

Proposal Summary //

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 to the overall vision through barriers to walkability and human-scale orientation. 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 and 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 and building height allowances and influenced 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-UN2), 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.
- Revise open space regulations to require public amenities for open spaces larger than five hundred (500) square feet. Possible amenities include benches, tables, trees, paths, and water features.

Downtown Districts

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

- Make height allowances for midblock and corner parcels the same.
- Require a wind analysis for buildings taller than one hundred and fifty feet (150') to decrease potential wind tunnel impacts.
- Increased building heights available for projects that include certain levels of affordability and/or pedestrian-oriented elements. Examples include benches, open space, and housing affordability options.

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

- Increase allowed building heights from ninety feet (90') to one hundred and eighty feet (180').
- Increased building heights available for projects that include certain levels of affordability and/or pedestrian-oriented elements. Examples include benches, open space, and housing affordability options.

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.
- New midblock walkway standards for their size and use to increase walkability and implement the Midblock Walkway Plan.

Gateway District (21A.31)

Gateway Mixed Use (21A.31.020)

- Height minimum increase from forty-five feet (45') 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.
- New midblock walkway standards for their size and use to increase walkability and implement the Midblock Walkway Plan.

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.

- Establish standards for midblock walkways to increase walkability and implement the Midblock Walkway Plan.
- 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.

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.
- Adjustments to ground floor use regulations to maximize walkability through pedestrian interest. These adjustments apply to Downtown Districts, Form Based Districts, and General Commercial District.
- New standards for the Downtown Districts, Form Based Districts, and General Commercial District.
 - Maximum percentage of glass reflectivity to reduce glare.
 - Streetscape standards, including tree coverage, minimum vegetation, street trees, soil volume, and overhead coverage.
 - Height transition standards to minimize abrupt changes in building height.

Design Review (21A.59)

- Add minimum stepback requirement for buildings seeking height increases. This aims to break up building masses to make them feel human scaled.
- 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.