

THE CITY OF CRANSTON

ORDINANCE OF THE CITY COUNCIL

IN AMENDMENT OF CHAPTER 17 OF THE CODE OF THE CITY OF CRANSTON,
AS AMENDED, ENTITLED, "ZONING"

*No.**Passed:*

/s/ Daniel R. Wall, Council President

Approved:

/s/ Kenneth J. Hopkins, Mayor

It is ordained by the City Council of the City of Cranston as follows:

Preamble

A. The City of Cranston recognizes that significant issues have arisen with stormwater runoff throughout the City and that action must be taken.

B. The City of Cranston finds that it is in the best interest of the city's economic welfare and community interest to support the continued development of Cranston.

C. The City of Cranston finds that to accommodate new development, the City of Cranston must take precautionary measures to address the increase in impervious surfaces and the resulting stormwater runoff and heat.

D. The City of Cranston finds that this ordinance can help manage additional stormwater runoff and improve the quality of Cranston's waterways.

SECTION 1. Chapter 17 of the Code of the City of Cranston, as amended, entitled "Zoning" (the "Zoning Ordinance"), is hereby amended as follows with deletions in ~~red-strikethrough~~ and insertions in underlined italics:

§ 17.04.030. Definitions.

"Green stormwater infrastructure" shall mean systems featuring plants, soil, and other natural materials designed to mimic natural processes by capturing, slowing, infiltrating, and treating stormwater at or near its source.

“Impervious surface coverage” shall mean a measure of intensity of land use that represents the portion of a site that is occupied by structures, pavement, and other impervious surfaces that do not allow for the absorption of water into the ground. Regardless of the surface treatment, all areas designated or used for parking or access to parking shall be considered impervious surfaces.

“Pervious surface coverage” shall mean the portion of a site that allows for the absorption of water into the ground.

“Riparian buffer” shall mean is an area of trees, shrubs, and other vegetation located adjacent to bodies of water such as rivers, streams, lakes, ponds, and wetlands.

Chapter 17.22 IMPERVIOUS SURFACE AND STORMWATER MANAGEMENT

§ 17.22.010. Impervious Surface Requirements.

A. Impervious surface area requirements for residential development:

District	<u>Total Maximum Impervious Surface Coverage (%)</u>
S-1, A-80	<u>15</u>
A-20	<u>30</u>
A-12	<u>50</u>
A-8	<u>50</u>
A-6	<u>60</u>
B-1/B-2 (single and two-family)	<u>60</u>
B-2 (multifamily)	<u>70</u>
C-1/C-2 (residential)	<u>70</u>

B. Calculations:

- a. Maximum impervious surface of a lot is calculated as the percentage of all impervious surface area of the total area of the lot.
- b. Maximum impervious surface of a specific yard is calculated as the percentage of all impervious surface area of the total yard area.
- c. Minimum pervious surface of a lot is expressed as a minimum square footage, regardless of lot size.
- b. Substandard lots of record shall maintain a minimum 1,000 square feet of pervious surface coverage.

~~C.c.~~ Any expansion of impervious surface in excess of the requirements in this section shall bring the lot into conformance with the requirements of §17.22.020.

~~D.B.~~ For mixed-use or non-residential developments on parcels over 10,000 square feet, a minimum of fifteen (15) percent of the parcel shall be landscaped.

- a. A change in use on a property where no extensive construction of improvements is sought may be exempted from this provision subject to granting of a waiver by the Development Plan Review Committee.
- b. Once a project complies with the minimum parking standards, then priority shall be given to meeting the landscaping standards in this section and the Subdivision and Land Development Regulations above additional parking.
- c. Planters may be counted towards landscaping area requirements if achieving the required landscaped area conflicts with another requirement of the Zoning Ordinance, subject to approval from the Building Official.
- d. Green stormwater infrastructure shall be counted towards landscaping area requirements.

§ 17.22.020. Stormwater Mitigation.

- A. Development of residential structures of up to two (2) dwelling units on individual lots and any increase to impervious surface coverage on lots with an existing residential structure of up to two (2) dwelling units shall provide for stormwater mitigation in compliance with the regulations in the "State of Rhode Island Stormwater Management Guidance for Individual Single-Family Residential Lot Development" as amended.
- B. Development not covered by subsection A above shall provide for stormwater mitigation in compliance with Chapter 15.28 soil erosion and sedimentation control of the city code and the "Rhode Island Stormwater Design and Installation Standards Manual" as amended.
- C. Upon installation of a stormwater system Where installation of a stormwater management system is required per this section but does not require a permit by the Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management, then the operations and maintenance manual for the stormwater management system shall be recorded with the City Clerk's Land Evidence Records Office prior to issuance of a certificate of occupancy.
- D. Where a subdivision includes an existing primary structure or a parking lot, the lot with the existing structure or parking lot shall be brought into conformance with the requirements of this section prior to the recording of the subdivision plans.

§ 17.22.030. Riparian Buffers.

- A. Unless otherwise specified by the Rhode Island Coastal Resources Management Program Special Area Management Plan, a vegetated buffer a minimum of 25 feet in width is required adjacent to the entire length of any water body. This buffer area is measured from the water's edge or the inland edge of a coastal shoreline feature for tidal waterbodies, as defined by the Rhode Island Coastal Resources Management Program.
- B. This buffer shall include trees and plant species that filter stormwater runoff, help stabilize soil, and help to improve the quality of the water body. New trees and plants planted within the riparian buffer shall only be species native to southern New England and appropriate for the location.
- C. The following shall be prohibited within the riparian buffer area:
 - a. Land disturbing activities that may result in erosion or sedimentation
 - b. Structures
 - c. Impervious surfaces
 - d. Application of fertilizers, herbicides and pesticides
 - e. Storage tanks for petroleum products

- ~~f. Septic system tanks or leach fields,~~
~~g. Clear cutting of vegetation~~
~~h. Stormwater management facilities~~
~~D. Paving for a walking path, bicycle path, or access to docks, piers, or beaches may be included within this buffer upon written approval of the City Arborist or designee.~~
~~E. Activities to restore areas of a riparian buffer requiring clear cutting of vegetation, application of herbicides and pesticides, and/or extensive replanting shall only be permitted upon written approval by the City Arborist or designee.~~

§ 17.64.010. Off-street parking

F. Off-Street Parking Facilities.

1. Off-street parking facilities for the handicapped shall conform to the state of Rhode Island Building Code, as amended.
2. A driveway of at least ten (10) feet by eighteen (18) feet shall be considered a parking space for a one family dwelling.
3. All areas designated or used for parking or access to parking shall be considered impervious surfaces unless designed with a porous surface consistent with Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management standards. Parking shall not be permitted on non-paved portions of the lot.
4. Principal use parking lots shall not exceed 75% impervious surface.
5. Substantial alteration or addition of any impervious surface of a parking facility to increase parking capacity shall bring the facility into compliance with the Zoning Ordinance and the Subdivision and Land Development Regulations. Substantial alteration for the purposes of this subsection shall mean any structural change to the interior of the existing parking area that disturbs more than 2,000 square feet of surface area including, but not limited to, excavation of any kind or the reclamation of pavement. Top coating or overlay of a new pavement on an existing paved surface shall not be considered an alteration subject to these requirements.

SECTION 2. This Ordinance shall take effect upon its final adoption.

Positive Endorsement:

Negative Endorsement: (Attach reasons)

Christopher T. Millea Date
City Solicitor

Christopher T. Millea Date
City Solicitor

Sponsored by: Councilwoman Graziano

Referred to Ordinance Committee: August 5, 2026