

Auto Body Shop Text Amendments – 10/22/2012 Draft

Sec. 65.701. Auto body shop.

A shop ~~that provides in the business of making~~ substantial motor vehicle body repairs, ~~to the shell or body of any automobile, and of major or substantial painting or undercoating services, including of the shell or body, and where the following service may also be carried out: general auto repair; engine rebuilding; rebuilding or reconditioning of motor vehicles; collision repair services; such as body, frame or fender straightening and repair; overall painting and undercoating.~~

Standards and conditions:

- (a) A ten (10) foot buffer area with screen planting and an obscuring wall or fence shall be required along any property line adjoining a residential zoning district.

Additional standards and conditions in traditional neighborhood, business, and IR light industrial restricted districts:

- (b) All repair work shall be done within an enclosed building. All vehicles awaiting repair shall be stored in an enclosed building or within an area enclosed by a wall or fence that provides an opaque screen. There shall be no exterior storage of parts or merchandise.
- (c) Doors to repair service bays shall be closed when providing repair services to vehicles, except for conveyance into and out of service bays.
- (d) All trash shall be stored within an enclosed obscuring wall or fence, shall not exceed the height of the wall or fence, and shall be removed from the lot by licensed waste disposers at least once per week.
- (e) Except in the IR light industrial restricted district this use shall be limited to parcels within one-quarter (1/4) mile of University Avenue, subject to standards and conditions (b) and (c) in section 65.703, auto service station, and there shall be no outside storage the lot shall be a minimum of thirty thousand (30,000) square feet in area.

(Ord. No. 11-27, § 1, 4-20-11)

[General auto repair, engine rebuilding, and rebuilding or reconditioning of motor vehicles, which is the definition of “auto repair station,” is taken out of the definition of “auto body shop” to avoid confusion. They are different uses with some differences in the districts and standards under which they are allowed. Where both uses are allowed in the zoning district, a business can include both uses, and the standards and conditions for both uses would apply.]

General auto repair, including engine rebuilding and rebuilding or reconditioning of motor vehicles, and auto body shops are commonly permitted in general commercial districts, including in Minneapolis (where there is no minimum lot area standard for these uses). They are needed services that are useful to have conveniently available. “Auto repair station” is permitted in the B3 general business district in St. Paul, but St. Paul currently permits auto body shops in the B3 general business district only as an accessory use to an auto dealership. As auto dealerships have moved to suburban locations, this service has become more limited in St. Paul. Neither auto sales nor auto body shop is currently permitted in traditional neighborhood districts.

ABRA Auto Body at 1190 University Avenue is an example of an auto body shop that operated as an accessory use to an auto dealership, Midway Chevrolet / Hyundai / Suzuki. Since Midway Chevrolet / Hyundai / Suzuki closed, ABRA has operated at this site under an interim use permit approved by the City Council in 2007. The interim use permit was set to expire in December 2012. The City Council approved a modification to the interim use permit at the December 19, 2012 meeting setting the interim use permit to expire “five years after City Council approval or when the property is redeveloped with a new use, or ownership of the use is transferred or the zoning code is amended to make auto body shop a conditional use at this location, which ever may occur first.” The property at

1190 University Avenue was rezoned from B3 general business to T4 traditional neighborhood district in 2011 as part of the Central Corridor / Traditional Neighborhood Zoning Study.

ABRA operates in mixed-use commercial areas without problems, including as part of the American Blvd. project in Bloomington and in the high-density, upscale Buckhead neighborhood in downtown Atlanta. ABRA provides a needed neighborhood service, provides neighborhood jobs, generates few vehicle trips, and would be compatible with high-density mixed-use development for which there is room on the site at 1190 University Avenue.

Subject to appropriate standards and conditions, auto body shops can be compatible in close proximity to residential and other commercial uses. State and federal standards for venting, including from paint booths, now tightly control emissions through mandatory installation of exhaust filters that successfully remove odors. City and state noise standards also apply, and proposed new condition (b) requiring all repair work to be done within an enclosed building goes beyond these to control noise.

Rather than a reference to auto service station standards in § 65.703 that currently only applies to auto body shops in the IR light industrial restricted district, the 10 foot buffer area and screen planting standard is written out in (a) to apply to auto body shops in all districts. Auto service station standard language in § 65.703(e) pertaining to pump islands is not necessary for auto body shops.

The proposed additional standards and conditions would require that all repair work and storage of parts be within an enclosed building, and mitigate potential impacts so that the use would be appropriate as a conditional use in the T4 traditional neighborhood, B3 general business, and IR light industrial restricted districts. The proposed 30,000 sq. ft. minimum lot area requirement is twice the 15,000 sq. ft. minimum lot area for auto repair stations and auto service stations, is 2½ times the 12,000 sq. ft. minimum lot area requirement for auto convenience markets and gas stations without auto service facilities, and would assure more than adequate area on the site to accommodate the repair building, accessory customer and employee parking, and storage of vehicles awaiting repair.

The dimensional standards and design standards in the T4 traditional neighborhood, B3 general business, and IR light industrial restricted districts that apply to all uses generally would apply to this use as well. For example, the minimum floor area ratio (FAR) in the T4 district would apply to this use as to all uses generally.]

Table 66.321, Principal Uses in Traditional Neighborhood Districts, and Table 66.421, Principal Uses in Business Districts.

Designate auto body shop as a conditional use in the T4 traditional neighborhood district and in the B3 general business district.

[Subject to the standards and conditions listed and noted above, it is appropriate as a conditional use in these districts. As noted above, auto body shops are commonly permitted in general business districts, including in Minneapolis, and are currently permitted in the B3 general business district as an accessory use to an auto dealership. The conditional use permit public hearing and review process provides for the imposition of additional conditions and limitations relating to site-specific conditions such as surrounding uses, hours of operation, building and door orientation, access, the storage of vehicles awaiting repair, and the location of vents.]