

2010 Zoning and Development Code

Summary of Major Changes

This memorandum summarizes the big picture changes to Grand Junction's Zoning and Development Code. The scope of this project is to update, not rewrite, the Code. Based on input from City Council, City staff and stakeholders, the five key objectives of this effort are to:

- Implement the goals and vision of the Comprehensive Plan
- Remove barriers to development and redevelopment
- Reduce the burden of nonconformities
- Streamline the development review process
- Reorganize and reformat the Code to make it more user friendly

The major Code changes summarized below are organized by the five objectives.

Implement the Goals and Vision of the Comprehensive Plan

- Encourage special consideration for Centers, Downtown and Mixed Use Opportunity Corridors (amendment process, form based districts, Alternative Parking Plan, etc.)
- Comprehensive Plan amendments – clarified decision making between City and County
- Made approval criteria for City amendments consistent with the Comprehensive Plan
- Clarified and expanded Director authority for administrative changes
- Provided opportunity for rezoning in Mixed Use Opportunity Corridors (from residential to mixed use)
- Created a wider palette of districts allowed to implement the Comprehensive Plan (form based districts, Business Park district)
- Reduced minimum lot sizes/setbacks and increased heights in most zone districts
- Added new Table of Districts to show land use designations that implement the Comprehensive Plan
- Changed neighborhood meeting content (concept plan required) and the City's role (educating the public about City goals and vision) at the meeting to engage the neighborhood more in the development process

Remove barriers to development and redevelopment

- Eliminated or reduced minimum lot size for most residential zone districts
- Increased density allowances for group homes
- Added new "Special Permit" for additional height, building area, fences (approved by City Council)
- Administrative changes allowed to Comprehensive Plan via amendment process (approved by Director)
- Revised Use Table to eliminate certain Conditional Uses and provide more uses by right
- Reduced landscaping requirements in the I-1, I-2 and B-2 zone districts
- Eliminated side yard landscaping in the I-1 and I-2 zone districts
- Reduced buffering and screening requirements between certain zone districts

- Encourage water wise (xeric) planting with reduced plant sizes
- Eliminated Open Space requirements in Multi-family development
- Existing districts retained, new form districts added as an option
- Revised buffer table (less instances where buffers are required), reduced buffer width
- Standardized bicycle parking space requirement (same for all development)
- Alternative parking plan provides Director flexibility (parking ratios may be modified and approved as part of site plan approval)
- Eliminated requirement for 20-year lease for shared parking; handicap parking may be provided on street in public right-of-way; parking ratios lowered for certain uses
- Floor Area Ratio (FAR) has been eliminated
- Deleted site analysis requirement for large development (only required when conditions warrant)
- Special Permit allowed for interim uses

Reduce the burden of nonconformities

- Old Code combined nonconforming use, sites and structures....new format separates each into its own section to be more user-friendly
- Change of Use: Director authority to approve a new, less nonconforming use
- Nonconforming residential use: Accessory structures such as garage/storage shed are now allowed
- Nonconforming structures maintenance and restoration:
 - Nonconforming structures may be maintained or restored provided there is no expansion of the nonconformity.
 - Mesa County Assessor's appraisal may be used (if not more than 12 months old) to determine the fair market value of the structure
 - Maintenance, restoration or remodel work of 25% or more will require corresponding percentage compliance with landscaping only
 - Landscaping and related improvements may be installed up to 24 months after issuance of a Certificate of Occupancy when guaranteed by a DIA and financial security
- Nonconforming sites:
 - New threshold of 65% increase of gross square footage of existing structure triggers site upgrades (used to be 35%)
 - Less than 65% triggers corresponding increase for landscaping, screening and buffering
 - Director now has authority to consider exceptions for properties that are physically constrained from full compliance (formerly known as the Site Design Exception process)
 - Change of use must provide difference between required parking for prior use and the required parking for proposed use. If less than 5 new parking spaces are required, no new parking must be provided.

Streamline development review process

- Staff administered review and approval of subdivisions, condominium plats and lease holdings
- Expanded minor deviation as administrative adjustment

- Added minor exemption subdivisions
- New “Special Permit” allows standards in special circumstances to be exceeded, following public hearing before City Council
- Administrative changes to Comprehensive Plan allowed by Director
- Sign Packages are approved administratively
- Revised code amendment and rezoning criteria
- Established rezoning criteria for Mixed Use Opportunity Corridors
- Streamlined Planned Development (eliminated Preliminary Plan requirement), simplified review process
- New alternative parking plan allows staff modification of parking ratios, shared parking, off-site parking
- Clustering provisions simplified
- Nonconforming provision simplified, clarified
- Updated Use Table to reduce CUP’s and create more allowed uses

Reorganize and reformat the Code to make it more user-friendly

- Made changes in Code organization/reformatting, consolidate similar topics (ie: fence provisions, group homes)
- Added Headers/Footers for easier navigation through Code
- Added cross-references to help navigate the Code
- Reduced overall length of the Code by approximately 100 pages
- Added improved Table of Contents and a new Index
- Reorganized various Tables for easier use
- Combined some categories, separated others and eliminated some land use categories in the Use Table (ie: added Contractors and Trade Shops, Oil and Gas Operations to “Industrial Service”)
- Consolidated fence provisions, added Special Permit option
- Added additional graphics to help illustrate standards
- Provided two new Zone District Summary Tables (dimensional standards)
- Provided links to Use Standards from the Use Table with online use of Code
- Deleted outmoded regulations (for example, standards for “racing pigeons”)
- Incorporated key TEDS provisions (lighting, parking, private streets)
- Added new definitions and provided clarification of other key definitions

NOTE: This list is not a complete list of all proposed changes. It lists the major changes designed to implement the vision, goals and policies of the Comprehensive Plan. Please make a detailed review of the entire Zoning and Development Code document for all proposed changes.