

project	USA Climbing NTC	date:	1-22-2026
owner	USA Climbing	architect:	VCBO Architecture

Project Description

The new USA Climbing National Training Center (NTC) will provide a home base for training the nation's Olympic and Paralympic climbing teams. When not dedicated to competitive climbing events and training sessions, the facility intends to serve the neighboring community as a commercial climbing gym that offers year-round recreation and opportunities to remain physically active for community members, from climbing novices to enthusiasts. The 99,616 square foot, 3-story facility will include both indoor and outdoor climbing walls; space to house strength and conditioning equipment studios; supporting locker rooms, equipment rentals, and storage; office space for USA Climbing and their partnered, on-site commercial gym operators; two multi-purpose spaces for meeting and trainings with an associated pre-event area overlooking the climbing walls in the indoor competition bay; and a dedicated area for the national team's athletes to train and receive recovery and physical therapy treatments to ensure peak performance.

The project will also encompass the demolition and rebuild of the existing Salt Lake Mattress Company building on site, restoring its original form and visual character through salvaged brick from the existing building. The intent for this building is to have the ground floor house a retail space on the south side facing the new Market Street frontage being created in the district, as well as a café on the north side of the building to address the Arts Campus Plaza currently being designed under the CRA's engaged design efforts for the overall district improvements. The second floor of the Salt Lake Mattress Company building will host a portion of the office suite for USA Climbing's operations and will be accessed through the new-build portion of the training facility. The northeast corner of the project site is intended to serve as a sunken plaza offering opportunities for both spectator viewing areas during competitive outdoor climbing events as well as additional space for city-hosted community events and festivals that are intended to occur along the revised 300 South street design, consistent with the city's expressed vision for the Rio Grande District.

Types of Construction Materials:

Type II-A construction

Precast Concrete and glazing at ground level with articulated metal panels and glazing on upper floors throughout the new construction portion of the project.

Rebuilt/restored masonry with raised concrete foundations with new energy-efficient glazing are to be executed at the existing Salt Lake Mattress Company building as part of the project.

USA Climbing and VCBO Architecture have undertaken a robust coordination with Salt Lake City's Community Reinvestment Agency to support the master planned vision for the city's encouraged development and reinvestment efforts in the Rio Grande District. Great effort has been taken to meet the city's requirements outlined in design standards and ordinance to the greatest extent possible, given the functional requirements for the facility to serve both as a commercial gym as well as a facility that meets standards to host national and international competitive climbing events. With this said, there are design standards and requirements which are proving incompatible with functional and technical requirements for the project that will require consideration for possible exception through the city's design review process. The following represent the specific areas we are submitting for consideration and approval with the Design Review application:

- Exception to Minimum Building Height of 75' under current GMU zoning requirements.

- Relief on maximum yard setbacks and associated landscaping/site furnishing requirements to accommodate the requested spectator/festival plaza to the northeast as well as the Arts Campus plaza to the west of the building.
- Ground and upper floor glass percentage reductions
- Building entrance frequency reduction
- Relief for Blank Wall Maximum Length standards
- Exception to maximum street-facing façade length

Design Review Narrative

Salt Lake City Zoning Requirements:

Gateway Districts

21A.31.010: GENERAL PROVISIONS:

A. Statement of Intent: The G-MU Gateway-Mixed Use District is intended to provide an urban setting for residential and commercial, developments, and implement the objectives of the Downtown Plan through district regulations that reinforce the mixed use character of the area and encourage the development of urban neighborhoods containing supportive retail, service commercial, office, and high density residential. *Noted – we submit that the project will prove to be a substantive amenity for residents of the district and downtown community at large. The project will provide a unique experience which will draw activity to the district from surrounding communities while also offering a facility that encourages health, wellness, and recreational opportunities for neighboring uses and residents.*

B. Uses: Uses in the G-MU Gateway-Mixed District as specified in Section 21A.33.060, "Table of Permitted and Conditional Uses in the Gateway District", of this title, are permitted subject to the general provisions set forth in this section. *Noted – see responses for permitted and conditional uses of the project below.*

C. Permitted Uses: The uses specified as permitted uses, in Section 21A.33.060, "Table of Permitted and Conditional Uses in the Gateway District", of this title are permitted; provided, that they comply with all requirements of this chapter, the general standards set forth in Part IV of this title, and all other applicable requirements of this title. *The facility's primary uses include commercial, retail, office, and indoor/outdoor recreational components, all of which are listed as permitted uses under the revised ordinances adopted as part of the city's mixed use consolidation efforts.*

D. Conditional Uses: The uses specified as conditional uses in Section 21A.33.060, "Table of Permitted and Conditional Uses in the Gateway District", of this title, shall be permitted in the G-MU Gateway-Mixed Use District provided they are approved pursuant to the standards and procedures for conditional uses set forth in Chapter 21A.54 of this title. *As noted above, outdoor recreation uses were textually updated as part of the adopted mixed use consolidation efforts from the city to be permitted uses so a conditional use review is no longer necessary for the project.*

E. Midblock Walkways: As part of the city's plan for the downtown area, it is intended that midblock walkways be provided to increase pedestrian connectivity and overall livability downtown through the creation of an intricate pedestrian network. The city has adopted the Downtown Plan that includes a midblock walkway map and establishes a need for such walkways as the Downtown grows. Because the districts within the downtown area allow building heights that exceed those of other districts in the city, the requirement for a midblock walkway is considered to be necessary to alleviate pedestrian impacts on the public sidewalks by dispersing future use of the public sidewalks. This requirement implements the city's Downtown Plan and provides visual relief from the additional height that is available in these zone districts when compared to the remainder of the city. All buildings constructed after the effective date hereof within the Downtown zoning districts shall conform to this officially adopted plan for midblock walkways, in addition to the following standards:

1. Any new development shall provide a midblock walkway if a midblock walkway on the subject property has been identified in a master plan that has been adopted by the city.
2. The following standards apply to the midblock walkway:
 - a. The midblock walkway must be a minimum of fifteen (15') wide and include a minimum six feet (6') wide unobstructed path.
 - b. The midblock walkway may be incorporated into the building provided it is open to the public. A sign shall be posted indicating that the public may use the walkway.
 - c. Building encroachments into the midblock walkway are permitted if they include one or more of the following elements:
 - (1) Colonnades;
 - (2) Staircases;
 - (3) Balconies: All balconies must be located at the third story or above;
 - (4) Building overhangs and associated cantilever - These coverings may be between nine (9) and fourteen feet (14') above the level of the sidewalk. They shall provide a minimum depth of coverage of six feet (6') and project no closer to the curb than three feet (3');
 - (5) Skybridge: A single skybridge is permitted. All skybridges must be located at the third, fourth, or fifth stories; and
 - (6) Other architectural element(s) not listed above that offers refuge from weather and/or provide publicly accessible usable space.

The zoning map does identify a midblock walkway requirement on the site. USA Climbing is currently working with the CRA to satisfy this requirement for the district. The current intent being pursued is that the city is looking to create a midblock walkway complying with the stipulated standard through the acquisition of land to the west of the Salt Lake Mattress Company building to establish Woodbine Court. As noted in the district vision and implementation plan, the creation of this new frontage will offer a means of pedestrian connectivity through both blocks of the district and connect to the adjacent Arts Campus plaza spaces in the heart of the district.

F. Modifications of Standards: A modification to the provisions of this chapter may be granted through the design review process, subject to conformance with the standards and procedures of Chapter 21A.59 of this title. *Noted – please refer to identified areas for considerations and modifications to standards contained in this project summary and narrative to be included within the requested design review process.*

G. Midblock Street Development: Developments constructing midblock streets, either privately owned with a public easement or publicly dedicated, that are desired by an applicable master plan:

1. May transfer a portion or all of the above ground development square footage of the proposed new midblock street to other land within the proposed development. *Noted.*
2. May increase the height of the building on the remaining land within the development site to a height necessary to accommodate the development square footage of the proposed right of way that is being transferred. *Noted.*
3. Any proposal under this section shall be subject to conformance with the standards and procedures of Chapter 21A.59, "Design Review", of this title. *Noted.*

H. Parking:

1. Belowground Parking Facilities: No special design and setback restrictions shall apply to belowground parking facilities. *Noted – current ordinance does not require off-street vehicular parking minimums for the intended uses as the subject property is part of a 'transit context' zone in Table 21A.44.040-A.*
2. Landscape Requirements: Surface parking lots shall have a landscaped setback of at least twenty feet (20') and meet interior landscaped requirements as outlined in Chapter 21A.48 of this title. *Noted.*
3. Design Review Approval: A modification to the restrictions on parking lots and structures provisions of this section may be granted through the design review process, subject to conformance with the standards and procedures of Chapter 21A.59 of this title. Such conditional uses shall also be subject to urban design evaluation. *Noted.*
4. Parking structures shall conform to the requirements set forth in Chapter 21A.37 of this title. *Noted.*

I. Outdoor Sales, Display and Storage: "Sales and display (outdoor)" and "storage and display (outdoor)", is permitted for retail uses and the retail components of other permitted and conditional uses authorized in Section 21A.33.060 "Table of Permitted and Conditional Uses in the Gateway District. These uses shall conform to the following:

1. Outdoor sales and display and outdoor storage may also be permitted when part of an authorized temporary use as established in Chapter 21A.42 of this title; *Noted.*
2. The outdoor sales or display of merchandise shall not encroach into areas of required parking for longer than thirty (30) days; *Noted.*
3. The outdoor permanent sales or display of merchandise shall not be located in any required yard area within the lot when the lot abuts a residential zoning district; *Noted.*
4. The outdoor sales or display of merchandise shall not include the use of banners, pennants or strings of pennants. (Ord. 24B-23, 2023: Ord. 24-23, 2023: Ord. 67-22, 2022: Ord. 14-19, 2019: Ord. 66-13, 2013: Ord. 62-13, 2013: Ord. 15-13, 2013: Ord. 83-98 § 6 (Exh. D), 1998) *Noted.*

21A.31.020: G-MU GATEWAY-MIXED USE DISTRICT:

A. Purpose Statement: The G-MU Gateway-Mixed Use District is intended to implement the objectives of the adopted Downtown Plan and encourage the mixture of residential, commercial and assembly uses within an urban neighborhood atmosphere. The 200 South corridor is intended to encourage commercial development on an urban scale and the 500 West corridor is intended to be a primary residential corridor from North Temple to 400 South. Development in this district is intended to create an urban neighborhood that provides employment and economic development opportunities that are oriented toward the pedestrian with a strong emphasis on a safe and attractive streetscape. The standards are intended to achieve established objectives for urban and historic design, pedestrian amenities and land use regulation. *We submit that the project contributes to the intended mix of uses targeted for the future residential and commercial development pattern within the Rio Grande District, and can help contribute to the intended vitality of the urban fabric envisioned by the city for the district.*

B. Special Provisions:

1. Commercial Uses, 200 South: All buildings fronting 200 South shall have commercial uses that may include retail goods/service establishments, offices, restaurants, art galleries, motion picture theaters or performing arts facilities shall be provided on the first floor adjacent to the front or corner side lot line. The facades of such first floor shall be compatible and consistent with the associated retail or office portion of the building and other retail uses in the area. *Noted, this requirement is not applicable as the project is not fronting on 200 South.*
2. Residential Units, 500 West: Buildings fronting on 500 West shall be required to have residential units occupying a minimum of fifty percent (50%) of the structure's gross square footage.

The project, as discussed and coordinated with the CRA to serve as a unique recreation hub of the district's development, is by nature not intended to meet this residential component of the ordinance. Rather, it will offer an alternative set of uses and amenities to the district that will support the vibrancy and desired urban street activity expressed in the Rio Grande District's vision and implementation plan.

C. Building Height: The minimum building height shall be seventy five feet (75'). The maximum building height shall not exceed one hundred eighty feet (180'). *As shown on the provided elevations, the building's current maximum height is set at 72'-5 1/4" to the top of its highest parapet above the main entrance to the south elevation along Market Street. This is one of the components for which we are seeking an exception, as compliance with this requirement would prove cost-prohibitive for the project to be built any taller. Furthermore, an increase in building height would drive further disparity between it and both the Salt Lake Mattress Company structure as well as the existing 'Blue Warehouse' structure to the south of the site, which were both identified as existing building stock to be preserved in the district's vision and implementation plan. It is also our understanding that the city would ultimately like to shift the zoning of the district to D-4 for subsequent development in the district which does not contain this minimum building height requirement.*

1. Design Review: A modification to building height over ninety feet (90') in height shall only be allowed if approved

through the design review process, subject to conformance with the standards and procedures of Chapter 21A.59 of this title, and subject to compliance to the applicable master plan. *Noted.*

D. All buildings shall be designed with a base that is differentiated from the remainder of the building. The base shall be between one and three stories in height, be visible from pedestrian view, and appropriately scaled to the surrounding contiguous historic buildings. The base shall include fenestration that distinguishes the lower from upper floors. Insets and/or projections are encouraged. The ground floor of all new buildings shall have a minimum floor to ceiling height of sixteen feet (16'). *Noted – the ground floor is demarcated by a different material usage and a change in plane of the façade from the upper floors on all street-facing frontages. The exterior-facing climbing walls will characterize the plaza facing frontages as a unique feature that will articulate and provide engagement with pedestrians accessing and navigating that site area. Fenestration, where able to be provided, will provide line of site into and out of the building for pedestrians along the street frontages. The proposed design would offer ground level interest through landscaped yards and added benching to break up uninterrupted wall surfaces caused by anchorage of indoor climbing walls to help animate the streetscape at pedestrian level. The design complies with and exceeds the stated 16' floor to ceiling height standard with a 21' floor to floor height.*

E. Yard Requirements: No minimum setback requirements. A maximum setback of ten feet (10') is allowed for up to thirty percent (30%) of the building facade.

1. If provided, the yard must include one of the following elements:

- a. Seating at a ratio of at least one bench for every five hundred (500) square feet of yard space; or
- b. Landscaping that includes an increase of at least twenty five percent (25%) in the total number of trees required to be planted on the site; or
- c. Awning or a similar form of weather protection that covers at least five feet (5') in width and length from all street-facing building entrances.

As noted in the project summary, this is one of the provisions from which we are seeking relief as the impacted frontages to help deliver the joint plazas on site, which are being coordinated with the CRA as part of the larger vision for the district, would potentially limit the intended uses of the plaza for spectator events and larger open uses during festivals or community gatherings.

2. Regardless of the setback provided, doors shall be setback a minimum distance to allow the door to operate without swinging into a right of way or midblock walkway. *Noted, and project complies.*

3. The planning director, in consultation with the transportation director, may modify this requirement to accommodate a wider sidewalk if the adjacent public sidewalk is less than fifteen feet (15') wide and the resulting modification to the setback results in a more efficient public sidewalk. The planning director may waive this requirement for any addition, expansion, or intensification, which increases the floor area or parking requirement by less than fifty percent (50%) if the planning director finds the following: *Noted.*

- a. The architecture of the addition is compatible with the architecture of the original structure or the surrounding architecture, or
- b. The addition reduces the extent of the noncompliance of the existing building.

4. Exceptions to this requirement may be authorized through the design review process, subject to the requirements of Chapter 21A.59 of this title. *Noted.*

5. Ground floor residential uses shall have a minimum setback of ten feet (10'). This setback shall be incorporated into a private yard for the ground floor units. (Ord. 24B-23, 2023: Ord. 24-23, 2023: Ord. 67-22, 2022: Ord. 14-19, 2019: Ord. 66-13, 2013: Ord. 15-13, 2013) *Noted, not applicable to project.*

21A.59.050: STANDARDS FOR DESIGN REVIEW:

A. Any new development shall comply with the intent of the purpose statement of the zoning district and specific design regulations found within the zoning district in which the project is located as well as the city's adopted "urban design element" and adopted master plan policies and design guidelines governing the specific area of the proposed development. *Noted – as stated in earlier sections of this narrative, the project is believed to support the intended purposes of the zoning district, objectives for the Rio Grande District, and will make excellent contributions to the renewed vitality of this portion of the city.*

B. Development shall be primarily oriented to the sidewalk, not an interior courtyard or parking lot.

1. Primary entrances shall face the public sidewalk (secondary entrances can face a parking lot). *Project complies.*
2. Building(s) shall be sited close to the public sidewalk, following and responding to the desired development patterns of the neighborhood. *The project has been worked to address existing and new public sidewalks being added as part of the district improvements to the greatest extent possible. Portions of the building along the north and east facades do exceed desired setback requirements based upon the desired relationship to the site location of the current Salt Lake Mattress Company building footprint on site that is to be rebuilt and restored in place with salvaged brick to match current form as part of the project. Where building frontages do not directly address public sidewalks, either landscaping of created yards will be provided to enhance the quality of pedestrian experience, or the building massing will engage the intended plazas that are being developed in conjunction with the CRA's objectives for the property as part of the larger Rio Grande District vision and implementation plan.*
3. Parking shall be located within, behind, or to the side of buildings. *Project complies – no off-street parking is required by ordinance or to be provided on site.*

C. Building facades shall include detailing and glass in sufficient quantities to facilitate pedestrian interest and interaction.

1. Locate active ground floor uses at or near the public sidewalk.
2. Maximize transparency of the street facing facades by prohibiting covering the ground floor glass with reflective treatments, interior walls, and other similar features that prevent passers-by from seeing inside of the building for non-residential uses.
3. Use or reinterpret traditional storefront elements like sign bands, clerestory glazing, articulation, and architectural detail at window transitions.
4. Locate outdoor dining patios, courtyards, plazas, habitable landscaped yards, and open spaces so that they have a direct visual connection to the street and outdoor spaces.

As noted, the project has made efforts to comply with these requirements wherever possible while still meeting the technical requirements for the intended functions of the facility (i.e. the extent and placement of the climbing walls throughout the project). Where transparency has not been able to be provided for these purposes, efforts have been made to provide visual interest for passers-by on those portions of the public way as reflected in the provided building elevations. Areas of the building facades that are not directly fronting the sidewalks are set back to provide intended plazas, a landscaped buffer with benches to allow for moment of pause, or a recessed entrance plaza which will provide pedestrian engagement.

D. Large building masses shall be divided into heights and sizes that relate to human scale.

1. Relate building scale and massing to the size and scale of existing and anticipated buildings, such as alignments with established cornice heights, building massing, step-backs and vertical emphasis.
2. Modulate the design of a larger building using a series of vertical or horizontal emphases to equate with the scale (heights and widths) of the buildings in the context and reduce the visual width or height.
3. Include secondary elements such as balconies, porches, vertical bays, belt courses, fenestration and window reveals.
4. Reflect the scale and solid-to-void ratio of windows and doors of the established character of the neighborhood or that which is desired in the master plan.

As a district of significant redevelopment with little existing building stock which is set to remain and an intentional shift in density and scale of urban fabric, the project has made a concerted effort to follow the expressed role of this project as part of the larger vision for the Rio Grande District. To help reinforce general best practices for urban design standards the design breaks up the building mass to help create a base condition which establishes a base plane appropriate to human scale at ground level with upper levels providing a slight change of plane to reinforce this shift in the elevations. Upper levels of the building mass have been studied to provide an articulation of material coupled with areas of glazing to break up the perceived continuity of larger expanses of building mass as shown in elevations.

E. Building facades that exceed a combined contiguous building length of two hundred feet (200') shall include:

1. Changes in vertical plane (breaks in facade);
2. Material changes;
3. Massing changes;
4. A minimum of eighty percent (80%) of the ground floor must be used for active, publicly accessible uses.

Active uses are those that promote an active pedestrian environment through inclusion of uses that capture the

attention of a passer-by. This includes retail establishments, retail services, civic spaces (theaters, museums, etc), restaurants, bars, art and craft studios, and other uses determined to be substantially similar by the planning director and/or commission; and

5. Stepback must be a minimum of ten feet (10') from the base of the building. This allows the base to be the primary defining element for the site and the adjacent public realm, reducing wind impacts, and opening sky views. The maximum height of the base of a proposed building should be equal to the width of the right of way if allowed in the zoning district to provide sufficient enclosure for the street without overwhelming the street. The minimum height of the base must be at least two stories. A building over two hundred feet (200') in width shall include necessary separation from property lines to minimize the impact of shadows and development rights of adjacent properties.

As noted in prior responses, the design reflected in the provided elevations has been composed to help provide greater visual interest and provide engagement at street levels and along the intended plazas on site. Building uses to the maximum extent possible have been arranged to engage with the public realm and drive interest for those navigating the district. A building step back would be atypical and has not been reflected as an intended feature of the building in the district's visioning document.

- F. If provided, privately-owned public spaces shall include at least three of the six following elements:
1. At least one sitting space for each two hundred fifty (250) square feet shall be included in the plaza. Seating shall be a minimum of sixteen inches (16") in height and thirty inches (30") in width. Ledge benches shall have a minimum depth of thirty inches (30");
 2. A mixture of areas that provide seasonal shade;
 3. Trees in proportion to the space at a minimum of one tree per eight hundred (800) square feet, at least two inches (2") caliper when planted;
 4. Water features or public art;
 5. Outdoor dining areas; and
 6. Other amenities not listed above that provide a public benefit.

The intended plaza design is still undergoing coordination with the city's engaged design team for the district-wide improvements, but the current iteration does provide public amenities to address these noted requirements above such as sitting surfaces at edges of planters, benches, public art features (proposed conceptually as illuminated sculptures of climbers on vertical armatures), and has been related to the building to provide opportunities for seasonal shade during hosted spectator and community events.

G. Building height shall be modified to relate to human scale and minimize negative impacts. In downtown and in the CSHBD Sugar House Business District, building height shall contribute to a distinctive city skyline.

1. Human scale:
 - a. Utilize stepbacks to design a building that relate to the height and scale of adjacent and nearby buildings, or where identified, goals for future scale defined in adopted master plans.
 - b. The minimum stepback for any building located in a zoning district that does not contain an upper level stepback provision shall be ten feet (10'). This stepback is only required for applications requesting additional height when authorized in the underlying zoning district. The stepback shall be applied to the first full floor of the building that is seeking the request for additional height.
 - c. For buildings more than three stories or buildings with vertical mixed use, compose the design of a building with distinct base, to reduce the sense of apparent height.

The designed building massing does not provide stepback but is consistent with the massing strategy depicted in the vision and implementation plan for the Rio Grande District. The facility is intended to be a lower massed structure to help address a desired shift in scale along the intended public plazas on site as well as the future green loop parkway in 500 West.

2. Negative impacts: All buildings seeking additional height as authorized in the underlying zoning district shall be subject to the following standards:
 - a. Modulate taller buildings vertically and horizontally so that it steps up or down to its neighbors.
 - b. Minimize shadow impacts of building height on the public realm and semi-public spaces by varying building massing. Demonstrate impact from shadows due to building height for the portions of the building that are subject to the request for additional height.
 - d. Modify tall buildings to minimize wind impacts on public and private spaces, such as the inclusion of a wind break above the first level of the building.
 - e. Design and orient to prevent snow, ice, or water from falling directly onto a public sidewalk, public space, neighboring property, or directly onto the walkway leading to the building entrance.

N/A – Additional height is not being sought.

3. Cornices and rooflines:
 - a. Cohesiveness: Shape and define rooflines to be cohesive with the building's overall form and composition.

The roofline and architectural detailing, including cornices, shall be complimentary to the structure's scale, material, color, and form and create a change in plane of at least six inches (6"), a change in material, utilizing at least one visible sloping plan along a minimum of fifty percent (50%) of the roofline on building elevations facing a street, or a change in material orientation to define the roof line of the building.

- b. Green Roof and Roof Deck: Include a green roof and/or accessible roof deck to support a more visually compelling roof landscape and reduce solar gain, air pollution, and the amount of water entering the stormwater system.

A varied roofline over the main climbing hall has been used to provide activated interest and variety of elevation along adjacent street frontages. Green roof and decks have not been pursued in an effort to maximize potentials for solar energy arrays being considered for the project as part of the district's larger sustainability and renewable energy initiatives.

H. Parking and on site circulation shall be provided with an emphasis on making safe pedestrian connections to the sidewalk, transit facilities, or midblock walkway. Parking is encouraged to be behind the principal building and away from pedestrian walkways.

Parking lots and structures shall be setback a minimum of twenty-five feet (25') from required midblock pedestrian access locations or as required in the underlying zoning district if the underlying zoning requires a larger setback.

N/A – The project does not have on-site parking as the ordinance does not have a vehicular off-street parking minimum for the intended uses as part of a transit context zone.

I. Waste and recycling containers, mechanical equipment, storage areas, and loading facilities shall be fully screened from public view and, for buildings with only one street-facing frontage, are prohibited from being located along street-facing facades. They shall incorporate building materials and detailing compatible with the building being served and shall be co-located with driveways unless prohibited by the presence of a street tree, public infrastructure, or public facility within the right of way. Service uses may be located within the structure. (See Subsection [21A.37.050](#).K of this title.)

Project complies – all such elements are intended to be housed within the interior spaces of the project.

J. Signage shall emphasize the pedestrian/mass transit orientation.

1. Define specific spaces for signage that are integral to building design, such as commercial sign bands framed by a material change, columns for blade signs, or other clearly articulated band on the face of the building.
2. Coordinate signage locations with appropriate lighting, awnings, and other projections.
3. Coordinate sign location with landscaping to avoid conflicts.

Project complies – proposed signage has been studied to relate and emphasize architectural features as shown on the provided elevations.

K. Lighting shall support pedestrian comfort and safety, neighborhood image, and dark sky goals.

1. Provide street lights as indicated in the Salt Lake City Lighting Master Plan.
2. Outdoor lighting should be designed for low-level illumination and to minimize glare and light trespass onto adjacent properties and uplighting directly to the sky.
3. Coordinate lighting with architecture, signage, and pedestrian circulation to accentuate significant building features, improve sign legibility, and support pedestrian comfort and safety.

Understood – street lighting criteria for the Rio Grande District are still being actively considered by city departments but the project intent is to comply with the lighting provisions above.

L. Streetscape improvements shall be provided as follows:

1. One street tree chosen from the street tree list consistent with the city's urban forestry guidelines and, with the approval of the city's urban forester, shall be placed for every thirty feet (30') of property frontage on a street. Existing street trees removed as the result of a development project shall be replaced by the developer with trees approved by the city's urban forester.

Street trees are either existing and intended to remain and be protected throughout the duration of the construction of the project or are pending install as part of district wide improvements currently under review by the city's departments. The intent for the project is to comply.

2. Hardscape (paving material) shall be utilized to differentiate privately-owned public spaces from public spaces. Hardscape for public sidewalks shall follow applicable design standards. Permitted materials for privately-owned public spaces shall meet the following standards:

- a. Use materials that are durable (withstand wear, pressure, damage), require a minimum of maintenance, and

- are easily repairable or replaceable should damage or defacement occur.
- b. Where practical, as in lower-traffic areas, use materials that allow rainwater to infiltrate into the ground and recharge the water table.
 - c. Limit contribution to urban heat island effect by limiting use of dark materials and incorporating materials with a high Solar-Reflective Index (SRI).
 - d. Utilize materials and designs that have an identifiable relationship to the character of the site, the neighborhood, or Salt Lake City.
 - e. Use materials (like textured ground surfaces) and features (like ramps and seating at key resting points) to support access and comfort for people of all abilities.
 - f. Asphalt shall be limited to vehicle drive aisles. (Ord. 70-24, 2024: Ord. 24B-23, 2023: Ord. 24-23, 2023: Ord. 14-19, 2019)

Noted – Materials for public way paving throughout the district wide improvements are still in active design and review by the city, but the project intent is to comply with a complimentary contrast to those selected to achieve noted objectives. Paving utilized on site is intended to be of durable finish and easily utilized by those with varied accessibility needs as well as meet the goals for reduced urban heat island effect.

21A.37.060: DESIGN STANDARDS REQUIRED IN EACH ZONING DISTRICT:

This section identifies each design standard and to which zoning districts the standard applies. If a box is checked (X), that standard is required. If a box is blank, it is not required. If a specific dimension or detail of a design standard differs among zoning districts or differs from the definition, it will be indicated within the box. In cases when a dimension in this table conflicts with a dimension in the definition, the dimensions listed in the table shall take precedence.

TABLE 21A.37.060
E. Gateway Districts:

Standard (Code Section)	G-MU	Compliance Notes
Ground floor use: enhanced active use (%) (21A.37.050.A2)	80	<i>Project Complies, please refer to area take-offs and calculation of percentage on the provided, updated drawing package</i>
Building materials: ground floor (%) (21A.37.050.B3)	70	<i>Project Complies, please refer to area take-offs on the provided, updated drawing package</i>
Building materials: upper floors (%) (21A.37.050.B4)	50	<i>Project Complies, please refer to area take-offs on the provided, updated drawing package</i>
Glass: ground floor (%) (21A.37.050.C1)	60	<i>Applicants are requesting accommodation on this standard as the targeted percentage of glazing exceeds the maximum opportunities achievable for the design because the required climbing walls limit available area for glazing quite notably along all elevations. Please refer to area take-offs on the provided, updated drawing package.</i>

Glass: upper floors (%) (21A.37.050.C2)	40	<i>Applicants are requesting accommodation on this standard as the targeted percentage of glazing exceeds the maximum opportunities achievable for the design because the required climbing walls limit available area for glazing quite notably along all elevations. Please refer to area take-offs on the provided, updated drawing package.</i>
Reflective glass: (21A.37.050.C3)	50	<i>N/A – reflective glass is not used on the project</i>
Building entrances (feet) (21A.37.050.D)	40	<i>Requesting accommodation as the building entrance spacing is incompatible with the operational requirements of the facility. As a single tenant space, the climbing gym and training center portion of the project will require a main public entrance in order to control access to the facility rather than allow ingress from multiple frontages.</i>
Blank wall: maximum length (feet) (21A.37.050.E)	15	<i>Requesting consideration on this point as fenestration and modulation of the wall surface are impacted by required lengths of the climbing walls in the building.</i>
Street facing facade: maximum length (feet) (21A.37.050.F)	150	<i>Requesting accommodation as building length restriction is incompatible with the operational requirements of the facility due to required lengths of climbing walls used for competitive events.</i>
Upper floor step back (feet) (21A.37.050.G1)	10	<i>N/A - the design does not exceed 85' and thus would not require the step back.</i>
Upper floor step back landmark (21A.37.050.G2)	X	<i>N/A - the design does not border on landmarked properties and all existing building stock in adjacency will be separated by a right of way.</i>
Lighting: exterior (21A.37.050.H)	X	<i>Project will comply</i>
Lighting: parking lot (21A.37.050.I)	X	<i>N/A</i>
Screening of mechanical equipment (21A.37.050.J)	X	<i>Project complies</i>
Screening of service areas (21A.37.050.K)	X	<i>Project complies</i>
Parking garages or structures (21A.37.050.L)	X	<i>N/A</i>

Public Improvements (21A.37.050.M)	X	Public improvements within the Rio Grande district are still being set in conjunction with CRA and the city departments. The improvements shown in the submitted plans constitute the most current backgrounds we have of proposed improvements.
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Project Context Photos



View of area south of project site along 500 West, the 'Blue Warehouse' and surrounding open site to south and west extend to the 400 South overpass.



VCBO

View of site from 500 West with Salt Lake Mattress Company building in distance and 'Blue Warehouse' to the south. State arts and artifacts building can be seen to the far right of the image.



View of the north east corner of the project site from 500 West, which currently contains a state owned arts and artifacts building.



View of the north east corner of the project site from 500 West at the intersection with 300 South

Architecture

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View of the block north of the project site from 500 West at the intersection with 300 South



View of the block north of the project site from 500 West, the Artspace and Macaroni Flats buildings projected to remain in the district's visioning document can be seen in the distance and to the right of the image.



View of the block north of the project site from 500 West, the Artspace building is visible in the distance with an existing mixed-use project located at the corner of the intersection with 200 South.



View of the Rio Grande Station which is to anchor the district sites across from the site on 500 West. The streetscape is projected to be substantially altered as part of the Green Loop improvements projected within the district.



View of the Utah State Archives building and a mixed commercial building in an adaptively re-used structure (CCG showroom) located across from the site on 500 West.



View of a recently constructed apartment building located south of the site and across the street on 500 West.



View of the site viewed from 300 South, looking south – the currently state-owned art and artifacts facility, which will be demolished as part of the project to make room for a plaza which addresses the future festival street and Green Loop improvements on 500 West.



View of the site viewed from 300 South, looking south – the Salt Lake Mattress Company building can be seen in the distance as well as the open land which is intended to be integrated as part of the Arts Campus in the heart of the district.



View of the land west of the site viewed from 300 South.



View of the street frontage across from the site viewed along 300 South – both buildings are projected for removal and redevelopment as part of the Rio Grande District's vision and implementation plan.



View of the street frontage across from the site viewed along 300 South – the pictured building is currently housing USA Climbing's interim facilities and is projected to be demolished after it is vacated upon completion of the new training center on the project site.



View of the street frontage across from the site viewed along 300 South – the remainder of the street frontage is otherwise open land to 600 West (as seen in the left of the image).

Design Review Comment Responses

Planning Department Comments:

The applicant's submittal was missing several zoning-specific details that are required to verify compliance with the design standards. While the drawing set includes complete floor plans, elevations, and sections, it does not include the quantitative data needed for a zoning review. Specifically:

Entry Spacing: The site plan (AS101) and elevation sheets (A201.0–A202.0) show multiple entry points, but no measurements or calculations identifying the distance between building entries. This spacing is required to confirm compliance with pedestrian orientation standards.

Response: Entry spacing has been added to the elevations as requested. It is important to note that several of the pedestrian connections out to the public way visible in the site plan are provided for the purposes of egressing the building and are not intended to act as a point of entry on a daily basis due to the need to have a single service counter to serve as a control point for patron access into the training center amenities. Entrances to each of the future retail and café tenant spaces being created at the ground floor of the Salt Lake Mattress Building are provided. The desire for an internal access point between these tenant spaces into the new training center as well as adjacency to the future parking structure serving vehicular parking needs for the district have driven the placement of the main entrance and lobby location for the training center along the south frontage on the future Market Street public right of way. The fact that the facility will not only serve the public but also Para athletes which could be greatly benefited by availability of adjacent public parking in close proximity to the building entrance has further informed the placement of the building's primary entrance.

Glazing Percentages: The elevations (A201.0–A202.0) identify storefront and curtain wall systems (802.0, 803.0) but do not provide percentages of glazing per façade. These percentages are necessary to verify whether each street-facing façade meets the required minimum transparency.

Response: Glazing percentage take-offs and calculations have been added into the elevation sheets as requested. As noted in the original and revised copy of the project narrative, the requirements for percentage of glazing will require consideration for adjustment from published standards during design review as the presence of climbing walls throughout the facility significantly diminish available surface areas where fenestration can be placed on the building's envelope.

Material Percentages: While the "Exterior Finish Schedule" lists materials (e.g., precast concrete, metal panel, perforated screen, glazing), the drawings do not include a materials percentage breakdown by façade or any area tabulation showing how much of each material is proposed. This information is needed to confirm compliance with the design material standards.

Response: The requested percentages summary has been added to the elevation sheets. The adopted design standards in the ordinance stipulate the minimum percentages of exterior materials which qualify as durable finishes. All proposed architectural materials/finishes on the project, both at ground floor and upper floors, satisfy the definition of durable materials under the ordinance. It is our contention that the exterior climbing walls also can satisfy the definition in the ordinance as they are wood (a natural material) that has been treated for exterior use/exposure.

Zoning Analysis Table: No zoning data table or compliance summary is provided on the site plan or cover sheet showing lot area, building coverage, height, setbacks, or required open space.

Response: A table of zoning data has been added to the site plan as requested. The ordinance had limited criteria set forth for such outlined items included in the comment (i.e. minimum lot size/widths, maximum building coverage, etc) for the GMU specific requirements so we had submitted responses to the specific stated requirements in the text of the project narrative previously.

Because these quantitative details are missing from the submitted plans, I asked the applicant to provide a zoning analysis with calculations for each requested modification, including the entry spacing, glazing percentages, and

material breakdowns on the elevation sheets. This information is required to accurately determine compliance and to document the extent of the requested design standard modifications.

Response: As noted above, updated exhibits have been furnished to provide quantitative information for review. Please advise if there are any further questions on the matter to review and make any determinations for requested design standard modifications.

Transportation Comments:

I don't have any major concerns with this design. The plans seem to comply with what I've seen of CRA's plans for the area. Bicycle parking calculations and details will be required with the building permit. Due to no vehicular parking being provided and the transit, bike, and pedestrian oriented plans for the area I recommend some indoor secure bicycle parking be provided in addition to the outdoor bike racks shown on the plan.

Response: Noted, we will plan to confirm bike parking opportunities and demonstrate more technical compliance for the project as noted during building permit review.

Building Services Comments:

No comments

Response: Noted

Fire Comments:

Comments made by Doug Bateman - doug.bateman@slc.gov for questions, clarifications or concerns.

**Fire access roads shall meet minimum width requirements (chapter 5 of IFC) and be provided so that all ground level exterior walls are within 150-feet. The existing roads do not meet this requirements. Proposed roads will need to be built to meet requirements or have alternative means proposed to increase maximum distances by Fire Code Official*

Response: Noted, the anticipation is that all public right of way improvements are to be completed to provide the intended fire access lanes to serve the building.

**An approved route of 8-feet around the building shall be provided for firefighting activities. This clearance shall be provided to lot lines and other permanent obstructions on any building side not fronting a Public Right of Way*

Response: As noted above, the design intent is for the building to front on public rights of way on all four elevations with ample space available for use for firefighting activities in the plaza spaces on the northwest and northeast corners of the site.

**Fire hydrants shall be provided to meet minimum required fire flow and maximum allowed spacing as required in IFC Appendix B and C. A hydrant shall be provided within 100-feet of the Fire Department Connection (FDC)*

Response: Noted, fire hydrant placements are to be coordinated with the city as design of the intended public rights of way for the Rio Grande District has been vetted. The intent is to comply with the stated standard/spacing relative to the FDC connection on the south side of the building along the new Market Street frontage.

**FDC shall be located on the street address side of the building, fully visible and accessible to emergency personnel*

Response: Noted, the FDC is located on the south side of the building, addressing the intended Market Street frontage.

**Standpipe connections shall be located on the intermediate landings*

Response: Noted, the fire suppression system design and layout is anticipated to be completed as a deferred submittal. We would imagine this can be addressed as a condition of the building permit level review.

Aerial access shall be provided in accordance with IFC appendix D105 to include minimum road widths of 26-feet, shall be located not less than 15 feet and not greater than 30 feet from the building, and shall be positioned parallel to the long side of the building, and not have any overhead obstructions, which would include power and utility lines and trees greater than 25-feet in mature height. Aerial access could be eliminated in exception requirements are met and approved by Fire code Official. **Exceptions may be explored through Fire Prevention to provide aerial access to 25% of the total perimeter of the building. See IFC appendix D105.1*

Response: Noted, it appears that the stated exceptions which may be explored for aerial access to 25% of the perimeter of the building could be satisfied with aerial access provided from both the Market Street and 300 South (Festival Street) frontages.

**Emergency Responder Radio Coverage may be required if testing shows minimum signal strength cannot be provided. Advisable to install or provide backbone risers in case needed.*

Response: Noted, the design team will take these concerns into consideration and include supplemental systems to meet/exceed minimum signal strengths as required in the construction documents/specifications.

**Roads shall be designed to withstand impacted loads of 75,000 pounds.*

Response: Noted, project intends to comply as the surrounding roads are also intended to serve as public rights of way within the district. The design standards in development with the CRA for the district wide improvements are still in process, but it is our understanding that the new improvements are intended to meet standards for emergency response and fire access for this project as well as adjacent developments.

Public Utilities Comments:

Public Utilities comments have been provided to assist in the future development of the property. The following comments are provided for information only and do not provide official project review or approval.

With increased densification, the applicant must consider the potential increase in construction costs resulting from required offsite utility improvements, potentially downstream of the subject property. Densification may place greater demands on water, sewer, and storm drain systems, which could exceed the capacity of the existing infrastructure. Property owners and developers will be required to upgrade the offsite public utilities to ensure sufficient capacity for the new development.

- *Public Utility permit, connection, survey, and inspection fees will apply. Response: Noted*
- *All utility design and construction must comply with APWA Standards and SLCPU Standard Practices. Response: Noted*
- *All utilities must meet horizontal and vertical clearance requirements. Water and sewer lines require 10 ft minimum horizontal separation and 18" minimum vertical separation. Sewer must maintain 5 ft minimum horizontal separation and 12" vertical separation from any non-water utilities. Water must maintain 3 ft minimum horizontal separation and 12" vertical separation from any non-sewer utilities. Response: Noted*
- *Public street light requirements are determined during building permit review. Response: Noted*
- *Utilities cannot cross property lines without appropriate easements and agreements between property owners. Response: Noted, parcels are in process of being consolidated and plat adjusted across the Rio Grande district to address these concerns as part of the CRAs development efforts.*
- *Site utility and grading plans will be required for building permit review. Site utility plans should include all existing and proposed utilities, including water, irrigation, fire, sewer, stormwater, street lighting, power, gas, and communications. Please refer to APWA, SLCPU Standard Practices, and the SLC Design Process Guide for utility design requirements. Response: Noted*
- *Applicant must provide fire flow, culinary water, and sewer demand calculations to SLCPU for review. The public sewer and water system will be modeled with these demands. If the demand is not adequately delivered or if one or more reaches of the sewer system reach capacity as a result of the development, a water/sewer main upsizing will be required at the property owner's expense. Required improvements on the public water and sewer system will be determined by the Development Review Engineer and may be downstream of the project. Response: Noted*
- *One culinary water meter is permitted per parcel and fire services, as required, will be permitted for this property. If the parcel is larger than 0.5 acres, a separate irrigation meter is also permitted. Each service must have a separate tap to the main. Response: Noted, the project intent is to comply.*
- *A minimum of one sewer lateral is required per building. The laterals must be 4" or 6" and meet minimum slope requirements (2% for 4" laterals, 1% for 6" laterals). Any unused sewer laterals must be capped and plugged at the main. Response: Noted, the project intent is to comply.*

- A minimum of one exterior cleanout is required on the sewer lateral within 5 feet of the building. Additional cleanouts are required at each bend and at least one every 50 feet for 4" laterals and every 100 feet for 6" laterals. *Response: Noted, the project intent is to comply.*
- All food and beverage processing, preparation, and service requires grease removal prior to discharge to the public sewer system. Treatment must be provided such that the discharge limit of 500 mg/L of FOG (fats, oils, and grease) is achieved. A 4ft diameter sampling manhole must be located downstream of the device and upstream of any other connections. *Response: Noted, the project intent is to comply and grease interceptor is shown in the provided civil/utility drawings.*
- Covered parking area drains are required to be treated to remove solids and oils prior to discharge to the sanitary sewer. These drains cannot be discharged to the storm drain. Use a sand/oil separator or similar device. A 4ft diameter sampling manhole must be located downstream of the device and upstream of any other connections. *Response: Noted, covered parking is not included in the project.*
- Site stormwater must be collected on site and routed to the public storm drain system. Stormwater cannot discharge across property lines or public sidewalks. *Response: Noted, the project intent is to comply as shown with detention system below the plaza, refer to provided civil drawings.*
- Stormwater treatment is required prior to discharge to the public storm drain. Utilize stormwater Best Management Practices (BMP's) to remove solids and oils. Green Infrastructure should be used whenever possible. Green Infrastructure and LID treatment of stormwater is a design requirement and required by the Salt Lake City UPDES permit for Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4). The applicant will need to provide options for stormwater treatment and retention for the 80th percentile storm. If additional property is not available, there are other options such as green roof or other BMP's. Lack of room or cost is generally not an exception for this requirement. If green infrastructure is not used, then applicant must provide documentation of what green infrastructure measures were considered and why these were not deemed feasible. Please verify that plans include appropriate treatment measures. Please visit the following websites for guidance with Low Impact Development: <https://deq.utah.gov/water-quality/low-impact-development?form=MYOISV&OCID=MYOISV%20and%20https://documents.deq.utah.gov/water-quality/stormwater/updes/DWQ-2019-000161.pdf?form=MYOISV&OCID=MYOISV>
Response: Noted, the design team will work with the civil engineer of record to identify potential integrations of LID strategies in the stormwater system design as required to satisfy the UPDES permit standards.
- Stormwater detention is required for this project. The allowable release rate is 0.2 cfs per acre. Detention must be sized using the 100-year 3-hour design storm using the farmer Fletcher rainfall distribution. Provide a complete Technical Drainage Study including all calculations, figures, model output, certification, summary, and discussion. *Response: Noted, the project intent is to comply as shown with detention system below the spectator plaza in the northwest corner of the site, refer to provided civil drawings. Calculations and drainage study are intended to be provided as required during the building permit review.*
- Projects larger than one acre require that a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) and Technical Drainage Study are submitted for review. *Response: Noted, the project intent is to comply.*
- Future utilities (i.e., water, sewer, and storm) to be installed by others, as shown on the plans (in 300 South, future Market St, and future Woodbine Court) will be public utilities and must meet all SLCDPU standards and requirements. Developer must bond for these offsite improvements. *Response: Noted, the civil engineer of record for the project is also handling the utility designs for the district-wide improvements so the intent is to comply with SLCDPU standards.*
- The existing water main in 300 South is a 4" cast iron pipe (CIP) installed in 1914. Any future connections to this pipe will trigger an upgrade to a 12" PVC main for the entire block along 300 South. See above note regarding utility demands – there may be other triggers for an upsize of this 4" water main. *Response: Noted, the civil engineer of record for this project has made efforts to coordinate timeline of*

these utility improvements as part of their role as the engineer of record for the district wide improvement approaches.

- *The future water main in future Market St must be either 12" PVC. This main must be located in the public right-of-way, at least 2 feet from the curb and gutter, and must maintain a minimum of 10 feet of horizontal separation from the future sewer main in Market St from outside to outside of the pipes.*
Response: Noted, the civil engineer of record for this project has made efforts to coordinate timeline of these utility improvements as part of their role as the engineer of record for the city on the district-wide utility improvements to be coordinated as part of the revisions to the public rights of way.
- *All future sewer manholes must be 5-foot diameter. Response: Noted*
- *Additional detailed review comments from SLCDPU are expected and will be provided during the formal building permit review process. Response: Noted*

Urban Forestry Comments:

There are existing trees in the public ROW park strip along 500 W and at the corner of 300 S and 500 W. These trees must be preserved and protected during all demolition and construction activities. All existing and proposed public streets must be designed with above ground and below ground space for street trees to be planted in the public ROW at the rate of one tree for every 30' of public street frontage.

Response: Noted, the site drawings have been updated to call for protection of the existing street trees in the public right of way along 500 W. The street trees along the new or adjusted public rights of way in the district plan which are bordering the project are in coordination with the CRA and the city to confirm timeline of improvements. The intent is to have these new frontages comply with established city street tree standards for the district.

Engineering Comments:

Engineering does not have concerns with this application. The Rio Grande Project will proceed through the Subdivision Improvement Construction Agreement (SICA) for public improvements within dedicated right-of-ways. This is typically administered during the preliminary plat process.

Subdivision Improvement Construction Agreement required. Said agreement will require a guarantee (bond), insurance certificate(s), and payment of fees.

Subdivision Improvement Plans required.

Response: Noted, the Rio Grande Project is still in process of consolidations and replat so applicants will continue to work with the city on implications/requirements as it pertains to this project.