

Department of Community and Economic Development  
Planning Division  
**ADMINISTRATIVE POLICY/CODE INTERPRETATION**

**MUNICIPAL**

**CODE SECTIONS:** RMC 4-2-060, Zoning Use Table, RMC 4-2-050, Permitted Land Uses Established

**REFERENCE:** N/A

**SUBJECT:** Clarification of conditions necessary for “drive-in/drive-through, retail” uses such as coffee stands to be allowed as “accessory uses” in the IL, IM, IH, CN, and CA Zones.

**BACKGROUND:** The City received a request for clarification of the zones that would permit a freestanding coffee business.

RMC 4-2-050A defines *Accessory Uses* as follows: “Uses customarily incidental and subordinate to the principal use and located upon the same lot occupied by the principal use or on an abutting/adjacent lot that is under the same ownership as the principal lot.”

The Zoning Use Table, RMC Section 4-2-060, lists “drive-in/drive-through, retail” as an “Accessory Use” (AC) in the following zones as follows:

**CV and CD Zones:** Subject to Footnote #28 “Accessory drive-through service is permitted only in association with multi-story buildings. The accessory drive-through service shall be located to the side and/or rear of the building, and integrated into the exterior wall. Drive-through lanes shall not be located between the street and the main pedestrian access to the buildings. These requirements may be adjusted through the Site Plan review process.”

**UC-N1 Zone:** Subject to Footnote #78: “No freestanding structures permitted unless architecturally and functionally integrated into an overall shopping center or mixed use development.”

**UC-N2 Zone:** Subject to Footnote #80: “Drive-through windows must abut a building facade or wall and must be located within the building footprint.”

However, the Zoning Use Table does not provide much guidance as to what would qualify a drive-in/drive-through retail business as “accessory”

in the IL, IM, IH, CN, and CA Zones because there are no associated conditions.

**JUSTIFICATION:** RMC 4-2-050A states: "Some accessory uses are specifically listed, particularly where a use is only allowed in an accessory form, whereas other accessory uses are determined by the Development Services Division on a case-by-case basis per RMC 4-2-050C4 and C6, Accessory Use Interpretations and Unclassified Uses." In order ensure consistent code administration relative to drive-in/drive-through retail uses, clarification of those conditions that would qualify such a business as "accessory" is needed.

**DECISION:** Drive-in/drive-through retail businesses are considered as 'accessory' in the **IL, IM, IH, CN and CA** Zones if the use can comply with any one of the following conditions: The use is 1) located on the same lot with another building/use; or 2) structurally integrated into another building/use's structure; or 3) located on its own lot but has some amount of indoor customer seating so as to qualify the drive thru as 'accessory' to the eating/drinking establishment.

**PLANNING DIRECTOR  
APPROVAL:**

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C. E. "Chip" Vincent

**DATE:** March 13, 2012

**APPEAL  
PROCESS:** To appeal this determination, a written appeal--accompanied by the required filing fee--must be filed with the City's Hearing Examiner (1055 South Grady Way, Renton, WA 98057, 425-430-6515) no more than 14 days from the date of this decision. Your submittal should explain the basis for the appeal. Section 4-8-110 of the Renton Municipal Code provides further information on the appeal process.

**CODE  
AMENDMENTS  
NEEDED TO  
IMPLEMENT  
DETERMINATIONS:**

Section 4-2-080, Conditions Associated with Zoning Use Table, should be amended by adding a new Footnote #19 applicable to Drive-in/Drive-Through Retail to read as follows: "These uses are only possible in three instances—When the use is: 1) located on the same lot with another building/use; or 2) structurally integrated into another building/use's structure; or 3) located on its own lot but has some amount of indoor customer seating so as to qualify the drive thru as 'accessory' to the eating/drinking establishment.