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PLANNING

Planning is a Division of the Department of Planning & Development Services

CARPORTS AND PORCHES

How is the term “carport” defined?

As a roof-covered structure accessory to a residence, substantially open on at least two of its sides, and which is designed or used for the storage of motor vehicles for the occupants of the residence to which it is accessory.

How is the term “porch” defined?

As a roof-covered platform which is accessory to a residence, is usually attached to or part of and with direct access to the residence, and is substantially open on at least two of its sides.

What are the setbacks for a carport?

Carports and porches which are attached to the primary structure, or located within 10 feet of it, are considered integral to the primary structure and must meet the same setback requirements as the primary structure. Illustrative graphics are shown on the next page.

Note: Unless the property is encompassed within the Open Structure Overlay Zone, NO carports or porches, either attached or detached, will be allowed within the minimum front yard required on the lot (front building line).

What is the Open Structure Overlay Zone (OS)?

This zone has less restrictive setback requirements and was adopted by the City Council in 2004. To determine if a property is within the OS Zone, contact us or utilize our online GIS maps at www.cosatx.us/GIS. Properties within the OS Zone are allowed to have open carports and porches that extend into the minimum front and/or side yards, which is ordinarily not permitted. Besides being located within the Overlay Zone, the property must:

1. Have a zoning designation of Single-Family Residence (RS-1), Two-Family Residence (RS-2), Manufactured Housing Subdivision (MHS), Low-Rise Multi-Family Residence (RM-1), or High-Rise Multi-Family Residence (RM-2); OR,
2. Have a zoning designation for Commercial or Manufacturing, but only if the property is occupied by one or more residential buildings.

When placing or constructing a porch or carport within the OS Zone that extends beyond the front building line, what conditions must be followed?

These conditions include, but are not limited to:

- They must be substantially open in character.
 - A minimum of 7 feet from the finished floor shall be open and unencumbered by any components, except necessary vertical supports no greater than 12 inches in width or diameter, or a to the building wall attached to the carport or porch.
- The leading edge or face of the roof shall not be closer than 5 feet from the front lot boundary and a minimum of 10 feet away from the back of the street curb or street surface edge.
- The leading edge or face of the roof shall not be closer than 2 feet from the side lot boundary and at least 5 feet away from the back of the street curb or street surface edge.
- Neither the roof nor any vertical support for the roof shall encroach into public rights-of-way, an easement designed to be open, or onto an adjacent lot or tract of land under the control of another party.
- Not more than 30% of the minimum front yard area required shall be covered by the roof of the carport or porch.
- The roof covering on the carport or porch shall be generally consistent with the materials, character and appearance of the roof covering the residence, or if attached to an accessory building, the roof covering the accessory building.

