

FORM BASED DISTRICTS

The FORM DISTRICTS are intended to foster a series of mixed use, pedestrian-friendly districts for specific areas of the City. The City of Knoxville has two Form Districts which are the **Cumberland Avenue Zoning District** and the **South Waterfront Zoning District**.

The **CUMBERLAND AVENUE ZONING DISTRICT** (map of area outlined in red) [Article 7.2-CU Cumberland Avenue](#), is intended to implement the Cumberland Avenue Corridor Plan. The goal is to foster a high-quality public realm by prescribing the physical form of buildings and other elements by addressing the relationship between building façades and the public realm.

The **SOUTH WATERFRONT ZONING DISTRICT** (map of area outlined in red) [Article 7.1-SW South Waterfront](#), is intended to provide standards for the continued growth and development in the south waterfront district. The purpose is to:

- Create a comprehensive and stable pattern of development and land uses upon which to plan transportation, water supply, sewerage, energy, and other public facilities and utilities.
- Ensure that proposed development is of human scale, pedestrian-oriented, energy conserving, and is designed to create attractive streetscapes and pedestrian spaces.
- Minimize automobile congestion through pedestrian-oriented development, compact community form, safe and effective traffic circulation, and adequate parking facilities.
- Ensure compatibility between different types of development and land uses.

There are three types of reviews for the Cumberland Avenue and South Waterfront Form Districts:

- The first is a Level 1: Zoning Clearance Review ([Article 7.0.2.E](#)). This is for all houses and duplexes within the Form Districts and requires approval from the Zoning Administrator only.
- The second is a Level 2: Development Plan Review ([Article 7.0.2.F](#)). This is for all multi-dwelling, mixed use and nonresidential structures within the Form Districts. This requires a recommendation from the Administrative Review Committee and approval from the Zoning Administrator.
- The third is a Level 3: Alternative Compliance Review ([Article 7.0.2.G](#)). This is for innovative, high quality developments that would not otherwise be allowed under a strict interpretation of the Form District regulations but nevertheless comply with the intent of the applicable Form District and Plan. The Alternative Compliance Review mechanism is also intended to provide a process for requests by applicants for reconstruction or expansion of nonconforming structures in which nonconforming uses operate. This requires a recommendation from the Administrative Review Committee and the Zoning Administrator with approval from the Knoxville Knox County Planning Commission.

A pre-application conference with City staff is required before submitting an application.

Depending on the nature of the project, this conference may be accomplished by phone, email, virtually or in-person. A request by a potential applicant must be accompanied by preliminary project plans and designs.

Contact Bryan Berry at bberry@knoxvilletn.gov or 865-215-2863 for a pre-application conference regarding a project.