

CITY OF SPOKANE

CENTERS & CORRIDORS STUDY



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CONSULTING
GROUP**

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Spokane Centers and Corridors Study

Executive Summary

This memo evaluates the City of Spokane's Centers and Corridors framework and recommends changes to the role centers play in the City's land use policy and regulatory structure, including changes to Comprehensive Plan policies, zoning and design standards in the interest of better achieving the City's goals for amenity-rich, walkable, mixed-use centers. These changes will affect how Centers and Corridors are designated, types of Center and Corridor designations, policy guidance for public investment in Centers and Corridors, and the rules that govern building in Centers and Corridors. It is accompanied by a market study appendix analyzing development potential in Center and Corridor areas in general and identifying regulations that create barriers to development.

Important policy recommendations include:

- Eliminating the Employment Center designation and folding those Centers into other Center typologies (page 15).
- Clearly designating implementing zones for each of the Centers and Corridors typologies (see pages 27-32).
- Updating how Centers and Corridors land use designations are mapped (page 33).

A key regulatory change is the introduction of a new family of **mixed-use zones** (see page 43) to replace the existing Center and Corridor zones:

- **MU-TOD**: emphasizes uses that support walking activity and high-intensity development, to be applied near high-capacity transit stops.
- **MU-1**: the "base" mixed-use zone that allows a broad mix of uses and high-intensity development, intended primarily for District Centers and Corridors.
- **MU-2**: oriented towards a narrower range of walking-friendly uses and moderate-scale development, intended primarily for Neighborhood Centers and Mini-Centers
- **MU-3**: oriented towards smaller-scale development, intended for peripheral areas at the end of centers. This is intended to replace both the CC4 and NMU zones.

Other notable regulatory proposals include increased height limits (page 47), relaxation of zone edge transition standards, maximum block length/through-block connection standards (page 54), and updates to block frontage standards (provisions for Pedestrian-designated streets and other block frontages, page 59).

Short- and Long-term recommendations

In spring of 2024, staff developed interim updates to Center and Corridor zones to implement recommendations of the South Logan Transit Oriented Development (TOD) Subarea Plan and EIS. These updates build on expiring interim Center and Corridor zoning passed as part of the Building Opportunities and Choices for All (BOCA) Initiative. The new short-term interim updates will provide a bridge to long-term changes to the Center and Corridor designation/zoning scheme included in the 2026 Comprehensive Plan update.

Height

Short-term: Update height limits to 55' and 75' for Neighborhood Centers and District Centers respectively.

Long-term: Allow 90-150' heights in MU-TOD, 75-150' in MU-1, 55-75' in MU-2, and 40' in MU-3 zones.

Transitions

Short and long-term: Update transition standards to allow 40' outright and allow an additional 2' height for each 1' (60°) from the adjacent Residential zone property line.

Parking

Short- and long-term: Remove parking requirements from CC/MU zones.

Floor Area Ratio (FAR)

Short-term: Reduce minimum FAR to 0.5 for District Centers and 1.0 for Employment Centers.

Long-term: Maintain minimum FAR of 1.0 for MU-TOD zone only.

Drive-Throughs

Short-term: Prohibit new drive-throughs in CC1 zone.

Long-term: Prohibit new drive-throughs in all MU zones on pedestrian streets and in the MU-TOD and MU-3 zones, and limit drive-through placement in MU-2 zone.

Centers and Corridors Analysis

The process of getting to policy and regulatory recommendations included an in-depth analysis of the Centers and Corridors planning, policy, physical, development, and regulatory findings by a consultant team led by MAKERS architecture and urban design. This included an assessment of the:

- Planning history of the Centers and Corridors.
- Policy framework, including an examination of the Centers and Corridors concept, individual goals and policies, applicable land use designations, and the mapping of those designations.
- Physical and regulatory conditions in each of the Centers and Corridors. This included the land use development context (land uses, built form and conditions, and recent development activity), transportation and public infrastructure context (including the street grid, traffic levels, transit access, streetscape conditions, and the presence of public facilities, open space, and amenities), and applicable land use designations and zoning.
- Centers and Corridors typologies plus related land use designations.

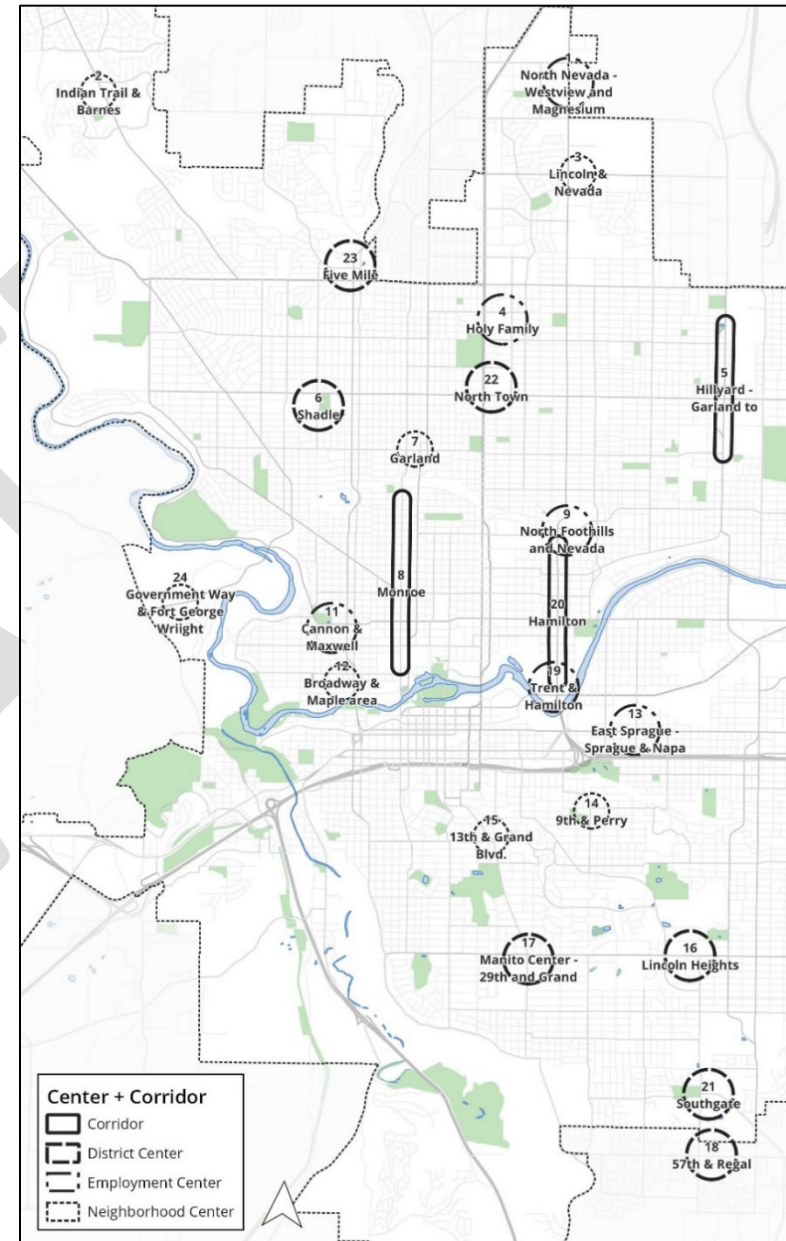


Figure 1. Designated Centers and Corridors as of June 2024

Planning Context

The City has prepared several neighborhood and subarea plans addressing specific policy recommendations for designated Centers and Corridors. Plans and studies for the following Centers and Corridors inform policy conversation and set the stage for an overall look at how comprehensive plan policy may adapt to achieve mixed-use development objectives.

- [Hamilton Corridor](#)
- [Shadle District Center](#)
- [Lincoln Heights District Center](#)
- [Whistalks Way \(formerly Fort George Wright Drive\) and Government Way Neighborhood Center](#)
- [North Monroe Corridor](#)
- [South Logan TOD Project](#)
- [Grand Boulevard Transportation and Land use Study](#)
- [Emerson Garfield Neighborhood Plan](#)
- [North Hill Neighborhood Action Plan including the Garland Neighborhood Center](#)

In addition, the City and partner agencies have conducted planning for broader areas that include both Centers and Corridors as well as areas not designated as a Center or Corridor in the Comprehensive Plan:

- North Bank via the [Downtown Plan Update](#)
- [South University District Subarea Plan](#)
- South Hill neighborhood connectivity ([Connectivity and Livability Strategic Plan](#), [South Hill Coalition 2014](#)) including Southgate District Center, Lincoln Heights District Center, Grand Boulevard – 12th to 14th Neighborhood Center, South Perry Neighborhood Center, and Grand District Center
- City Line BRT corridor via the [TOD Framework Study](#)
- Division BRT via the [DivisionConnects Phase 2 Vision and Implementation Strategy](#), including the North Town District Center and Holy Family Employment Center
- [East Central Neighborhood Plan Update](#) including the East Sprague Employment Center
- [West Central Neighborhood Action Plan](#) including the West Broadway Neighborhood Center and the Maxwell and Elm Employment Center



Figure 2. South Logan subarea plan cover

- The City's neighborhood and subarea planning efforts have demonstrated different areas have different needs and opportunities. For example, the DivisionConnects, Phase 2 study proposed the classification of mixed-use center types by the classifications of the streets serving them and the type of BRT station proposed to be located there. The North Bank concepts in the Downtown Plan Update and South University District plans envision an urban landscape investing heavily in walking and rolling infrastructure and focusing less on accommodating vehicles. Both the West Hills and Shadle Park planning efforts emphasize access to transit, while suggesting minimal changes to retrofit the existing, auto-centric design of the transportation system. These planning processes inform new policy suggestions recommending a practical approach to achieving mixed-use development while acknowledging the context variability between various Centers and Corridors.

Despite these area-by-area differences, the City's various plans and studies all agree on achieving six objectives, regardless of the Center or Corridor's setting:

- **Connectivity**, where street, sidewalk, and trail connections to and through the mixed-use centers are emphasized, both to improve access for all modes of travel and to impose a sense of more intimate scale to larger centers.
- **Residential infill**, where increases in residential density within and surrounding mixed-use centers facilitates walking and rolling access to retail and services within the center and creates a transition to low intensity residential neighborhoods nearby.
- **Public realm improvements**, where streets, drives, parks, and plazas are treated to create environments attractive to pedestrians, motorists, cyclists, people using mobility aids, business owners, residents, and others who will fuel development demand adjoining the public realm consistent with overarching land use strategies.
- **Speed reduction**, slowing vehicular traffic in mixed-use areas, and more closely balancing design priority between people walking, bicycling, rolling or driving.
- **Pedestrian safety**, emphasizing the importance of street crossings and vehicular separation between walking and rolling travelers and those in cars or moving freight.
- **Edge permeability**, where the distinction between what is the mixed-use center and what is a residential neighborhood is somewhat blurred, encouraging



Figure 3. Examples of desired characteristics of Centers.

convenient walking and rolling to, through, and between mixed-use centers.

- **Transit access**, facilitating and encouraging access to STA's BRT or high-capacity network and supporting a more compact mixed-use center development design less reliant on parking.

Development Eras

One of the key factors that determines opportunities and challenges in different Centers is development era. There are three general categories with some broad similarities in conditions:

- **Pre-war main-street Centers**, like South Perry, Grand Boulevard, or Garland, will likely need help with building retrofits and renovations, infill-friendly regulation (limited or no parking requirements and setbacks), and, where appropriate, parcel consolidation. City support for community events, public art, activation of vacant storefronts, and upgrades to aging infrastructure will be most important to set the stage for community-led revitalization and investment in these traditional Centers and Corridors.
- **Post-war Centers**, like Manito, North Town, Shadle, and Five Mile have aging buildings and infrastructure, and environments hostile to walking, bicycling, and rolling. Some of these places are well-positioned for mixed-use redevelopment in some respects, though land values, construction costs, and expectant rents are still not at the levels necessary to make vertical mixed-use development pencil. The existing mix of CC zoning, design standards, and pedestrian street designations provide a good starting point, but some strategic adjustments (see Regulatory Changes below) can provide enhanced guidance toward economic and community design objectives for these Centers and Corridors.
- **Contemporary Centers**, like Southgate and Indian Trail, are seeing new development with some community design improvements over the post-war Centers noted above. They will likely need help in traffic safety improvements such as crosswalks, signal timing that is friendly to people walking and bicycling, protected bike lanes, shared-use paths, through-block connections, and parking lot design that supports people walking, bicycling, and rolling. These areas also likely need support for green stormwater infrastructure, tree planting, and heat-



Figure 4. Centers developed during different periods exhibit different development patterns, opportunities and challenges.

reflective roofs to combat heat island effects.

Proposed zoning and design guidance, particularly related to land use, building height, connectivity requirements, and walking and rolling facilities will need to be sensitive to these different typologies in the community's existing Centers, allowing some flexibility in the application of the rules to facilitate incremental change or wholesale transformation. The Neighborhood Center and District Center designations may still apply, but zoning – and complementary investment in the public realm – will be key to encouraging the development of a compact, mixed-use form.

Policy Gaps and Issues

When conceived, the City attempted to implement Centers and Corridors land use designations through a series of zoning districts, generally applied to existing commercially zoned land and subsequently appended to support attributes that are more friendly to people walking and rolling. The concept of Centers and Corridors is somewhat abstract, with fuzzy edges that may or may not conform to the implementing zones.

This application of policy and zoning has resulted in some gaps between City wishes to achieve and the policy put in place to achieve it. Current policy may not reflect the land use diversity existing in Centers and Corridors, the appropriateness of the expectations for development, the size of Centers, the treatment of land just outside of center boundaries, the requirement to prepare subarea plans, the relevance of "Employment Centers," the treatment of "non-center" mixed-use areas, and the relationship between street design and mixed-use Centers and Corridors.

Diversity of Development Conditions

Center and Corridor designations are applied in a wide range of conditions. As a result, zoning and design standards struggle to account for all situations and development contexts. The Comprehensive Plan also applies similar expectations for lively walkable, mixed-use spaces, regardless of the area's existing or potential development patterns.

Conditions within individual Centers and Corridors also vary. Land use goals may not apply to all areas of a Center or Corridor. For example, not all areas of a Center or



Figure 5. Policy, development regulations, and market conditions must align to see desired outcomes realized.

Corridor may be appropriate for prioritizing storefronts oriented toward people walking, and there is little policy guidance currently on where to concentrate certain types of activities.

Unrealistic Development Expectations

Centers and Corridors policy expectations may overstate the market's likely development response, with existing development patterns or transportation facilities inducing development differing from policy intent. For example, while policy may anticipate mid-or high-rise mixed-use development, the real estate economics may only support single-use multi-family or strip-style commercial development.

Size of Centers

Comprehensive plan policies loosely discuss center size, with District Centers the largest, with large floor plates for large-format retail, department stores and grocery stores. However, it is unclear from policy language how many acres such Centers should be cover. Policy language also indicates multifamily residential uses as favored "adjacent" to District Centers in the policies, but there is no definition of "adjacent," creating ambiguity. The intent appears to present some degree of land use transition between the more intense center or corridor and the less intense neighborhoods surrounding it. The way in which this policy is to be interpreted and applied is unclear.

Subarea Planning

The Comprehensive Plan relies on subarea planning for each designated Center or Corridor to interpret policy and apply meaningful zoning designations. However, recent subarea planning for each Center has focused primarily on localized concerns and enjoyed only limited funding. Subarea plans have not consistently satisfied the land use objectives in the Comprehensive Plan, mostly because the resources available to support these planning efforts have limited their scope. Subarea planning is costly and can be a multi-year process.

Without applicable subarea plans, Centers and Corridors rely on a system of CC zoning districts and overlays, most of which do not match Centers and Corridors Comprehensive Plan map extents. In some cases, permitted uses or required development types are not compatible with the goals in the Comprehensive Plan, although implementation of the

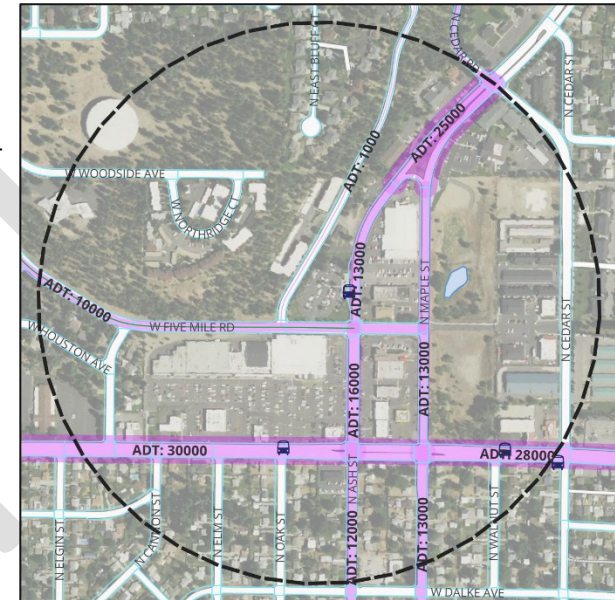


Figure 6. Five Mile District Center serves an important retail center for the surrounding neighborhoods but resides in a challenging transportation context surrounded and bisected by busy arterials and couplet.

South Logan Transit-Oriented Development project will facilitate some near-term changes to allowed development approaches.

Employment Centers

The “Employment Centers” serve a vague purpose, offering little benefit beyond recognition of a relatively concentrated workforce. The areas included as Employment Centers leave out some important industrial, institutional, and logistics sites with greater and more concentrated employment than contained within designated Centers. Additionally, the landscape of employment is changing, with office occupancy decreasing and business park types of development on decline. The Employment Center designation may now be obsolete.

Undesignated Centers and Use Mix in Other Areas

The Plan’s existing policy anticipated mixing of uses in the designated Centers and Corridors as well as areas not currently designated, such as Neighborhood Mini-Centers and General Commercial segments along Division Street.

There are areas in the city, such as segments of Division Street, which may qualify as Centers or Corridors due to planned public investments, but which are not included as such. Current zoning in these areas may perpetuate development conditions in conflict with the Centers and Corridors concept.

Streets and Public Infrastructure

Many centers lack a connected street system, hindering all mobility options including walking, bicycling, rolling, and vehicular movement. This is most prevalent in post-war and contemporary centers. The design of existing streets in these Centers, including heavy, fast-moving traffic, no on-street parking, narrow sidewalk widths, and limited street trees. These factors significantly reduce the attractiveness of sites in these Centers for mixed-use development oriented toward people walking.

Policy guidance now exists to create a more Center and Corridor type of environment, even though its implementation may not always result in the ideal streetscape. Policies TR-2, TR-3, and TR-6 establish connectivity provisions to enhance walking, rolling, and vehicular connections between sites and uses within Centers and Corridors, both in new

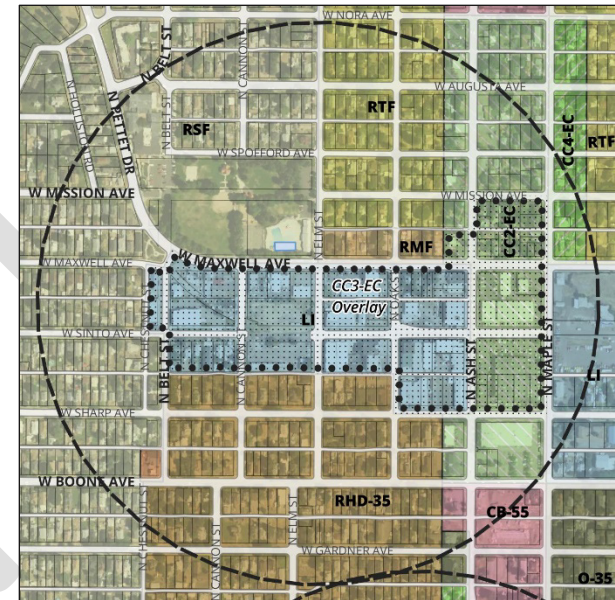


Figure 7. Cannon and Maxwell Employment Center is centered on legacy industrial uses that are surrounded on three sides by residential uses. It has potential to function as a Neighborhood Center if and when those industrial properties redevelop. The current conditions, however, present notable challenges to attracting urban mixed-use and multifamily redevelopment on these sites.

development and redevelopment contexts. What now is needed is a clear vehicle to link policy direction to implementation.

This may include identifying specific and conceptual connections within Centers and Corridors or providing for maximum block lengths between public streets and between public streets and private through-block connections. This need not be expressed as lines on a map. It can be built into policy and zoning, ensuring project designs and street improvement plans enhance the public realm in ways compatible with mixed-use, compact forms.

DRAFT

Typology Findings

While the Comprehensive Plan land use typologies are frequently mismatched with the zoning code, with land use map designations that may not align precisely with implementing zones, the fundamental distinction between Center types and Corridors still has value. The framework can be improved, however, by respecting typological distinctions and their essentially different functional expectations or physical characteristics.

District and Neighborhood Centers

These designations, if mapped differently, work well. They establish a clear concept calling for the integration of mixed uses or the transformation of potential development sites to create a more compact, dynamic, walkable, and transit-oriented space. They differentiate scale and intensity, an appropriate policy distinction to confirm compatibility with surrounding uses and define transportation facility and public service needs. But they should be applied more broadly, encompassing other potentially mixed-use areas. Some areas now with downtown or general commercial zones might qualify for inclusion here.



Figure 8. Examples of typical Centers: left, Southgate; right, South Perry.

Corridors

The Corridor designation is intuitive. It communicates a linear, mixed-use environment, with storefronts along an arterial street, on-street parking, lower traffic speeds, and easy pedestrian access, all set in a relatively narrow strip of intensity. This designation seems to work well, but it may also need to be applied more broadly, wherever this development type is sought. It implies specific physical components, though, and places designated as Corridors may also rely on significant retrofitting of the public realm and arterial streets to accomplish overall development objectives – a serious policy consideration when selecting areas for Corridor designation. East Sprague, Market Street, and North Monroe are examples of this type of arterial transformation and are consistent with proposed policy and discussion revisions to Policy LU 3.2.



Figure 9. Monroe, an example of a typical Corridor.

Employment Centers

The vagueness and inconsistent application of Employment Centers indicates limited value as a land use designation. There are six of them in Spokane, and a different designation applied to each may serve them just as well and alleviate confusion about what to expect and how to zone them. This report recommends removing Employment Center as a designation, and redesignating each of the existing Employment Centers as outlined below.

Redesignation Recommendations for Existing Employment Centers

- Cannon & Maxwell** – This Employment Center is unique as a small, legacy site close to Spokane’s first-ring suburbs. Its existing light industrial zoning also has a mixed-use overlay. It can be reclassified as a Neighborhood Center, adjusting the boundary to incorporate the Oak and Ash intersection with Maxwell. Removing the Employment Center designation and retaining the LI zoning in the rest of the area accommodates additional remaining development potential. The park and pool across the street serve as a great amenity.
- East Sprague/Sprague & Napa** – Given the industrial land to the north and freeway impacted land to the south, this stretch is functioning more like a Corridor. While there are industrial jobs in the vicinity, the entire landscape north of Sprague is industrial, making this site less distinct as an Employment Center. The designation is also less important now that the Altamont industrial sites are developed. Redesignating this as a Corridor would better match the function of East Sprague and clarify development expectations.
- Holy Family** – Set along the Division Street corridor, this Employment Center designation may be better served as another type of Center evolving as part of the emerging BRT vision. Alternatively, the Center designation can be removed, allowing a Neighborhood or District Center designation to take its place.
- North Foothills and Nevada** – The benefit of having this area designated as a Center of any type is unclear. However, now that the developed form of the district is taking shape, it may make sense to designate it as a Neighborhood Center to reflect recent housing development and retain a



Figure 10. Designated Employment Centers as of June 2024.

portion of the area for industrial and institutional uses.

- **North Nevada** – This area appears to have little potential to emerge as a Center as envisioned in the Comprehensive Plan. Creation of a Center – possibly a District Center – would require close collaboration with the County to encourage a transformation of land use and reconfiguration of the transportation network to be compatible with either industrial or mixed-use center type development.
- **Trent & Hamilton** – This area is a portion of the northern University District, partially served by the new City Line BRT. It is also part of the study area for the South Logan TOD plan, examining how the space may transform as a result of the new BRT line and increasing development pressure associated with the universities and planned housing. It is recommended to transition to a District Center.

Mini-Centers and Neighborhood Retail

These areas are both currently zoned as Neighborhood Retail (NR) – with 35' height limit and allowing single-purpose residential. Their neighborhood context and mixed-use pattern align with a smaller vision of the Neighborhood Center concept. If the Centers and Corridors approach applies to Mini-Centers and Neighborhood Retail, the Neighborhood Center designation should be scalable to apply to mixed-use development smaller than one acre or single street corner parcels.



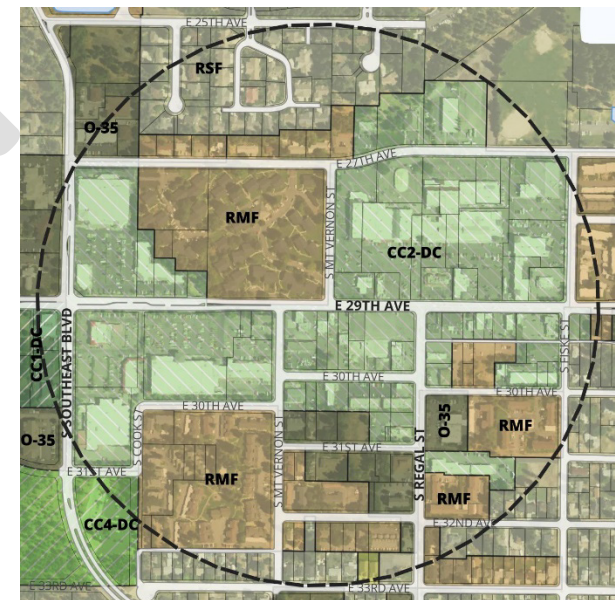
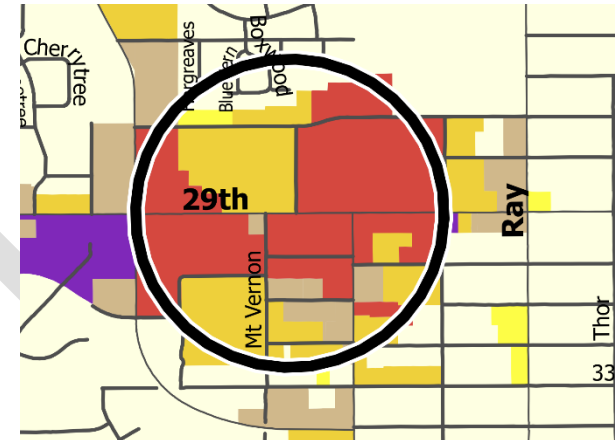
Figure 11. Wisconsin Burger near the South Perry Center is a good example of neighborhood-scale retail.

Policy Recommendations

This study offers findings and policy initiatives for a wide spectrum of “Center” types. The suggested policy responses address land use and, to a lesser degree, transportation facility design. Part of the response is to recognize the indefinite edge of Centers and Corridors and allow some flexibility to apply zoning as appropriate to respond to individual Center or Corridor conditions. In today’s zoning context, the incomplete overlap between the Centers and Corridors land use designation and CC zones creates inevitable mismatches and gaps, as well as confusing terminology.

A potential direction is to retain the Centers and Corridors concept but alter the way it is interpreted in policy and applied through zoning. This chapter discusses policy perspectives and proposes a hierarchy of “Mixed-Use” zones. This approach anticipates that individual districts may warrant different zoning designations depending on development economics, market trends, or City goals for Transit-Oriented Development (TOD). This may also allow for a broader application of Mixed-Use designations, bringing into the framework the downtown, sections of the Division Street corridor currently lacking Center designations, and Neighborhood Retail properties.

The Comprehensive Plan’s land use chapter provides ten land use goals, each with several policies intended to guide City initiatives, investment, and response. The proposed policy language here makes surgical revisions, with additional explanation added as necessary to the “discussion” section. These “discussion” paragraphs often introduce quasi-policy statements of their own, noting specific guiding principles, design strategies, or locational conditions which may inform zoning standards or discretionary review criteria. The “Notes” column offers ways in which the discussion may be reconsidered to express policy change intention or to offer ways in which an unchanged policy can be reinterpreted to be more compatible with the findings of this Centers and Corridors study. In some cases, the “Proposed policy” is unchanged, but the discussion accompanying the policy in the existing plan may warrant a new look.



Policy Recommendations Table

Proposed policy text changes are shown in the right column with **additions** and ~~deletions~~ shown as such.

Topic	Existing policies	Notes	Proposed policies
Residential density	<p>LU 1.4: Higher Intensity Residential Areas</p> <p>Direct new higher intensity residential uses to areas in and around Centers and Corridors designated on the Land Use Plan Map and to areas where existing development intensity is already consistent with development of this type</p>	Relies on spatially determined C&C geography and excludes single-family areas from consideration. Also does not define “higher density” to clarify which types or intensities qualify, even in the “discussion” section.	<p>LU 1.4: Higher intensity residential areas</p> <p>Direct new higher intensity residential uses a variety of housing types to areas in and around Centers and Corridors designated on the Land Use Plan Map and to areas where existing development intensity is already consistent with development of this type.</p>
Offices	<p>LU 1.5: Office Uses</p> <p>Direct new office uses to Centers and Corridors designated on the Land Use Plan Map</p>	Somewhat of hollow policy, as the C&C zones are no more permissive of office than other commercial zones. We’ve found that in this environment where there’s been an increase in the amount of remote office work, the best approach to encourage office development is to create a vibrant environment where office workers have access to a mix of services and amenities. Secondly, recommendations promote adaptable ground floor designs that Discussion introduces design suggestions to fine-tune office design and incorporate residential.	<p>LU 1.5: Office uses</p> <p>Foster a walking-oriented environment in Centers and Corridors that encourages the integration of offices with retail, dining, service, and residential uses through use permissions, development standards, and design provisions that emphasize pedestrian-oriented development and strategic public investment.</p> <p>Emphasize adaptable ground floor spaces on key street frontages in Centers and Corridors through tall floor to ceiling heights that can accommodate offices and a wide range of retail and commercial uses.</p>

Topic	Existing policies	Notes	Proposed policies
Small retail	LU 1.6: Neighborhood Retail Use Direct new neighborhood retail use to Neighborhood Centers designated on the Land Use Plan Map	Cements small neighborhood retail uses of less than two acres in place, permitting no new such development except as infill. Encourages new commercial use to be in C&C spaces. Also, similar to the suggested office policy, emphasizes that in order to successfully encourage neighborhood-scaled retail, it's important to create a good physical and regulatory environment that supports such uses.	LU 1.6: Retail in neighborhoods Encourage the integration of retail, dining, and service uses within a neighborhood context, particularly designated Neighborhood Centers, through use permissions, development standards, and design provisions that emphasize pedestrian-oriented development and strategic public investment. <u>Place limitations on the intensity of retail commercial uses in neighborhoods to emphasize uses that serve the neighborhood scale.</u>
Neighborhood retail	LU 1.7: Neighborhood Mini-Centers Create a Neighborhood Mini-Center wherever an existing Neighborhood Retail area is larger than two acres	Establishes two- to five-acre commercial development category outside of C&C space, encouraged to integrate residential uses. New mini-centers can be established through neighborhood planning.	No change to policy. An update to the discussion section associated with this policy is recommended, including removing language about establishing new Mini-Center locations through a neighborhood planning process and softening or removing language regarding the separation from other neighborhood-serving businesses by at least one mile.
Small Scale Commercial	N/A	Suggest adding a new policy on this topic that has been generating local and statewide interest lately.	LU 1.X: Corner stores and small scale commercial Allow for the establishment of small-scaled retail commercial uses on corner lots that support daily needs in all residential zones. Establish size limitations and use and design provisions that minimize impacts to adjacent residences.

Topic	Existing policies	Notes	Proposed policies
Commercial	LU 1.8: General commercial uses Direct new General Commercial uses to Centers and Corridors designated on the Land Use Plan Map	There is land in the GC designation not within C&C space. Is this policy hinting at doing away with it? Otherwise, it may invite creating new Corridors to absorb existing GC zoning districts.	LU 1.8: General commercial uses Foster an environment that encourages the integration of general commercial uses with residential and mixed-use development through use permissions, development standards, and design provisions. In Centers & Corridors designated on the Land Use Map, establish permissions, standards and provisions for general commercial uses that emphasize strategic public investment and development oriented toward walking, rolling and active transportation.
Transformation	LU 1.14: Nonconforming uses Avoid the creation of large areas of nonconforming uses at the time of adoption of new development regulations	Transformation might create nonconforming development, but land uses may still be conforming. Does this policy make the distinction? The discussion may warrant amending to clarify.	No change to policy. Update to discussion needed.
Public spaces	LU 2.1: Public realm features Encourage features that improve the appearance of development, paying attention to how projects function to encourage social interaction and relate to and enhance the surrounding urban and natural environment	The discussion relates this to the architecture and siting of private development and not to the character of highways, roads, and streets and the impact they have on what land uses develop alongside them.	No change

Topic	Existing policies	Notes	Proposed policies
Development strategy	<p>LU 3.1: Coordinated and efficient land use</p> <p>Encourage coordinated and efficient growth and development through infrastructure financing and construction programs, tax and regulatory incentives, and by focusing growth in areas where adequate services and facilities exist or can be economically extended</p>	<p>This policy seems to lay a foundation for strategic application of incentives to generate desired development.</p>	<p>No change</p>
Designation	<p>LU 3.2: Centers and Corridors</p> <p>Designate Centers and Corridors (neighborhood scale, community or district scale, and regional scale) on the Land Use Plan Map that encourage a mix of uses and activities around which growth is focused</p>	<p>The policy is brief, with most of the interpretation direction and applicable guidance on standards incorporated in the “discussion.” Not sure how a policy amendment might help clarify, or if changes would only inform how policy is interpreted. This points to a spatial designation and does not help align the Land Use Plan Map circles and ovals to conditions on the ground. The discussion warrants review and revision to capture findings of this analysis.</p>	<p>Combine with LU 3.3 and update discussion(see below).</p> <p>LU 3.2: Centers and Corridors</p> <p>Designate Centers and Corridors (neighborhood scale, community or district scale, and regional scale) on the Land Use Plan Map that encourage a mix of uses and activities around which growth is focused. <u>Designate new Centers or Corridors through the Comprehensive Plan amendment process or other city-approved planning process.</u></p>
Designation	<p>LU 3.2: Centers and Corridors</p> <p>Centers designation discussion.</p>	<p>Discussion section should be updated to provide more flexibility for designation of new centers.</p>	<p>Suggested Centers and Corridors are designated where the potential for Center or Corridor development exists. Final determination is subject to a sub-area planning process <u>or other planning or design process, as appropriate to facilitate Center or Corridor development consistent with Comprehensive Plan policy.</u></p>

Topic	Existing policies	Notes	Proposed policies
Designation	LU 3.2: Centers and Corridors Neighborhood Center discussion.	Discussion section should be updated to emphasize importance of streetscape and street facing development edges. See District and Neighborhood Centers on page 13.	Buildings in the Neighborhood Center are oriented to the street, <u>and street designs are compatible with storefront and residential uses anticipated to locate along street edges, contributing to the quality of the Center experience and serving active transportation needs.</u>
Designation	LU 3.2: Centers and Corridors District Center discussion.	Discussion section should be updated to emphasize importance of streetscape and street facing development edges. See District and Neighborhood Centers on page 13.	As with a Neighborhood Center, new buildings are oriented to the street, <u>and street designs are compatible with storefront and residential uses anticipated to locate along street edges, contributing to the quality of the Center experience and serving active transportation needs.</u>
Designation	LU 3.2: Centers and Corridors Employment Center.	The Employment Centers offer little benefit as a special designation, and their mapping excludes several areas of concentrated employment, like Riverpoint, the South Hill hospital district, and the industrial area near the fairgrounds and rail corridors. It may be time to eliminate the special employment center designation and incorporate those areas into other centers or corridors where they are adjacent or simply use zoning to implement industrial land use designations. See Employment Centers on page 15.	Remove Employment Center designation.

Topic	Existing policies	Notes	Proposed policies
Designation	LU 3.3: Designating Centers and Corridors Designate new Centers or Corridors in appropriate locations on the Land Use Plan Map through a city-approved planning process	This requires an “approved” subarea planning process for the siting of new Centers and Corridors, something which may be expensive. Consider integrating an option outside of the subarea plan process to establish a new Center or Corridor, provided the area meets specified criteria.	Delete policy and integrate with LU 3.2.
Identification, scale, and location	LU 3.4: Planning for Centers and Corridors Conduct a city-approved subarea planning process to determine the location, size, mix of land uses, and underlying zoning within designated Centers and Corridors. Prohibit any change to land use or zoning within suggested Centers or Corridors until a subarea planning process is completed	This policy appears redundant to LU 3.3. Revision can easily incorporate the essence of LU 3.3. Subarea planning is a complex process to require before land use or zoning changes. See Subarea Planning on page 10.	Delete policy.
Interdependence	LU 3.5: Mix of uses in Centers Achieve a proportion of uses in Centers that will stimulate pedestrian activity and create mutually reinforcing land uses	Policy language seems appropriate. Table LU 1 assigns land use mix targets which may need revisiting but may not warrant policy action. Housing site area targets for neighborhood centers seems high. Is the omission of “Corridors” intentional?	No change
Form	LU 3.6: Compact residential patterns Allow more compact and affordable housing in all neighborhoods, in accordance with design guidelines	Policy appears to mandate design guidelines for small-lot or attached housing types, requiring the City to have them in place in advance of development occurring.	LU 3.6: Compact residential patterns Allow more compact and affordable forms of housing in all neighborhoods, in accordance with design guidelines.
Parking	LU 3.8: Shared parking Encourage shared parking facilities for business and commercial establishments that have dissimilar peak use periods	Sharing with residential uses may also be appropriate. There may also be opportunities to advocate for having no required parking under certain circumstances.	LU 3.8: Shared parking Encourage shared parking facilities for residential , business, and commercial establishments.

Topic	Existing policies	Notes	Proposed policies
Streets and land use	LU 4.1: Land use and transportation Coordinate land use and transportation planning to result in an efficient pattern of development that supports alternative transportation modes consistent with the Transportation Chapter and makes significant progress toward reducing sprawl, traffic congestion, and air pollution	This seems to focus on high-level, capacity-based transportation/land use coordination but does not introduce the character of transportation improvement types to complement the desired types of land use along transportation facility edges.	LU 4.1: Land use and transportation Coordinate land use and transportation planning and design to result in an efficient pattern of development that supports alternative transportation modes consistent with the Transportation Chapter and makes significant progress toward reducing sprawl, traffic congestion, and air pollution multiple transportation options, including walking, rolling, accessing transit, or driving. <u>Land use policy and transportation decisions should prioritize walking, rolling, bicycling and public transit, consistent with the Transportation Chapter, balancing the transportation mode emphasis and approach based on land use designation and development mix.</u>
Land use diversity and compactness	4.2: Land uses that support travel options and active transportation Provide a compatible mix of housing and commercial uses in Neighborhood Centers, District Centers, Employment Centers, and Corridors	This policy encourages land use diversity and compactness, creating a land use context to support alternative modes.	Provide a compatible mix of residential and commercial uses in Neighborhood Centers, District Centers, Employment Centers, and Corridors Centers and Corridors.
Connectivity	LU 4.4: Connections Form a well-connected network which provides safe, direct and convenient access for all users, including pedestrians, bicycles, and automobiles, through site design for new development and redevelopment	This policy argues for safety and convenience of alternative modes. We suggest that it's important to emphasize that the network includes more than just streets.	LU 4.4: Connections Form a well-connected network of streets and through block connections which provides safe, direct, and convenient access for all users, including pedestrians, bicycles, and automobiles, through site design for new development and redevelopment.

Topic	Existing policies	Notes	Proposed policies
Connectivity	<p>LU 4.5: Block length</p> <p>Create a network of streets that is generally laid out in a grid pattern that features more street intersections and shorter block lengths in order to increase street connectivity and access</p>	<p>This sounds good, but there aren't currently any implementing standards. It also only references streets, whereas the diverse context of the centers, particularly those platted Mid-Century or later, would benefit from a more dynamic and flexible set of block standards that encourages the integration of private through-block connections. These could include a mixture of private streets, alleys, woonerfs (curbless routes shared by vehicles, walkers, and rollers), and non-vehicular routes.</p>	<p>LU 4.5: Block length</p> <p>Create and apply a dynamic set of maximum block length standards that provides a maximum distance between public streets and a shorter maximum distance between public streets and a through-block connection that create a well-connected street and pathway network that supports all types of travel.</p>
Land use diversity and compactness	<p>LU 4.6: Transit-supported development</p> <p>Encourage transit-supported development, including a mix of employment, residential, and commercial uses, adjacent to high-performance transit stops</p>	<p>The policy is generally consistent with the findings of this analysis, but the discussion appears to require subarea planning to implement special treatment. The discussion may need revision to eliminate the subarea planning requirement.</p>	<p>No change to policy. Update to discussion needed.</p>
Compatibility	<p>LU 5.5: Compatible development</p> <p>Ensure that infill and redevelopment projects are designed to be compatible with and complement surrounding uses and building types</p>		<p>No change to policy.</p>
Streets	<p>TR 2: Transportation Supporting Land Use</p> <p>Maintain an interconnected system of facilities that allows travel on multiple routes by multiple modes, balancing access, mobility and place-making functions with consideration and alignment with the existing and planned land use context of each corridor and major street segment.</p>	<p>This policy mentions placemaking, and the discussion references Centers and Corridors and provides support for multi-modal transportation. Proposed updates to Policy LU 4.5 Block Length provide a strategic implementing element.</p>	<p>Policy guidance on transportation issues related to Centers and Corridors is located in the transportation element of the Comprehensive Plan. This leaves a great deal up to interpretation by staff. These transportation policies provide a foundation for modifying the transportation system priorities and facility designs within Centers and</p>

Topic	Existing policies	Notes	Proposed policies
Streets	TR 3: Transportation Level of Service (LOS) Set and maintain transportation level of service standards that align desired growth patterns with optimal choices of transportation modes.	This policy accommodates increased traffic congestion in designated Centers and Corridors anticipating lower vehicle speeds, focusing on the movement of people and not just vehicles.	Corridors, but there is little in the existing Land Use Element to suggest ways in which they can be effectively employed or how specific facility designs can be made more compatible with the types of land uses the Centers and Corridors policy encourages.
Streets	TR 6: Commercial Center Access Improve multi-modal transportation options to and within designated district centers, neighborhood centers, employment centers, corridors, and downtown as the regional center.	This policy offers flexibility in design to accommodate the unique needs of Centers and Corridors, enhancing the pedestrian realm, encouraging reduced vehicle speeds, and accommodating high-intensity transit service.	

Recommendations for Land Use Designation Descriptions

The Land Use Element's Section 3.4 (not to be confused with Policy 3.4) includes descriptions of the City's full list of land use designations. For the Centers and Corridor designations, these descriptions replicate the discussion sections for each land use policy. The land use policy discussion sections should better coordinate with the land use designation descriptions to avoid conflicting guidance.

Secondly, this study recommends adding implementing zones for each land use designation, particularly those related to Centers and Corridors, to better sync the proposed zoning provisions with the land use designations.

Thirdly, this study recommends calling out the Centers and Corridors typologies different than the other land use designations, as they are mapped differently (shown as an overlay feature) and function more as a unique overlay feature.

Below are recommended modifications to the Land Use Designation section of the Comprehensive Plan integrating the recommendations above, with **additions** shown in bold and ~~deletions~~ with strikethrough text. Implementing zoning provisions are all new content, as noted below.

Neighborhood Center

The Neighborhood Center contains the most intensive activity area of the neighborhood. In addition to businesses that cater to neighborhood residents, activities such as a daycare center, church, or school may be found in the Center. Size and composition of the Center varies depending upon location, access, neighborhood ~~context~~**character**, local ~~desires~~, and market opportunities. Important elements to be included in the Center are a civic green, square or park, and a transit stop. ~~Buildings fronting on the square or green should be at least two or three stories in height with housing located above ground floor retail and office uses.~~ **Modest building height step-downs are integrated at the edge of mixed-use zones where adjacent to lower intensity residential zones** ~~is stepped-down and scale of housing is lower as distance from the Center increases.~~ The circulation system is designed to facilitate pedestrian access between residential areas and key neighborhood components **and to facilitate land use and development types consistent with the Center's vision.**

Implementing zones include (new text):

- MU-2 for those areas suitable and desirable for a mix of commercial and residential development.
- Residential zones for those areas currently developed with applicable residential uses.
- LI for those areas with legacy light industrial uses that are desirable to retain for employment purposes, but due to their location may in the long term be reconsidered for mixed-use or multifamily redevelopment as development trends change.

District Center

District Centers are similar to Neighborhood Centers except they are larger in scale and contain more intensive residential and commercial activities. Size and composition of the Center vary depending upon location, access, neighborhood ~~context~~ character, local desires, and market opportunities. District Centers are usually located at the intersection of principal arterial streets or major transit hubs. To enhance the pedestrian environment, plazas, green space, or a civic green serve as an integral element of the District Center. **Modest building height step-downs are integrated at the edge of mixed-use zones where adjacent to lower intensity residential zones.** Higher density housing is found both within and surrounding the District Center to help support business and transit. A circulation system, which facilitates pedestrian access between residential areas and the District Center, is provided. District Centers and downtown Spokane are linked by frequent transit service, walkways, and bikeways.

Implementing zones include (new text):

- MU-TOD for those areas within walking distance of existing or planned high-capacity transit stations.
- MU-1 for those areas suitable and desirable for a mix of commercial and residential development.
- MU-3 for those areas that function as a transition between low-intensity residential areas and mixed-use areas, which are also designated as Center and Corridor Transition.
- Residential zones for those areas currently developed with applicable residential

uses.

- LI for those areas with legacy light industrial uses that are desirable to retain for employment purposes, but due to their location may be reconsidered in the long term for mixed-use or multifamily redevelopment.

(remove designation)

Discussion: The Employment Center designation is unnecessary, particularly as designated in the Land Use Plan Map. It can be eliminated. Where the existing 150' maximum building height is necessary to retain, apply that height with the MU-1 zone.

~~Employment Centers have the same mix of uses and general character features as Neighborhood and District Centers but also have a strong employment component. The employment component is expected to be largely non-service-related jobs incorporated into the Center or on land immediately adjacent to the Center. Employment Centers vary in size from thirty to fifty square blocks plus associated employment areas.~~

Corridor

The Corridor concept focuses growth along transportation corridors, such as a major transit line. It is intended to allow improved transit service to daily activities. Housing and employment densities are increased along the Corridor to support frequent transit service and business. Usually, Corridors are no more than two blocks in depth along either side of the Corridor. Safe, attractive transit stops, and walking or bicycling ways are provided. A variety of housing types—including apartments, condominiums, townhouses, and houses on smaller lots—are located in close proximity to the Corridor. Important elements include multi-story buildings fronting on wide sidewalks with street trees, attractive landscaping, benches, and frequent transit stops **with roadway design and performance expectations compatible with the Corridor land use concept**. A full range of services are provided including grocery stores serving several neighborhoods, theaters, restaurants, drycleaners, hardware stores, and specialty shops.

Implementing zones include:

- MU-TOD for those areas within walking distance of existing or planned high-capacity transit stations.
- MU-1 for those areas suitable and desirable for a mix of commercial and

residential development.

- MU-3 for those areas that function as a transition between low-intensity residential areas and mixed-use areas, which are also designated as Center and Corridor Transition.
- Residential zones for those areas currently developed with applicable residential uses.
- LI or HI for those areas with legacy industrial uses that are desirable to retain for employment purposes, but due to their location may be reconsidered in the long term for mixed-use or multifamily redevelopment as development patterns and market demands shift.

Center and Corridor Core

Discussion: Center and Corridor Core functions as the joint mapped designation that applies for all Centers and Corridors typologies. At first glance, it's somewhat confusing to add another term to the Centers and Corridors typology mix. However, it functions reasonably well as a parcel specific designation whereas the Centers and Corridors typologies are mapped in a conceptual overlay manner. No text changes to the existing description are necessary:

This designation allows commercial, office, and residential uses in designated Centers and Corridors. The type, intensity, and scale of uses allowed **and the type, scale, and character of streets** shall be consistent with the designated type of Center or Corridor. This Comprehensive Plan designation will be implemented with the Land Use Code for Centers and Corridors.

Implementing zones include:

- MU-TOD for those areas within walking distance of existing or planned high-capacity transit stations.
- MU-1 for those other areas suitable and desirable for a mix of commercial and residential development and are within a designated District Center or Corridor.
- MU-2 for those other areas suitable and desirable for a mix of commercial and residential development and are within a designated Neighborhood Center.

Center and Corridor Transition

Discussion: There are only a handful of such designations within the City, and they tend to be primarily single-family detached homes, some of which have been converted to businesses. Their location between Center and Corridor Core areas and low-density residential areas lends to the transitional “tag”. While eliminating this designation was considered (absorb applicable properties into the Center and Corridor Core designation), connecting these properties with the proposed MU-3 zone (updated version of the current CC4 zone) is a reasonable solution given the sizeable increase in height to the proposed MU-1 or MU-2 zone. Nevertheless, adding the MU-2 zone as an additional implementing zone is recommended to allow future opportunities to accommodate urban multifamily and mixed-use development within these areas.

These areas are intended to provide a transition of mixed uses (office, small retail, and multi-family residential) between the Center & Corridor Core designations and existing residential areas. Office and retail uses are required to have residential uses on the same site. ~~This Comprehensive Plan designation will be implemented with the Land Use Code for Centers and Corridors, Center and Corridor Type 4.~~

Implementing zones include:

- MU-3 for areas characterized by detached low-rise residential development character but located between MU-1 or MU-2 zoned property and a low-density residential designation.
- MU-2 for those sites adjacent to a MU-1 or MU-2 zoned property and both suitable and desirable for development consistent with MU-2 zone provisions.

Non-Center and Corridor Designations

There are a number of designations that are closely related to the Centers and Corridors designations and proposed implementing Mixed-Use zones. They warrant a close review followed by recommendations in support of the City's Center and Corridors strategy.

Below are a combination of recommendations and considerations that should be tied in with the larger comprehensive plan update:

- Combine and adjust Neighborhood Retail and Neighborhood Mini-Center Designations. These designations are largely identical, and both employ the same NR as the implementing zone. The policies for both restrict new such designations and prohibit the expansion of existing designations but allow for infill development. Similar to Centers and Corridors, policies promote uses oriented toward walking and rolling. At minimum, this study recommends considering the proposed MU-2 zone as an optional implementing zone (in addition to NR), provided the low end of the 55-75-foot height range is used.
- The Office designation and corresponding Office and Office Residential zones should be evaluated during the comprehensive plan update. Most of these designations and zones reside outside of current Center and Corridor boundaries. At minimum, consider approving the proposed MU-2 as implementing zones for Office designated properties, if the Office designation remains.
- The General Commercial designation covers a more extensive set of areas than the Centers and Corridors. These designations are largely located along arterial street corridors such as W Northwest Boulevard, E Sprague Avenue, N Market Street and N Division Street, and within larger commercial districts such as the South University District. The two key implementing zones are the GC and CB zones, which are largely identical, but have varying height limits. Consider the implications of allowing the proposed MU zones to be implementing zoning options for the GC designation to allow more flexibility to promote development that emphasizes the goals and policies of Centers and Corridors in larger areas of the City as desired.

Mapping Centers and Corridors

Considerable project team discussions during this study revolved around mapping the Centers and Corridors. The Center and Corridor current typologies use large circles for District and Employment Centers (approximately 2,400 feet wide), smaller circles for Neighborhood Centers (approximately 1,600 feet wide), and oblong circles for the Corridors (approximately 800 feet wide). These circles and oblong circles were clearly intended to serve more as a conceptual purpose rather than function as site specific land use designations. But the framework has been a cause of some confusion as to the boundaries and application of Center and Corridor policies and implementing zoning provisions.

Recommended Mapping Approach

This study's proposed updates to the Centers and Corridors land use designations, most notably the implementing zoning recommendations, help to solve perhaps the largest shortcoming of the current designation and mapping system. This includes retaining a conceptual overlay approach to the Center and Corridor typologies. This study, however, recommends changing how these typologies are delineated on the map to an intersection-based system rather than simple circles or oblong circles.



Figure 12. Key intersections provide the structural core of every center.

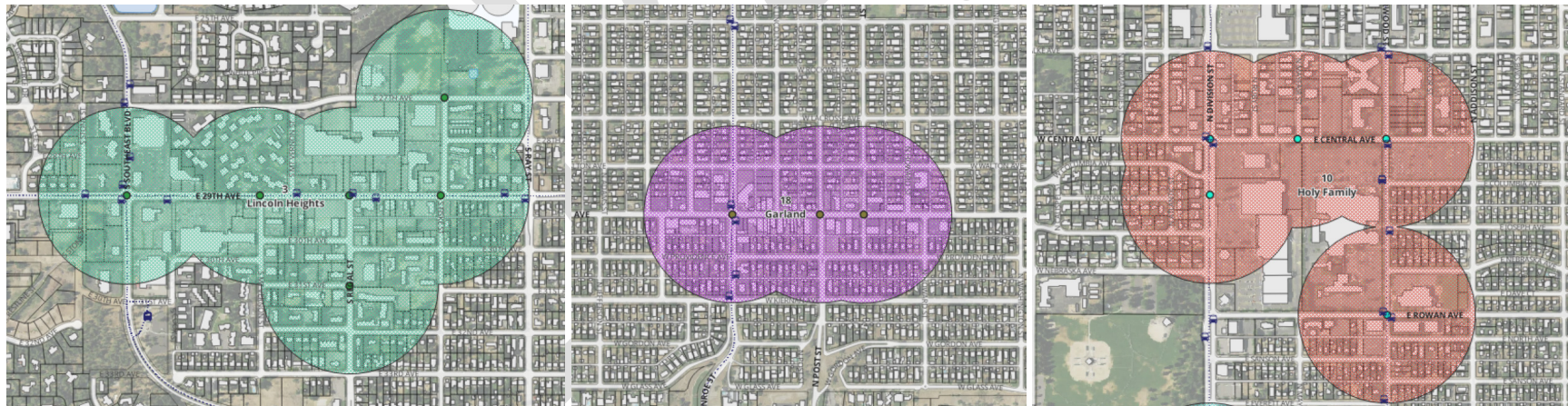


Figure 13. Example mapping application at Lincoln Heights District Center, Garland Neighborhood Center, and Holy Family Employment Center.

Unlike the existing system, which applies a circular boundary around a single center point, this approach would provide flexibility for the variety in shapes and sizes of

different centers. This approach also emphasizes the fundamental role of that street intersections play in creating centers and corridors, where the interaction of public rights of way and private land creates economic, social, and cultural opportunities. Important intersections are relatively easy to identify for each center based on traffic patterns, land values, existing infrastructure and development patterns.

We recommend drawing a one-eighth-mile conceptual buffer around street and other key intersection points for each Center. One-eighth mile is equivalent to one block length and two block widths in many parts of the city. Parcels that fall within this boundary would be within the applicable Center or Corridor land use designation. This approach recognizes the variability in both size and shape of centers while empowering planners to make reasonable judgments about application of appropriate designations and corresponding implementing zoning.

Any mapping approach will have some drawbacks. In this case, the one-eighth-mile buffer is appropriate and intuitive for parts of the city with a traditional street grid but will be somewhat more challenging to apply in newer centers, such as Indian Trail, with widely spaced intersections. In these cases, this study recommends treating major driveway entrances to shopping centers as key intersections.

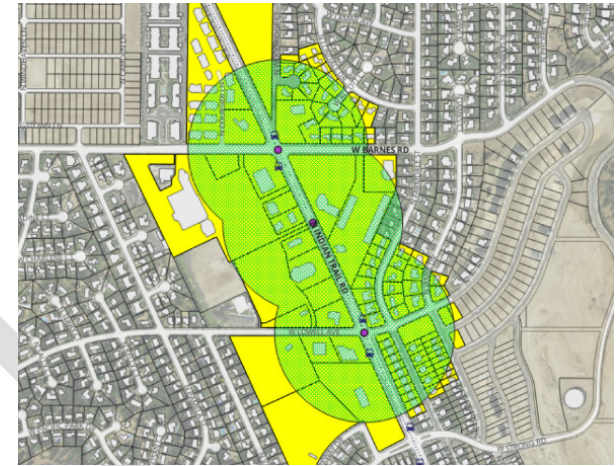


Figure 14. Indian Trail Neighborhood Center, with parcels falling within the one-eighth-mile buffer highlighted.

Regulatory Changes: A Policy Lens

Revisions to the policies, policy discussions and land use descriptions described earlier in this section point to a variety of regulatory changes, many of which are described in more detail in the proposed zoning changes.

Housing Affordability

The City's Building Opportunity for Housing (BOH) project produced a recent set of zoning amendments adjusting lot size, parking, and intensity requirements to facilitate housing construction. This strategy aimed to reduce costs and barriers to new housing production, leading to improved affordability through increased housing supply.

In addition, the City's [Multifamily Tax-Exemption](#) (MFTE) program does provide tax exemptions to new multifamily developments that include units affordable to low and moderate income households. By increasing zoning capacity for multifamily housing through BOH the City expanded the potential use of the MFTE to encourage new affordable units. Similarly, increased zoning capacity in Center and Corridor areas increases the potential of MFTE to bolster affordability in walkable, amenity rich area.

Other possible approaches not yet part of the City's policy discussion could include mandatory inclusionary housing requirements, whereby density and/or other development capacity increases are coupled with a requirement that a percentage of new units meet certain affordability levels.

Building Height

Increasing building height can offer attractive development incentives, but, once in place, it is difficult to roll back. If the City commits to the Centers and Corridors approach, targeted increases in building height limits can be effective. Revised height thresholds should account for the economics of high-rise construction (elevators, seismic design, and materials), the aesthetics and function of street-level floor-to-ceiling heights (adaptability to retail, residential, or office use), and the aesthetics and functions of rooftops (equipment, access, and stormwater treatment). The City should carefully consider targeting locations where increased building height will strategically contribute to the vitality of mixed-use districts. Increased building heights should be used with restraint, and primarily near the area of highest intensity within these Centers and Corridors.

Floor Area Ratio

Full commitment to the Centers and Corridors approach may require the adoption of a minimum floor area ratio in the core areas of the Centers and Corridors, particularly in those locations served by BRT. New policy and zoning can underscore the need for more intensity within a quarter mile of these bus stations, requiring minimum bulk and intensity and reducing or eliminating off-street parking requirements. Coupled with maximum height restrictions, minimum FAR requirements can drive the highest levels of intensity in locations served by enhanced transit.

Surface Commercial Parking

The current Centers and Corridors regulations allow some types of development that may be incompatible with the City's long-term goals for Center and Corridor areas. In some contexts, surface commercial parking may create a void in the urban fabric that acts as a detriment to the success of the area. In other contexts, surface commercial parking may be necessary for the success of nearby businesses. Regulatory tools that address both situations and the ability to apply them where appropriate is important for the success of the strategy.

Historic Preservation

There are currently few protections against the demolition of historic buildings within the urban fabric of some historic Centers. Placing appropriate controls on demolition of historic structures in Centers and Corridors and standards that support adaptive re-use can help ensure historic structures support the development of a sense of place in centers, linking these areas past and its future.

Transitions

An important element of the initial Centers and Corridors strategy was to minimize the impacts of increased height on adjoining residential areas. New mixed-use zoning will still need to respect this, but the scale and type of transitions may need to be managed a bit differently. The strict transition requirements have made it difficult to realize Center and Corridor potential, limiting the ability of smaller zone edge parcels to attain the development intensity necessary to support redevelopment. A new policy and zoning framework that changes the way Centers and Corridors are mapped, adjusts implementing zoning provisions, and adjusts the transition's specific height setback

requirements to achieve an appropriate balance between Center and Corridor development capacity and compatibility.

Internal Connectivity

In addition to street connectivity, providing good internal connectivity (pedestrian at a minimum, but ideally vehicular too) within the site and between sites (notably when lots are more than 120' deep) can be essential to create a truly pedestrian-friendly and dynamic Center. Design standards can address the frequency and design of such connections, and the design of development frontages facing those connections, to best ensure that those connections are inviting and contribute to the function of a Center.

Block Frontages

The City's current system of Pedestrian Streets establishes an initial street typology framework based on more than just vehicular capacity. Standards and guidelines for designated Pedestrian Streets and undesignated streets address permitted parking lot locations, the location, orientation, and window transparency of buildings, curb cuts, and streetscape elements. New policy should emphasize refining current provisions for Pedestrian Streets and undesignated streets to enhance the character, function, and economic viability of Centers and Corridors, while accommodating strategic flexibility.

Design Standards

Design standards tend to be more uniformly successful when they incorporate objective criteria, are implemented consistently, and serve a recognizable purpose. Recent State legislation will essentially require this. By clearly stating the importance of design in the success of a mixed-use center and the need to incorporate connectivity, create a pedestrian-friendly street environment, and establish identity, policy updates can support and guide the City's refinement of its design standards. These standards need not be an impediment to investment and development. Rather, they clarify what is appropriate in mixed-use areas, establish a template within which development can fit, and create a new set of expectations to shape individual projects and reinforce district identity.



Figure 15. Conceptual rendering of development under updated zoning and design standards.

Zoning and Design Standards Recommendations

Crafting a New Family of “Mixed-Use” Zones for Centers and Corridors

This study recommends replacing the existing Center and Corridor (CC) zones with a family of new “Mixed-Use” zones crafted to implement the proposed policy changes above. There are several reasons to make this change, including:

- A “mix of uses” is the obvious objective for these zones and the term is easy to understand.
- Such mixed-use zones could also apply to areas outside of designated Centers and Corridors, where the use and dimensional provisions match the conditions and aspirations for particular areas. While all of the existing commercial zones allow for residential uses, most of these areas look and function like commercial “zones”. But given the housing supply and affordability challenges faced by the city, the concept of these other zones evolving more into “mixed-use” places over time is an important subject. Simply including the name “mixed-use” in the zone name is a good start in communicating objectives and opportunities.
- The current CC zoning framework includes an awkward relationship between the CC typology land use designations, applicable zones, and development regulations (notably maximum building height). Also, development and local market trends have evolved considerably since the CC zoning provisions were established. This study and the larger comprehensive planning process provides an opportunity to overhaul the system with new zones crafted both to meet policy objectives and work in sync with development and market trends.

This concept starts with creating a base mixed-use zone (MU1) that applies broadly – allowing a wide mix of commercial uses, including modest-scaled light industrial, where all uses are conducted indoors. Regarding auto sales, it could make sense to permit modest scale uses, where most of the use and activity occurs within a building with minimum acreage devoted to outdoor car parking. It is recommended to continue allowing single-purpose residential uses outright.

Specialization recommendations:

Use mix:

- Develop a TOD-focused zone that emphasizes uses that help activate the pedestrian environment over auto-oriented and land consumptive uses.
- The smaller scale neighborhood-scaled mixed-use areas warrant some extra limitations on use types, including:
 - New retail floor area construction: Allow grocery stores with no more than 60,000 square feet of total floor area. Limit other retail uses to 20,000 square feet in total floor area.
 - Prohibit regional oriented uses that don't promote activity, like storage uses.
 - Prohibit light industrial uses, even those conducted entirely indoors.

Pedestrian Street designations:

- Continue use of the current Pedestrian Street designations and standards but provide adjustments to the standards. Most notably:
 - Rename "Pedestrian Street" to "Storefront Street" to better describe the desired built form and land use.
 - Designating more streets, including adding a mechanism to integrate a minimum amount of storefront proportional to the size of large mixed-use zoned sites in conjunction with redevelopment.
 - Providing some strategic limitations on ground floor uses to ensure that such users contribute to the envisioned pedestrian-oriented character and activity.
 - Adjusting minimum façade transparency standards.
 - Adding strategic weather protection requirements.

Scale (Height) of MU zones.

- Height can likely be handled simply by extensions to the MU zone that emphasize the maximum height. Ideally, there are only five different maximum heights.
 - 150 feet for TOD Mixed-Use Centers: This height allows the market to catch up and allow for unique developments or construction types (including mass timber).
 - 90 feet to allow for seven-story mixed-use buildings or six-story office or research buildings. This assumes an allowance for 20-foot concrete-framed

ground floor and 10-foot, 6-inch floor-to-floor heights for wood-framed upper floors, with some built-in flexibility. Apply this to all CC zones that included 55-foot limits and were raised up to 70 feet in the interim housing code.

- 75 feet to allow for five-story mixed-use buildings. This allows for 20-foot ground floor and 10-foot, 6-inch upper floors with some extra flexibility. Apply this to all CC zones that included 40-foot limits and were raised up to 55 feet in the interim housing code.
- 55 feet to allow for four-story mixed-use buildings and up to five-story residential buildings. This height is an important mid-way point between 40 and 75-foot thresholds and provides a good option for increasing the height allowances for those zones currently capped at 35 feet.
- 40 feet to allow for three-story walkups, live-work units, or mixed-use buildings at a height limit that matches the newly adopted R1 zone. This would apply just to the smallest neighborhood commercial areas that reside in a low-density residential context (surrounded by the R1 zone).
- Floor area ratio (FAR). Since the Interim Housing Ordinance steered sharply away from the FAR approach, future mixed-use zones should also employ a simplified approach that avoids maximum FAR along with the current incentive-based FAR-bonus systems.

Parking

- The recent Parking Regulations for Housing effectively eliminated off-street parking requirements for housing in all Centers and Corridors. The South Logan Transit-Oriented Development Plan includes policies to remove minimum off-street parking requirements within the study area or within ¼ mile of BRT stations as a general approach. An MU-TOD zone should employ this same approach. Otherwise, the current off-street parking requirements for commercial uses in the CC zones are relatively minimal. Sticking with the current standards (at most) is recommended for the other mixed-use zones.



Figure 16. Conceptual rendering of development in a MU zone adjacent to lower intensity residential zones.

Recommended Mixed-Use Zones

MU-TOD – The mixed-use zone that emphasizes transit-oriented development.

Create a mixed-use zone that emphasizes uses that support pedestrian activity over auto-oriented uses and land intensive uses. This applies to mixed-use areas around BRT stations close to Downtown, including South Logan Subarea, where new auto-oriented uses and land intensive uses, such as mini-storage, should be prohibited.

MU-1 – The “base” mixed-use zone, which accommodates maximum use flexibility.

Create a base mixed-use zone that applies broadly and allows a wide range of commercial uses, including modest-scaled light industrial, where all uses are conducted indoors. Permit modest scale auto sales uses, where most of the use occurs within a building. Permit drive-through uses, except on streets where the block-frontage designation specifically disallows it, and apply strategic spacing requirements to avoid concentration of auto-oriented facilities. Continue to allow single-purpose residential uses outright.

MU1 concept should apply to all District Centers, Corridors and areas formerly designated as Employment Centers.

MU-2 – The small neighborhood-scaled mixed-use zone

This is intended for existing Neighborhood Centers that warrant some commercial use size limitations. This also should be the destination zone for those areas currently zoned Neighborhood Retail. While that zone does not currently have floor area limitations for commercial uses, the location and purposes of the zone would be consistent with an approach having some limitations.

MU-3 – The residential mixed-use zone

This study recommends replacing the current CC4 and NMU (which is codified but not mapped) zones with this zone. It allows residential, offices, and small-scale retail sales and service uses (up to 3,000 square feet in stand-alone form, but without a floor area cap when in mixed-use structures that feature residential units).

The detailed use and form recommendations for each of these zones are set forth below.

Use Provisions

Table 1 below documents the current CC zone use permissions and adds proposed Mixed-Use (MU) zones and corresponding use permissions. The right column adds commentary on the suggested approach and provides some specific conditions.

Table 1. Current and proposed use permissions. Table key: P = permitted; L = permitted with limitations; N = not permitted; For footnote letters and numbers, refer to applicable notes in the right column.

Key Use	Existing Zoning			Proposed Zoning				Current & Recommended Use Provisions and Conditions
	CC1	CC2	CC4	MU-TOD	MU-1	MU-2	MU-3	
Residential	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	Continue the approach of maximum flexibility to accommodate single purpose residential uses in these zones. Use the suggested block frontage provisions to limit ground floor residential uses on existing/planned “storefront” blocks. ALSO: Recommend prohibiting “new” detached single-unit residential uses in the MU-TOD zone and perhaps in the MU-1 and 2 zones.
Commercial, financial, retail, services	P _x	P _x	L ₁	P	P	P _y	P _z	For MU-TOD and MU-1, no area limitations are recommended on such uses. Recommended limitations for the construction of new uses in the MU-2 and MU-3 zones as reflected below. y Grocery stores are limited to 60,000sf and other uses are limited to 20,000sf. z Uses are limited to 3,000sf in the MU-3 zone, except that larger floor areas are permitted where such uses are integrated into a mixed-use building with residential units. Existing CC zone use conditions not proposed for new MU zones: x Use limited to 40,000sf for designated Neighborhood Centers in the Comprehensive Plan. L ₁ Residential uses are required to be mixed on the same parcel as proposed office & retail uses. Nonresidential uses are limited to 3,000sf/parcel. In Neighborhood Centers, nonresidential uses are only allowed on parcels with frontage on an arterial street. Nonresidential uses in the CC4 zone are not allowed within 60’ of a single-family and two-family residential zone or further than

Key Use	Existing Zoning			Proposed Zoning				Current & Recommended Use Provisions and Conditions
	CC1	CC2	CC4	MU-TOD	MU-1	MU-2	MU-3	
								300' (Neighborhood Center only) from a CC core comprehensive plan designation.
Eating & drinking establishments	P _x	P _x	N	P	P	P _x	P _y	<p>Remove the 5,000sf limitation in the base Mixed-Use zone, but keep it in the MU2, and reduce to 3,000sf in the MU3.</p> <p>x Limited to 5,000sf (in Neighborhood Centers for existing CC zones).</p> <p>y Uses are limited to 3,000sf in the MU-3 zone, except that larger floor areas are permitted where such uses are integrated into a mixed-use building with residential units.</p>
Restaurants without cocktail lounges	P	P	L1	P	P	P	P _x	<p>x Uses are limited to 3,000sf in the MU-3 zone, except that larger floor areas are permitted where such uses are integrated into a mixed-use building with residential units.</p> <p>Existing CC zone use condition not proposed for new MU zones:</p> <p>L1 Residential uses are required to be mixed on the same parcel as proposed office & retail uses. Nonresidential uses are limited to 3,000sf/parcel. In Neighborhood Centers, nonresidential uses are only allowed on parcels with frontage on an arterial street.</p>
Professional & medical offices	P	P	L1	P	P	P	P _x	<p>x Uses are limited to 3,000sf in the MU-3 zone, except that larger floor areas are permitted where such uses are integrated into a mixed-use building with residential units.</p> <p>Existing CC zone use condition not proposed for new MU zones:</p> <p>L1 Residential uses are required to be mixed on the same parcel as proposed office & retail uses. Nonresidential uses are limited to 3,000sf/parcel. In Neighborhood Centers, nonresidential uses are only allowed on parcels with frontage on an arterial street.</p> <p>Nonresidential uses in the CC4 zone are not allowed within 60' of a single-family and two-family residential zone or further than 300' (Neighborhood Center only) from a CC core comprehensive plan designation.</p>
Entertainment	P	P	N	P	P	P	N	Retain current approach – with entertainment banned only in the smallest Neighborhood Center areas (MU3)

Key Use	Existing Zoning			Proposed Zoning				Current & Recommended Use Provisions and Conditions
	CC1	CC2	CC4	MU-TOD	MU-1	MU-2	MU-3	
Limited industrial (if entirely within a building)	P _x	P _x	N	P _x	P _x	P _x	N	Retain current approach. x Limited to 20,000gsf.
Drive through businesses	P _x	P _x	P _x	N	P _{x,y}	P _{x,y}	N	Recommend prohibiting them entirely in TOD areas but continuing current approach elsewhere (except MU-3). x Prohibited on designated storefront/pedestrian streets and TOD overlay areas. y Limited to one drive through lane and cannot be placed within 300 ft of another drive through.
Motor vehicle sales, rental, repair, or washing	N	P	N	N	P _x	P _{x,y}	N	Recommend allowing these in MU1 and MU2 if they are conducted entirely indoors, with some size limitations in the MU2. x Use must be conducted entirely indoors (Outdoor display, storage, or use of industrial equipment, such as tools, equipment, vehicles, products, materials, or other objects that are part of or used for the business operation is prohibited). y Limited to 20,000gsf
Gasoline sales	P _x	P	P _x	N	P _y	P _{x,y}	N	Suggest an approach similar to drive-through businesses noted above. Retain the current six pump limitation in the MU2. x Limited to six pumps in CC1, MU2 and CC4. y Prohibited on designated storefront streets and TOD overlay areas.
Self-storage	N	P	N	N	P _x	N	N	Retain the current approach but note prohibitions on storefront streets and TOD overlay areas. x Prohibited on designated storefront streets and TOD overlay areas
Winery and Microbreweries	P	P	N	P	P	P	N	Retain the same approach here. Microbreweries are likely too much for the smallest corner store/cross roads in a Neighborhood Center.

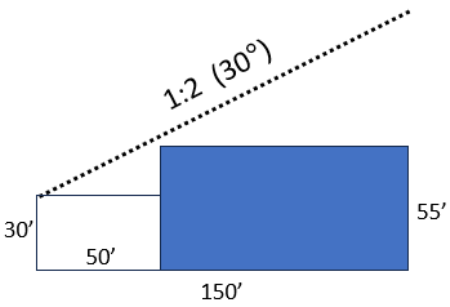
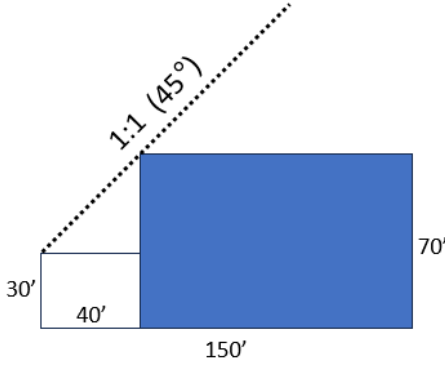
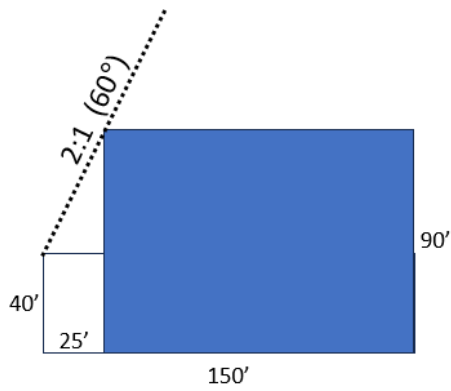
Key Use	Existing Zoning			Proposed Zoning				Current & Recommended Use Provisions and Conditions
	CC1	CC2	CC4	MU-TOD	MU-1	MU-2	MU-3	
Commercial Parking Lot	P	P	N	P _x	P _y	P _y	N	<p>Recommend renaming to Commercial Parking and differentiate between surface and structured parking.</p> <p>x Surface commercial parking lots are prohibited.</p> <p>y Surface commercial parking should not cause the total amount of parking on properties within a 500 ft radius to exceed 4 stalls per 1,000 sq ft of commercial floor area.</p>

Dimensional Standards

Table 2. Current and proposed dimensional standards. Note: The black underlined standards reflect those of the interim housing regulations.

Standard	Existing Zones			Proposed Zones				Current & Recommended Use Provisions and Conditions
	CC1	CC2	CC4	MU-TOD	MU1	MU2	MU3	
HEIGHT – based on center designation type (feet)								
General				90-150 _x	75-150 _x	55-75 _x	40	X Zone provides for variable height limits within the range as specified on the Zoning Map. This includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none">150' for those areas currently designated as Employment Centers and other current zones that allow 150'.90' for those areas currently designated as District Centers.75' for those areas currently designated as Neighborhood Centers.
Neighborhood Center	40 <u>55</u>	40 <u>55</u>	40 <u>55</u>	These designations would no longer impact MU zone height standards				
District Center	55 <u>70</u>	55 <u>70</u>	40 <u>55</u>					
Employment Center	150	150	70					

Standard	Existing Zones			Proposed Zones				Current & Recommended Use Provisions and Conditions
	CC1	CC2	CC4	MU-TOD	MU1	MU2	MU3	
								<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 55' for those areas currently designated as Neighborhood Retail, Neighborhood Mini-Center, and Office._____
Building Height Transition Requirement	For all development within 150' of any single-family or two-family residential zone, height limit starts at 30' at the residential zone boundary and additional building height is added at a ratio of 1' vertical to 2' horizontal. <u>The interim housing ordinance revised the ratio of 1:1.</u>			For development on properties adjacent to lower intensity residential zones, height limit starts at 40' at the residential zone boundary and additional building height is added at a ratio of 2:1.				Recommend adjusting the standard to start at 40" and then go up at the 2:1 ratio.

Standard	Existing Zones			Proposed Zones				Current & Recommended Use Provisions and Conditions	
	CC1	CC2	CC4	MU-TOD	MU1	MU2	MU3		
Comparing Height Transition Requirements									
<div><div><p>Pre-BOCA/BOH standard 30'+1:2 55' height limit</p></div><div><p>Interim standard (current) 30'+1:1 70' height limit</p></div><div><p>Recommended standard 40'+2:1 90' height limit</p></div></div>									
FLOOR AREA RATIO (FAR)									
Minimum FAR	None 1.0 _x	None 1.0 _x	None 0.5 _x	1.0 _y	None	None	None	Retain the 1.0 minimum FAR only in the MU-TOD zone and apply to all development types except civic/public uses. Suggest exempting small lot development from this standard. x Applies only to development where a minimum of 50% of the floor area is residential. y Development on lots under 20,000sf are exempt	
Maximum basic allowable FAR by use									
Non-residential	0.5	0.2	x None	None	None	None	None	Avoid FAR limitations, similar to most recent zoning ordinance changes.	
Residential	1.0 None	0.5 None	1.0 None	None	None	None	None		

Standard	Existing Zones			Proposed Zones				Current & Recommended Use Provisions and Conditions
	CC1	CC2	CC4	MU-TOD	MU1	MU2	MU3	
Combined	1.5 <u>None</u> _γ	0.7 <u>None</u> _γ	1.0 <u>None</u> _γ	None	None	None	None	<div><div>x</div>In the CC4 zone the FAR for all nonresidential uses may not be greater than the FAR for the residential uses located on the same parcel. Nonresidential uses are limited to a maximum of three thousand square feet per parcel.<div>γ</div>Applies only to development where a minimum of 50% of the floor area is residential.</div>
Maximum FAR by use with public amenities								
Non-residential	1.0	0.8	None	None	None	None	None	
Residential	2.0 <u>None</u>	1.5 <u>None</u>	1.5 <u>None</u>	None	None	None	None	
Combined	3.0 <u>None</u> _γ	2.3 <u>None</u> _γ	1.5 <u>None</u> _γ	None	None	None	None	
SETBACKS (minimum feet)								
Street lot line	0	0	x	0 _γ	0 _γ	0 _γ	0 _γ	<div><div>Suggest pointing to proposed block frontage standards, which emphasize that the form (possibly the use too) dictates the minimum setback.</div><div><div>x</div>When abutting RSF and RTF zoned lots, the minimum structure setback from street lot line is the same as the abutting residential zoning district for the first 60 ft. from the boundary of the abutting residential zoning district.<div>γ</div>Buildings are subject to block frontage standards as set forth in Table 5.</div></div>
Setbacks from Curb/Sidewalk Width	12	12	12	12 _γ	12 _γ	12 _γ	12	Continue current standard until more specific streetscape standards can be developed. The footnote allows for limited cantilevering out to or close to the ROW edge.

Standard	Existing Zones			Proposed Zones				Current & Recommended Use Provisions and Conditions
	CC1	CC2	CC4	MU-TOD	MU1	MU2	MU3	
								γ The upper floors may cantilever out to the ROW edge, up to a maximum of 4'.
R1 and R2 zoned lots (adjacent to)	10	10	10	5	5	5	5	Use a basic 5', as the building height transition requirement addresses the biggest compatibility component between these two zones.
Interior lot line	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	For MU-3, the setback should be consistent to the permanent changes associated with the interim housing ordinance (it's currently 5').
CC, O, NR or similar zones	0'	0'	0'					
Front lot line	10'	10'	10'					Correct this. It should be same as street lot line.
LANDSCAPING (minimum width in feet)								
Street trees and planting strips	5' between curb and sidewalk in all CC zones with 25-30' spacing depending on form							Good base standard.
Adjacent to a street	5' of L2 planting							Doesn't apply for zero setback buildings
Interior property lines	5' of planting strip							Doesn't apply for zero setback buildings or where parking is adjacent to another parking lot; Doesn't specify what type of landscaping; Recommend allowing options for shared open space, pathways, access drives, or parking facilities along property line.
Interior property lines adjacent to residentially zoned property	8' of L1 planting strip, except 8' of L2 planting strip for RHD zone							Code allows director discretion to waive or reduce this and the above requirement based on: No useable space for landscaping exists between the proposed new structure and existing structures on adjoining lots or alleys because of inadequate sunlight or inadequate width. Three other options exist, but this is the most notable. This study agrees that some flexibility here is important, but the current factors (criteria) used by the director to make those decisions have room for improvement. For

Standard	Existing Zones			Proposed Zones				Current & Recommended Use Provisions and Conditions
	CC1	CC2	CC4	MU-TOD	MU1	MU2	MU3	
								<p>example, the 8' planter strip requirement typically equates to a minimum 8' building setback, but that doesn't appear to be the case here based on one of the factors. Also, xeriscape landscaping may be desirable, but it appears that it could be provided elsewhere on the site.</p> <p>Consider modifying the criteria to consider onsite topography, building heights, setbacks and disposition, fence design, and landscaping characteristics.</p>

Parking Standards

Table 3: Parking Standards and Comments. Note: The underlined text indicates 2023 Building Opportunity for Housing interim housing regulations and proposed regulations. ~~Strikethrough~~ text indicates expired elements of 2022 Building Opportunity and Choices for All interim standards.

Standard		Existing Zones				Proposed Zones MU-TOC, MU-1, MU-2, MU-3	Comments
		CC1	CC2	CC3	CC4		
Minimum Parking: Residential	All	1 per 1,000 gross sq. ft. or 1 per dwelling unit plus one per bedroom after 3 bedrooms		1 per 1,000 gross sq. ft. or 1 per dwelling unit, whichever is less		None	Preferred direction is no required parking for MU zones. This will support adaptive re-use and rehabilitation of existing structures, new business formation, and property development.
	0-30 units	None					
	31-40 units	0.2 per unit					
	41-50 units	0.25 per unit					
	51+ units	0.31 per unit					
Minimum Parking: Non-residential		1 per 1,000 gross sq. ft.		1 per 1,000 gross sq. ft. 2 per 1,000 gross sq. ft.			
Maximum parking: all uses		4 per 1,000 gross sq. ft				4 per 1,000 gross sq. ft	This matches the parking maximum policy in the draft SLTOD plan.

Block Size and Connectivity Standards

This study recommends applying reduced block size and enhanced connectivity standards for large lot development (including redevelopment). The proposed concept is dynamic in form, allowing some flexibility for traditional blocks bound by public streets, provided blocks are divided by through-block connections. This idea is important for improving connectivity and repurposing former large commercial areas such as shopping malls that may need improved connectivity. This may be easier to achieve when there is aggregated ownership, but the City should look for tools, such as master plans or development agreements, that can allow for improved block size and connectivity standards. Such through-block connections may be a combination of vehicular and pedestrian routes that are privately owned and maintained within a public access easement. For context, here are some typical block sizes for selected Centers:

- Cannon and Maxwell: 330 feet by 280 feet.
- Garland 612 feet by 280 feet (longest block)
- Shadle: 680 feet by 280 feet (blocks on north side of Wellesley Avenue). Note that the Shadle Shopping Center property is more than 1,500 feet long.
- Holy Family: 615 feet by 280 feet (blocks surrounding the hospital)
- Manito: 514 feet by 260 feet (probably the most average sized lot, as the lot sizes in the area are quite variable).
- Lincoln Heights: 600 feet by 280 feet.
- South Perry: 630 feet by 280 feet.

Downtown Spokane blocks, however, are typically around 300 feet long. The 200-300-foot range in blocks is ideal for creating a connected pedestrian environment that helps to reduce the distance between destinations.

Those Centers and Corridors that were developed prior to World War II already have smaller block sizes along with a small lot development pattern. Those Centers and Corridors that could benefit from reduced block size and enhanced connectivity standards are those that were developed after World War II. Most of these include superblock shopping center sites with 600-1,500 long blocks that are often just as wide.

Urban forms of development that feature reduced or structured forms of parking equate to much smaller block sizes in the 200-300-foot range. While breaking up such superblock

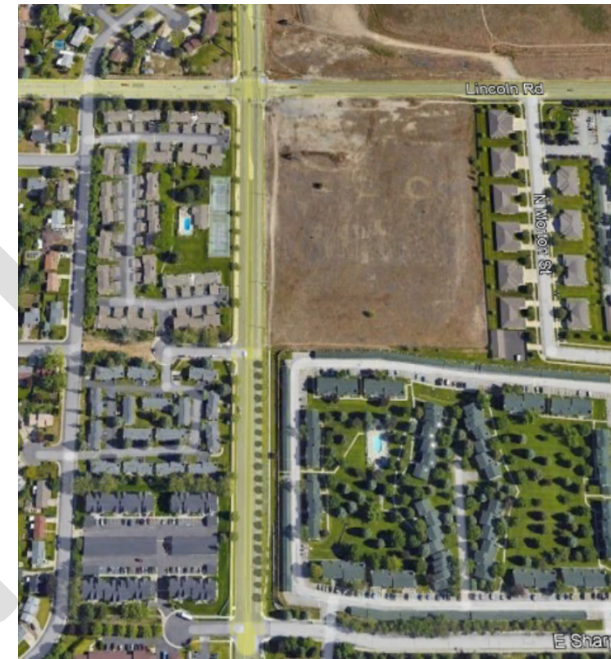


Figure 17. The Lincoln Nevada Neighborhood Center site (vacant property upper center in image) is poorly connected to adjacent residential uses due to the inward facing design of each residential development.

The intent of providing stronger connectivity standards is to prevent disconnected development patterns like this, particularly in Centers and Corridors.

sites with public streets at such intervals is one attractive option, integrating options for larger blocks, provided they integrate through-block connections, accommodates much needed flexibility.

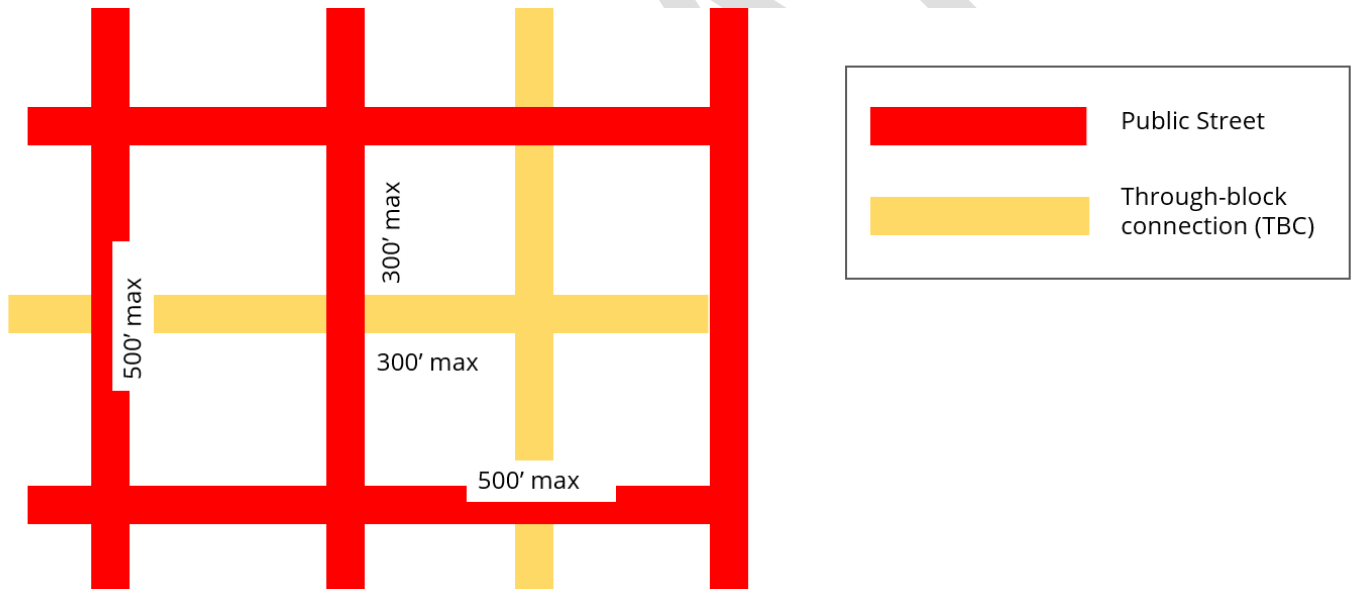
Proposal: Maximum block length standards.

These standards would apply to new large-lot development (sites with blocks more than 300 feet long) or major redevelopment activity on such sites.

Table 4: Maximum block length standards.

Zone	Maximum block face length		Maximum block (bound by public streets) perimeter length
	Between public streets and TBC's or between TBC's	Between public streets	
Any MU zone	300'	500'	2,000'

Example street/through-block connection network in the MU zone



500' max

300' max

300' max

500' max

Public Street

Through-block connection (TBC)

The concept would require some exceptions to account for topography or other physical constraints (such as a large school or park on adjacent sites or an active railroad line). Wider blocks between streets and through-block connections might better match the surrounding context or line up better with current arterial traffic signals. Furthermore, some flexibility might be granted for special permitted uses that require larger block sites or integrate special community amenities.

Proposal: Through-block connection standards.

Through-block connections may include private streets, shared pedestrian and vehicular access routes, and other walking and rolling routes. Such connections are encouraged to be integrated into the design of developments to comply with the proposed maximum block size standards and enhance pedestrian circulation in the area, while also providing an option for vehicular access to on-site parking, functioning as a design amenity to new development, and breaking up the massing of buildings on long blocks. Specific regulation suggestions for through-block connections:

- A. Public access easement. Where a through-block connection is necessary to meet the maximum block size standards, such connections shall be provided within a public access easement.
- B. Alignment. Specific alignments for the through-block connections will be developed during the development review process for applicable sites.
- C. Accessibility. Through-block connections must be physically accessible to the public at all times and built to meet all ADA standards, in terms of materials, slope, widths. And other related standards. Connections may take a variety of forms, depending on the block size and use mix.
- D. Alternative designs. Adjustments to the through-block connection regulations may be approved by the City provided the design:
 - 1. Creates a safe and welcoming pedestrian-route.
 - 2. Provides an effective transition between the shared lane or path and adjacent uses (e.g., enhances privacy to any adjacent ground-level residential units).
 - 3. Functions as a design amenity to the development.

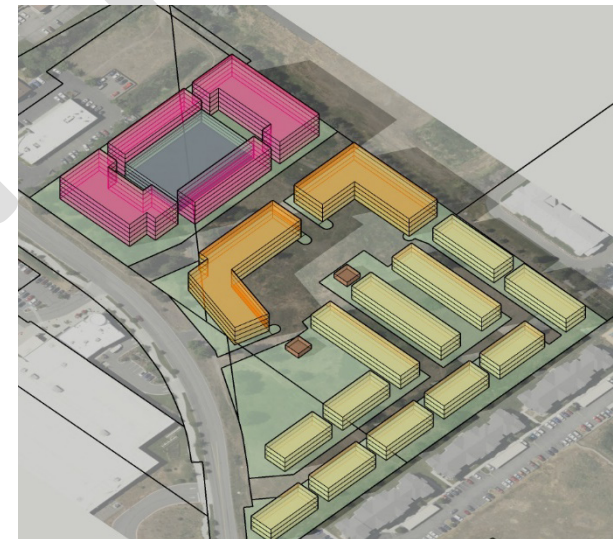


Figure 18. Conceptual development layouts employing block size and connectivity standards at large sites.

- E. Cantilever design. Buildings may project or cantilever into minimum required easement areas on building levels above the connection for up to a maximum of 100 feet in length, provided a 13-foot, six-inch vertical clearance is maintained, and all other regulations are met.
- F. Through-block connection types. Unless otherwise noted, required through-block connections may take any of the following forms set forth herein. A combination of designs set forth above may be used for each connection.
 - 1. Private street.
 - a. Applicability: The private street option may apply to any through-block connection.
 - b. Design: Private streets shall meet City's Public Works Standards.
 - 2. Alley design.
 - a. Applicability: The traditional alley design option may apply to any through-block connection.
 - b. Design: Alleys shall meet City's Public Works Standards.
 - 3. Shared-Street or "Woonerf" design.
 - a. Applicability: The "woonerf" – or shared multi-modal lane, mixing people walking, bicycling, and rolling with vehicles as guests - may apply to any through-block connection.
 - b. 32-foot minimum public access easement.
 - c. 20-foot-wide two-way shared travel lane.
 - d. Landscape planters with a mixture of trees, shrubs, and ground cover must be integrated on at least one side of the shared-lane.
 - e. Apply those same proposed ground level/façade block frontage standards above that apply to undesignated streets.
 - 4. Landscaped passageway design.
 - a. Applicability: Optional design when vehicular access to the site is provided elsewhere on the site.
 - b. 30-foot minimum public access easement.
 - c. Eight-foot minimum walking path in commercial, multifamily, and civic contexts and five feet minimum in single unit and duplex subdivisions.
 - d. Six-foot minimum landscaping strips (with a mixture of trees, shrubs, and ground cover) on each side of the walking path.



Figure 19. A through-block connection featuring a cantilevered building extending over a portion of the connection.

- e. Apply those same proposed ground level/façade block frontage standards above that apply to undesignated streets.
 - f. Apply lighting standards to support visibility in the narrower passageways.
5. Urban passage design.
- a. Applicability: Optional design for commercial or mixed-use areas when vehicular access to the site is provided elsewhere on the site and active ground level uses are provided along frontages.
 - b. Twelve-foot minimum public access easement.
 - c. Apply those same proposed ground level/façade block frontage standards above that apply to undesignated streets.

DRAFT

Block Frontage Standards Recommendations

Table 5 below illustrates suggested changes to the current standards that apply to Pedestrian designated streets plus changes that apply to other non-designated streets.

Table 5: Suggested changes to Pedestrian Streets and undesignated street standards. Additions are underlined and deletions are struck.

Topic	Standard	Comments and Recommendations
PEDESTRIAN STREETS (SUGGEST CHANGING THE NAME TO "STOREFRONT STREETS")		
<u>Application of new Pedestrian Street designations</u>	Legislative process (similar to a code or map amendment).	Consider designating new streets as part of the Comprehensive Plan update process or through future subarea planning efforts. Recommend applying a minimum length of designated Pedestrian Street on MU-zoned sites in conjunction with large site redevelopment (over 2 acres). The minimum length of onsite Pedestrian Street designation must be equivalent to 33% of the lot's arterial street frontage. The designation may be located anywhere on the site, provided it's within 1/8 mile of a transit stop.
<u>Permitted ground level uses fronting a Pedestrian Street</u>	<p><u>All ground level uses allowed in the applicable zone, except:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <u>Motor vehicle sales, rental, repair, or washing, gasoline sales, and self-storage</u> <p><u>For residential uses, only lobbies and common areas are permitted</u></p>	Considering that Pedestrian Streets should be carefully selected, there should be a prohibition on uses that are not helpful in terms of streetscape activation. Ground level dwelling units built up to the sidewalk edge are more often harmful to the streetscape due to the permanently closed blinds look. Such units are typically the least livable units in a building due to privacy challenges and lack of solar access as a result of the closed blinds. Allow apartment building lobbies, common areas and other shared amenities to provide a good compromise option that's worked reasonably well elsewhere.
Building entrances	The primary entrance to the building shall be visible from and fronting on a Pedestrian Street.	Yes, clear enough.
Maximum setback	Along Pedestrian Streets, buildings shall be placed at the back of the required sidewalk (see Setbacks section of Land Use Code for <u>Mixed-Use zones Centers and Corridors</u>) <u>or adjacent to a pedestrian oriented space (term to be defined, functions like a plaza) that fronts onto the street, except for a setback up to 10 ft. for the purpose of providing a publicly accessible "plaza," "courtyard," or recessed entrance.</u>	Remove limits on width of a plaza space. Use the term Pedestrian-Oriented Space and define it.

Topic	Standard	Comments and Recommendations
Façade transparency	A minimum of 60% of the ground floor transparency zone (area between 2-10 vertical feet above the sidewalk level) shall be comprised of windows with clear, “vision” glass allowing views into the interior. Display windows may be used to meet half of this requirement provided they are at least 16” deep and not simply attached to the façade.	This draws from some of the transparency standards for buildings along arterial streets in Centers and Corridor zones (not specifically called out for Pedestrian Streets) but makes adjustments to clarify the transparency zones and adds a protection for display windows.
<u>Weather protection</u>	Required weather protection may be accommodated in two ways: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> At least 3’ deep along at least 50% of the building’s façade; and/or Recessed building entrances featuring weather protection at least 3’ deep along the width of the building entrance. 	Most pre-war storefront buildings use the second option, but it makes sense to offer both and stick to the same width. 6’ wide canopies are desirable for larger buildings (in terms of proportion) and allow a couple to walk underneath out of the rain. But given the historic pattern in Spokane and the more limited rainfall, the 3’ standard is appropriate for designated Storefront Streets.
Ground level details	Façades of commercial, residential, and mixed-use buildings that face Pedestrian Streets shall be designed to be pedestrian- friendly through the inclusion of at least three of the following elements:	While there might be consideration of requiring such details on more than just storefront buildings, including a prescriptive list, and requiring three options is a reasonable approach. Since the above proposal addresses ground level uses, there’s no need to clarify uses here.
Parking lot location	Parking lots shall not be located between a building and a Pedestrian Street.	This concept allows parking to be located along the street frontage provided it’s to the side of a building. Simply prohibiting any surface or structured parking adjacent to a Pedestrian Street is ideal, but given the large range of contexts, it makes sense to stick with the current approach. Also, the curb cut prohibition below makes it quite difficult to place any parking lots adjacent to a Pedestrian Street.
Curb cuts	Curb cuts shall not be located along a designated Pedestrian Street.	No changes suggested.
Streetscape elements	Publicly-usable site furnishings such as benches, tables, bike racks and other pedestrian amenities shall be provided at building entrances, plazas, open spaces, and/or other pedestrian areas for all buildings larger than 10,000 sf. Buildings less than this size are encouraged to include such amenities. Specific types of site furnishings shall be approved by the City	The threshold makes sense for requiring some integrated amenities, but the situation likely requires a more clear and measurable standard/options.

Topic	Standard	Comments and Recommendations
Pedestrian-oriented sign	Signs shall be oriented to pedestrians, rather than people in vehicles.	This should be updated to be much more specific and measurable.
Sign integration with architecture	The design of buildings and sites shall identify locations and sizes for future signs. As tenants install signs, such signs shall be in conformance with a future recommended overall sign program that allows for advertising which fits with the architectural character, proportions, and details of the development. When developed, a future sign program shall indicate location, size, and general design.	The concept is good. Further collaboration with design review staff is warranted to determine whether this language is working well or needs adjustments.
Creative graphic sign design	Various "guidelines" encouraging signs highly graphic in form, expressive, and individualized.	Good, except such encouraged components may no longer be appropriate in objective standards integrated into SMC.
Unique landmark signs	New landmark signs should correspond to the location, setting and type of businesses, and shall be approved by the Planning Director.	Good – but very challenging language if we're trying to be objective. Perhaps this can be addressed in approach to design departures/alternative compliance provisions.
Ground signs	Pole signs shall be prohibited. All freestanding signs shall be prohibited. Ground signs no higher than 5 feet total. The base of any ground sign shall be planted with shrubs and seasonal flowers.	With buildings built up to the sidewalk edge, it's best to simply locate signage on the buildings in these contexts.
OTHER STREETS (UNDESIGNATED)		
Buildings along street	New development shall not have parking between buildings and the street and at least 30% of the frontage of the site shall consist of building facades.	Retaining the current block frontage approach for undesignated streets is the first recommendation. It provides plenty of flexibility while ensuring that some buildings are located close to the street. One other component of the current approach that works is that the building standards increase as buildings get closer to the street. See related suggestions and comments on that issue below. Two alternative approaches were considered but not chosen: 1) Eliminate this standard to simplify the code and provide more flexibility. This would only work if the City was very aggressive in designating Pedestrian Streets. But ultimately it provides too much flexibility in design (by allowing more parking along street fronts). 2) Create a more dynamic system of block frontages with three or more designations (one for Storefronts, one for flexible design, and something in between). The challenge for Spokane

Topic	Standard	Comments and Recommendations
		is that it requires mapping all applicable streets in the Centers and Corridors with one of the three or more designations. That complexity likely renders that option untenable.
Buildings along intersection corners	Buildings shall hold the street corner, although setbacks that accommodate plazas, seating areas, landscaping, clear view triangles (for traffic safety) and prominent entrances are acceptable.	Keep this – at least in concept. Other standards cover the details.
Façade transparency	For commercial or mixed-use building facades visible and within 1020 feet of a an arterial or pedestrian-street (front property line) , a minimum of 50% of the ground floor <u>transparency zone (area between 2-10 vertical feet above the sidewalk level)</u> shall be comprised of windows with clear, “vision” glass allowing views into the interior. Display windows may be used to meet half of this requirement.	Apply the 50% standard just to buildings within 10’ of the street. The transparency zone details will assist in measuring. Delete the display windows for anything other than storefronts directly adjacent to sidewalks.
	For commercial or mixed-use building facades visible and located within 60 feet of a street an arterial or pedestrian street , a minimum of 30% of the ground floor <u>transparency zone (area between 2-10 vertical feet above the sidewalk level)</u> shall be comprised of windows with clear, “vision” glass allowing views into the interior. Display windows may be used to meet half of this requirement.	Keep this standard intact, with some similar adjustments as made above.
	For other commercial or mixed-use buildings and all residential buildings, a minimum of 15% of any ground floor façade that is visible from and fronting on any abutting street shall be comprised of windows with clear, “vision” glass allowing views into the interior.	Agree with the 15% rule for “other” building facades.
	<u>For residential uses, a minimum of 15% of the entire building façade* that is visible from and fronting on any abutting street shall be comprised of windows.</u>	Need a standard for the entire residential façade – similar to what will be required in residential zones under the interim housing ordinance.
<u>Building entrances</u>	<u>For building facades located within 60 feet of a street, the primary entrance to the building shall</u>	This wasn’t addressed for non-designated streets.

Topic	Standard	Comments and Recommendations
	<u>face the street or be within 45-degree angle of a street frontage.</u>	
<u>Weather protection</u>	<u>Weather protection at least 3' deep is required over all business, public, and private residential building entries.</u>	A simple but necessary standard for livability and building integrity.
Curb cut limitations	A curb cut for a nonresidential use should not exceed 30 feet for combined entry/exits. Driveway width where the sidewalk crosses the driveway should not exceed 24 feet in width.	No changes here unless design review and engineering have experienced problems with these standards.
Drive-through lanes	Any lanes serving drive-through businesses shall not be located between the building and any adjacent street.	Keep



Figure 20. Concept rendering of redevelopment featuring “storefront street” (left) and “other streets” (right) block frontage treatments.

Other Updated Design Standards Concept

In addition to the block size and connectivity and block frontage standards noted above, below are recommended updates to the existing Centers and Corridors Design Standards and Guidelines:

- Updated standards should be codified and integrated within the Spokane Municipal Code, rather than the current freestanding, adopted-by-reference form. By moving these standards into the code, they can be more integrated with other zoning provisions and easier to access.
- Pursuant to Washington House Bill 1293 involving design review, the existing design “standards and guidelines” should be updated to only include clear and objective development regulations. This means that the provisions should emphasize prescriptive and measurable standards over vague guidelines that are more challenging to interpret.
- Retain but modify options for alternative compliance. Design provisions in the code and in the Centers and Corridors Design Standards and Guidelines include a complex web of provisions that allow flexibility in how designs comply with guidelines. While HB 1293 effectively bans the use of guidelines, it does not specifically prohibit options for alternative compliance designs for clear and objective standards. Thus, when updating current provisions to such clear and objective standards, options to allow for alternative designs should be strategically integrated, provided they meet the defined purpose for particular standards and any special compliance alternative criteria associated with a particular standard. This approach integrates some much-needed flexibility to objective design standards.
- While all sections warrant a full review and update, these sections need special attention:
 - Service element siting and design warrants a comprehensive update given evolving best practices, particularly for urban development forms that feature structured parking.
 - The section Transition between Commercial and Residential Development should be eliminated, as these current provisions don’t qualify as objective design standards. However, the separate building height transition requirement between higher intensity Mixed-Use zones and lower intensity

residential zones should be retained but refined as provided for in the Interim Housing Ordinance.

- Materials section also warrants a full update given evolving construction practices.
- Massing section also warrants a full update given evolving construction practices. Integrate standards that allow choices in how designers can further articulate the building massing and architectural expression as a means to provide for secondary scales and patterns that are smaller than the entire façade.
- Seek ways to provide standards for encouraging integration of public art, universal design and greenery, such as climbing trellises, to meet design element requirements.

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