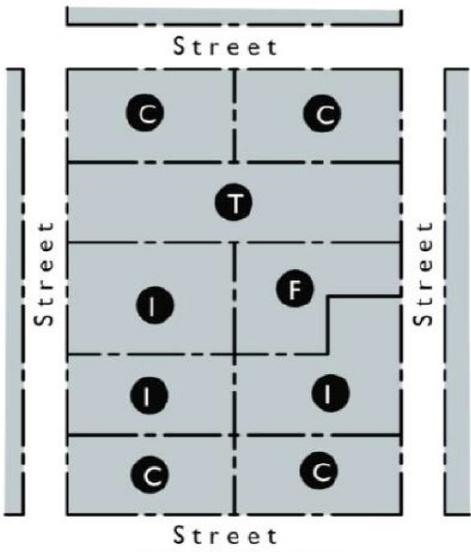
Types of Lot Lines:
- *Front lot lines* run along street lines
- *Side lot lines* intersect street lines
- *Rear lot lines* do not intersect street lines; they intersect side lot lines.
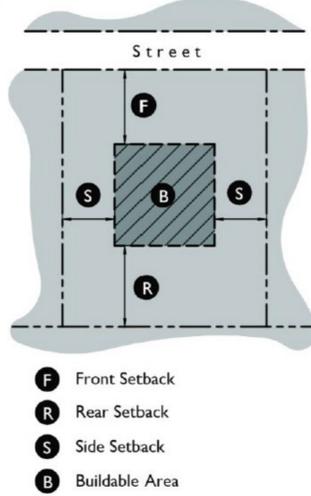
Yards:
- Yards are situated between a building and the front, side, or rear property lines.
- A lot may contain a front, side, and rear yard; or only a front and side yard.
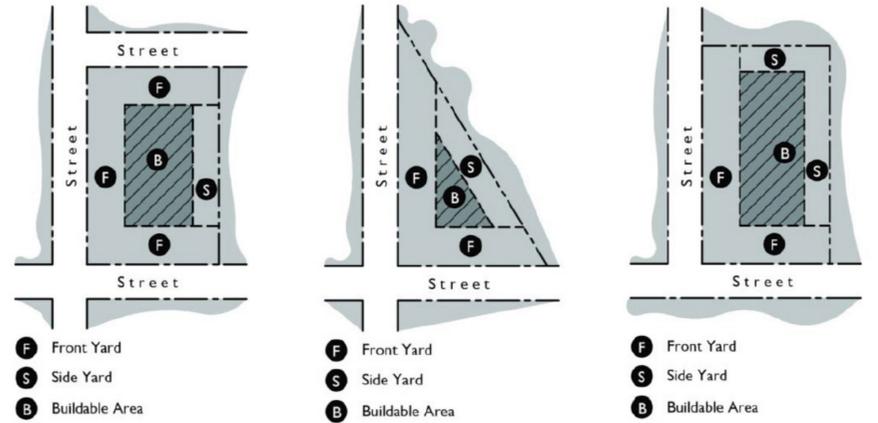
TYPES OF LOTS

- **C** Corner Lot
- **I** Interior Lot
- **F** Flag Lot
- **T** Through, or Double Frontage, Lot

**NOTE: These illustrations are simply meant to provide a visual depiction of various types of lots, setbacks, property lines, and buildable areas. The scale of these illustrations does not represent existing or future lot conditions in Harris County.

INTERIOR LOT

- **F** Front Setback
- **R** Rear Setback
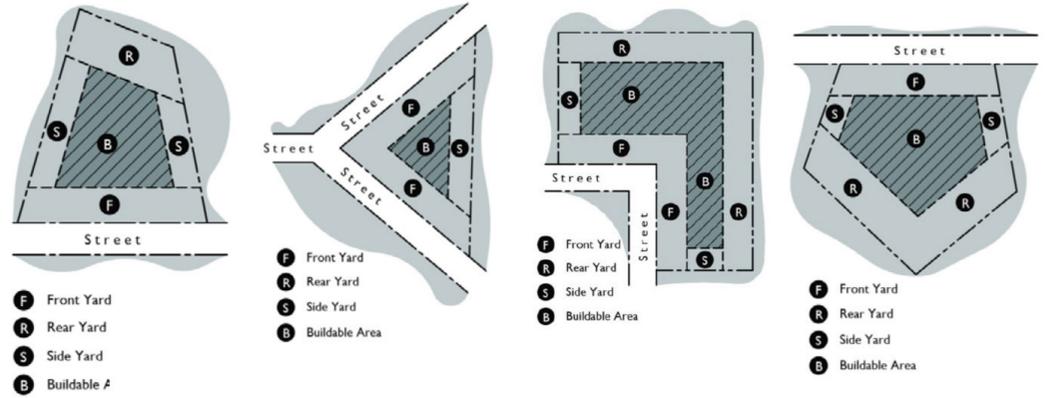- **S** Side Setback
- **B** Buildable Area

CORNER LOTS

- **F** Front Yard
- **S** Side Yard
- **B** Buildable Area

IRREGULAR LOTS

- **F** Front Yard
- **R** Rear Yard
- **S** Side Yard
- **B** Buildable Area

EXISTING DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS FOR RESIDENTIAL ZONING DISTRICTS

The table below presents a summary of lot standards for development in residential zoning districts commonly found throughout the County. These standards regulate building setbacks from property lines, lot width and lot dimensions, and minimum lot size.

Currently, the lot standards are similar for residential development in many of these zoning districts. Do you feel that any of these standards should be modified? Be sure to review the "Lot Standards Exhibit" poster for more details.

MINIMUM RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS SUMMARY*

Description		Minimum Lot Area*		Lot Width at Public Street	Lot Width at Building Line	Minimum Setbacks			Max. Building Height	Max. Accessory Bldg Height	Maximum Lot Coverage	Other Requirements
		Public Water	Private Water			Front	Side	Rear				
A-1 (Agricultural/Forestry)	The objective of this district is to preserve land areas suitable for eventual rezoning when the need and availability of community facilities warrant its development. The types of uses, area and intensity of development permitted in this district are designed to protect agricultural uses until rezoning is warranted and appropriate changes in districts can be made. This district also allows low-work units. See definitions (article II) and supplementary district regulations (article V).	District regulation for intended use shall apply.	District regulation for intended use shall apply.	50'	District regulation for intended use shall apply.	District regulation for intended use shall apply.	District regulation for intended use shall apply.	District regulation for intended use shall apply.	35 feet or 2½ stories.		District regulation for intended use shall apply.	
R-R (Rural Residential)	The objective of this district is to preserve the natural resources and environmentally sensitive areas of the county while providing for low-density residential use. No new R-R district may be created which contains less than ten acres.	2 acres	2 acres	50'	90'	50'	1 story: 10' 1+ stories: 12' Corner: 50' ("street side yard")	35'	35 feet or 2½ stories.	15'	25% of total lot area	
R-1 (Low-Density Residential)	The objective of this district is to preserve land areas for single dwelling unit structures and to promote residential areas with low densities. Those areas are intended to be geographically defined and protected from the encroachment of uses not performing a function necessary to a residential environment. Certain nonresidential uses which are more compatible with residential uses may be permitted on review by the board of zoning adjustment. In addition to the primary structure, only one detached residential structure shall be permitted on the same lot as the primary structure, shall be on the same utilities as the primary structure, shall be no more than 800 square feet, and shall be located to the rear or side yard of the primary structure. Prohibited are: detached structures which may be or are intended to be rented out as living areas. No new R-1 Low-Density Residential District may be created which contains less than four (4) acres.	2 acres* *Exception = subdivision lots in approved plats, reviewed & approved by HC PC as a variance or waiver stipulated in resolution per Article XVII	2 acres	50'	90'	50'	1 story: 10' 1+ stories: 12' Corner: 50' ("street side yard")	35'	35 feet or 2½ stories.	15'	25% of total lot area	
R-2 (Medium-Density Residential)	The objective of this district is to provide and preserve land areas for single dwelling unit structures and low-density multiple dwelling unit structures, not to exceed two dwelling units per structure, which will achieve an overall medium density of residential development. Certain uses which are more compatible with residential uses than with nonresidential uses are also permitted on review of the board of zoning adjustment. In 2 districts should be located in areas where a gradual transition from one district or density or development to another is desirable. No new R-2 Medium-Density Residential District may be created which contains less than two acres.	Single Family (Use # 1 Requirements) 2 acres	N/A	50'	90'	50'	1 story: 10' 1+ stories: 12' Corner: 50' ("street side yard")	35'	35 feet or 2½ stories.	15'	25% of total lot area	
		Two-Family ½ acre	1 acre	50'	100'	50'	1 story: 10' 1+ stories: 12' Corner: 50' ("street side yard")	35'	35 feet or 2½ stories.		30% of total lot area	
R-3 (High-Density Residential)	The objective of this district is to promote and encourage the development of multidwelling unit structures in areas served by facilities and services necessary to result in efficient, but not overcrowded, high-density residential development. Intensities of land development should be limited to avoid congestion of building and traffic and to provide adequate open space for a healthful and tasteful environment. Nonresidential uses permitted on review should be limited to those necessary to directly serve residents in high-density residential districts. No new R-3 High-Density Residential District may be created which contains less than four acres.	Single Dwelling Unit Structure 2 acres (Min. 4 acres)	N/A	50'	90' (Per R-1)	50' (Per R-1)	1 story: 10' 1+ stories: 12' Corner: 50' ("street side yard") (Per R-1)	35' (Per R-1)	35 feet or 2½ stories. (Per R-1)		25% of total lot area (Per R-1)	1. Permitted nonresidential uses shall have a minimum lot size of 30,000 square feet and shall be set back from all lot lines for a distance of not less than 50 feet. 2. More than 1 multi-dwelling unit structure may be erected on the same lot provided there shall be a minimum distance of 20 feet between principal buildings.
		Multi-Dwelling Unit Structures 2,500 sf per dwelling unit for up to 4 dwelling units	N/A	50'	100'	10'	10' Corner: 50' ("street side yard")	35'	85 feet or 5 stories		30% of total lot area	3. Multi-dwelling unit structure may be erected on the same lot provided there shall be a minimum distance of 20 feet between principal buildings. 4. Must have an approved water supply and water system and an approved sewage disposal system.

*NOTE: A hard copy of the zoning and development standards is provided on the table.

To view these standards in the existing Zoning Ordinance online, use this link and navigate to Article IV, Section 3 - Zoning District Regulations: https://library.municode.com/ga/harris_county/codes/code_of_ordinances?nodeId=COOR_APXAZO_ARTIVZODIOBUSRE_S3ZODIRE

CONSIDERATIONS FOR BUFFERS, LANDSCAPING, AND TREE PRESERVATION

Currently, Harris County does not require buffers or landscaping for new residential development. Do you think buffer, landscape, and tree preservation provisions should be considered in the development code update?

The following images are from the same street in Harris County, depicted in the aerial image below. Some homes have a natural wooded buffer along the street and side and rear property lines, while others have an open front yard with some landscaping and may or may not have buffers along side property lines.

Illustration

Open front yard, no buffer

Wooded buffer along street, in front of house

Homes with natural wooded buffer along street:

Homes with open yards along the street; some buffers along sides and rear property lines: