

MEDICAL MILE  
OVERLAY DISTRICT  
DESIGN GUIDELINES

CITY OF ALABASTER

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## **PART 1. INTRODUCTION**

### **Background.**

The Medical Mile Overlay District was established by City Council on April 11, 2016 with the intent of redeveloping this corridor for compatibility with and complementary to the existing medical setting. The ordinance addressed appropriate uses and offered basic guidelines. This document will serve to guide the physical development for the Medical Mile Overlay.

### **Applicability.**

The Medical Mile Overlay District encompasses those properties along US Hwy 31 North from Simmsville Road to Hillwood Lane, and situated within parts east of the CSX railway and west of a line 1000 feet parallel to the centerline of US Hwy 31 N. This is more clearly shown on Exhibit 2-1 on page 2.

### **How to Use this Document.**

The overlay district works in conjunction with the City's base zoning districts and other development regulations. Applicants are encouraged to consult with City staff as early as possible in the development process. The City also has a design review process which is required by all applicants prior to any construction. During this process, these guidelines along with all other applicable regulations are explained. This is a companion document to the City of Alabaster Zoning Ordinance, the City's Subdivision and Development Regulations, and other applicable City Codes.

# MEDICAL MILE OVERLAY DISTRICT DESIGN STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES

## SECTION 1. INTENT

Recognizing the special nature of U.S. Highway 31 Medical Mile and the impact of the appearance and their importance to the local economy, the intent of the Medical Mile Overlay District is to establish minimum development standards and regulations for properties within the corridor regarding building development, design and orientation, land uses, site development, landscaping, buffering and screening, access, parking and signage. Overall, the Medical Mile Overlay District is intended to establish uses for this unique area that are compatible and complementary with the existing medical facilities and offices and encourage the improvement of the architectural and visual character of the corridor.

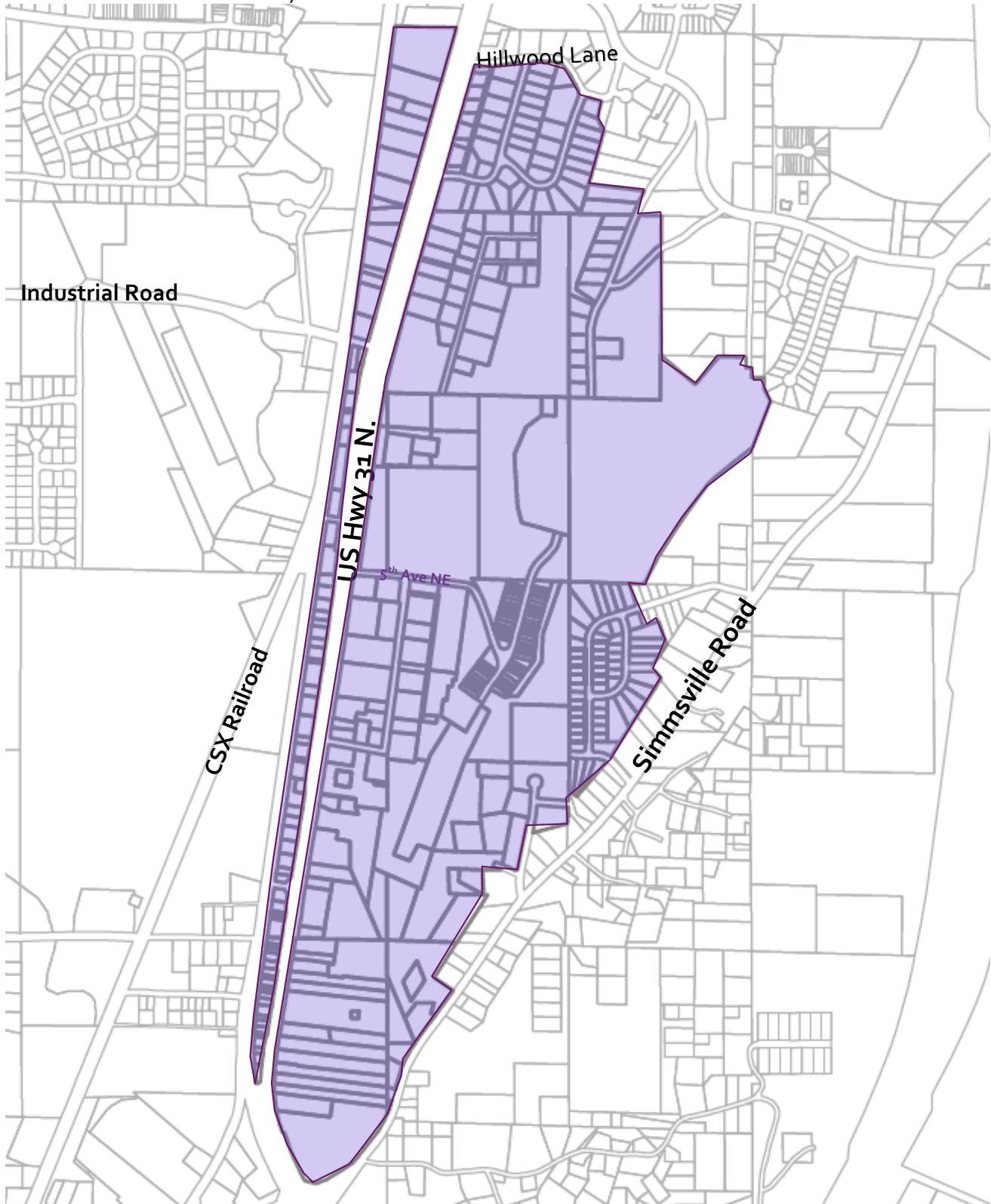
These standards and regulations shall be so applied to accomplish the following purposes:

- 1) To ensure that Alabaster's Medical Mile corridor is developed and maintained in a harmonious and compatible manner to promote the economic development, general welfare and safety of the community.
- 2) To ensure creativity and compatibility of the planning and design among land uses in the corridor as well as to encourage a responsible land ethic.
- 3) To minimize congestion by incorporating access management principles into site design.
- 4) To guide the placement, size, arrangement and articulation of buildings.
- 5) To encourage reuse and redevelopment of existing buildings and building lots.
- 6) To enhance property values through high-quality design and cohesive placemaking.
- 7) To design signage as an integral part of the overall building design.

## SECTION 2. ESTABLISHMENT OF DISTRICT BOUNDARIES

These regulations shall apply to all lots, parcels and tracts as shown in Exhibit 2-1.

Exhibit 2-1 Medical Mile Overlay District boundaries



## SECTION 3. COMPLIANCE

Permitted land uses (Section 7 of this manual) and all development standards in the City's Zoning Ordinance, Subdivision Regulations, Building Codes, and other applicable development-related codes and ordinances that apply to the base zoning district in which the property is located shall apply in developing any such property within Medical Mile Overlay District unless otherwise provided specifically herein. In cases where any of the Overlay District's requirements conflict with base zoning requirements, the more stringent requirement shall apply. Only the potential development of the subject property is affected.

### Nonconforming Uses

All nonconforming existing developments and businesses in the Medical Mile Overlay District on the effective date of this ordinance shall be continued and approved provided that:

- No change shall be permitted to allow any other nonconforming business type, building, or new business of a nonconforming use.
- A nonconforming use shall be required to comply with this ordinance if it has been abandoned for a continuous period of more than 180 days.

Compliance with the Medical Mile Overlay District standards and regulations shall be required for a change of use or an abandoned use. Compliance means full compliance with the Medical Mile Overlay District requirements, including architectural elements, landscape/buffers/screening, signage, parking, grading/drainage, building orientation/occupation.

Additionally, the following guidelines are used for compliance for existing uses regarding landscaping/buffer requirements and for signage:

- 1) Compliance with landscaping and buffering requirements is required when the total building square footage of any expansion exceeds 50% or when the value of multiple building permits reaches 25% or more of the total value of all improvements prior to application of the building permit.
- 2) Compliance with the Signage Standards shall apply when a sign permit is required, including the replacement of a sign panel:
  - a. New signs shall comply with all signage standards
  - b. Existing single tenant signs shall be brought into compliance when a change to the sign requires a sign permit
  - c. Existing multi-tenant signs of a type permitted in the overlay district (monument, pillar, projecting, wall mounted) may be permitted for individual tenant sign change without achieving full compliance as to size, location and illumination
  - d. Existing multi-tenant signs of a type prohibited in the overlay district (pole mounted, etc.) shall be permitted to install new sign panels. Panels installed must be compliant with the illumination standards.
- 3) Expansions shall not be constructed on the front or street side of a structure, unless the proposed expansion would bring the structure more into compliance with the standards in the Medical Mile Overlay District.

## SECTION 4. INTERPRETATION AND MODIFICATIONS

The City of Alabaster Planning and Zoning Official is empowered to make interpretations of the requirements stated within the Medical Mile Overlay District. Appeal of the Planning and Zoning Official's interpretation may be filed with the Planning and Zoning Commission.

The Medical Mile is unique in its proximity to elements that inhibit redevelopment. Hwy 31 is bordered on the west by a CSX rail-line and its accompanying 50-foot right-of-way that borders every parcel on the west. It is bordered on the East by higher elevations for much of the properties on the east side of Hwy 31. The natural landscape and man-made environments are evident and may present difficulties in compliance with some standards of the Overlay District. Based on site-specific issues, modifications may be permitted because of the exceptional narrowness, shallowness or shape of a specific piece of property, exceptional topographic condition, or other extraordinary and exceptional condition of a property.

Any standard within the Overlay District may be modified, insofar as the intent of the standard is being met; the modification results in better urban design for the neighborhood as a whole; and the modification does not impede or burden existing or future developments of adjacent properties.

Minor modifications shall be those of deviations of 10% or less and may be approved administratively by the Planning and Zoning Official. Examples of these modifications are those that are quantifiable such as changes in setbacks, landscape buffers widths, percentage of glazing and materials. Any determination made by the Planning and Zoning Official may be appealed to the Planning Commission. Such appeal shall be filed within seven days of the determination. Major modifications are those deviations more than 10% and those that are not quantifiable such as drive-thru locations, location of architectural elements and deletion of architectural elements must be approved by the Planning Commission.



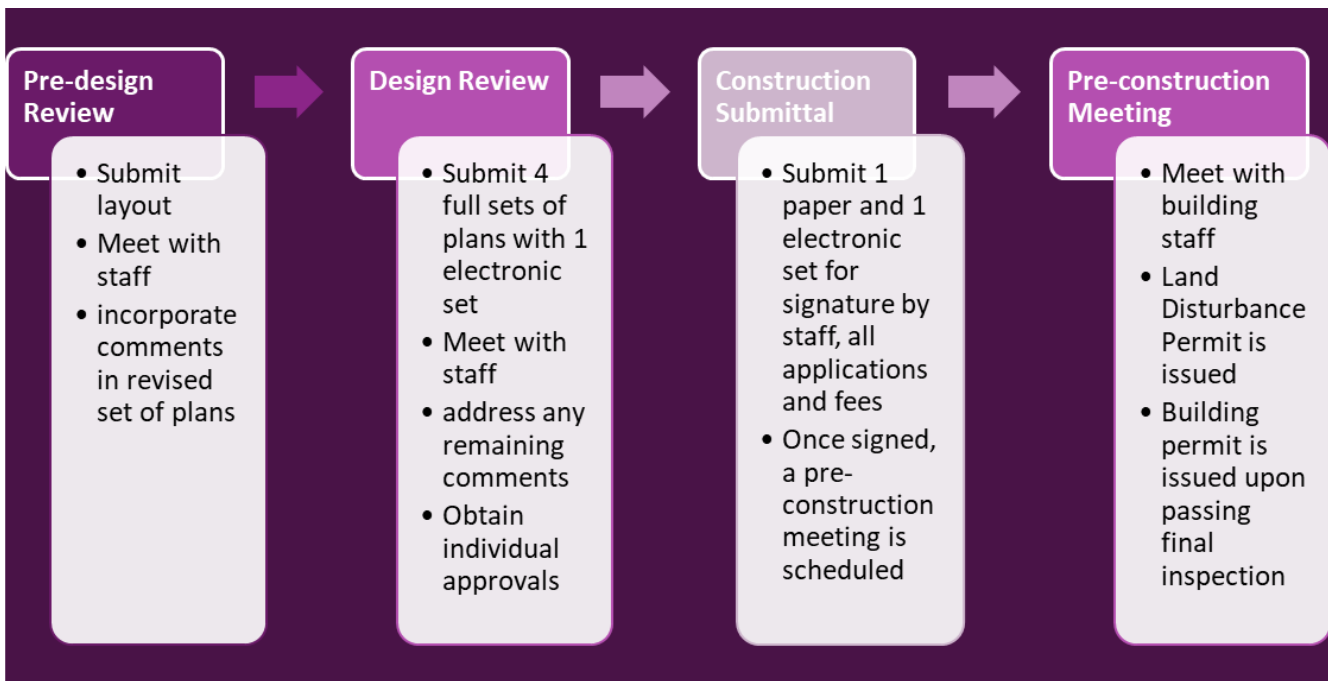
## SECTION 5. APPLICATION PROCEDURE FOR DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Prior to beginning any design or preparation of drawings or plats, the applicant or his or her agent are encouraged to schedule a pre-application meeting with the City of Alabaster design review staff to discuss the overall proposed development plan for the land and general conformance with the Medical Mile Overlay and the Comprehensive Plan. During this meeting, the zoning administrator will inform the project representatives of all Medical Mile Overlay requirements, in addition to other applicable zoning regulations. There are two routes to approval; either through expedited or design review. Staff will determine what process the applicant will follow during the pre-application conference.

**Expedited Review.** For changes of use or ownership for a conforming site, the applicant shall submit a business license application and zoning compliance checklist. This process is reserved for projects that will not require any exterior changes or expansion. These applications are reviewed by the Zoning Administrator and Fire Marshal and under most circumstances can be processed as a 'one-stop' approval.

**Design Review.** For new construction and redevelopment as defined in Section 3 of this guide, prior to the issuance of any business license, building permit, or any subdivision or resurvey of existing property, each owner/applicant shall submit plans for review through the development review process.

The Design Review process begins with a pre-design meeting with all development services staff and follows through the process as illustrated below:



The construction set will be a full set of drawings providing the information below:

- 1) A current boundary survey with legal description, names and addresses of all landowners whose property adjoins the property, as shown in the Tax Assessor's Records of Shelby County, Alabama.
- 2) The location of all buildings proposed to be constructed within the tract, or the existing structures intended to be utilized.
- 3) Existing and proposed access ways and roads, public and private.



- 4) A drainage plan showing existing and proposed drainage.
- 5) Location of all existing and proposed public utilities.
- 6) Location of all off-street parking spaces and loading facilities, service areas/trash enclosures.
- 7) A landscape plan showing the location of required plantings, screening/buffers, and/or walls
- 8) Location of all existing and proposed easements.
- 9) Location of all sidewalks, trails, other pedestrian infrastructure
- 10) Elevations and renderings showing compliance with building orientation, exterior materials and architectural elements
- 11) A lighting plan for any site, parking lot, building lighting, a detail of the fixtures and a photometric plan (if applicable).
- 12) Grading plan, with erosion control, consistent with the development regulations.
- 13) A development schedule if project is to be undertaken in phases
- 14) Master signage plan with elevations of all proposed wall and free-standing signage, locations, sizes and heights.

## SECTION 6. PERMITTED USES

In addition to the requirements set forth by the base zoning district of the individual parcel, within the Medical Mile Overlay District no business license shall be issued, nor shall any building, structure, or land be used or structure shall be erected, structurally altered, or enlarged except for one or more of the following permitted uses:

- (1) Federal, state, county, or city owned or operated buildings and uses.
- (2) General and private hospitals.
- (3) Hospital and surgical facilities.
- (4) Medical or dental clinics.
- (5) Physical therapy, rehabilitation, and therapy clinics.
- (6) Nursing homes, rest homes, and convalescent homes.
- (7) Medical educational institutions, including dormitories.
- (8) Medical research, experimental and testing laboratories.
- (9) General office uses and office buildings.
- (10) Professional services (such as attorneys, accountants, engineers, architects).
- (11) Personal care services (such as barbershops, dry cleaners, hair salons, alteration shops).
- (12) Medical, surgical and dental supply houses.
- (13) Apothecaries, drugstores.
- (14) Ambulance services.
- (15) Doctors' and nurses' quarters.
- (16) Retail sales and consumer service establishments accessory to any permitted use, provided that such commercial use shall not occupy more than 15 percent of the total floor area of the building in which such use is located.
- (17) Accessory structures and uses to those permitted herein.
- (18) Artificial limb and brace, therapeutic establishments.
- (19) Florist shops.
- (20) Optical firms.
- (21) Book shops.

- (22) Gift shops, specialty shops.
- (23) Restaurants, sandwich shops, coffee shops.
- (24) Hotels.
- (25) Gasoline sales/convenience stores.
- (26) Houses of worship.
- (27) Banks and credit unions.

Uses allowed by special exception

- (1) Pop-up retail for any use listed in the permitted uses
- (2) Business office/services compliant with Sec. 111-90f of the zoning ordinance and meeting these guidelines.

The following uses are not permitted.

- (1) Temporary vendors (excludes mobile food vendors, pop-up retail)
- (2) Tobacco/Vape Products/CBD Oil sales exceeding 10 percent of gross sales as defined by the City of Alabaster's revenue code, and as defined by the State Code of Alabama regulation of tobacco products
- (3) Any use not specifically enumerated in subsection (c) of this section.

## SECTION 7. BUILDING STANDARDS

### Goals:

- Monitor the placement, size, arrangement, and articulation of buildings in the Medical Mile Overlay District.
- Encourage a walkable and welcoming pedestrian friendly environment.

### Building Types:

To establish bulk building standards, the following building types have been identified as appropriate for the Medical Mile Overlay District:

#### Commercial Buildings

New or redeveloped commercial buildings should occupy nearly all of the street frontage within a limited setback (10 to 25 feet from US Hwy 31 North). The Medical Mile Overlay District intends to retro-fit existing commercial uses to be more aesthetically pleasing and more marketable to prospective tenants by building new commercial structures to front US Hwy 31 North, taking into consideration the unique constraints of this corridor including existing ALDOT right-of-way, railroad right-of way, Alabama Power right-of-way and extreme terrain along the eastern lines of properties. Parking should be located along the side to make the most of shallow lots along the west side of US Hwy 31 North, and to the rear to allow for buildings to be placed as close to US Hwy 31 North to soften the impacts of the ALDOT right-of-way which exceeds 130 feet in most areas. Pedestrian amenities, outdoor dining areas, and/or new entrances should be incorporated wherever possible. Moreover, facades are encouraged to be updated to reflect improvements with new architectural elements, substantial glazing, and awnings.

#### Civic or Institutional Building Type

The Civic or institutional building type includes both public and privately owned or operated community and public facilities. Current civic and institutional building types in the Medical Mile Overlay District include Brookwood Baptist Hospital. The uses permitted in the Medical Mile include a variety of civic/institutional uses and their development is encouraged and anticipated. Civic and institutional buildings should act as community landmarks, utilize key sites, and be designed to provide architectural emphasis through materials, massing, and other details.

The building standards for the Medical Mile Overlay District are listed in 7-1 and should apply to all development in the district:

#### A. Setbacks

Setbacks are determined by ground floor use – Mixed Use / Commercial or Civic Use. Minimum setbacks have been reduced and maximum setbacks have been established. This will bring the buildings close to the roadway and help to emphasize the façades of structures. Setbacks are measured from the public right-of-way line.

#### B. Glazing

Glazing refers to the amount of glass or transparency on a façade. Glazing enables pedestrians to see activity on the inside of the building, and patrons to see the activity on the street. The use of tinted glass is acceptable, however, reflective glass is prohibited.

Minimum glazing requirements shall be calculated based on the façade area. The first floor glazed area calculation shall be based on the façade area measured to a height of 14 feet (14') from grade.

On corner lots with frontage on US Hwy 31 North, the glazing shall turn the corner facing the secondary street a minimum of 20 feet (20') in length along the property frontage.

**C. Building Orientation**

All front facades of the principal building and entrances should face and be parallel to the street. In addition, no drive-thru shall be located on a street frontage.

Table 7-1: Building Standards Table by Building Type

Building Type	Commercial	Civic or Institutional Use
<b>Setbacks:</b>		
Minimum building front setback line <sup>1</sup>	Twenty (20')	Thirty feet (30')
Maximum building front setback line	Thirty feet (30')	Fifty feet (50')
Minimum building side setback line <sup>2</sup>	Five feet (5') unless adopted building/fire codes more stringent	Five feet (5') unless adopted building/fire codes more stringent
Minimum rear building setback line <sup>3</sup> :	Ten feet (10') unless adopted building/fire code more stringent	Ten feet (10') unless adopted building/fire code more stringent
Adjacent to residential	Twenty feet (20')	Fifteen feet (15')
Adjacent to non-residential	Five feet (5')	Five feet (5')
<b>Building Configuration:</b>		
Maximum building height	Forty-five feet (45')	Sixty feet (60')
Minimum first floor height	Fourteen feet (14')	Fourteen feet (14')
Minimum % glazing of street wall <sup>4</sup> :		
First floor	45%	40%
Additional floors	35%	30%

<sup>1</sup> Exceptions to front setback: exceptions may be made for recesses up to 5' for articulation of the building façade and up to 20' for seating areas. Exceptions to maximum front setback may be made for certain uses and lot characteristics when a hardship is established.

<sup>2</sup> Exceptions to side setbacks: side setbacks with street frontage, on corner lots, shall follow front setbacks.

<sup>3</sup> Exception to rear setbacks: development abutting property with an existing residential use shall comply with the applicable landscaping and buffer standards of Article VIII of the City of Alabaster Zoning Ordinance.

<sup>4</sup> Corner lot glazing: On corner lots with frontage on US Hwy 31 North, the glazing shall turn the corner facing the secondary street a minimum of 20 feet (20') in length along the property frontage.

## SECTION 8. ARCHITECTURAL TREATMENT STANDARDS

### Goals:

- Encourage high quality buildings that are well designed, visually interesting and compatible with surrounding structures.
- Create facades that are varied and articulated with large windows to improve visibility and engage the pedestrian.

### A. Building Massing

Buildings should relate in mass and scale to existing development along US Hwy 31 North. For development with long frontages, monotonous facades should be avoided. The following shall apply to the Medical Mile Overlay District:

- 1) Blank walls facing streets shall be prohibited. All buildings should incorporate architectural treatments to suitably articulate and break up building mass along the US Hwy 31 North and along sides of the building clearly visible from the street.
- 2) The maximum length of an uninterrupted (or blank) façade plane shall not exceed thirty feet (30') in length.
- 3) Widths of buildings are encouraged to consist of three (3) or four (4) structural bays (sections divided by architectural vertical elements). Building wall offsets, windows, projections and recesses up to 4 feet (4'), pilasters, or a change in material or color shall be used to break up the mass of a single building into bays.
- 4) Provide well-defined entryways with porches, porticos and recessed doorways

### B. Building Façades and Window Treatments

The façade, or the front exterior of the building, shall be clearly delineated by cornice lines, stringcourses, canopies, awnings, fenestration, and other architectural elements (defined below) to create a recognizable base, middle, and top of buildings.

- Cornice Lines: a horizontal decorative molding, or ledge that crowns a building. Cornice lines can also be found over a door or window.
- Stringcourses: a raised horizontal band or course of bricks on a building. Often stringcourses are used as a line of demarcation between stories of a multistoried building.
- Awning/Canopy: the awning is a structural, cantilevered, shed roof attached to the exterior of a building, while the canopy is canvas or a similar material hung up over doorways and entrances of a building.
- Fenestration: the arrangement of windows and doors on the façade of the building – usually in a horizontal line.

### C. Permitted Attachments

In addition to requirements placed on awnings by the City of Alabaster sign regulations, awnings shall comply with the following requirements:

#### Prohibited Elements:

- Awnings shall not be made of shiny, high-gloss, or translucent materials. The use of vinyl or plastic as awning materials is prohibited.
- Awnings shall not cover distinctive architectural features of the building face, or damage the building.

- Awnings shall not be illuminated.

Permitted Elements:

- Awning should be a solid color, with the underside of the awning matching the face.
- Cloth or canvas awnings are encouraged.
- Awnings should complement the color of the building facade.
- The scale of the awning (height, length, depth, and bulk) shall complement the building storefront.

D. Building Materials

The following building façade materials regulations apply:

- The use of a variety of materials is encouraged. A minimum of two (2) materials is required, with one serving as the dominant cladding. The presentation should be consistent for any wall with visibility from the public. Exceptions are allowed when it is evident that a wall is not visible from the public or such treatment does not further the intent of the guidelines.

Primary materials	Secondary (accent) materials	Prohibited materials
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Brick</li> <li>• Stone</li> <li>• Hardy Board</li> <li>• Brick/stone veneer</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Architectural concrete/split faced block</li> <li>• Glass wall system</li> <li>• Metal panel (architectural grade)</li> <li>• Man-made brick/stone material</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plywood</li> <li>• Standing seam metal</li> <li>• Vinyl</li> <li>• Aluminum</li> <li>• Smooth surface concrete block</li> </ul>

- In addition to the above requirement regarding materials, buildings located at the intersection of US Hwy 31 North and a secondary public street shall address both streets with architectural and/or massing elements. Such elements may include porches, windows, bay windows or other façade projections and features. For the purpose of this standard, a service lane is not a street.



## SECTION 9. LANDSCAPING STANDARDS

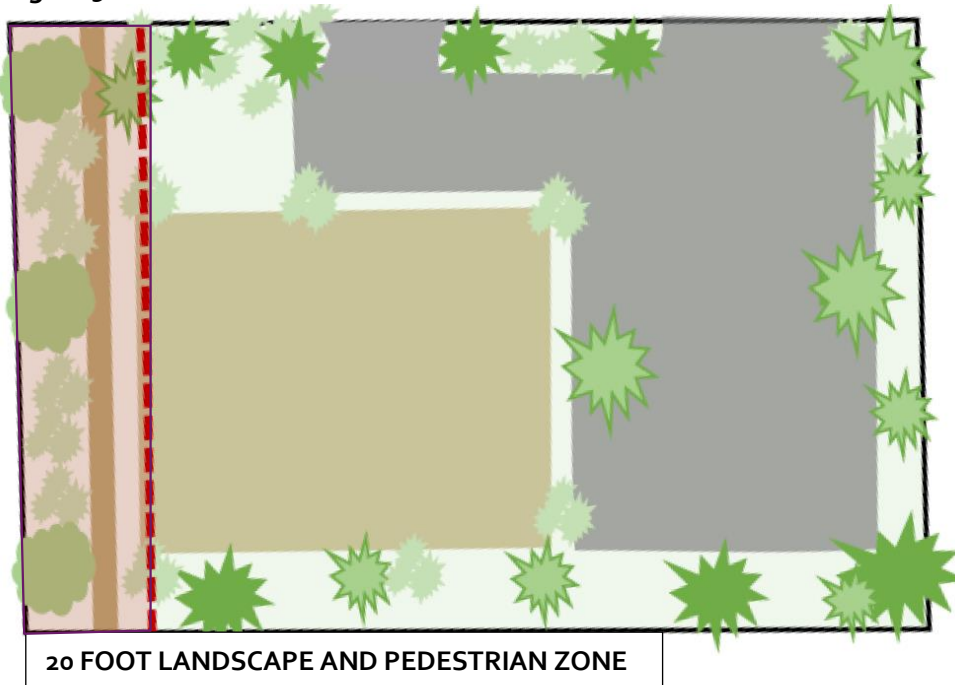
Landscape standards are provided to complement the architecture of buildings, to soften the impacts of vehicular areas, and promotes environmental responsibility. Due to the site constraints already discussed in this guide, the landscape standards have been modified from the High Traffic Corridor landscape requirements of Sec. 111-265 of the Zoning Ordinance. For ease in complying with landscape requirements applicants have the option of incorporating the Sec. 111-265 requirements into their site plan if they choose.

For the Medical Mile Overlay, there are two basic requirements that each site must meet: 1) the entire site/property must provide a minimum of 20% of the total area dedicated to landscaped area; 2) a landscape/pedestrian zone is defined which will accommodate a minimum 5-foot sidewalk and 10 feet for landscape area. This will allow greater flexibility in meeting landscape requirements. The landscaped area will be a combination of shade trees, shrubbery and ground cover. The sidewalk should be located within and flanked by landscaped area. It is intended that the majority of tree and shrub plantings should be within the zone closer to the street while the other side of the sidewalk may be ground cover and shrubs.

**Landscape Elements.** Each lot in the Medical Mile must provide the following:

- At least 20% dedicated landscaped area. Parking islands and drainage area will not count as part of landscaped area.
- At least 10% shall be located in the landscape/pedestrian zone (illustrated in Figure 9-1). The 10% must include a combination of shade trees and shrubs. Shade tree requirement is 1 per 30 feet of frontage. Some of these trees may be clustered, but uniformity is encouraged.
- Parking islands are required to separate 10 parking spaces and will be planted with a shade tree
- The remaining landscaping shall be distributed along the perimeters and other areas to separate vehicular travel from site elements and to conceal features such as trash enclosures, drainage areas, mechanical equipment.
- A minimum of 5% of the requirement is set aside for foundation plantings.

**Figure 9-1**



## SECTION 10. PARKING STANDARDS

### Goals:

- To limit the negative effects of vast amounts of visible parking lots, which take up valuable real estate and make travel less pleasant for pedestrians.
- To encourage cooperation among local businesses to promote and develop shared parking.
- To ensure that parking lot lighting considers safety, function, and aesthetics.

Parking is a necessity for a business to thrive but due to increased traffic volume and the existence of substandard, overdeveloped lots, it is necessary to restructure the parking requirements to strike a balance between business needs and responsible planning. Not only by reducing the current standards of minimum parking numbers and stall size, but by encouraging joint uses, shared parking arrangements and alternate methods of travel.

Parking will be oriented to the rear and side of the buildings. No more than 30% of required parking spaces shall be located in front yard. This serves to accomplish the objective of emphasizing structure, and to provide safe travel from business to business.

Parking minimums have been reduced for the following:

Retail uses (single storefront) = 1 space per 200 sq.ft. of leasable area

Retail uses (shopping strip or other grouped development) = 1 space per 250 sq.ft. of leasable area

Restaurant uses = 1 space per 100 square feet of the dining area (including outdoor eating area)

Office uses = 1 space per 250 sq.ft. of floor area (mechanical areas, restrooms, storage may be excluded)

Parking maximums are established so that no more than 20% of the site can be dedicated to parking spaces. The parking maximum may be increased when alternate surfaces such as pervious pavers are used or when the site employs bio-retention methods to handle stormwater runoff.

Parking stalls are the same as stated within the Zoning Ordinance, however, up to 20% of the parking spaces provided may be 9 feet by 18 feet.

### Shared Parking

Shared parking between uses that require peak parking capacity at different times of the day, week, or season is encouraged. Properties that enter into a shared parking agreement (access easement) with adjacent uses shall receive a ten percent (10%) reduction in the required number of parking spaces.

### Parking Lots

Surface parking lots should have sufficient interior (to the lot) and exterior (between the lot and adjacent right-of-way or property) landscaping to visually break up their appearance and to reduce the amount of runoff and sheet flow. In addition to base zoning district landscaping requirements and, the following interior landscape standards shall apply to parking lots within the Medical Mile Overlay District:

- Parking lots must include curbing and/or gutters and be landscaped in accordance with Section 111-265 of the City of Alabaster Zoning Ordinance (landscaping requirements for vehicular areas in high-traffic corridors) unless a Section 9 exception is granted.

## Parking Lot and Site Lighting

Lighting fixture height shall compliment and be compatible with the building design. In addition to lighting requirements as set forth in Section 111-119 of the City of Alabaster Zoning Ordinance, the following regulations shall apply to the Medical Mile Overlay District:

- Lighting fixtures in parking areas shall be no greater than fourteen feet (14') above the ground.
- Lighting attached to building exteriors or mounted on the ground to reflect upon building exteriors shall be consistent with the architectural style of the building.
- Each light fixture shall be designed and installed so as to direct its beam of light below the horizontal plane of such lighting fixture.
- Light fixtures shall be a decorative style for interior site lighting.

## Prohibited Lighting Styles

- Cobra
- Box
- Flashing, blinking, or intermittent lights, and neon tubing

## SECTION 11. ACCESS STANDARDS

### Goals:

- Driveways, parking lots, and access routes should be consolidated whenever possible to limit curb cuts, minimize development costs, and reduce automobile-pedestrian conflicts.
- The number and location of access points to US Hwy 31 North shall be determined as part of the site plan review process and shall be coordinated with ALDOT standards.
- Create inter-parcel access between adjacent lots to increase mobility options for vehicles and pedestrians.

- A. Cross access. Allows for vehicles to pass between properties without entering the public right-of-way. Cross access is required unless one of the circumstances below exists. Parking lots for non-residential developments that have direct access to US Hwy 31 North shall have at least one vehicular connection to adjacent properties (cross access) unless:
- Access is deemed infeasible or inappropriate due to topography or physical constraints as determined by the City Engineer.
  - Access may not be successfully achieved due to conflicts with the neighboring property or property owner. In such cases, installing a driveway to the adjacent property and providing a recorded easement that will allow access to the adjacent property in the future is sufficient.

Cross access will be required whenever practical. This requirement can be waived by staff only when documentation produced by ALDOT or other agency/owner will prohibit such access.

- B. Joint Access. This is a shared driveway that provides access to multiple properties via one driveway. Joint access is encouraged.

For both cross and joint access arrangements, an easement agreement that provides for the mutual right of ingress and egress for both property owners shall be recorded with Shelby County records and be referenced on a final plat and any restrictive covenants shall be referenced on the site plan.

## SECTION 12. SIGNAGE

As addressed in other sections of these guidelines, the focus along the Medical Mile Overlay District corridor is for the structures. The signage regulations have been updated to reflect this objective. The table below outlines the various types of signs allowed and the specifications for each:

Table 12-1: Signage Allowances

	Free-standing (pole) sign	Or Monument sign	Wall sign	Or Canopy sign	Projecting sign	Shopping Center sign	Directory sign
Maximum square footage	48 sq.ft.	60 sq.ft.	30% of the storefront*	25% of the	12 sq.ft.	100 sq.ft.	80 sq.ft.
Maximum height	15 ft.	10 ft.	N/A**	N/A	N/A	25 ft.	20 ft.
Total allowed	1 per lot	1 per lot	1 per street frontage	1 per storefront	1 per storefront	1 per street	1 per building

Notes on signage:

1. Monument signage is encouraged as reflected in the increased size allowances
2. Channel set letters with halo lighting are encouraged
3. Window signage is restricted to 25% of the entire window
4. Signs may display business name only, no phone numbers/ email addresses.
5. Storefront as measured by length x width, minus doors
6. Wall signs cannot be mounted above the roofline or extend above a parapet wall.

### ***Prohibited Signs***

- No open/exposed lighting (show pic of FROU FROU sign)
- No cabinet signs (except that an existing business refacing the panel for the same business)
- No new signage will be permitted on existing mansard roofs
- Any sign prohibited in Sec. 111-232

## SECTION 13. SCREENING, FENCE AND WALL STANDARDS

### Goals:

- To screen large trash containers, service areas, and mechanical equipment from public view.
- To minimize the visibility of drainage structures when necessary.
- To ensure that the design and materials chosen for fences and walls are compatible with the architectural style and materials of the buildings on site.

### A. Screening of Loading Docks and Trash Receptacles

The following screening standards shall apply in the Medical Mile Overlay District:

- Service and loading areas, outdoor storage areas, trash receptacles, grease containers, and similar appurtenances shall be located to the rear of the building to minimize visibility from public property and shall be visually screened from view from public property.
- Trash receptacles shall be located within a three-sided structure which completely conceals the trash receptacle and oriented so that it doesn't open toward the street front. The color and architecture of the structure shall be compatible with that of the building which it serves.

### B. Screening of Accessory and Utility Equipment

The following screening techniques for accessory and utility equipment shall apply in the Medical Mile Overlay District:

- All outdoor equipment, such as heating, cooling, and ventilation systems, utility meters and panels, shall be placed on the roof, in the rear or side of buildings, or be located to minimize visibility from public property and shall be visually screened from view from off the premises on all sides by fencing or an evergreen landscape screen.
- Mechanical equipment shall not be allowed along the frontage of a public way. Mechanical equipment on the roof shall be screened from abutting streets with parapets or other types of visual screening.
- Walk-in coolers shall be located at the rear of the building.

### C. Screening of Drainage Areas

Drainage structures, unless constructed as an amenity, as in a water feature, shall be located at the rear of the property, or away from public view. If such facilities must be located along the frontage, they must be screened with a form of decorative treatment such as a retaining wall, dense hedges or brick/masonry/iron combination

## Materials for Fences and Walls

The following screening techniques for fences and privacy walls shall apply in the Medical Mile Overlay District:

- Fences and walls constructed between the principal building and the street (excluding alleys) shall not exceed four feet (4') in height, except for retaining walls.
- Design materials chosen for fences and walls should be compatible with the architectural style and buildings on site. See below for permitted and prohibited materials for walls and fences in the Medical Mile Overlay District.

### Permitted Materials

Fences and walls within the front setback, in front of buildings, or on side property lines facing public streets shall be constructed of the following materials:

- Wood, if treated, stained, or painted
- Brick
- Masonry
- Ornamental iron or aluminum

### Prohibited materials:

- Chain-link
- Barbed or razor
- Unpainted wood
- Plastic
- Vinyl

### Retaining Walls

The following standards shall apply to retaining walls in the Medical Mile Overlay District:

- The exterior surface of retaining walls shall be compatible with the architecture and site design of the property.
- Retaining walls which exceed eight feet (8') in height and are visible from public property shall be visually screened with vegetation.

### Permitted Materials for Retaining Walls

- Natural or artificial stone
- Brick
- Vegetation



## SECTION 14. GRADING AND DRAINAGE STANDARDS

### Goals:

- To establish environmentally sensitive and aesthetically pleasing slopes and ditches.
- To encourage alternatives to alleviate existing drainage issues due to overdevelopment and facilitate redevelopment through measures that require minimal land.

### Grading and Drainage

The following grading and drainage standards shall apply in the Medical Mile Overlay District:

- The use of crushed granite or limestone for slope stabilization and storm drainage is prohibited in areas visible from the street.
- In areas that are visible from public property, subsurface drainage structures or grassed swales are encouraged to manage storm water (rather than open ditches).
- See Section 13 regarding fencing/screening of drainage structures. Appropriate, decorative screening or a wall is required for any drainage structure that cannot meet the requirements of this section.

## SECTION 15. MISCELLANEOUS REQUIREMENTS

### Exterior Storage

Exterior storage must be approved by the Board of Zoning Adjustment as a special exception. As part of the board of zoning adjustment review of an exterior storage special exception, the board shall require such exterior storage of materials to be contained by fencing in such a manner as to be neat in appearance when viewed from any street. No exterior storage or display of materials, whether for sale or not, is permitted in the required front yard.

### Vending Machines, ATM machines, Kiosks

Certain accessory uses/structures are not appropriate within front yards. The following guidelines apply respectively to all such uses:

- 1) Vending Machines shall be placed against the building and are not allowed to impede any required walkway. Vending machines are limited to one per building.
- 2) No ATM machine, ice vending unit, or kiosk shall be located on a non-residential premise without written approval of the zoning official. Said approval shall require the contact information of the applicant and owner, permission of the owner if required and a layout showing the proposed location. Such structures are not appropriate as stand-alone units within the front of the site, therefore prior to approval, the following site requirements must be met:
  - Must meet the primary front setback for the district;
  - Not impede circulation or visibility;
  - Not located within a required landscape strip/buffer yard, loading/unloading area, or off-street parking space.
  - Each site will be limited to one kiosk, unit or bin.
- 3) ATM machines, ice vending units and other kiosks shall be complementary to existing developments. Signage will be limited to 30% of each side, limited to two sides of the unit.

### Underground Wiring

All power, communication, and other wiring installed to service structures in the Medical Mile District shall be placed underground.

### Sidewalks

For new construction, or redevelopment that involves site improvements, a 5-foot wide concrete sidewalk will be required. The ideal placement of sidewalk installation is within the landscape/pedestrian zone as shown in Figure 9-1. Alternate locations may be within the ALDOT right-of-way, or along the rear of the lot if feasible. Whenever the sidewalk is located on private property, a sidewalk easement must be provided.

Note: Applicants will need to coordinate with ALDOT if the plans are to construct the sidewalk within the Hwy 31 right-of-way. The sidewalk shall be designed so that both ends connect with existing sidewalks.

Where it can be shown that connecting is not feasible, this may be waived by the Zoning Administrator but in these cases, alternate methods and design elements may be required. Also, in the event ALDOT will not allow, or the site does not provide a feasible location for a sidewalk on the property, the City's Zoning Administrator shall have the discretion to consider alternate methods or concessions for the inability to provide a sidewalk. Examples may be additional landscaping or providing other pedestrian infrastructure or bike racks. The applicant shall have the right to appeal the requirement to install sidewalks by making application with the Planning Commission.

## GLOSSARY

- Arcade: a covered walkway consisting of a series of arches supported by columns or piers open to the street, with shops on either side.
- Certificate of Occupancy: a document issued by the City of Alabaster certifying a building's compliance with applicable building codes and other laws. The Certificate of Occupancy indicates the structure is in a condition suitable for occupancy.
- Cladding: a covering or coating on the structure. Appropriate materials include: Brick, natural or artificial stone, concrete, brick veneer, glass curtain wall systems, hardy board.
- Cornice Lines: a horizontal decorative molding, or ledge that crowns a building. Cornice lines can also be found over a door or window.
- Stringcourses: a raised horizontal band or course of bricks on a building. Often stringcourses are used as a line of demarcation between stories of a multistoried building.
- Awning/Canopy: the awning is a structural, cantilevered, shed roof attached to the exterior of a building. While the canopy is canvas or a similar material hung up over doorways and entrances of a building.
- Cross Access: properties utilize a connection between parking lots to allow for traffic flow on-site on off the major road.
- Curb Cut: or ramp or driveway leading down from a development/ sidewalk to the street.
- Easement: a legal term used to grant the right to cross or otherwise use another's land for a specific purpose. Easements can be granted for a number of things including: sidewalk easements, utilities easements, cross and joint access easements. Easements are often granted for sidewalks, cross access, and joint access.
- Façade: the front exterior of the building.
- Façade width: the length of the front exterior of the building that is built within the minimum and maximum front setback lines.
- Fenestration: the arrangement of windows and doors on the elevations of a building.
- Frontage, street: properties fronting (facing) Hwy 31 North.
- Frontage: the spacing between the building's façade and the public right-of-way.
- Gallery: a balcony, or platform running the length of a wall, often above a portico or arcade. Galleries are Intended for buildings with ground floor commercial or retail uses and the gallery many be one or two stories.
- Glazing: the amount of glass or transparency on a façade. Glazing enables pedestrians to see activity on the inside of the building, and patrons to see the activity on the street.
- Grassed swales: a linear vegetated ditch used to treat and reduce flow velocities of storm water runoff. Grass swales are applicable nearly everywhere and they are especially effective at receiving runoff from highways and residential areas, due to their linear nature.
- Joint access: Properties share an access point creating a unified entrance/ exit for multiple properties.
- Overhang: a projecting upper portion of a building, such as a roof or balcony.
- Pilaster: a shallow pier attached to a wall; often decorated to resemble a classical column.
- Portico: a porch, usually with a triangular, pediment roof supported by classical columns.
- Public right-of-way: an easement granted or reserved over the land for transportation purposes, in this case US Hwy 31 North.
- Setback: the distance which a building or other structure is set back from a street or road, a floodplain, or other place deemed to need protection.
- Structural bays: sections of the structure divided by architectural vertical elements