

# CBD Design Standards

## UDC CODE TEXT AMENDMENT

**CASE NUMBER:** PLN-14-00010

**PREPARED BY:** Brandon Cammarata

**MEETING** NOVEMBER 3, 2014 – Planning Commission

**DATES:** NOVEMBER 10, 2014 – City Council

**RECOMMENDATION:** The Planning and Development Office recommends approval of the proposed text amendment pursuant to the review criteria outlined in Article 2, Section 2.4.1d of the Cheyenne Unified Development Code (UDC) with the following recommendation(s):

1. Include building additions in the CBD requirements

**STAFF REPROT UPDATE (11/04/14):** At its meeting on Monday, November 4, 2014, the City of Cheyenne Planning Commission recommended approval of the above described UDC Text Amendment by a vote of 5 to 0. With staff recommendation #1 and the additional recommendation "2" to exclude 6.7.3e from applicability to the CBD

2. Exclude 6.7.3e Enclosure Ratio from applicability to the CBD

## OVERVIEW

During the 2014 UDC Annual Review, the Planning & Development Office received a proposal to amend the City's current Central Business District (CBD) to include the design standards currently described in UDC Section 6.7 Small Scale and Mixed Use Standards. These standards include basic objective minimum standards such as buildings oriented to the street, transparency such as windows and entryways, building components and materials.

These minimum standards are for new development to integrate and enhance the walkable and historic framework of the downtown area. Property values and investments are protected by ensuring new development meets these basic standards which support a vibrant commercial district.

## HISTORY OF CHEYENNE'S DISCUSSION ON BUILDING DESIGN STANDARDS

Establishing minimum standards for new construction downtown has consistently been a recommendation starting with Vision 2020 (2001), 2006 Market Based Downtown Plan (DDA), PlanCheyenne 2006 and 2014, Historic Placemaking in 2013. Cheyenne has had building design standards for large commercial "Big Box" since 2007 and general design standards for other general commercial zoning since 2012 (see specific references at the end of this report).

## PROPOSAL

### 1. OVERVIEW

The proposal is to include the minimum design standards described in UDC 6.7. These standards apply to new construction including additions in the Mixed Use Business Emphasis (MUB) zone district. Recent projects developed under these requirements include the new Jimmy Johns on Pershing and the Taco Johns Downtown.

These standards proposed for the CBD would impact new construction *excluding building additions*. In general the purpose of minimum standards for new construction is to integrate and enhance the existing historic walkable frame work. The economic viability of the downtown is based in part on being walkable. The standards do not aspire to produce historic replicas but rather to maintain and enhance the walkable environment in the downtown area. By protecting and enhancing the pedestrian environment with new construction, existing development that was intended to function in a walkable environment should also benefit. This regulation would not require existing buildings to make changes.

Relating to existing buildings the City, DDA and Mainstreet programs include some existing and developing tools which encourage investment in existing buildings. Examples include the DDA's Capital Improvement Grant program as well as the newly developed Façade Improvement Program which was the subject of a CityCouncil Work Session on 10/29/2014. Each of these programs offers assistance to existing building owners to help in encouraging improvements. Additionally, the City adopted the International Existing Building Code, which provides avenues for flexibility in reuse of existing buildings.

### 2. REGULTION COMPONENTS

The primary components of the regulation include the following:

1. **SETBACK.** Buildings locate between 0' and 20' from the sidewalk. *Buildings located close to or at the public sidewalk are a consistent element in any viable downtown and relate to the walkability of the area as well as integrating with surrounding buildings.*

2. **PRIMARY ENTRANCE FEATURE.** Any façade that faces a public street or civic open space shall contain a primary entrance feature. *Intended to be consistent with the existing development patterns and relates to the walkability and viability of the area.*
3. **CIVIC OPEN SPACES.** Integrate civic open spaces and urban design elements into site design. Typically these areas are integrated with the streetscape.
4. **BUILDING DESIGN.** Applies only to façades that facing a public street, private street or civic open space.
  - a. Break up vertical and horizontal mass with top, middle and base concepts, creating buildings that relate to the scale of the pedestrian.
  - b. Façade Openings – Windows and doors on the street level, windows above the 1<sup>st</sup> floor to a lesser degree. This element relates to creating a safe and interesting environment.
  - c. 30% quality materials typically brick or stone. Remaining materials can vary.

### 3. MODIFICATIONS

The proposal includes two primary deviations from the current standards. The first deviation clarifies there are no height limits as would be found in the Neighborhood Business District. The second deviation identifies that the standards would not be applicable to building additions.

- No height restrictions in the CBD
- Does not apply to building additions

The Planning and Development Office does not support the removing building additions from the standards for the CBD. In the downtown, development is very compact and it is common for buildings to be connected. Thus in the CBD, building additions can have as significant of an impact as a new building would. In many cases, a building could be attached to an existing structure, eliminating the effectiveness provided by this section of code. The Dinneen building addition has had a major impact the downtown and the City is fortunate the project was done in a manner to enhance to pedestrian environment. The project could just as easily been done with no windows, details, entries or materials facing Lincolnway. Another future example may be developed in the hole, which could be considered a building addition as well. Staff would like to clarify that Council is aware of the impact excluding building additions might have to the downtown environment. If there is still a desire to exclude building additions, staff would request clarification from Council as to what they want to consider a building addition, or is it simply anytime a building shares a “wall”.

**AMENDMENT REVIEW:** In reviewing, providing comments, and making recommendations and decisions on a proposed UDC Amendment, the Staff, Planning Commission and City Council shall use the following criteria as outlined in Article 2, Section 2.4.1.d(1-3), UDC

**PLANCHEYENNE.** *The amendment is in accordance with general goals and policies of the Comprehensive Plan, or is necessary to address an emerging issue not anticipated in the Comprehensive Plan and is not inconsistent with the plan.*

1.4.c Downtown Revitalization, page 62 - Continue to encourage renovation, revitalization, building reuse, restoration, and infill in the Downtown core, along with a mix of retail, restaurants, employment, commercial, office, residential, and civic uses. Encourage retail and restaurant uses, along with public art, and inviting public spaces at the street level to promote pedestrian activity. Support residential uses above existing non-residential uses and at higher densities in strategic areas to further increase the Downtown area’s vitality.

1.4.e Building Reuse, page 62 - Balance business opportunities with respective impacts as properties change to new uses, encouraging private investment that is calibrated to the surrounding context.

3.2.c Downtown Placemaking , Page 68 - Support the development of community gathering places and a public realm in Downtown that are designed to provide opportunities for year-round activity and contribute to its sense of place. Landscape planters, public art, street trees, and other urban design elements are all important considerations.

3.2.d Historic Context Sensitive Design, page 68 - Design new buildings in the Downtown with architectural features and building massing that are compatible with the historic character and scale of buildings. (See also Appendix C: Regional Architectural Identity which provides background on traditional architectural styles and features found in Cheyenne.)

Informational

Downtown Principles, Page 112; Mixed Use Principles, Page 114; Appendix C: Regional Architectural Identity, Page 169

**Historic Placemaking** (Adopted) see [Downtown Lincolnway Placemaking Pedestrian and Urban Design Plan](#) on <http://www.cheyennecity.org/index.aspx?NID=546> SEE page 24, more specific outline of the needed approach

**2006 Market based Downtown Plan** [http://www.downtowncheyenne.com/dda\\_docs.asp](http://www.downtowncheyenne.com/dda_docs.asp)

**Vision 2020, (2001)**, Downtown Priority Actions

*CONCURRENCY. The amendment is consistent with the Wyoming Statutes, and specifically the Municipal Planning and Zoning statutes.*

The proposed amendment is in accordance with the Comprehensive Plan and other planning documents and is consistent with the referenced statutes.

*POLICE POWER. The amendment promotes the general health, safety and public welfare.*

The amendment promotes the health, safety and welfare of the community.

## RECOMMENDATION

The recommendation to include the Design Standard in 6.7 to the CBD is supported by staff with the following clarifications:

1. Recommend that building additions not be excluded from the CBD requirements  
OR if Council wants to exclude building additions:
2. Clarification of what constitutes a building addition.

## ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1: Underline-strikeout format of proposed changes