

# Industrial Development



## Facts to Know

### INTRODUCTION:

In the City of Commerce City, there are four industrial zone districts. They are as follows:

- I-1: Light-Intensity Industrial District
- I-1S: Industrial Park Storage District
- I-2: Medium-Intensity Industrial District
- I-3: Heavy-Intensity Industrial District

Each zone district has a unique purpose, and the combination of regulations for a particular zone district are designed to meet that intended purpose. For example, the I-1: Light-Intensity Industrial District is intended to provide a general commercial and restricted industrial district designed for a variety of compatible business, warehouse, wholesale, office, and limited industrial uses. The regulations for the I-1 zone district contribute to the creation of light industrial park developments.

These regulations can generally be broken down into two categories: bulk standards, and design standards.

*Bulk standards* deal with the general form of a building, and determine things like the maximum size and placement of a building on a lot. These regulations typically include the lot size, floor area ratio, open space, height, and setbacks. The purpose of bulk standards is to allow building forms within a particular zone district that are characteristic of the built environment that zone district is intended to create.

*Design standards* deal with the specific architectural details of a building. These regulations typically include exterior materials, entry features, and the location of windows and doors. The purpose of design standards is to promote the design of an environment that is built to a human scale, to encourage attractive street fronts that accommodate pedestrians in a safe and pleasant manner, and to allow for vehicular movement.

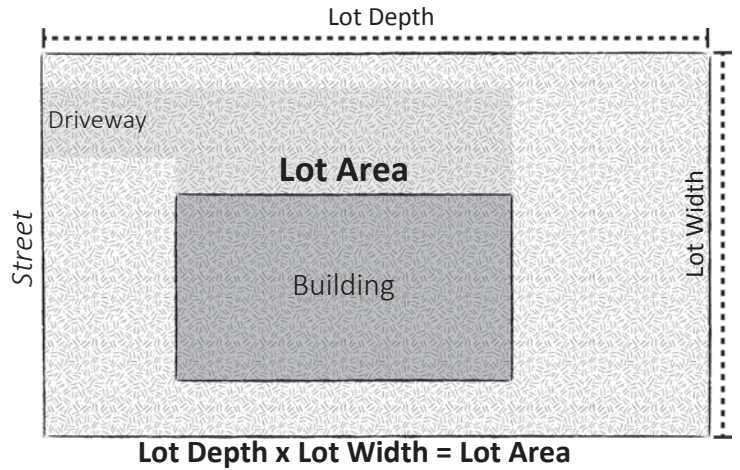
This packet explains what each of the bulk standards means and how to measure it, as well as lists the specific requirements for each of the industrial zone districts.

There are also various industrial areas, predominately in the northern part of the city, that are zoned PUD (Planned Unit Development). Each of these PUDs is unique, and may have different standards than those for the regular industrial zone districts. Please contact the Planner of the Day to obtain a copy of a PUD zone document for the specific standards, which apply in a particular PUD.

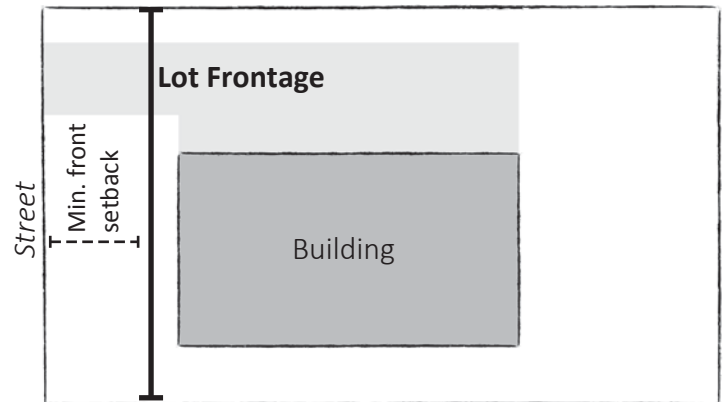
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## BULK STANDARDS:

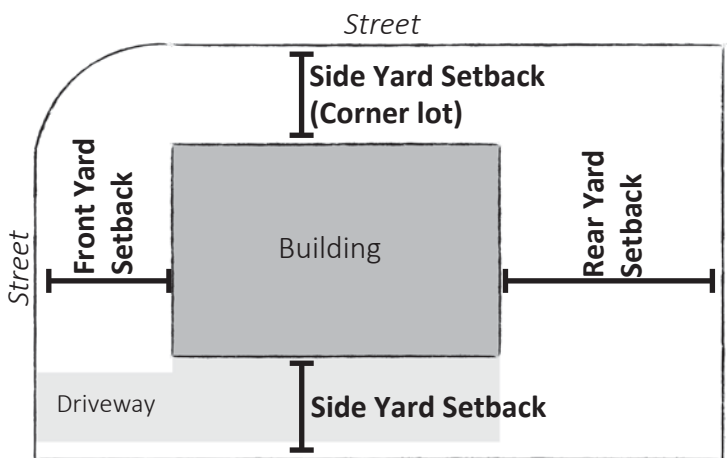
**Lot Area:** The term “lot area” refers to the size of the lot, and is defined as the total square footage within the lot lines of a lot. This information can typically be found in a variety of places, including tax assessment records, subdivision plats, and property deeds. Any new lots to be created through the subdivision process must meet the applicable lot area requirements for the particular zone district in which the property is located. Existing lots which do not meet the lot area requirements may still be allowed to develop so long as the use complies with the underlying zone district and any new structures meet the remaining bulk standards.



**Lot Frontage:** The term “lot frontage” refers to the distance between the side lot lines, as measured along a straight line parallel to the front lot line and located the minimum front setback distance from the front lot line. The front lot line is the one adjacent to the street on which the property has its principal access.



**Setback:** A “setback” is the distance between a lot line and a building or structure. There are setback requirements for all sides of a property, as measured from the front lot line (the side with the primary pedestrian access), the side lot lines, and the rear lot line. These can be measured by drawing a straight line at a right angle from the lot line to the closest projection of the building or structure. Cornices, cupolas, box and bay windows, or similar architectural features are allowed to extend up to one foot into any setback.

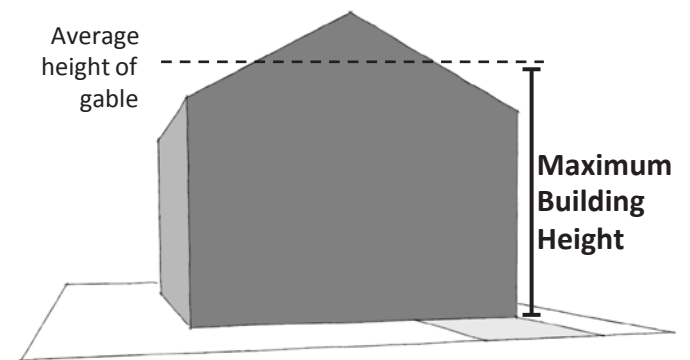
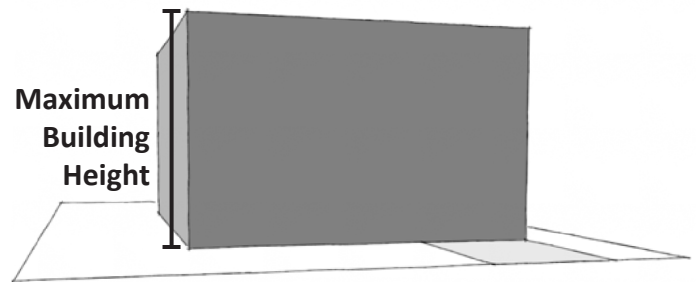


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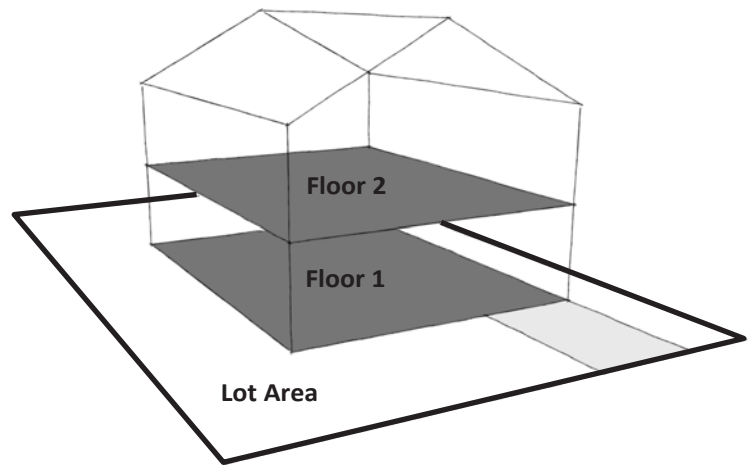
**Building Height:** Building height is the vertical distance from the highest finished grade adjacent to the building to the highest point of the building, which is determined in one of three ways depending on roof style. For flat roofs, the highest point is considered to be the cap. For pitched roofs, the highest point is considered to be the average height of the highest gable or hip.

Chimneys, cornices without windows, cupolas, domes not used for human occupancy, elevator penthouses, monuments, parapet walls, skylights, spires, steeples, theater scenery lofts, towers, and other similar structures may exceed the maximum permitted height by up to 150%.



**Floor Area Ratio:** The “floor area ratio,” or “FAR,” is the gross floor area of all buildings on a lot or parcel, divided by the lot area. The term “gross floor area” refers to the total area in square feet of all floors of a building measured from exterior walls.

$$\text{Floor 1} + \text{Floor 2} = \text{Gross Floor Area}$$
$$\text{Gross Floor Area} / \text{Lot Area} = \text{FAR}$$



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## I-1: LIGHT INDUSTRIAL DISTRICT:

The purpose of the light intensity industrial district (I-1 district) is to provide a general commercial and restricted industrial district designed for a variety of compatible business, warehouse, wholesale, office, and limited industrial uses.

BULK STANDARD	REQUIREMENT
Minimum floor area ratio	0.05
Maximum floor area ratio	N/A
Minimum lot area	30,000-square feet
Maximum lot area	N/A
Minimum lot frontage	80 feet
Minimum front yard setback	20 feet
Maximum front yard setback	75 feet (new structures only)
Minimum side yard setback (interior lot)	5 feet on either side with a minimum of 30 feet total for both setbacks. Maintain a minimum structure separation of 25 feet between buildings across side property lines.
Maximum side yard setback (interior lot)	N/A
Minimum side yard setback (corner lot)	15 feet
Maximum side yard setback (corner lot)	N/A
Minimum side yard setback (corner lot along collector or arterial)	20 feet
Maximum side yard setback (corner lot along collector or arterial)	100 feet
Minimum rear yard setback	20 feet
Minimum building height	15 feet
Maximum building height	50 feet
Building location	No building shall be located less than 25 feet from the boundary of any residential zone district.

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## I-1S: INDUSTRIAL PARK STORAGE DISTRICT:

The I-1S industrial park storage district is comprised of areas that are primarily developed for non-offensive types of industrial activity, wholesaling activity, and commercial facilities. In addition, it potentially allows for screened outdoor storage with approval of an Outdoor Storage Permit.

BULK STANDARD	REQUIREMENT
Minimum floor area ratio	N/A
Maximum floor area ratio	N/A
Minimum lot area	30,000 square feet
Maximum lot area	N/A
Minimum lot frontage	70 feet
Minimum front yard setback	20 feet
Maximum front yard setback	75 feet (new structures only)
Minimum side yard setback (interior lot)	Side setback, minimum: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 25 feet one side.</li> <li>- None on other side, subject to approval by the fire marshal and chief building official.</li> <li>- Side setbacks shall be so applied and interpreted to maintain minimum structure separations across side property lines of 25 feet.</li> </ul>
Maximum side yard setback (interior lot)	N/A
Minimum side yard setback (corner lot)	15 feet
Maximum side yard setback (corner lot)	N/A
Minimum side yard setback (corner lot along collector or arterial)	20 feet
Minimum rear yard setback	0 feet
Minimum building height	15 feet
Maximum building height	50 feet
Building location	No building shall be located less than 25 feet from the boundary of any residential zone district.

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## I-2: MEDIUM-INTENSITY INDUSTRIAL DISTRICT:

The purpose of the medium intensity industrial district (I-2 district) is to provide for a district in which light and medium industrial and similar uses may be operated. Medium-intensity industry consists of any industrial or manufacturing operation subject to acceptable safeguards to control potential nuisances and hazardous effects both on and off the premises.

BULK STANDARDS	REQUIREMENT
Minimum floor area ratio	0.05
Maximum floor area ratio	N/A
Minimum lot area	50,000-square feet
Maximum lot area	N/A
Minimum lot frontage	80 feet
Minimum front yard setback	20 feet
Maximum front yard setback	100 feet
Minimum side yard setback (interior lot)	20 feet
Maximum side yard setback (interior lot)	N/A
Minimum side yard setback (corner lot)	20 feet
Maximum side yard setback (corner lot)	N/A
Minimum side yard setback (corner lot along collector or arterial)	20 feet
Maximum side yard setback (corner lot along collector or arterial)	150 feet
Minimum rear yard setback	25 feet
Minimum building height	15 feet
Maximum building height	50 feet
Building location	No building shall be located less than 50 feet from the boundary of any residential zone district

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## I-3: HEAVY-INTENSITY INDUSTRIAL DISTRICT:

The purpose of the heavy intensity industrial district (I-3 district) is to provide a district designed to accommodate normal operation of almost all industries, subject to those regulations necessary for the protection of nearby property owners in the lawful use of their respective properties.

BULK STANDARD	REQUIREMENT
Minimum floor area ratio	0.05
Maximum floor area ratio	N/A
Minimum lot area	50,000-square feet
Maximum lot area	N/A
Minimum lot frontage	80 feet
Minimum front yard setback	20 feet
Maximum front yard setback	100 feet
Minimum side yard setback (interior lot)	25 feet
Maximum side yard setback (interior lot)	N/A
Minimum side yard setback (corner lot)	25 feet
Maximum side yard setback (corner lot)	N/A
Minimum side yard setback (corner lot along collector or arterial)	25 feet
Maximum side yard setback (corner lot along collector or arterial)	150 feet
Minimum rear yard setback	25 feet
Minimum building height	15 feet
Maximum building height	50 feet
Building location	No building shall be located less than 50 feet from the boundary of any residential zone district

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## DESIGN STANDARDS:

The purpose of this section is to provide for a uniform set of standards for the review of new industrial developments as well as additions to existing industrial developments. These standards are designed to promote a concentrated development pattern that encourages pedestrian use and provides a community environment not dominated by vehicles. The standards below are a summary of the key items, which are reviewed during the development process. The full text of these standards can be found in Article VII of the Land Development Code.

**Building Location:** In a single-building development, the building shall be oriented towards the primary abutting street. Where multiple buildings are proposed on a development parcel, buildings shall be oriented to allow views into the project and preserve high-quality views through the project (e.g., views of the mountains). In addition, all primary and pad site buildings shall be arranged and grouped so that their primary orientation complements adjacent, existing development and frames and encloses a pedestrian and/or vehicle access corridor within the development site, as well as parking areas, public spaces, or other site amenities.

**Building Entrance:** All primary structures shall have a clearly defined main pedestrian or employee entrance oriented towards a public street, which should feature at least two of the following elements:

- (a) Canopies or porticos;
- (b) Overhangs;
- (c) Recesses or projections;
- (d) Arcades;
- (e) Arches;
- (f) Peaked roof forms;
- (g) Outdoor patios;
- (h) Display windows;
- (i) Architectural tile work or moldings integrated into the building design; or
- (j) Integrated planters or wing walls that incorporate landscaped areas or seating areas.

**Architectural Design:** Structures shall be sited to avoid a wall effect along public rights-of-way and along adjacent property lines. This can be achieved by varying the building setbacks and clustering buildings. The design of all buildings should employ textured surfaces, projections, recesses, shadow lines, color, window patterns, overhangs, reveals, changes in parapet heights, and similar architectural features to avoid monolithic shapes and surfaces. If any building is on a lot or tract with frontage on a public park or open space, or is adjacent to a property zoned or used for residential use, it shall have equally detailed façade as the front of building, constructed of equally high-quality materials on the façade facing such park, open space, or residential use.



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**Materials:** All front façades of primary structures, all façades that face a public right-of-way, and all side wall façades within 15 feet of the front façade shall contain a minimum of 50% glass, masonry, concrete, or stucco. Acceptable materials include synthetic stucco, block, pre-stressed concrete, precise concrete panels, brick, poured-in-place, tilt-up concrete components, glass and stone. Walls other than the front façade of a primary building may be clad with architectural metals, but not within 15 feet of the front façade of the building. Metal siding includes any form of metal exterior finish material, including corrugated or standing seam metal siding. The director may permit metals such as bronze, brass, copper, and wrought iron to be located along the front façade if a determination is made that such materials are equal to or superior to the primary building materials.

Façade building materials shall not create excessive glare when viewed from any public street or from any residential area.

There are specific design standards for pole construction buildings. On these types of structures, eaves and rakes must be a minimum of 12 inches. All facades of structures that are pole construction and are visible from a public or private right-of-way, public space, or residence must be covered in a minimum of 25% masonry veneer, stucco veneer, or other material as approved by the Director, and have a minimum of 2 windows that are 20 square feet each, with shutter treatments. Structures that are made of pole construction shall have a minimum of two paint colors that are complimentary to one another.

**Roofs:** All primary structures with flat roofs shall include a parapet or fascia around all sides of the building. All sloping roof areas with a pitch of 3:12 or greater, and visible from any public or private right-of-way, shall be surfaced with attractive and durable materials. Metallic surfaces for roofs are acceptable.

On all structures exceeding two stories in height, roofs shall internally drain, and external scuppers and wall drains shall be prohibited.

**Parking:** To the maximum extent feasible, parking shall be provided at the rear or sides of the building. Please contact the Planner of the Day for the specific number of parking spaces required for your use. Note that each parking stall must have minimum dimensions of 9 feet by 19 feet, and minimum drive aisle widths of 24 feet for two-way traffic. Bicycle parking is also required at a rate of one bicycle parking space for every 20 automobile parking spaces.

**Outdoor Storage:** Outdoor storage is only allowed in the I-2 and I-3 zone districts. It may be permitted in the I-1S and certain areas of the I-1 zone district with the approval of an Outdoor Storage Permit. Please see the Facts to Know for Outdoor Storage or contact the Planner of the Day for additional information.

Any outdoor storage and parking areas for vehicles in excess of 15,000-gross vehicle weight (GVW) must be located behind the front façade of the primary structure.

All exterior above-ground storage tanks, piping, and equipment that cannot be housed in a structure or adequately screened by landscaping or fencing must be painted in a camouflaging earth tone color, or other complimentary development color, and screened to the fullest extent possible.

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**Landscaping:** All areas on a site that are not covered by buildings, structures, paving or impervious surface are considered landscape areas and shall be landscaped in accordance with these standards. Landscape areas may include such elements as turf grass, planting beds, tree lawns, hardscape, detention and retention ponds, and drainage zones. The following table indicates the minimum requirements that landscape areas must meet.

Development Type	Trees	Shrubs	Material	Turf	Mulch	Tree-Lawn	ROW Buffer
Industrial lot up to 5 acres	1 for every 600-sq. ft. of landscape area	1 for every 300-sq. ft. of landscape area	Landscape area must contain 75% live plants	Max of 50% of landscape area	Two types required	Yes-spaced 40 feet apart along all street frontages	20-foot depth of landscaping along all public rights-of-way
Industrial lot greater than 5 acres	1 for every 1200-sq. ft. of landscape area	1 for every 300-sq. ft. of landscape area	Landscape area must contain 75% live plants	Max of 50% of landscape area	Two types required	Yes-spaced 40 feet apart along all street frontages	20-foot depth of landscaping along all public rights-of-way

In addition to the general landscape requirements listed above, buffer zones are required for properties in industrial zone districts when they adjoin certain other zone districts or land uses, as shown in the table below. Trees and shrubs planted as part of the buffer requirements cannot be used to meet any other landscaping requirement.

Zoning District of Proposed Use	Adjacent Zone or Land Use: AG, R-1, R-2	Adjacent Zone or Land Use: MHP, R-3, R-4	Adjacent Zone or Land Use: C-1, C-2, C-3, MU-1, I-1, I-1S	Adjacent Zone or Land Use: I-2, I-3
I-1, I-1S	Type B: 15 feet wide, 8 shrubs and 5 evergreen trees per 100 linear feet	Type A: 10 feet wide, 5 shrubs and 3 trees per 100 linear feet	N/A	Type B: 15 feet wide, 8 shrubs and 5 evergreen trees per 100 linear feet
I-2, I-3	Type C: 20 feet wide, 10 shrubs and 8 evergreen trees per 100 linear feet	Type C: 20 feet wide, 10 shrubs and 8 evergreen trees per 100 linear feet	Type B: 15 feet wide, 8 shrubs and 5 evergreen trees per 100 linear feet	N/A

There are also specific landscaping standards for parking lots. The perimeter of all parking areas must be landscaped with at least one tree and five shrubs for every 30 linear feet along a street, right-of-way, or abutting another property. The table on the next page determines the width of this buffer. Perimeter parking area landscaping may be including with other buffer requirements, as applicable.

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Abuts a local street	Abuts a collector street or another parking area	Abuts an arterial street
Minimum 5 feet	Minimum 10 feet	Minimum 15 feet

Parking lots with six or more spaces also must be screened from abutting uses and from the street. Screening must consist of a fence, wall, planter, earthen berm, plant material, or a combination of such elements, each of which shall have a minimum height of 36 inches. If the abutting land use is residential, the screening must consist of a wall or fence in combination with plant material.

In the interior of parking lots, landscape islands must be placed at least every 15 parking stalls, and must have minimum dimensions of 8 feet by 10 feet. The landscape islands must each have at least one tree and six shrubs per parking row.

**Fencing:** All new industrial fences and walls, including those used for screening purposes, must adhere to the fencing standards shown in the table below:

Location	Maximum Height	Minimum Setback from Property Line	Style
Front Yard	6 feet	20 feet (50 feet for gates)	Open or Screen
Side or Rear Yard	8 feet	0 feet	Open or Screen
Side or Rear Yard along Public Right-of-Way	6 feet	20 feet (50 feet for gates)	Open or Screen
Along a Public or Private Open Space or Park	8 feet	0 feet	Open or Screen

Acceptable fence and wall materials include wood, brick, stone, masonry, stucco over concrete block, vinyl, wrought iron, aluminum, fiberglass, composite, chain link, or corrugated metal. Sheet plastic, sheet metal, and plywood fencing is not allowed. In addition, chain link fencing with inserts, slats, or attached fabric screening material is prohibited.

**Screening Areas of Low Visual Interest:** Mechanical equipment, utility equipment, trash receptacles, and loading docks should be screened from view from public rights-of-way and from adjacent properties to the maximum extent feasible through their placement on the site, architectural design, and landscaping. Screening enclosures for mechanical and utility equipment and for trash receptacles must use at least one of the predominant materials and colors used in the primary structure. Enclosures for trash receptacles must be a minimum of 6 feet in height.

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**Lighting:** All proposals for new exterior lighting systems, as well as any alterations or renovations to existing lighting systems, must submit a photometric plan for review. Key standards include that in no case shall exterior lighting add more than one foot-candle to illumination levels at any point off-site, and that the maximum height of freestanding outdoor light fixtures is 30 feet, unless the development abuts a single-family residential property, in which case the maximum allowed height is 25 feet. Please see the complete lighting standards in Division 7 of Article VII of the Land Development Code.

**Above-Ground Storage Tanks:** All tanks shall meet the applicable building and fire code requirements, and shall be located in side or rear yards. In the following situations, a Conditional Use Permit is required prior to the use of an aboveground storage tank:

- Tank size exceeding 12,000 gallons of capacity for the storage of liquids;
- Storage of flammable gasses exceeding 10,000 cubic feet of capacity on any single property;
- Storage exceeding 48,000 gallons of capacity on any single property, only if the property is zoned I-3 and at least 3 acres in size.

## SOURCES FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

- Interactive Property Lookup Map (What's My Zoning?): [maps.c3gov.com/propertylookup](https://maps.c3gov.com/propertylookup)
- Land Development Code Article IV (Zoning Districts)
- Land Development Code Article VII (Development and Design Standards)
- Facts to Know for Development Plans
- Facts to Know for Landscape Plans
- Facts to Know for Outdoor Storage
- Commercial and Industrial Submittal Requirements
- Planner of the Day: 303-227-8777 or [cdplanner@c3gov.com](mailto:cdplanner@c3gov.com)
- Building Safety Division: 303-289-3790