

BUILDING HEIGHTS & PEDESTRIAN CODES

ZONING TEXT AMENDMENT



DEPARTMENT of COMMUNITY & NEIGHBORHOODS

DESIGNWORKSHOP

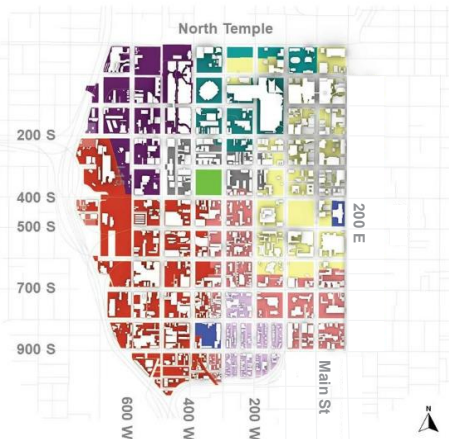


Salt Lake City's Planning Division is proposing updates to portions of the Land Use Code related to building heights, review processes, and pedestrian spaces within downtown. The code revisions aim to accommodate growth and respond to new development pressures while developing standards for public spaces. Changes seek to have a positive impact on human-scale orientation, pedestrian accessibility, and community character.

PROJECT OBJECTIVE

Downtown Salt Lake City is a rapidly growing area. The Downtown Plan, adopted in 2016, sets the vision for the area to be "the premier center for sustainable urban living, commerce, and cultural life in the Intermountain West." With growth comes challenges, such as barriers to walkability and human-scale orientation, that limit the overall vision. As a result, this project aims to understand the relationship between building heights and their impacts on a public space.

These proposed zoning changes seek to enhance the pedestrian experience and livability in the Downtown Area to better support the goals set in the Downtown Master Plan.



PROJECT BACKGROUND

The project began in the summer of 2021 with an analysis of existing code requirements, recent development applications and an on-the-ground exploration of new development in progress. This analysis enabled the project team to understand how potential code changes may transform and influence future projects.

Throughout the project there were multiple outreach efforts to understand perspectives from key stakeholders and the general community. The project kick-off included focus group meeting with the downtown business community, neighborhood councils, and the stakeholders from the disability community. A visual preference survey was also conducted to gain broader community and public input. Overall the team received comments from more than 425 community members. These tactics aimed to gather the community's preferences of pedestrian elements, building height allowances and influence the proposed code language.

PROPOSAL

The proposed amendments incentivize developers to build with human-scale design as well as provide pedestrian-oriented elements.

The proposed code changes are limited to the boundaries of 900 South, I-15, North Temple, and 200 East (as shown on the map). These districts include Downtown Districts (D1-D-4), Form Based District (FB-UN1 and 2), General Commercial (CG), and Gateway Mixed Use District (GMU). Revisions are also proposed to the Design Standards and Review Chapters.

This page outlines the proposed code changes in the downtown area. These changes are in draft form and your input as part of the public comment process will be used to refine the proposed language.

All Zones

- Add size and location restrictions for surface level parking lots to support a more urban environment with a high level of walkability.
- Any new development shall provide a midblock walkway if it has been identified in a city-adopted master plan. This additions also allows room for building encroachment for skybridges, colonnades, and building overhangs.

Downtown Districts

D-1 Central Business District (21A.30.020)

- Eliminate the differentiation between standards set for midblock and corner parcels.
- Unlimited height allowance available; Design Review and requirements apply for buildings taller than two hundred feet (200'). Buildings that exceed this height must include a midblock walkway, affordable housing provisions, increased ground floor use or visual interest, historic preservation covenant, or publicly accessible open space of five hundred (500) square feet.

D-3 Downtown Warehouse/Residential District (21A.030.040)

- Design Review and requirements apply for buildings taller than seventy five feet (75'). Buildings that exceed this height, up to one hundred and eighty feet (180') must include a midblock walkway, affordable housing provisions, increased ground floor use or visual interest, historic preservation covenant, or publicly accessible open space of five hundred (500) square feet.

D-4 Downtown Secondary Central Business District (21A.30.045)

- Maintain allowed building height maximums of one hundred and twenty feet (120') to three hundred and seventy five feet (375') in certain locations with additional requirements and Design Review. Conditions include requiring a midblock walkway, affordable housing provisions, increased ground floor use or visual interest, historic preservation covenant, or publicly accessible open space of five hundred (500) square feet.

All Downtown Districts (21A.30)

- Implement front and corner yard setback maximums to emphasize the urban feel of the area and provide better usage of the setback for pedestrian oriented elements.
- Addition of sidewalk requirements to be a clear walking path a minimum of ten feet (10') wide.

Gateway District (21A.31)

Gateway Mixed Use (21A.31.020)

- Height minimum increase from twenty five feet (25') in certain locations and forty-five feet (45') everywhere else, to seventy-five feet (75') and height maximum increase from seventy-five feet (75') to one hundred and eighty feet (180'). This serves to increase the urban feel of the area and allow for greater density in our most transit-rich neighborhoods.
- Front yard setback decrease to emphasize the urban feel of the area and provide better usage of the setback for pedestrian oriented elements.

Commercial Districts (21A.26)

General Commercial District (21A.26.070)

- Add front yard setback maximum to emphasize the urban feel of the area, create clearer views at street intersections, and provide better usage of the setback for

pedestrian oriented elements.

- Increase a majority of the General Commercial's building height from sixty feet (60') to seventy-five feet (75'). Additionally, for the portion of the CG zone within the boundaries from 400 S to 700 S and from 300 W to I-15, the height would increase to one hundred and fifty feet (150').
- Outdoor usable space requirements would be adjusted to be linked to height allowances in order to benefit the public realm. These aim to increase plazas, gardens, yards, etc. in the CG district.

Form Based Districts (21A.27)

- Implement regulations for rooftop gardens to encourage their development.
- Add front and corner yard setback minimum and maximums for ground floor residential uses to emphasize the urban feel of the area and provide better usage of the setback for pedestrian oriented elements.
- Consolidate regulations into a user-friendly table.
- Define usable elements to be required in common open spaces.

Design Standards (21A.37)

- Additional thresholds for administrative review in order to streamline the approval process.
- Design-based standards currently located individually within each zone would be transferred out of the district text and into this chapter. In particular, Form Based and Gateway Mixed Use Districts would be added to the Design Standards Table.
- Step back requirements for full floors above a certain height to reduce the impact to adjacent properties of a smaller size.
- Adjustments to ground floor use regulations to maximize walkability through pedestrian interest. In particular, the term "active uses" and "amenity space" are more defined to produce desired outcomes.
- Adjustments to the maximum length of street facing facades to clarify the intent of the requirement and add a horizontal articulation standard. This attempts to increase the architectural interest of a building.
- Updates to building material standards to ensure durable material and exempt buildings older than fifty (50) years.
- New standards for the Downtown Districts, Gateway Mixed Use District, Form Based Districts, and General Commercial District.
 - Maximum percentage of glass reflectivity to reduce glare.
 - Streetscape standards, including tree coverage, minimum vegetation, street trees, and soil volume.
 - Height transition standards to minimize abrupt changes in building height.
 - Overhead cover requirements at building entrances to provide weather protection to pedestrians.

Design Review (21A.59)

- Addition of minimum stepback requirement for buildings seeking height increases. This aims to break up building masses to make them feel human scaled.
- Addition to requirements for buildings with facades that exceed two hundred feet (200') in contiguous length.
- More defined standards to cornice and roof lines to decrease the need for interpretation of how to complement the surrounding architecture.
- Restrictions on parking lot setbacks and waste screening to emphasize walkability and pedestrian interest.
- Addition of 21A.59.045: Design Review Standards Applicability. This section defines the thresholds that requires projects to go through a Design Review process.