



Community Development Code Update - Frequently Asked Questions

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This document addresses high-level questions regarding the proposed Community Development Code working draft and how it would operate differently from the current code ordinance.

Below you will find questions broken out by each of the 11 proposed code articles. If you have questions beyond what this document provides, please don't hesitate to reach out to the Planning and Development office by phone at (417) 864-1037 or by email at Forwardsgf@springfieldmo.gov

Content may be added to this document as the review process continues. To find the most recent version of the document please visit <https://www.forwardsgf.com/initiative3/>

Is this the final draft of the Community Development Code that will be adopted?

No. This is a working draft, intended for review by Place Team participants, elected officials and other technical groups to gather feedback, ensuring the proposed code aligns with the community's goals and Forward SGF, before finalizing the proposed working draft and beginning the public adoption process.

The Land Development Code is scheduled for consideration and adoption by City Council in February 2025. There is estimated to be a six-month code testing period after adoption, with a projected effective date of July 2025. This schedule may be refined as work continues.

How does this proposed code implement recommendations from Forward SGF?

The proposed code update is one of the Top 10 Initiatives outlined in Forward SGF. This initiative also will address or implement over 200 recommendations from Forward SGF by emphasizing quality of place, the creation of complete neighborhoods, connections to nature, accommodating the place type approach to land planning and elevating design over use. The proposed code also elevates the use and design of public spaces, for all users.

ARTICLE 1: GENERAL PROVISIONS

How would administration of the Community Development Code be changed as part of the proposed code update?

The administration, interpretation, and enforcement of the Community Development Code would shift from being a duty of the Building Development Services Department to that of the Planning and Development Department.



ARTICLE 2: PROCEDURES

How would the development review process change as part of the proposed code update?

The proposed code aims to streamline the review process for platting, zoning, site plans, appeals, as well as the administration, interpretation, and enforcement of the Code. Development standards are located in separate articles, organized by the nature of the development type (residential or nonresidential) and the targeted design discipline (subdivision, community design, access, parking, landscaping, etc.). Each process is organized to include all applicable review, eligibility, and approval criteria. Some applications are processed in tandem depending on the nature of the project. For instance, the rezoning or conditional use permit and site plan review processes may occur simultaneously.

Some uses have been deemed to be appropriate in certain contexts and have been suggested to be approved as conditional uses in new consolidated zoning districts. This will reduce the requirement that all properties be rezoned in order to expand use possibilities. (See Table 4-3 for permitted and conditional uses).

In addition, the Planning and Zoning Commission is proposed to have final approval authority over conditional use permits (CUP). CUPs would be considered only by City Council in the event of an appeal or sufficient community protest.

How would the proposed code affect the rezoning process?

The proposed code offers two options for rezonings that will replace “conditional overlays” and commonly used “planned developments”. Rezoning applications will be considered:

1. With a binding site plan and established performance standards, similar to the current use of a “planned development” or Conditional Overlay District.
2. Without a binding site plan, at the discretion of the Director of Planning and Development.

What elements of the current process are remaining the same?

The current public notice procedures, including required neighborhood meetings, posted signs, and mailings will not change.

ARTICLE 3: SUBDIVISION & COMMUNITY DESIGN

What would developers be required to provide under the proposed new code that they were not previously required to provide?

Generally, applications will require the same amount of information to illustrate the proposed development and public improvements as currently required. However, the new code may request that information be provided in a different format, at a different time, or as a commitment through a binding site plan to ensure that the development is of the context and character that is desired.

At what point would developers be required to install the required elements - sidewalks, driveways, landscape, signage, stormwater retention, etc., under the proposed code?

Developers are required to install the required elements, at the time of development. Like the existing code, public improvements required as part of a subdivision can be secured and



completed in concert with the approval of a final plat, and issuance of other subsequent permitting.

What would determine the level of streetscaping and landscaping required?

The level of streetscaping and landscaping required under the proposed code is determined by the frontage and street type, zoning district, as well as the existing pattern of the block. The idea is to require a proportional improvement that is determined by the context of the street type and placetype.

ARTICLE 4: DISTRICTS & USES

What are the proposed changes to the zoning districts?

The number of proposed zoning districts would change from 25 to 12. Residential-Single-Family, Heavy Manufacturing, Residential-Manufactured Home Community, Government and Institutional, and Center City zoning districts would all remain.

The proposed code proposes to consolidate and refine zoning districts that are similar in use in exchange for more prescriptive development standards. As an example, R-TH and several GAP and West College subdistricts would be combined into a new R-MX1, Low-density mixed residential district, which would emphasize a mix of small-scale, missing middle housing options. R-MD would be R-MX2, which would emphasize a mix of small-scale and moderate-scale missing middle housing options that support a more compact, walkable neighborhood. Another example that has been proposed is to consolidate the General Retail (GR) and Highway Commercial (HC) districts into a new General Commercial (GC) district, that qualifies many permitted uses through the Conditional Use Permit process or by specified performance standards. *See Section 4.01, 4.02, and 4.03 for more information.*

How will my property be impacted by the change in zoning districts?

The City of Springfield will be rezoning some properties, in the technical sense, as the district name and permitted uses and standards will change with the adoption of the new Community Development Code. However, the change or consolidation of some districts retains all uses and development rights but may introduce more options in uses or development consistent with current allowances. In these instances, the name of a district may change. This is to better reflect alignment with the Place Types in Forward SGF and/or better reflect what that district currently allows. An example is the change of the R-MD or Residential Medium Density to R-MX2. Previously the R-MD allowed duplex, and multifamily dwellings. The R-MX2 District now allows small lot housing, duplex and multi-unit houses, townhomes, and small to medium apartment buildings. Conversely, there are no changes to the R-SF district in allowed uses and development standards. *See Section 4.01 (Establishment of Districts) for more information.* In all situations where a zoning change is required, regardless of the degree, the City will initiate and bear the cost and required notifications. All property owners will be notified and afforded an opportunity to ask questions and discuss the changes.

Would the proposed code still have Conditional Overlay Districts?

No. The Conditional Overlay District process will be absorbed into the new site plan requirement. Both a binding site plan, specific performance standards, and conditions, such as hours of operation, lighting/noise restrictions may be required to be included in a rezoning. These specific



conditions or requirements will be recorded on the site plan and designated in the zoning title, i.e. CMX1 - C101.

Would the proposed code keep Urban Conservation Districts?

Yes and no. Established UCDs will remain in place as part of the proposed code, as legacy districts in the short term. City staff will evaluate and potentially pursue consolidation of these at a later time. Neighborhoods or areas that would like to pursue an overlay such as a UCD, would be directed to apply for Planned Zoning following the development of a strategic plan, neighborhood plan, or corridor plan. See *Section 4.01 (D) (Legacy Districts)* for more information.

Would Planned Developments still be used as a zoning district?

A Planned Development (PD), of which in recent years has been used as a site-specific development plan, would no longer be offered as an option. Planned zoning applications would create a development plan for a specific area, establishing the arrangement of land uses, relationship between different development types, and design concepts for streets, open spaces, frontages, sites, and buildings. This approach would provide flexibility in development and design standards, while providing predictability for both City staff and the community. See *Article 2.06 (Planned Zoning)* for more information.

Would the proposed code permit Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs)?

Attached Accessory Dwelling Units would be permitted in both Traditional and Center City Neighborhoods by right, in line with the current code. Detached Accessory Dwelling Units would be permitted under the proposed code in the Center City Neighborhood placetype by right and by way of Conditional Use Permit in other place types. See *Article 4.04C (Accessory Dwelling)* and *Article 5.03B (Accessory Buildings - Residential)* for more information.

ARTICLE 5: RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT & DESIGN

Would the proposed code ensure development is compatible with the scale of the neighborhood?

The proposed code would ensure that development is compatible with the scale of the neighborhood by determining what is contextually appropriate by the application of zoning that is consistent with the placetypes. The proposed code would preserve the existing character of neighborhoods by emphasizing "human scale" patterns; neighborhood streetscapes, and building/lot frontages that are contextually appropriate with respect to the neighborhood placetype.

Design standards for residential and nonresidential districts have been proposed that regulate building types, lot standards, frontage types, and design standards. See *Article 5 - Residential Development and Design, Article 6 - Nonresidential Development and Design, and Article 8 - Landscape and Site Design (8.04 - Buffering and Screening)* for more information.

How would design standards change for residential development under the proposed code?

The proposed code aims to enhance the appearance and quality of neighborhoods through simple standards that address the arrangement and landscape of the site and the relationship of buildings to the street and public spaces. Design standards for residential districts have been



proposed that regulate building types, lot standards, and frontage types. See *Article 5 - Residential Development and Design* for more information.

How would the proposed code encourage a variety of housing options?

The proposed code would establish zoning districts that allow for a full range of housing types based on the context in which the development is proposed. Consolidation of existing residential districts and expansion of residential uses in nonresidential districts has been proposed. See *Article 4 - Zoning Districts and Uses*, *Article 5 - Residential Development and Design* (specifically Table 5.1).

ARTICLE 6: NONRESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT & DESIGN

How would the proposed code affect commercial development adjacent to residential property?

Design standards for nonresidential development have been proposed that regulate building types, lot standards, frontage types, and design standards. See *Article 6 - Nonresidential Development and Design*, and *Article 8 - Landscape and Site Design (8.04 - Buffering and Screening)* for more information.

ARTICLE 7: ACCESS & PARKING

Would the proposed code change minimum parking requirements?

Yes, parking requirements and design will be regulated differently, and will allow for exceptions to prevent excessive parking in some situations. See *Article 7.04 (Required Parking)* for more information.

How would the proposed code improve walkability through design?

The proposed code requires connections to be made to nearby public amenities, including parks, trails, schools, and more.

ARTICLE 8: LANDSCAPE & SITE DESIGN

How would the proposed code aim to preserve our urban forest and tree canopy?

The proposed code aims to preserve the existing urban forest and tree canopy by awarding credits for retaining landscape material that is healthy or already meets the minimum specifications outlined in the proposed code. See *Article 8.03 (Required Landscaping)* for more information.

Would the proposed code implement Dark Sky principles?

The proposed code would require that all exterior lighting be limited to a specific mounting height, be shielded and installed so that direct illumination is confined to the boundaries of the source by the use of shields. Light locations, illumination levels, and fixtures would be required to minimize backlighting, glare, and uplighting as much as possible. See *Article 8.06 (Outdoor Lighting)* for more information.



How would the proposed code change buffer yard requirements?

The proposed code would require the application of buffer yards to be based on the specific context, intent, and the degree of mitigation desired. The current code has 13 different buffer types, whereas the proposed code has reduced buffer types down to four. This approach would allow for flexibility in the selection of plantings used for buffer yards, while ensuring the type of buffering is contextually appropriate. See *Article 8.04 (Buffers and Screening)* for more information.

ARTICLE 9: SIGNS

How would the proposed code change requirements for new signs?

While there are some changes proposed that impact sign terminology, no major changes are proposed to the current sign ordinance. Article 9 reorganizes how signs are classified and simplifies the approval process. Sign permits will still be processed and approved by the Building Development Services Department.

ARTICLE 10: SUPPLEMENTAL DISTRICTS & USES

Article 10 will contain sections of the current code including Urban Conservation Districts, Short-Term Rentals, Telecommunication towers, and other specific situations that aren't otherwise addressed in the code.

ARTICLE 11: DEFINITIONS

This is a common set of terms, and a description of uses intended to provide clarity and consistency for interpreting the proposed code.