

ZONING DISTRICTS 101

Contact the Community Development Department for questions at 913.856.0913

What is Zoning?

Zoning is a method of land use regulation designed to minimize the negative impacts of certain types of land use by separating them from one another. This is achieved by restricting uses to classified districts, such as residential, agricultural, commercial, and industrial zones. The regulations are intended to allow these different land uses to be located and organized in a manner that promotes public health, safety, comfort and general welfare, to conserve property values, and to facilitate the adequate provision of transportation, water, sewage, schools, parks, and other public requirements.

What do the letters and numbers mean?

A combination of letters and numbers is used to identify each zoning district's use and development parameters. They are usually categorized as follows: **A:** Agriculture, **R:** Residential, **C:** Commercial, and **M:** Industrial.

The letter designation can be followed by another letter, a number, or a combination of both. For example, the designation RE means Rural Estates, which refers to residential home use on properties larger than one acre. The additional use of letters or numbers divides the land use groups into smaller groups based on the type of land use or development permitted within a particular zoning district.

P = Planned Zoning District

The City of Gardner has designated the letter "**P**" to indicate that the zoning request is for a Planned Zoning District, and the use of the property is based upon an approved development plan. When the letter "**P**" is used as part of the zoning district designation, a development plan is required to address details related to the particular use and design of the property. The development is required to follow that development plan in addition to other applicable development regulations.

To receive the "**P**" designation, the property owner or developer must provide a preliminary development plan which outlines the framework for the proposed development and/or use of the property. The planned zoning district request must go through the public hearing process, Planning Commission, and finally the Governing Body for approval. A final development plan based on the approved preliminary plan is then required.

Any future development must be tied to the approved development plan. No changes can be made without further review by staff. If the proposed changes are substantial, the property owner must provide a revised preliminary or final plan that will then be reviewed by the Planning Commission and the City Council.

For example, while R-4 (Mixed –Density Neighborhood District) zoning may allow for four-story apartments, if a development is zoned "RP-4" and the development plan did not include four-story apartments, the developer would not be able to change their approved plans in order to include said apartments without going through the approval process again, as what is allowed in R-4 zoning district is not necessarily or automatically allowed in RP-4 zoning district.