



Staff Report

PLANNING DIVISION
DEPARTMENT of COMMUNITY and NEIGHBORHOODS

To: Salt Lake City Planning Commission
From: Meagan Booth, Principal Planner
801-535-7213, meagan.booth@slcgov.com
Date: March 23, 2022
Re: PLNPCM2021-01228- Zoning Text Amendment Building Coverage- R-2 (Section 21A.24.110.F)

Zoning Text Amendment

PROPERTY ADDRESS: Citywide
MASTER PLAN: Citywide
ZONING DISTRICT: R-2 Single- and Two-Family Residential District

REQUEST: Jim Bradley, owner of the property at 927 East 700 South, has submitted a petition to amend a section of the Zoning Ordinance related to building coverage limitations in the R-2 Single and Two-Family zoning district. The subject ordinance currently limits the building coverage for single-family homes to 40% of the lot and the building coverage for duplexes to 45% of the lot. The proposed amendment would increase the allowable building coverage to 45% for single-family homes that are located on lots that are less than the current minimum lot size requirement of 5,000 square feet.

The Planning Commission's role in this application is to provide a recommendation to the City Council, who will make the final decision on the requested zoning text amendment.

RECOMMENDATION: Based on the information in this staff report and the factors to consider for zoning text amendments, Planning Staff recommends that the Planning Commission forward a positive recommendation to the City Council regarding this proposal. Planning Staff also recommends that the Planning Commission consider expanding the proposal to allow 45% building coverage for all single-family properties, not just those located on lots less than the required minimum lot size.

ATTACHMENTS:

- A. [R-2 Zoning Maps](#)
- B. [Applicant Information and Narrative](#)
- C. [Analysis of Standards -Standards for General Amendments](#)
- D. [Public Process and Comments](#)
- E. [Department Review Comments](#)

PROJECT DESCRIPTION AND BACKGROUND

Jim Bradley, the property owner at approximately 927 East 700 South, has submitted a petition to amend Section 21A.24.110.F of the Zoning Ordinance related to building coverage limitations in the R-2 Single and Two-Family Residential District. The Zoning Ordinance currently limits the building coverage for single-family homes to 40% of the lot and the building coverage for duplexes to 45% of the lot. The proposed amendment would increase the allowable building coverage to 45% for single-family homes in the R-2 district.

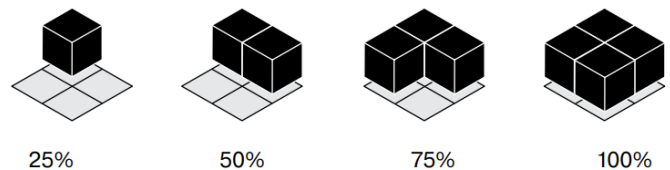
The applicant provided a project narrative explaining the rationale for the text amendment request that can be found in Attachment B of this report. The applicant's proposal would only apply to single-family dwellings on lots less than 5000 square feet. The change would impact approximately 400 single-family properties located in the R-2 zoning district citywide. The proposed language change is as follows (applicant's changes are underlined):

- F. Maximum Building Coverage:** The surface coverage of all principal and accessory buildings shall not exceed forty-five percent (45%) of the lot for two-family dwellings and forty percent (40%) for single-family dwellings, except for single-family dwellings on legally existing lots that are less square footage than the minimum lot size of 5,000 square feet. Single-family dwellings on legally existing lots of less than 5,000 square feet are allowed surface coverage of all principal and accessory buildings not to exceed forty-five percent (45%) of the lot's total square footage. For lots with buildings legally existing on April 12, 1995, the coverage of existing buildings shall be considered legal conforming.

The proposal would not change current building setback requirements, building height, or any other zoning regulation. The proposal would allow additional building square footage, but new construction and additions would still need to comply with all other zoning regulations.

Building Coverage Defined

Building Coverage is defined as the percentage of the lot covered by principal or accessory buildings. The purpose of building coverage limitations is to ensure that there is some open space on the property for landscaping and other outdoor uses. The calculation includes all buildings or structures on a lot (principal and accessory).



Current Building Coverage Regulations

The R2 zone allows for both single-family and two-family (duplex) residential uses and the building coverage regulations are different for these uses. In the R-2 zone, the building coverage for single-family is 40% of the lot and the building coverage for duplexes is 45% of the lot. Basically, the buildings used for duplexes can occupy more space than the buildings used for single-family.

The Difference between 40% and 45% Building Coverage

The table below shows an example of the difference in square footage allowance for a lot with 40 percent compared to 45 percent building coverage.

Square Footage	40%	45%	Sq. Ft. Change
4000	1600	1800	200
5000	2000	2250	250
6000	2400	2700	300
7000	2800	3150	350
8000	3200	3600	400
9000	3600	4050	450
10000	4000	4500	500

Lot Size Regulations and how they Impact Building Coverage

The residential zoning districts require a minimum amount of property for particular land uses. This is what controls density in the residential zones. In the R2 zone, new single-family development requires a minimum of 5,000 square feet of lot area and duplexes require a lot size of 8,000 square feet. Not all existing properties meet the minimum lot area requirements because they were developed prior to when the current zoning regulations were established. The applicant's proposal applies to these non-complying lots. The properties that would be impacted by the applicant's proposal are shown on the map titled R2 Single-Family Lots less than 5,000 Square Feet in Attachment A.

As shown in the table above, a single-family home on a lot that is 4,000 square feet in size would be 200 square feet smaller under the current 40% building coverage limitation than what could be built if the building coverage were increased to 45%. This 200 square feet of additional space could allow something like an additional room to be added to existing homes, which may enable a growing family to continue to stay in their neighborhood. Staff is of the opinion that, since the proposal does not impact building setbacks or any other zoning regulation, there would be minimal to no impact if the building coverage were increased. Staff is also of the opinion that the 45% building coverage allowance should be extended to all single-family homes in the R2 zone, not just those on lots less than 5,000 square feet. This is discussed further in the Key Considerations section.

Areas of the City Affected by the Proposal

The R2 zoning district is found across the city, however, the biggest concentrations of adjacently zoned properties are in the Central City and Capitol Hill communities. Staff provided maps of the city's R-2 zones. (Attachment A). Approximately 400 single-family parcels would be affected by the applicant's proposal and 1300 single-family parcels with staff's recommendation.

KEY CONSIDERATIONS

The key considerations have been identified through the analysis of the project and include:

1. Staff's Recommendation
2. Compliance with Master Plan Policies
3. Compliance with the Standards for General Amendments

Consideration 1: Staff's Recommendation

Staff is recommending that the Planning Commission consider expanding the proposal to allow 45% building coverage for all single-family properties, not just those located on lots less than the required minimum lot size. This change would impact approximately 1300 existing single-family properties in the R-2 Zone. The 5% increase in building coverage would result in slightly larger homes; however, the proposal would not impact building setback requirements, building height, or any other zoning regulation. Staff is of the opinion that allowing 45% building coverage for all single-family homes in the R2 zone would have little to no impact; therefore, staff recommends that the zoning language be simplified by providing one building coverage regulation for both uses.

The recommended proposed language change is as follows (changes are in strike and underline):

- F. Maximum Building Coverage:** The surface building coverage of all principal and accessory buildings shall not exceed forty-five percent (45%) of the lot for single-family and two-family dwellings uses. ~~and forty percent (40%) for single-family dwellings.~~ For lots with buildings legally existing on April 12, 1995, the coverage of existing buildings shall be considered legal conforming.

Consideration 2: Compliance with Master Plan Policies Plan Salt Lake (2015)

The proposed zoning text amendment adheres to the initiatives within Plan Salt Lake, a citywide plan that outlines the City's overall vision for the next 25 years. This includes the development of a wide variety of housing types, a mix of uses, and housing options which are essential for sustainable growth and development. The applicant also provided examples in his narrative of how the proposal meets the initiatives of Plan Salt Lake. (Attachment B) Applicable initiatives that the proposed amendment would help implement are listed below:

Neighborhoods:

- Maintain neighborhood stability and character.
- Support neighborhood identity and diversity.

Growth:

- Locate new development in areas with existing infrastructure and amenities, such as transit and transportation corridors.
- Encourage a mix of land uses.
- Promote infill and redevelopment of underutilized land.
- Accommodate and promote an increase in the City's population.

Housing:

- Promote energy-efficient housing and rehabilitation of existing housing stock.

Preservation:

- Preserve and enhance neighborhood and district character
- Balance preservation with flexibility for change and growth.

The proposed zoning text amendment is aligned with the initiatives outlined in Plan Salt Lake relating to neighborhoods, growth, housing, and preservation opportunities.

Consideration 3: Compliance with the Standards for General Amendments

Planning Staff reviewed the proposal against adopted policies and regulations and provide a recommendation to the Planning Commission. The below are criteria used to analyze a proposed zoning text amendment:

1. Whether a proposed text amendment is consistent with the purposes, goals, objectives, and policies of the City as stated through its various adopted planning documents.
2. Whether a proposed text amendment furthers the specific purpose statements of the zoning ordinance.
3. Whether a proposed text amendment is consistent with the purposes and provisions of any applicable overlay zoning districts which may impose additional standards; and
4. The extent to which a proposed text amendment implements the best current, professional practices of urban planning and design

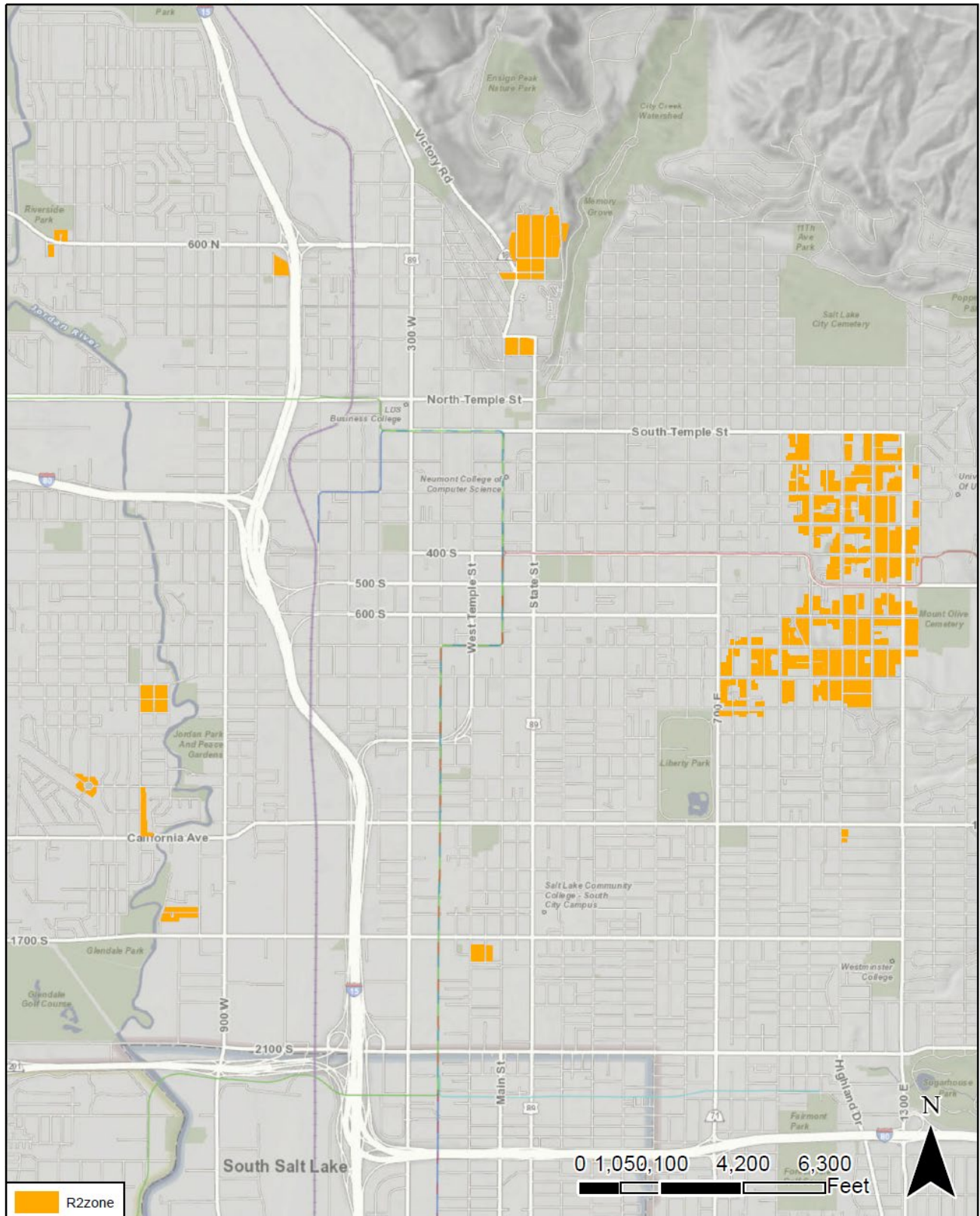
The proposed zoning text amendment generally complies with the Zoning Requirements shown in Attachment C.

NEXT STEPS

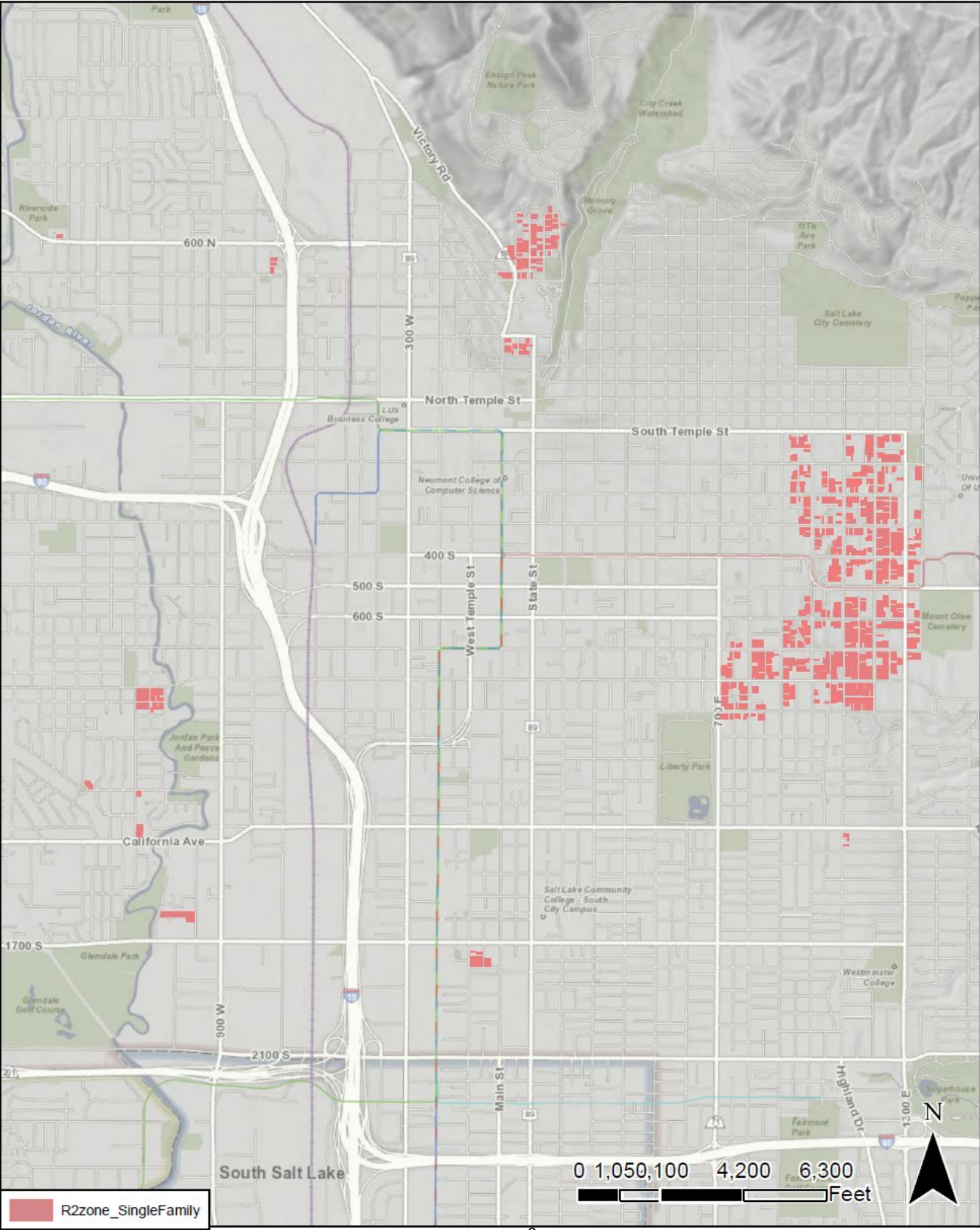
The Planning Commission's recommendation will be forwarded to the City Council for their consideration as part of the final decision on this petition. The City Council will hold a briefing and additional public hearing on the proposed changes. The City Council may make modifications to the proposal and approve or deny the proposed changes. If ultimately approved, the changes would be incorporated into the City Zoning Code and development would be required to follow the new regulation.

ATTACHMENT A– R-2 ZONING MAPS

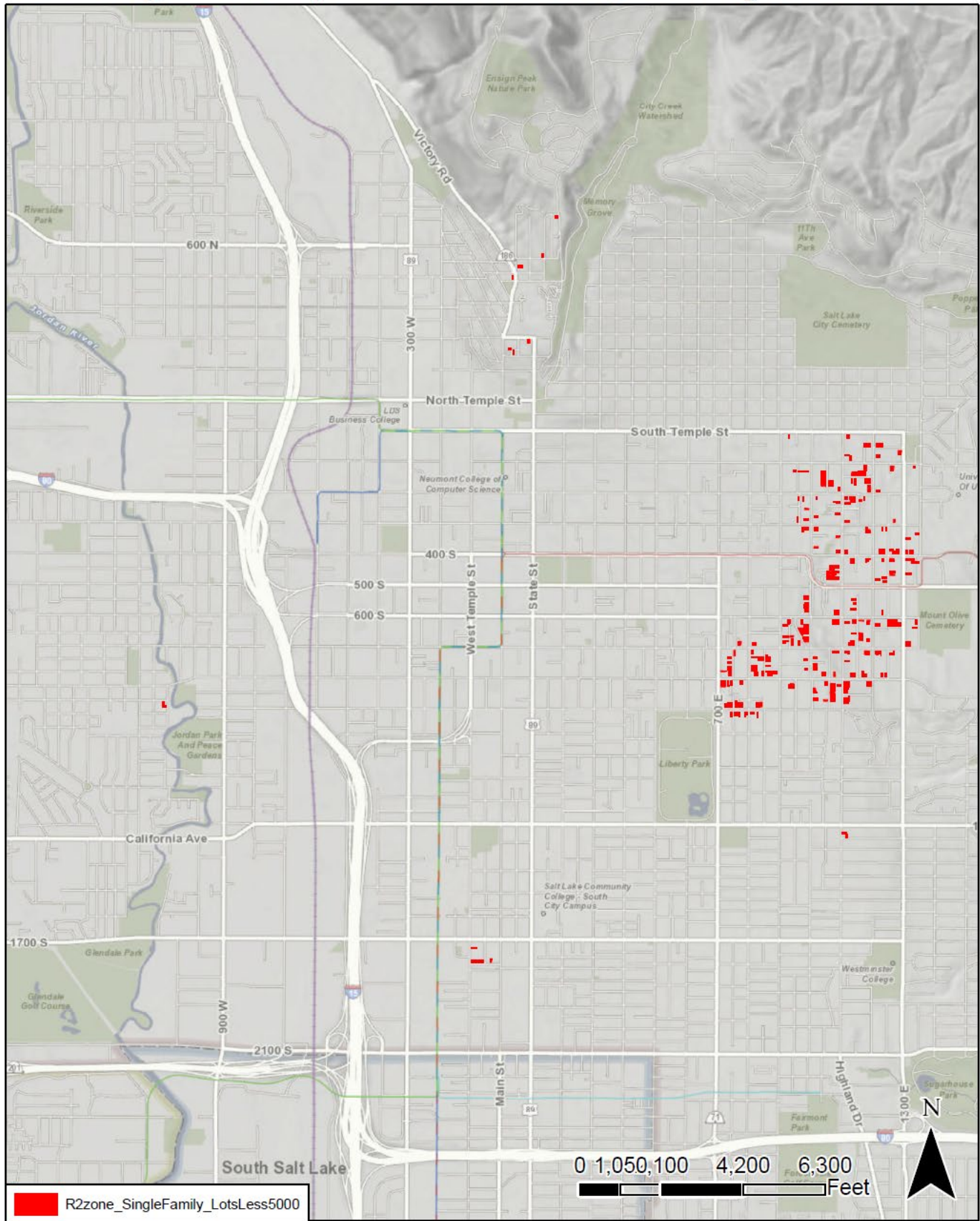
R-2 Zone City Wide



R-2 Single Family Lots



R-2 Single Family Lots less than 5000 square feet



ATTACHMENT B – APPLICATION & NARRATIVE



Zoning Amendment

SALT LAKE CITY PLANNING

☒ Amend the text of the Zoning Ordinance ☐ Amend the Zoning Map

OFFICE USE ONLY

Received By:

Date Received:

Project #:

Name or Section/s of Zoning Amendment:
21A.24.110F

PLEASE PROVIDE THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION

Address of Subject Property (or Area):
R-2 Zoned Areas in Salt Lake City. (927 East 700 South, 84102 - Subject Property)

Name of Applicant:
Edwin James Bradley

Phone:

Address of Applicant:
749 Hilltop Road Salt Lake City, Utah. 84103

E-mail of Applicant:
ejamesbradley@comcast.net

Cell/Fax:
801-518-7600

Applicant's Interest in Subject Property:

☐ Owner ☐ Contractor ☐ Architect ☒ Other:

Name of Property Owner (if different from applicant):
Glenda Bradley

E-mail of Property Owner:
ejamesbradley@comcast.net

Phone:
801-518-7600

Please note that additional information may be required by the project planner to ensure adequate information is provided for staff analysis. All information required for staff analysis will be copied and made public, including professional architectural or engineering drawings, for the purposes of public review by any interested party.

AVAILABLE CONSULTATION

If you have any questions regarding the requirements of this application, please contact Salt Lake City Planning Counter at zoning@slcgov.com prior to submitting the application.

REQUIRED FEE

Map Amendment: filing fee of **\$1,075** plus **\$121** per acre in excess of one acre

Text Amendment: filing fee of **\$1,075**, plus fees for newspaper notice.

Plus, additional fee for mailed public notices. Noticing fees will be assessed after the application is submitted.

SIGNATURE

➔ If applicable, a notarized statement of consent authorizing applicant to act as an agent will be required.

Signature of Owner or Agent:

Date:

Edwin Bradley

11/29/21

Updated 8/21/2021

SUBMITTAL REQUIREMENTS

Staff Review

1. **Project Description** (please electronically attach additional sheets. See [Section 21A.50](#) for the Amendments ordinance.)

☐

A statement declaring the purpose for the amendment.

☐

A description of the proposed use of the property being rezoned.

☐

List the reasons why the present zoning may not be appropriate for the area.

☐

Is the request amending the Zoning Map?
If so, please list the parcel numbers to be changed.

☐

Is the request amending the text of the Zoning Ordinance?
If so, please include language and the reference to the Zoning Ordinance to be changed.

WHERE TO FILE THE COMPLETE APPLICATION

Apply online through the [Citizen Access Portal](#). There is a [step-by-step guide](#) to learn how to submit online.

INCOMPLETE APPLICATIONS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED

_____ I acknowledge that Salt Lake City requires the items above to be submitted before my application can be processed. I understand that Planning will not accept my application unless all of the following items are included in the submittal package.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Statement declaring the purpose of the amendment.

The purpose of this proposed amendment is to amend Ordinance 21A.24.110.F to allow single-family dwellings in a R-2 Zone to use up to a maximum of 45% of the total lot square footage with covered structures on legally existing lots that are less than the current minimum lot size requirement. The existing ordinance allows single-family dwellings in an R-2 Zone to place up to a maximum of 40% of total lot square footage with covered structures which typically would be a home, a garage, and possibly a covered patio or shed. In the past, a number of single-family dwellings in the R-2 zone were legally platted with less than the current legal minimum lot size of 5,000 SF. Single family homeowners with less than a 5,000 SF lot are still subject to the 40% maximum covered structures ordinance. Consequently, those homeowners are more limited in their ability to expand the total square footage of covered structures on their property.

This amendment would allow expansions that would enhance the livability of single family dwellings in the R-2 Zone. Increasing the 40% requirement for those homes to 45% would bring it in line with the maximum coverage requirement for a two-family dwelling in the same R-2 Zone.

Description of the proposed use of the property being rezoned.

The proposed zoning amendment would apply to any single family dwelling in a R-2 Zone that was legally platted on a lot of less than 5,000 SF. It would allow those homes to have 45% of their lot under covered structures. Two-family dwellings in the R-2 Zone are all ready at the 45% threshold.

List Reasons Why Present Zoning May Not Be Appropriate for the Area

Existing policies in Salt Lake City Zoning Ordinances as well as official planning documents support this request to amend Ordinance 21A.24.110F.

The Purpose Statement for Ordinance 21A.24.110:R-2 reads as follows:

"Purpose of the R-2 Single and Two Family residential district is to preserve and protect for single family dwellings the character of existing neighborhoods which exhibit a mix of single and 2-family dwellings by controlling the concentration of 2-family dwellings."

The Purpose Statement is clear in its intent to preserve the character of existing neighborhoods in favor of single family dwellings *"....by controlling the concentration of 2-family dwellings."* A single family home in a R-2 Zone can be converted into a 2-family dwelling by adding an apartment in a basement, attic, or main floor. Such a conversion is aided by the existing Ordinance which allows a 2-family dwelling to have a maximum of 45% of its total lot size available for covered structures; a 5% greater allowance than that which is available for single family dwellings. Consequently, a number of single family dwellings in a R-2 Zone have been, and will continue to be, converted into 2- family dwellings which often means two small rental apartments. This appears to be antithetical to the stated goal in the Purpose Statement to *"...preserve and protect for single family dwellings the character of existing neighborhoods..."*

Additionally, the **Salt Lake City Community Preservation Plan** that was unanimously adopted by the Salt Lake City Council on October 23, 2012, is replete with references for the need to preserve and stabilize neighborhood character. Under the heading of Community Character Preservation on page I-8 of the Plan, It clearly states the goal of preservation of neighborhood character. It reads as follows:

"The need to preserve the unique character of the City's urban neighborhoods, while allowing for modifications to existing homes to meet today's current living standards for space and convenience are important City policies. The policies are aimed at ensuring the City provides housing choices that continue to attract residents to live in the Capital City."

Over the past years and under previous ordinances, a number of single family dwellings were legally permitted on lots less than the current requirement of 5,000 SF. These older homes represent a historical look back at the architectural styles of the times and present an understanding of the character of the

neighborhoods in which they are located. The preservation and protection of these homes are vital to our City's heritage and aesthetics.

The acceptance of the proposed text amendment would allow modifications to these homes to meet the needs of modern life. Conveniences such as dishwashers, laundry appliances, staircases to basements, and second bathrooms are the necessities needed to maintain a home as a family dwelling. At the time these homes were built, space for these conveniences was not a consideration. Increasing the allowable square footage footprint of covered structures on legally platted lots in a R-2 Zone to 45% allows for modest modifications that would increase their livability and value to the neighborhood as single family homes and would reflect and preserve the historical character of the area.

Is the request amending the zoning map?

NO

Is the request amending the text of the Zoning Ordinance?

YES.

Ordinance 21A24.110.F would be amended to read as follows:

"Maximum Building Coverage: The surface coverage of all principal and accessory buildings shall not exceed forty-five percent (45%) of the lot for two-family dwellings and forty percent (40%) for single family dwellings" **(proposed added language follows)** except for single-family dwellings on legally existing lots that are less square footage than the minimum lot size of 5,000 square feet. Single family dwellings on legally existing lots of less than 5,000 square feet are allowed surface coverage of all principal and accessory buildings not to exceed forty-five percent (45%) of the lot's total SF.

ADDENDUM

The following is an example of the limitations placed on a single family dwelling in an R-2 Zone subject to Ordinance 21A.24.110-R2, Section F.



927 East 700 South, SLC (R-2 Zone)

History

This 92 year old home was purchased by its current owner and resident in 2012. It sits on a 4427.2 SF legally platted lot. In 2019, due to structural problems with the original earthen wall foundation, the earthen cellar wall was replaced with a concrete foundation and floor. That work included replacing an old indoor trap door access to the basement with a staircase. This expensive and necessary work to prevent the home from collapsing preserved a charming, single family home that exhibits the historical character of the neighborhood. All work was permitted.

Problem

Staircase replacing trap door took so much space it made the room it was in useless as a living space. (See photo) Owner wanted to extend back of home 8.5 feet to recapture the lost living space. The existing ordinance limiting a single family home to a maximum of 40% coverage of principle and accessory buildings prevents any extension greater than one foot.

Calculating the 40% Regulation:

Total Property S.F. - 4427.2 S.F.

Existing home and garage - 1752.5 S.F.

Percent covered - **39.58%**

Existing home, garage and
proposed addition (189.6S.F.) 1942 S.F.

Percent covered - **43.8%**

The proposed extension of 8.5 feet exceeds the Ordinance requirement of 40% maximum building coverage by 3.8%. There are no exceptions to this requirement nor are there any administrative processes available to allow a review of the merits of the proposed increase. However, note that if this was a two-family dwelling (two small apartments) it would meet the two-family dwelling requirement which allows a maximum of 45% covered with structures within the same R-2 Zone.



ATTACHMENT C – ANALYSIS OF STANDARDS

Standards for General Amendments

21A.50.050: A decision to amend the text of this title or the zoning map by general amendment is a matter committed to the legislative discretion of the city council and is not controlled by any one standard. In making its decision concerning a proposed text amendment, the City Council should consider the following factors:

FACTOR	RATIONALE	FINDING
Whether a proposed text amendment is consistent with the purposes, goals, objectives, and policies of the City as stated through its various adopted planning documents.	The zoning code amendment is consistent with Plan Salt Lake's policies. (City Plan Considerations are discussed above.)	The proposal is generally consistent with the policies of the applicable adopted planning documents for the City.
Whether a proposed text amendment furthers the specific purpose statements of the zoning ordinance.	<p>Purpose Statement: The purpose of the R-2 Single- and Two-Family Residential District is to preserve and protect for single-family dwellings the character of existing neighborhoods which exhibit a mix of single- and two-family dwellings by controlling the concentration of two-family dwelling units. Uses are intended to be compatible with the existing scale and intensity of the neighborhood. The standards for the district are intended to provide for safe and comfortable places to live and play and to promote sustainable and compatible development patterns.</p> <p>The amendment does not contradict the R-2 zone's purpose. The zone allows for both single-family and two-family dwellings. The amendment would allow the building size of a single-family home and duplex to be comparable. The modification does not affect the ordinance's other requirements.</p>	The proposal generally furthers the purpose statement of the R-2 Zone.
Whether a proposed text amendment is consistent with the purposes and provisions of any applicable overlay zoning districts which may impose additional standards; and	Regardless of these changes, the development would still need to comply with overlay regulations.	The proposed changes are consistent with any associated overlays.
The extent to which a proposed text amendment implements the best current, professional practices of urban planning and design.	The amendment allows property owners to add square footage to their homes. According to the US Census, the average US house has risen from 1,660 square feet in 1973 to 2,687 square feet today. Small-scale development infills and remodels are in line with current best design practices.	The proposal is consistent with current professional urban planning and design practice.

ATTACHMENT D – PUBLIC PROCESS & COMMENTS

The following is a list of public meetings that have been held, and other public input opportunities, related to the proposed project since the applications were submitted:

- **Recognized Organization Notification – February 7, 2022**
Notice of the project was provided to all Community Council Chairs.
- **Early Notification to Property Owners and Residents – February 7, 2022**
The project was placed on an open house, and a notice was provided via listserv because the amendment has a city-wide impact.
- **City Open House – February 7, 2022**
Staff hosted an online Open House to solicit public comments on the proposal. The Online Open House period started on February 7, 2022, and ended on March 23, 2022 (Date of the Planning Commission Meeting)
- **Public Hearing – March 17, 2022**
Notice of the public hearing for the Planning Commission Meeting. Public notice was posted on City and State websites and Planning Division listserv.
- **Public Comments**
At the time of this staff report no public comments were received, if any comments are received after publication of the Staff Report, they will be forwarded to the Commission and included in the public record.

ATTACHMENT E – DEPARTMENT REVIEW COMMENTS

This proposal was reviewed by the following departments: No further comments or concerns had been received at the time the report was written.

Engineering:

No concerns or comments

Building/Fire:

No concerns or comments

Public Utilities:

No concerns or comments

Transportation

No concerns or comments