



**Agenda
City Council
March 2, 2026
5:30 PM
Council Chamber, Clemson City Hall**

Notice of Public Hearing

- a. 2026-R-01 Proposed Text Amendment (Neighborhood Conservation Overlay District)
 - i. The City of Clemson City Council will hold a public hearing on the matter listed below. The session will begin at 5:30 p.m. on Monday, March 2, 2026 in the Council Chambers in City Hall, 1250 Tiger Boulevard, Clemson, SC 29631. Comments on the matter may be submitted in person during the hearing, and in writing through the MyCivic app on the City’s website prior to the session.

Hearing Topic:

2026-R-01 Proposed Text Amendment (Neighborhood Conservation Overlay District)

The proposed amendment would establish a new zoning overlay district intended to facilitate stability and promote continuity that will help maintain the character and minimize negative impacts of change on designated existing residential neighborhood(s). Among the issues addressed by draft’s standards are the prioritization of the preservation and protection of the natural terrain and existing landscape, and ensuring the architectural elements and placement of new development conform to the character of the surrounding existing neighborhood. It also authorizes the Board of Architectural Review to establish additional design criteria. The Planning Commission approved the proposal on February 9, 2026. Links to copies of documents will be published on the Agenda Center page of the City website.

Contact the Planning and Development Department (864-653-2050) for more information.



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CODE OF ORDINANCES

CHAPTER 19 ZONING (1)

ARTICLE III. RESIDENTIAL DISTRICTS AND DISTRICT REGULATIONS

DIVISION 2. CONDITIONAL USE AND SPECIAL EXCEPTION STANDARDS FOR RESIDENTIAL DISTRICTS

Sec. 19-305. Purpose of conditional use and special exception standards.

C. RESIDENTIAL ACCESSORY STRUCTURES & USES ²: See Section 19-305, Endnote 2

12. Guest Cottage

a. Conditional Use Standards [All Residential Districts]: See Section 19-305 C.1.

4. ~~Guest cottages shall meet the minimum setbacks for primary structures in the district. Guest cottages must be a minimum of 25 feet from any street, 10 feet from any side property line, and 15 feet from any rear property line.~~
11. Shall be located behind the front building line of the principal structure. ~~and shall otherwise meet all dimensional requirements for principal structure(s) (other than height) of the district.~~

ARTICLE XI. ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW

Sec. 19-1104. Powers and duties of the BAR.

- A. The Board of Architectural Review (BAR) shall review applications for permits for the following activities within AR **and NC** districts which are subject to architectural review by the BAR pursuant to regulations in ~~this~~ article 12.

ARTICLE XII. Neighborhood Conservation Overlay District (NC District)

Sec. 19-1201. Establishment and Purpose.

The zoning overlay hereby established by these standards in conformity with the provisions of the South Carolina Local Government Comprehensive Planning Enabling Act of 1994 shall be known as the Neighborhood Conservation Overlay (NC District). The purpose of the NC District is to facilitate stability and promote continuity within the designated areas in order to maintain the character of, and to minimize negative impacts of change on, the existing neighborhood(s). The boundaries of the NC District, including

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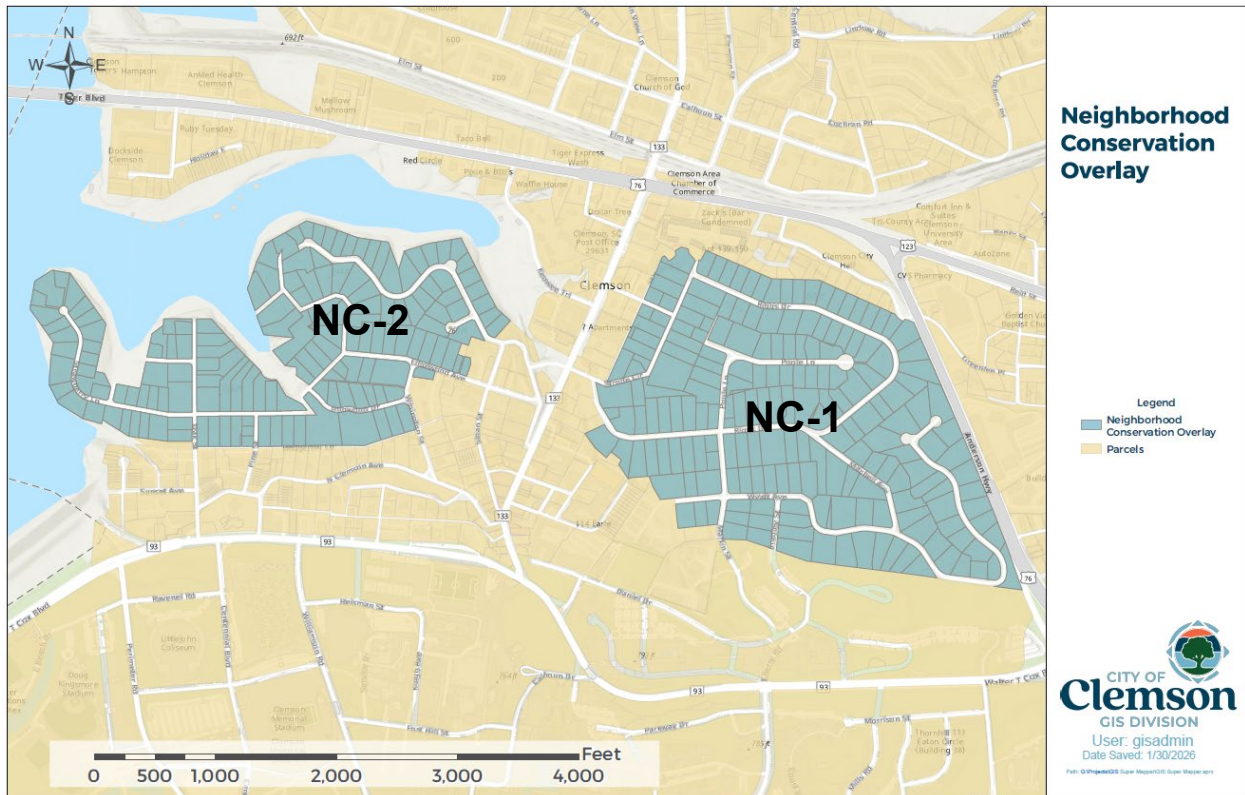
Proposed edits in **RED** font approved by Planning Commission Feb. 9, 2026

Additional staff recommendations in **BLUE** font

each constituent portion or sub-district, shall be as delineated and identified on MAP 19-1202 (below). The boundaries of the NC District may be amended as deemed necessary.

Sec. 19-1202. Boundaries.

MAP 19-1202



***Sub-districts:**

NC-1 Cold Springs

NC-2 Sloan-Poe

*Names of sub-districts are intended for reference only, and may or may not reflect the names of original subdivisions of all portions of a designated area.

Sec. 19-1203. District Regulations.

A. Application.

The district regulations established by this article shall apply to the construction of all new residences, guest cottages, garages, subdivisions of land, and only those additions to existing residences or occupied structures that incorporate an apartment unit.

B. Exemptions.

The following shall be exempt from the application of the regulations of this section:

1. Temporary uses or structures permitted by district regulations;
2. Ordinary maintenance, painting, or repair which does not require a building permit;
3. Public and private utility structures permitted by district regulations;
4. Structures on public streets or public property approved by the City Council;
5. Demolition or modification of any structure which is certified by the Building Official in writing as being necessary to protect the public from unsafe or dangerous conditions.
6. Fences, wall or sports courts.
7. Accessory structures less than two hundred (200) square feet that do not contain habitable spaces.
8. Additions that do not contain an apartment.

C. Certificate of Approval.

Notwithstanding any other standard or regulation contained in this Chapter, a Certificate of Approval granted by the Board of Architectural Review (BAR) shall, with the exception of subdivisions governed by Chapter 15 of the City of Clemson Code of Ordinances, be required for any use or structure subject to these standards prior to the issuance of any other permit or approval. Said Certificate of Approval shall be based upon the review and consideration of the particular proposed use or structure, and may include conditions deemed necessary by the BAR to ensure conformity with these standards. Such approval shall be pursuant to Section 3 of the Vested Rights Ordinance (CC-2005-11) [section 15-30.2]. Subdivisions governed by Chapter 15 of the City of Clemson Code of Ordinances shall be subject to applicable rules contain therein.

D. Dimensional Standards.

In the event applicable standards of the NC District do not include dimensional limitations or other rules governing modifications of a proposed use or structure, the regulations of the underlying zoning district shall apply.

E. General Standards.

The following general standards shall be applied in the review of all applications for Certificates of Approval:

1. The natural terrain and landscape shall be preserved and protected to the degree feasible. In all cases existing trees and shrubs shall not be destroyed indiscriminately.
2. Architectural scale, location, form, line, color, texture, and other design elements of buildings and other structures shall conform to the character of the neighborhood; no Certificate of Approval shall be issued for proposed projects that fail to meet quality of design standards called for by these regulations.
3. The placement and relative location of proposed structures/additions must be consistent with that of existing structures in the surrounding area.
4. Exterior lighting shall be used only for safety and design.
5. All electrical and mechanical equipment and refuse containers shall be concealed or screened from view of the public right-of-way.
6. The BAR will establish supplemental design criteria for future evaluation.

F. Legal Non-conformance.

Any existing use or structure deemed to be in legal non-conformance with these standards shall be permitted to continue provided proposed changes or alterations do not result in an increase of said non-conformity.

Sec. 19-1204. Amendment of District.

- A. The NC District may be amended from time to time as deemed necessary in accordance with the zoning amendment procedures established by this Chapter.
- B. Standards addressing the specific conditions of each sub-district may be adopted as needed. Consideration of such standards should at a minimum include:
 1. Promoting harmonious and attractive development both in the district and in surrounding areas;
 2. Ensuring pedestrian accessibility and safety;
 3. Protection of the character of established neighborhoods;
 4. Encouragement of creativity and superior and/or innovative architectural and site design that results in cohesive architectural styling throughout sub-districts;
 5. Protection and enhancement of the City's tree canopy.

- C. Design review standards shall reflect the goals set forth in the Comprehensive Plan and other applicable adopted plans. The Board of Architectural Review shall use these standards to encourage development that both draws from and responds to the architectural features of existing structures, and respects the impact on adjacent residential properties.

Sec. 19-1205. Application for Certificate of Approval.

All projects proposed to be located in any portion of the NC District shall require review and approval of a Certificate of Approval by the BAR prior to the issuance of any building or other permit/approval. Application for review of proposed projects shall be made to the Planning and Development Department Office. City Council may establish, and from time to time amend, appropriate fees for said review. Applications shall include the completion and submittal of appropriate forms provided by Planning and Development Department staff, and any support materials deemed necessary to address all pertinent aspects of a proposed project.

A. The following architectural review procedure is hereby established:

1. *Conceptual review.* Applicants are encouraged to meet with the Zoning and Codes Administrator prior to the preparation of working drawings and specifications. The purpose of this meeting shall be to acquaint the applicant with NC District standards and guidelines. Applicants may also meet with the BAR to present the concept of a proposed project in order to obtain general input during formative phases. Conceptual review is mandatory for all projects including new structures.
2. *Preliminary review.* During preliminary reviews the BAR shall provide applicants with specific input and guidance related to the application. However, in the event the materials presented are deemed to be sufficiently clear and the proposal is determined to meet applicable standards, the BAR, or its designee, may grant preliminary and final approval. Notwithstanding this standard, the first time a project involving construction of a new structure is listed as an item on a BAR meeting agenda, public input shall be obtained pursuant to the BAR Rules of Procedure prior to the board rendering a decision.
3. *Final Review.* At the conclusion of a final review, the BAR, or its designee, may grant, grant with conditions, or disapprove an application for a Certificate of Approval.

- B. The BAR may, on a case-by-case basis, delegate its authority to conduct conceptual, preliminary, or final design reviews regarding one or more aspects/categories of projects to the Zoning and Codes Administrator. In the event a delegated review reveals the applicant has met all applicable standards, the Zoning and Codes Administrator may, if appropriate, issue a Certificate of Approval. Notwithstanding the delegation of authority, however, the Zoning and Codes Administrator may at any point refer a matter back to the BAR, who shall take it up again at their earliest opportunity.
- C. In addition to the required completed application form and any applicable fees, applicants for review of projects for Certificates of Approval shall submit nine (9) full-color paper copies and one (1) digital copy of the following materials to the Zoning and Codes Administrator by the application deadline:
1. Site plan, drawn to scale;
 2. Landscape plan;
 3. Elevation plans, including any portions of the structure visible from a public right-of-way; and
 4. Other information as may be required, and may include pictures of any buildings adjacent to the subject property.

The Zoning and Codes Administrator shall reserve the right to accept additional application support materials after the deadline for submission provided the application, appropriate fees, and primary information were received on time.

- D. Decisions of the Zoning and Codes Administrator may be appealed to the Board of Architectural Review pursuant to procedures set forth in this article.
- E. All subdivisions (Simple Lot, Minor or Major) shall follow the standard review processes established in Chapter 15 of the City of Clemson Code of Ordinances.

Sec. 19-1206. Appeals.

- A. A person aggrieved by a decision of the Zoning and Codes Administrator related to an application for an architectural review Certificate of Approval, or any officer, department, or board of the city may appeal the decision to the BAR, as follows:

1. The appealing party shall file written notice of appeal with the Zoning and Codes Administrator and the BAR within 30 days after receipt of written notification of the Zoning and Codes Administrator's decision. The notice of appeal shall specify the grounds of appeal;
2. The Zoning and Codes Administrator shall provide the BAR with all documents in the record upon which the action appealed was taken;
3. An appeal stays all proceedings to enforce the action, unless the Zoning and Codes Administrator certifies that a stay would cause imminent peril to life and property. The BAR or Circuit Court may grant a restraining order for due cause;
4. The BAR shall hear the appeal at its next regularly scheduled meeting, provided that notification of the appeal is published in a newspaper of general circulation 15 days before the meeting;
5. The appealing party may appear in person or by attorney at the meeting;
6. The BAR shall hear the appeal in accordance with adopted procedure. The BAR shall provide a written decision, including findings of fact and conclusions; and
7. The BAR shall serve a copy of its decision on parties in interest by certified mail and keep a copy as a permanent public record.

Sec. 19-1207. Appeal of BAR's decision.

Decisions of the Board of Architectural Review may be appealed to the Circuit Court within 30 days of the BAR's decision pursuant to S.C. Code 1976, § 6-29-900.

Sec. 19-1208. Architectural Review Neighborhood Conservation Sub-district Standards.

Table 19-1208 Neighborhood Conservation District: Sub-district Standards		
"✓" = required "-" = not required		
Standards	NC District	
	# 1	#2
Building Standards		
1. The design and materials of any addition or accessory structure must match that of the primary house.	✓	✓

2. Design of any new construction must fit in with the surrounding properties and advance the aesthetics of the neighborhood.	✓	✓
3. All new homes developments to which these standards are applicable are subject to the City's Site Management Plan during construction	✓	✓
Site Standards		
1. Planned Development proposals are not allowed for properties located within the NC District Sub-district	✓	✓
2. New lots created will avoid irregular shapes with side lots lines being perpendicular to the road.	✓	✓
3. All new residences developments to which these standards are applicable are required to adhere to landscaping standards found in the Architectural District Standards table 19-1110 and Article IX.	✓	✓
4. Site plans for new construction or subdivisions must map mature trees and describe the measures that will be to conserve them, minimizing the loss of mature trees. For each 6 8" DBH or greater tree taken down that is not within the footprint of the primary residence, two (2) canopy trees must be installed in its place. If no approved suitable location can be found, the property owner shall pay \$500.00 into the tree bank fund for every missing tree. The BAR can approve the substitution of a required canopy tree for one or more ornamental tree or bush for cause.	✓	✓
5. New buildings and additions shall be designed to set into the landscape with a minimum of reshaping to the topography and loss of mature trees.	✓	✓
6. New construction should provide for large, native trees that will reach at least fifty (50) feet in height at maturity. At least two (2) trees of this type should be placed and maintained in an approved manner in each of the front and rear yards; existing trees may be counted in this amount.	✓	✓
7. At least two ornamental trees such as a dogwood or redbud should be shown in the front and rear yards of each building on plans being submitted for approval for new construction.	✓	✓
8. The BAR may on a case-by-case basis modify setback requirement to make proposed new construction fit in better with the surrounding properties; in no case may a permitted setback be less than five (5) feet.	✓	✓
9. The BAR shall approve all landscaping plans.	✓	✓

Sec. 19-1209. Enforcement.

A. Failure to maintain structures and landscaping in the manner approved by the BAR shall be a violation of this ordinance.

B. Failure to comply with the approved subdivision plans shall be a violation of this ordinance.

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Proposed edits in **RED** font approved by Planning Commission Feb. 9, 2026
Additional staff recommendations in **BLUE** font

Note: Approval of the proposed draft will necessitate the following changes to the numbering of the following Code Articles-

ARTICLE ~~XIII~~ XIII. ADMINISTRATION

ARTICLE ~~XIII~~ XIV. APPEALS

ARTICLE ~~XIV~~ XV. AMENDMENT

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