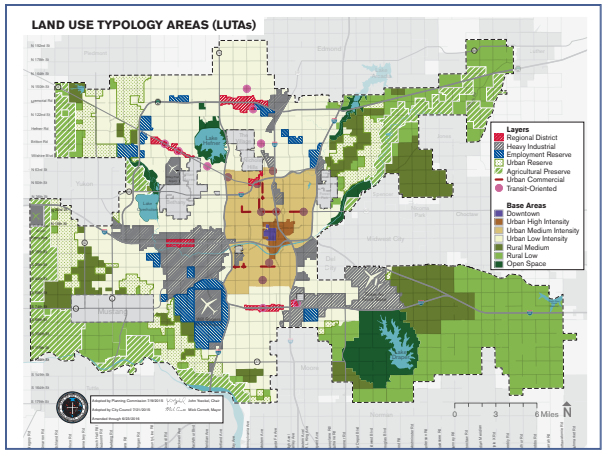

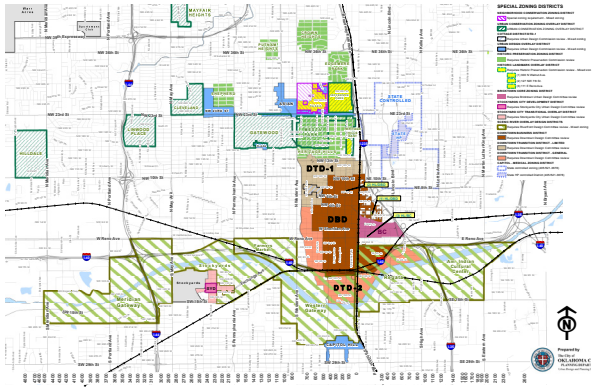

Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

Development Codes Diagnosis

June 6, 2017

Peter J. Park, LLC

LWC

OPTICOS

Prepared for the City of Oklahoma City, Oklahoma by:
Opticos Design, Inc.

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Introduction & Executive Summary

chapter 1

1.1 Purpose of the Diagnosis

The purpose of the following analysis is to provide a high-level review of the Oklahoma City Development Codes: Chapter 59 Zoning and Planning, Chapter 3 Advertising and Signs, Chapter 35 Nuisances, and the City's Subdivision Regulations. The following review and recommendations are to guide future amendments and implement plan**okc,** the City's Comprehensive Plan. This analysis addresses the following:

- How the codes function and are organized;
- Redundant or contradictory regulations;
- Regulations that are ineffective, complicated, or prevent quality development;
- How the code is used by the average person;
- How the code does or does not implement current policy direction; and
- How the code does or does not accommodate walkable urban development.

The analysis is presented in six chapters:

- Chapter 1 provides an overview of Oklahoma City's codes, a summary of interviews, a summary of how Oklahoma City's codes align — or not — with plan**okc,** and key findings.
- Chapter 2 provides an overview of Chapter 59's existing format and structure with recommendations.
- Chapter 3 provides an overview of the code's administration and procedures with recommendations.
- Chapter 4 provides an overview of Oklahoma City's 26 base zoning districts, 16 overlay districts, and 7 special purpose districts, focusing on their intended physical character and requirements with recommendations.
- Chapter 5 provides an overview of the key issues with the existing zoning and focuses on four base zoning districts with recommendations.
- Chapter 6 provides an overview of other key standards: subdivision, signage, and nuisances, with recommendations.
- This Code Diagnosis is an integral part of Oklahoma City's effort to update the relevant codes and procedures to implement the vision for the City, plan**okc,** and to ensure that the Zoning Code stimulates reinvestment and promotes the kind of development Oklahomans want to see in the future.

KEY TERMS

Walkable urban Refers to areas pedestrian-oriented in nature such as historic neighborhoods and neighborhoods built generally before the 1950s. The process will determine if form-based zoning should be applied but typically, it is applied to areas that are identified as 'walkable urban'.

Auto-oriented suburban Refers to areas more auto-dependent in nature and configuration. Typically these areas are zoned with conventional zoning.

Transitional Refers to areas that have many of the characteristics of the walkable urban pattern but lack key characteristics such as retail and services within a short walking distance or have significant barriers to walking and cycling.

Use-based (Conventional code) Refers to the type of zoning code, such as Oklahoma City's, that is organized and based on the primary factor of land use.

FBC Refers to 'Form-Based Codes', which are organized on the primary factor of physical character.

Form-Based Zone(s) Refers to the zones and standards applied instead of 'use-based' zones to generate or support walkable urban development.

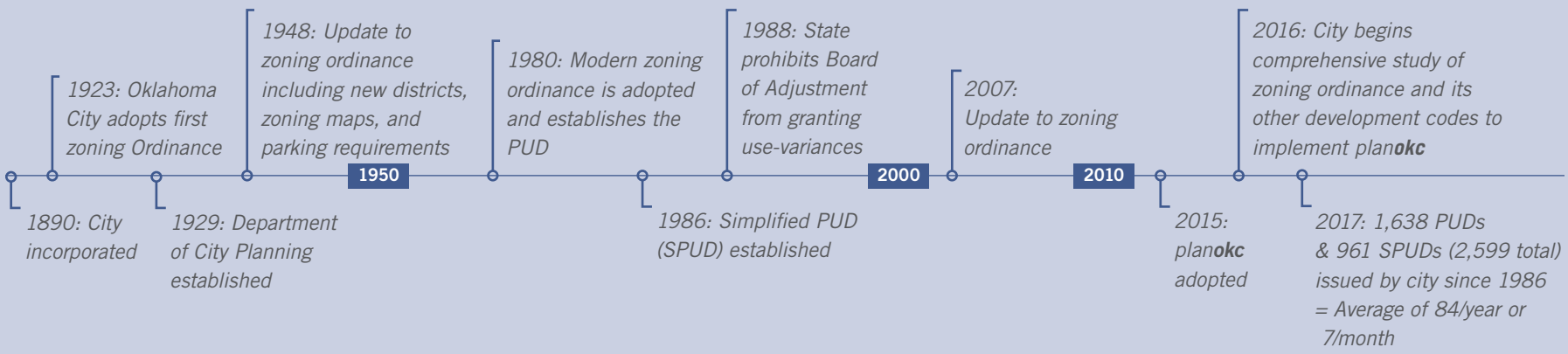
Missing Middle Refers to the range of housing choices often not present or allowed by current codes and regulations. This often results in the demand for those housing types.

House-Scale Refers to buildings that are the size of houses. Depending upon their context, they may be occupied by one to several families and with home occupations (house, duplex, triplex, quadplex, villa/mansion apartment, bungalow court, courtyard building up to 3 stories).

Block-Scale Refers to buildings that are individually as large as a block or collectively arranged along the sidewalk to form a continuous facade as long as most or all of a block.

1.2 History and Current Structure of the Zoning and Planning Code

Oklahoma City Zoning History



Source: City of Oklahoma City Planning Department

1.3 Summary of Stakeholder Interviews

On January 18, 2017 the consultant team interviewed thirteen different groups representing a broad range of people and business interests, including city staff. The interviews were focused on two basic questions: which of the current regulations are working and which are not? and what issues need to be addressed? The following themes stand out from all the individual comments received that day. This information serves as a backdrop for moving forward with this Code Diagnosis.

1. **Disparate views on what's working and what's not working**
2. **Lack of clarity about planokc's role**
3. **Overuse of PUDs and SPUDs**
4. **Varying agreement that zoning code needs thorough update**
5. **Need a clear, consistent set of rules and predictable administration**
6. **Low certainty in current process**
7. **Need clarity in roles and authority of all groups that review projects**
8. **Communication and coordination between departments needs improvement**
9. **Smaller projects at a disadvantage in processing**
10. **More communication needed between plan reviewers and code writers**
11. **Solutions need to be relevant to Oklahoma City and not just brought in from other places**
12. **Single-family zoning prevents reinvestment in duplexes and fourplexes**
13. **Developer resistance to "raising the bar" on development standards due to planning commission likely asking for even more**
14. **Impact fee system needs improvement**
15. **Overlays are applied inconsistently and cause confusion**
16. **Current regulations do not distinguish between urban development and suburban development**

1.4 Alignment with plan**okc**

Evaluation: Do existing zoning, guidelines, and procedures support plan**okc**'s desired outcomes and associated policies?

Oklahoma state law requires that a community's comprehensive plan and its zoning be consistent. Among the many benefits of this requirement is the knowledge that the comprehensive plan's goals and objectives will move from concepts to reality. Second, this happens through zoning, guidelines, and procedures that are consistent with the comprehensive plan. The following reflects the consultant team's analysis of Oklahoma City's zoning, guidelines, and procedures to determine if they support plan**okc**'s desired outcomes and the associated policies. Each desired outcome is identified with the associated policies that are to carry out that desired outcome. Each policy is then rated on how it currently is or is not supported by existing standards, guidelines, and procedures. The remaining chapters of this Diagnosis are organized around these 37 objectives, summarized from plan**okc** goals, initiatives and development-related policies.

Outcome 1: Integrate uses while ensuring compatibility	
SU-2	W
SU-7	W
SU-8	W
ST-32	N
E-33	W
G-30	N
L-30	Y
L-33	N
ST-12	W
ST-17	N
Outcome 2: Allow increased densities where appropriate	
SU-7	W
SU-9	W
SU-10	W
G-30	N
ST-22	N
ST-32	N
ST-34	N

Outcome 3: Mitigate negative impacts of compact development	
SU-10	W
Outcome 4: Improve transportation system connectivity	
SU-8	W
C-11	W
C-12	N
C-15	W
C-29	N
C-33	N
E-33	W
L-37	N
ST-17	N
SE-2	N
SE-8	N
Outcome 5: Integrate residential unit types and sizes and ownership/leasing agreements	
SU-5	N
SU-8	W
L-12	N

Outcome 6: Increase walkability	
SU-8	W
C-7	N
SU-11	N
ST-17	N
Outcome 7: Increase bikeability	
SU-8	W
ST-17	N
C-25	N
Outcome 8: Improve neighborhood safety	
L-7	N
P-22	N
ST-12	W
SE-1	N
SE-2	N
Outcome 9: Incorporate street typology standards	
C-4	N

KEY Y = Yes, supported | W = Weak support, unclear, or heavy reliance on PUD/SPUD | N = Not supported or Not existing | NA = On-going activity required by city and not expected to be enforced through a standard

Outcome 10: Establish new access management requirements	
C-28	W
C-29	N
SE-2	N
Outcome 11: Ensure adequate and quality open space and streetscapes	
SU-8	W
E-32	W
ST-17	N
Outcome 12: Preserve environmental/water quality, reduce flood risk	
G-2	N
G-3	W
G-9	W
G-13	W
G-15	W
G-16	N
G-19	Y
G-20	W
G-22	W
SU-8	W
Outcome 13: Require low-impact development techniques where appropriate	
G-2	N
G-12	N
G-13	W
E-10	NA

Outcome 14: Facilitate cluster/conservation subdivisions	
G-9	W
L-41	W
Outcome 15: Increase water conservation	
E-36	NA
G-2	N
G-22	W
SE-12	NA
Outcome 16: Improve siting and design of parks and open space	
P-25	N
P-31	N
Outcome 17: Require private parks and improve/establish park construction and maintenance standards	
P-25	N
P-31	N
Outcome 18: Require street trees on all streets	
G-29	N
Outcome 19: Bury/coordinate utility lines	
ST-28	N
SE-21	N
Outcome 20: Encourage unified planting for adjoining land owned by the same person	
SU-47	W

Outcome 21: Require confirmation of sustainable funding for common areas including streets and other infrastructure	
SU-8	W
SU-12	N
L-40	W
Outcome 22: Increase minimum lot sizes in UR and AP LUTAs	
LUTA Policies (UR, AP)	W
G-39	N
Outcome 23: Introduce transitional platting	
SU-13	N
Outcome 24: Remove utilities connection requirement in rural areas	
SU-8	W
Outcome 25: Revise utilities infrastructure extension procedures	
SU-15	W
SU-16	N
Outcome 26: Improve downtown livability	
SU-7	W
ST-12	W

KEY Y = Yes, supported | W = Weak support, unclear, or heavy reliance on PUD/SPUD | N = Not supported or Not existing | NA = On-going activity required by city and not expected to be enforced through a standard

Outcome 27: Revise parking standards & prohibit new surface parking downtown	
C-43	N
SU-7	W
SU-38	N
Outcome 28: Require affordable housing in downtown projects	
SU-43	W
Outcome 29: Update Airport Environs Overlay if necessary	
ST-5	NA
Outcome 30: PUDs: Explore expiration, verification of building according to approved plans	
SU-22	N
Outcome 31: Establish citywide design regulations to ensure functional and aesthetic minimums	
E-11	W
E-38	N
ST-17	N

Outcome 32: Establish/Improve design standards for:		
Industrial uses	SU-34	N
High density residential	SU-6	N
Cultural, civic, sporting facilities	E-9	N
	SE-16	N
Materials, fences, equipment	E-12	N
	E-13	N
	E-34	W
Parks	P-22	N
	P-25	N
Transit stations	C-34	N
Parking structures	E-37	N
Parking lot screening	E-40	W
Signs	E-14	W
	ST-17	N
Bicycle parking	C-25	N
Historic properties	E-3	Y
Integration of public art	E-15	W

Outcome 33: Increase landscaping amount and quality	
E-36	NA
G-29	N
G-30	N
SU-29	N
Outcome 34: Increase tree canopy along streets, over parking lots	
G-29	N
Outcome 35: Encourage native and drought-tolerant plants	
E-36	NA
G-2	N
G-22	W
Outcome 36: Remove invasive plant species	
G-2	N
G-22	W
Outcome 37: Preserve trees	
G-2	N
G-25	N

Plan**okc** recognizes that Oklahoma City's existing zoning, guidelines, and procedures are insufficient and if changes are not made to the existing standards, guidelines, and procedures, it will be very difficult to see the results of plan**okc**.

KEY Y = Yes, supported | W = Weak support, unclear, or heavy reliance on PUD/SPUD | N = Not supported or Not existing | NA = On-going activity required by city and not expected to be enforced through a standard

1.5 Summary of Key Findings

Oklahoma City's current Development Codes are a combination of detailed, dense, and complicated documents created over the last 35 years. The work of identifying specific, detailed solutions to all problems identified with these codes will occur in future phases of the process to update these codes. This section highlights the top issues identified by the consultant team, and raises issues that, based on the consultant team's experience, are contributing to concerns with the current development review process or could hinder achieving the goals of plan**okc**. The most visible and critical issue in the analysis of the city's regulations is that the code structure and organization are overly complicated, not well coordinated, and do not meet modern-day best practices in code writing layout. Ineffective base zoning districts have led to the creation of special purpose districts and supplemental regulations in the form of Overlay Districts. In addition, site-specific plan approvals (PUDs and SPUDs) have become a favorite response to dealing with the ineffective base zoning districts. This complexity, in combination with the uncertainty in the process, is time-consuming for both public and private sectors, has hindered small-scale projects and the incubation of local small businesses. In addition, the base zoning districts make it difficult to build diverse, small-footprint Missing Middle housing types, which are necessary for Oklahoma City to meet its affordability goals. (*See Sidebar "What is the Missing Middle?" on page 31*). Ineffective base zoning districts ultimately have led to a development review and entitlement process that is complicated and unpredictable.

The following points illustrate specific findings of Oklahoma City's Development Codes, which are typical issues found in most conventional codes.

1 Weak Document Structure/Organization and Format

- Poor usability and clarity due to seemingly random locations of information; multiple references to other sections of Code
- Few or no graphics/illustrations
- Repetition and conflicting standards
- Sentences full of jargon and with no actual regulations (see example below):

  "*8100.2. Interpretation. The Planning Director shall decide questions of the inclusion or exclusion of a particular principal use within a use unit classification, with the right of appeal to the Board of Adjustment. A use, if specifically listed in a use unit classification, shall not, by interpretation, be included as a principal use within any other classification.*"

- Poor organization of the documents and lack of integration/clustering of similar types of information
- Poor format of how each page is arranged: non-user friendly and confusing for the staff and the public

Does this issue affect implementation of planokc?

Yes, the easier it is for more people to use the codes the more the codes contribute to reinvestment. The current situation does not contribute to reinvestment.

2 Ineffective Base Zoning Districts

- Attempt to regulate different contexts with same zones (Walkable Urban & Auto-Oriented Suburban) with different intended built form (e.g. C-3 in city core and C-3 on city edges)
- Too many suburban uses and forms allowed/required in pre-1940s neighborhoods and centers, changing their walkable urban form, encouraging driving, and requiring more road investment
- Majority of current standards prioritize land use over physical form, depending on overlay districts and additional layers of regulation
- More projects go to discretionary review to resolve issues the standards don't address, partly in reaction to the community's perception that the zoning standards are 'not protecting' what they already value
- The creation of 7 special purpose districts highlights the ineffectiveness of the base zoning districts to address these environments
- It's uncertain what the various density standards will generate

Does this issue affect implementation of planokc?

Yes, the current situation depends largely on site-specific plan approvals, new base zoning, and adding overlays or other additional standards instead of more consistent progress through improved base districts. By requiring discretionary review for smaller projects or uses, the speculative aspect serves as a disincentive to reinvestment at the smaller end of the scale. This puts more of these applications in the queue, bogging down the system and calendar.

3 Overuse of PUDs/SPUDs and Site-Specific Plan Approvals

- Every project is negotiated leading to unpredictability for both the community and developers
- Unpredictability generates a complex and unusable regulatory structure and lots of extra administrative work
- Overuse of PUDs and SPUDs complicates things unnecessarily. This tends to discourage the small investor that is attracted to projects that do not attract large investors
- In 31 years, the City has issued 1,638 PUDs and 961 SPUDs for a total of 2,599 or 84/year or 7/month; this regularity indicates that the existing zoning is not working well enough and that unique zoning and standards are needed for individual sites

Does this issue affect implementation of planokc?

Yes, this process raises uncertainty because it is not known what might be approved/negotiated.

4 Too Many Layers of Regulations

Multiple layers of supplemental regulations have been added over the course of many years to attempt to fix the issues, often on a very local/neighborhood basis, leading to a high need for interpretations and inconsistency in approach across the community.

In several cases, parcels have multiple overlays and standards in addition to the base zoning district's standards. Each overlay is supplementary to the base zone district but overrides the base district's standards. This leaves many standards in place that are irrelevant yet still apply to property. In addition, the owner or applicant must sort through the standards to determine what actually applies. This is time-consuming and can be confusing, requiring time from staff to clarify the situation.

Does this issue affect implementation of planokc?

Yes, the intended physical form and character are not clear and are subject to the discretionary process, presenting obstacles to easy reinvestment.

5 Outdated and Overly Restrictive Parking Regulations, Especially for Walkable Urban Contexts

- Encourages/requires auto-oriented environments regardless of context or desired type of place. This is a top obstacle for reinvestment and infill in walkable urban contexts
- Except for a few special purpose districts, the standards cannot distinguish between a rural, auto-oriented suburban or walkable urban context, resulting in development that tends to function and look the same regardless of location

Does this issue affect implementation of planokc?

Yes, even with the best form standards in place, if the parking standards are too high and are not coordinated with the desired results, the desired form is not possible to very unlikely.

6 Narrowly Defined Land Uses and Outdated Regulations

- Current standards are cumbersome and ineffective with narrowly defined land uses and outdated standards
- Article 8 of the Zoning Code contains the classifications for all uses. Article 9 contains the standards for all uses. The reader needs to check two very detailed areas of information often for a simple question: "is my proposed use allowed?" For example, the office and commercial table alone lists 112 individual uses. This high level of specificity invites the need for interpretations and the need for more unproductive specificity

Does this issue affect implementation of planokc?

Yes, while some areas need more specificity about uses than others, the areas that do not (walkable urban areas) are hindered by this specificity.

7 Out of Date Subdivision Standards

- Disconnect between the variety and types of places and these standards that drive site planning
- Standards see every project as a version of a suburban tract of single-family houses when many projects are not
- Even though there are "rural" standards, the current standards essentially require suburban development in all parts of the City regardless of context, making it difficult if not illegal to develop walkable urban projects at the rural end of the development spectrum

Does this issue affect implementation of planokc?

Yes, without the appropriate standards for walkable urban places and their variety, including rural development, such development is not possible. In addition, environmental conservation areas are not integrated as they could be, losing the opportunity for such resources to contribute to a development's appeal.

8 Ineffectively Defining and Regulating Rural Environments

- The standards try to address these unique places by substantially lowering density and lot coverage from regular suburban development but ultimately promote a suburban context rather than what most people consider a rural context
- The standards do not address reducing the overall development footprint to conserve the rural context; this leads to the incremental conversion of rural environments into suburban environments
- The standards don't describe, recognize, or regulate the actual physical characteristics that generate a rural environment

Does this issue affect implementation of planokc?

Yes, the lack of standards that actually generate and maintain a rural environment results in a suburban pattern and its infrastructure extending further than intended. In addition, this lack of standards encourages the removal of rural places, something valued by plan**okc**.

9 Complex Procedures

- The length of time needed to secure development approval, the difficulty of navigating through administrative procedures, and the lack of predictability in the entitlement process because too many applications require discretionary review is a constraint to quality development
- Application requirements are unclear and permit cycle times are inconsistent, which together with the overall complexity of the regulations adds time and expense to construction projects
- There are few opportunities for minor deviations from development standards to be approved administratively by staff. A net result of this is that undesirable development is as easy to do as desired development that is consistent with plan**okc**

Does this issue affect implementation of planokc?

Yes, complex procedures and the lack of a predictable and streamlined entitlement process is a detriment to consistently attracting quality development and the implementation of the desired outcomes of plan**okc**.

10 Complex City Administration

- Multiple City departments are in charge of different sections of the Development Codes; the departments review applications independently within their purview of the Code, which is not consistently coordinated with or informed by other departments
- With plan**okc** in place, the purpose for departments working closely is clearer and needed more than ever before

Does this issue affect implementation of planokc?

Yes, most desired outcomes of plan**okc** will require multiple city departments working together. Although this is improving, more improvement will benefit the community through more coordinated implementation of plan**okc**.

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Document Structure and Organization

Chapter 2

2.1 Document Format and Structure

This analysis covers four documents: Chapter 59 Zoning and Planning, Chapter 3 Advertising and Signs, Chapter 35 Nuisances, and the City's Subdivision Regulations. This set of documents is referred to here as "Development Codes".

POOR CLARITY IN CODE FORMAT AND STRUCTURE

As is true with any set of codes of similar age, the many years of additions of new regulations and procedures have made the Development Codes and supporting documents inconsistent, hard to understand, and difficult to use. The primary areas of issue are:

1. Non-user-friendly and out-of-date layout;
2. Non-user-friendly hierarchy, structure, and location of information;
3. Lack of illustrations, graphics and photographs; and
4. Inconsistent use of terminology and conflicting information.

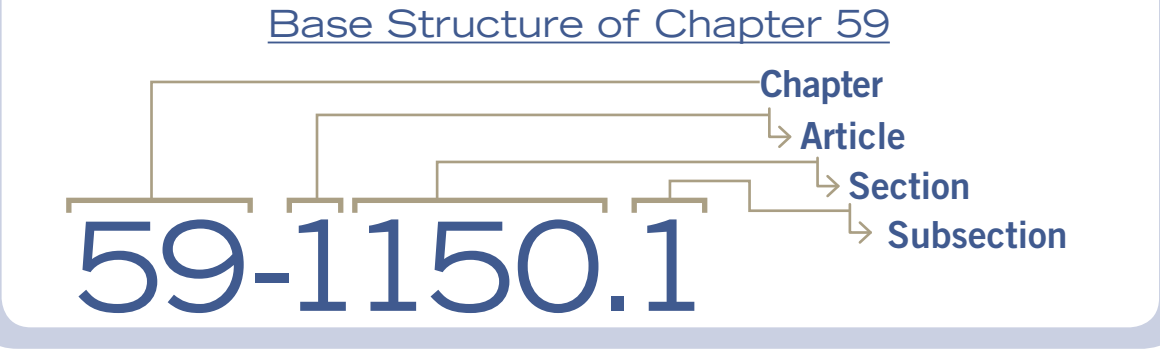
ORGANIZATION OF CONTENT

The basic structure of Chapter 59 Zoning and Planning has four major structural levels:

- Chapter
- Article
- Section
- Subsection

Oklahoma City's Development Codes use three different structures and numbering systems:

- Chapter 59 Zoning and Planning uses its own structure and numbering system
- Chapters 3, 16, and 35 use the same structure and numbering system
- Subdivision Regulations uses its own structure and numbering system



1. NON-USER-FRIENDLY AND OUT-OF-DATE LAYOUT

On top of all of the structural and content issues related to the codes, the difficulty in using the document is made more difficult by formatting that is dated and hard to follow. The formatting issues start with some very basic graphic design issues related to page layout and document template format. Compounding these issues is a lack of consistent and clear indents, not knowing where you are numerically on the page, and inconsistent selection of font size and/or style (e.g. capitalization, bold, or not bold, etc.). When used appropriately, these techniques reinforce a structural hierarchy in the document that makes it easier to use.

Likewise, the lack of a consistent layout among all the documents adds to the confusion. If the overall code structure and organization was clear and the content effective, these types of items would be less of an issue, but in this instance, they make the problem worse. In addition, the 4 documents use three different numbering systems and organization which is also unhelpful.

One of the major ways that the Development Codes are out of date is that they are very text heavy and lack graphics. An improved format could be used throughout all documents. However, care should be taken to ensure regulatory graphics are differentiated from illustrative graphics. Most importantly, graphics should clarify the document, not add to its complexity.

Cross-Referencing

Any document of this size will need cross-referencing to clarify the specific location of additional regulations. That being said, due to the nature of the poorly structured document, cross-referencing in Oklahoma City's codes makes the documents difficult to follow.

Lack of Table of Contents Below Chapter Levels

Within the current Development Codes, the only level that has a table of contents (TOC) is the chapter level, thus leaving the user unclear when they get to a subchapter, article, or division level, what information is included in that portion of the code. The user must search through the entire portion of the code to see if what they are looking for exists there, or if it is in another location.

2. NON-USER-FRIENDLY HIERARCHY, STRUCTURE, AND LOCATION OF INFORMATION

Due to the many years of adding and replacing content, without a comprehensive assessment of structure and location, information within the Development Codes is not clearly or consistently organized and coordinated. The consistency of the chapter, article, section, and subsection structure has been lost with three numbering systems among the five documents. Similar information can be found at different levels within the Development Codes. Procedures are spread throughout the document in various locations, making the document difficult to navigate. It isn't clear to a person preparing a project application that they have addressed all of the regulations and procedures, possibly causing them to miss information because of this issue.

For example, special purpose districts are base zoning districts located within Article VII of Chapter 59 with special regulations and guidelines that follow different review procedures than those for other base zoning districts. Another example is overlays: these districts supplement the base zoning district standards. But what about the overlay's standards that do not address certain base zone district standards? Further, some overlays include additional procedures and others do not. Once you get to the combination of special purpose districts and overlay districts and the inconsistent structure of information and overlapping requirements in relation to the base zoning districts, it quickly becomes confusing.

3. LACK OF ILLUSTRATIONS, GRAPHICS, AND PHOTOGRAPHS

Presently, the Development Codes use few graphics and could benefit all users. Graphics can clarify development standards without the use of cumbersome, descriptive text that is open to wide interpretation. While text will still accompany graphics, having both placed on the same page creates ease in referencing and understanding intent.

4. INCONSISTENT USE OF TERMINOLOGY AND CONFLICTING INFORMATION

Different portions of the Development Codes contain information or terminology that directly conflicts. This is likely due to the multiple locations of the same information in various parts of the Codes, leading to a lack of consistency over time.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Considering these issues, we recommend the following:

a. New Organizing Principle

The structure of the current Development Codes is organized around the idea of separated land uses and does not currently support many of plan**okc**'s desired outcomes. We recommend adopting an approach based on existing and intended physical character to update Oklahoma City's zoning code. Experience shows this to be a more effective approach for placemaking in future development. By using physical form as the organizing principle, the community can be mapped to identify where natural, rural, walkable urban, and auto-oriented suburban contexts exist and where they are intended. This greatly informs the Code's content and its organization. In addition, this allows the City, over time and as desired by the community, to enable auto-oriented areas to transition to walkable urban areas.

b. New Hybrid Structure for a Unified Development Code

Bring Chapter 59, 3, 16, 35 and the subdivision regulations into a Unified Development Code. Organize Chapter 59 to have two operating systems: a set of zones and standards focused on Walkable Urban and rural areas, and a set of improved conventional zones and standards for Natural and Auto-oriented areas. Both sets of standards could share many procedures with distinct procedures for each system as needed. Also, integrate Chapter 3 'Signage' as well as the site planning and street (thoroughfare) standards of the Subdivision Regulations to provide a comprehensive set of codes that work together in one document.

c. Improved Graphics and Format

Clarity and usability could be greatly improved with the use of graphics, illustrations, tables, and photographs to explain development regulations and procedures. Thought should also be given to the document format as a whole, in both physical and electronic form, for the ease of both city staff and community members. With the use of more graphics, Oklahoma City should look to find a different means of making the code electronically accessible, as MuniCode does not support graphics.

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Procedures and Administration

chapter 3

3.1 Procedures and Administration

The procedures and administration requirements in Chapter 59 'Planning and Zoning' could be improved significantly by changes in the organization and structure of the chapter. In addition, presenting information in tables or matrices will provide clear direction for applicants as well as identifying the subsequent decision-making authority and approval procedures.

The following policy outcomes referenced on pages 9-11 have procedural and administrative implications on existing Codes and new development applications. Below, each relevant policy outcome is checked against the current Codes.

Policy Outcome: #2 – Allow Increased Densities Where Appropriate

There are currently no procedures established that would allow for increased densities in specific instances or locations, including vacant, underutilized, and brownfield sites (Policy ST-22), or for permitting secondary units and accessory dwelling unit standards (Policy SU-9) (Article IV Administrative Procedures).

Policy Outcome(s): #13 – Require Low-Impact Development Techniques Where Appropriate and Increase Water Conservation

There are currently no procedures in place that require or encourage Low Impact Development techniques besides the encouragement of internal landscaped areas, such as parking lot islands and landscaped strips, to be designed for stormwater management purposes (Article XI Landscaping and Screening Regulations, Section 59-11250 Landscape requirements, E, 3). Water conservation is also currently not required or encouraged through existing procedures, including within the Landscaping and Screening regulations (policies E-36, G-2 and G-13).

Policy Outcome: #14 – Facilitate Cluster/Conservation Subdivisions

The Code includes procedures to prevent environmental degradation and loss of critical habitat/sensitive areas (Policy G-9) as follows. First, a Master Development Plan required for a Planned Unit Development must show environmentally sensitive areas and wildlife habitats (Article XIV. Planned Unit Development, Section 59-14150 - Authorized Planned Unit Development). Second, while the code does include some requirements for rural and environmentally sensitive areas to allow for smaller lot sizes and cluster development within the RA and RA2 zoning districts, ways to improve how the Subdivision Regulations and other applicable codes should be considered to generate rural and low density suburban development.

Policy Outcome: #16 – Improve Neighborhood Safety

The Code does not include a pre-development process in which safety is considered in the design of projects other than the existing standards to protect public health, safety, and general welfare required for site review by the Public Works Director based on the arrangement of buildings/structures on a site (Policy L-7 and Policy SE-3) (Article IV Administrative Procedures, Subsection 4200.3.F.1 Site Plan Review for Building Permits, E). In addition, there are currently no criteria established for locating, designing, and improving public/private parks to enhance safety and security (Policy P-22).

Policy Outcome: #20 – Encourage Unified Planning for Adjoining Land Owned by the Same Person

The Code does not include findings for permit approval to ensure proper circulation and land use compatibility for the development of adjoining land owned or controlled by a single entity (Article IV Administrative Procedures). Further, findings for permit approval lack specificity, which reduces predictability and effectiveness. Unified planning of adjoining properties for circulation and compatibility is only encouraged for Planned Unit Developments (Article XIV Planned Unit Development, Section 59-14200 PUD and SPUD review criteria). These standards should be expanded to apply to other developments.

Policy Outcome: #21 – Require Confirmation of Sustainable Funding for Common Areas Including Streets and Other Infrastructure

There are currently no findings for permit approval to encourage developers to demonstrate sustainable funding levels for the provision and/or maintenance of common areas and facilities (Policy SU-12).

Policy Outcome: #25 – Revise Utilities Infrastructure Extension Procedures

The Code does not include procedures for developments located in areas outside of a sanitary sewer drainage basin to first complete a drainage basin study (Policy SU-16). The Code also does not require developers to use the methods proposed in Policy SU-15, which requires the use of various methods to ensure infrastructure and facility capacities are adequate for proposed development, such as the requirement for developers to construct or fully fund infrastructure to serve their development,

or to only allow development after the City or State has constructed necessary infrastructure. However, Subsection 4200.3. Site Plan Review for Building Permits (Article IV – Administrative Procedures) requires the location and capacity of drainage systems to be identified as a condition of site plan review with a building permit.

Policy Outcome: #30 – PUDs: Explore Expiration, Verification of Building According to Approved Plans

There is currently no expiration date established for PUDs or SPUDs, or procedures to ensure build-out according to approved plans (Policy SU-22) (Article XIV Planned Unit Development).

Policy Outcome: #32 – Establish/Improve Design Standards for Historic Properties

The Code includes procedures to guide the assessment of proposals to alter or demolish historic properties through Certificate of Appropriateness standards and procedures (Policy E-3) (Article IV Administrative Procedures, Section 59-4250 Discretionary review procedures, Subsection 4250.4 Historic Preservation Review). Procedures to guide the identification of historic or significant properties are listed in Article VIII – Special Purpose Districts, Section 59-7250 Historic Preservation Regulations. In the next phase of the code update process, these existing procedures will be assessed to determine what improvements, if any, are needed to ensure this policy outcome is satisfied.

RECOMMENDATIONS

a. Clearly Identify Roles and Responsibilities

Existing approval process information is not in a logical location and it is difficult to find and apply. The role and responsibility of each review authority responsible for a permit or process should be clearly and consistently laid out. For example, a decision matrix/table in the beginning of the Chapter that includes language related to responsibilities for each type of permit or process. Recommendations, final decisions, and appeals can be shown comprehensively in one place, and accompanying language can be presented consistently.

b. Predictable and Streamlined Entitlement Process

A predictable and streamlined entitlement process is important for consistently attracting quality development. Today, the length of time needed to secure development approval, the difficulty navigating through Article IV (Administrative Procedures), and the lack of predictability in the entitlement process is a constraint to quality development. The unpredictable review process is a result of complicated procedures and the complex development standards of Article VI (Zoning Base Districts). The complexity of these regulations adds time and cost to construction projects. Also, the high number of approvals of PUDs and SPUDs (see page 33) is indicative of an inefficient and outdated regulatory system.

For development regulations to be most effective, the review process must be transparent and effective. Application requirements should be clear, permit cycle times should be consistent, and the process should be streamlined to the greatest extent possible.

c. Consistency in the Review

Streamlining the review and entitlement process is one of the most important incentives to encourage the form of development desired by plan**okc**. This may mean that more entitlement decisions could be made administratively by City staff based on clearly written standards and findings, and that some decisions currently made by review boards, the Planning Commission, and the City Council may be delegated to staff. As an example, permit requirements can be simplified for uses consistent with plan**okc** and the code by including authority for administrative minor use permits for certain uses.

d. Missing or Incomplete Code Administration Information

Within Article IV (Administrative Procedures) and other related chapters of the municipal code several key pieces of information appear to be missing, such as:

- How to use the zoning code. This could be solved by inserting a simple process diagram for the most common application types.
- Purpose and applicability statements for the zoning code and related chapters. These are important components of a code and should be incorporated throughout, as needed.
- Clearly articulated procedures and rules for understanding and interpreting the zoning code.

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Content Specific Findings

chapter 4

4.1 Competing Layers of Regulations

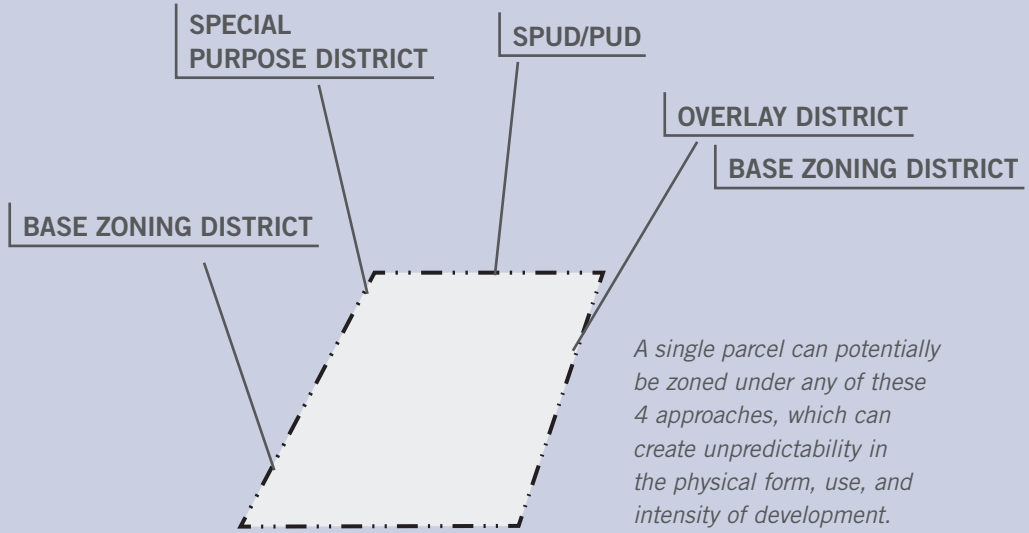
MANY LAYERS OF REGULATIONS CREATE COMPETING SYSTEMS

To address the ineffectiveness of the base zoning districts and other parts of the Development Codes, new standards have continuously been added since the last code update in 2007 and have not been fully coordinated with existing content and document structure. This has created many layers of regulations (starting with 26 base zoning districts), resulting in an overall code that is unnecessarily complicated and confusing.

COMPLEXITY REDUCES USABILITY

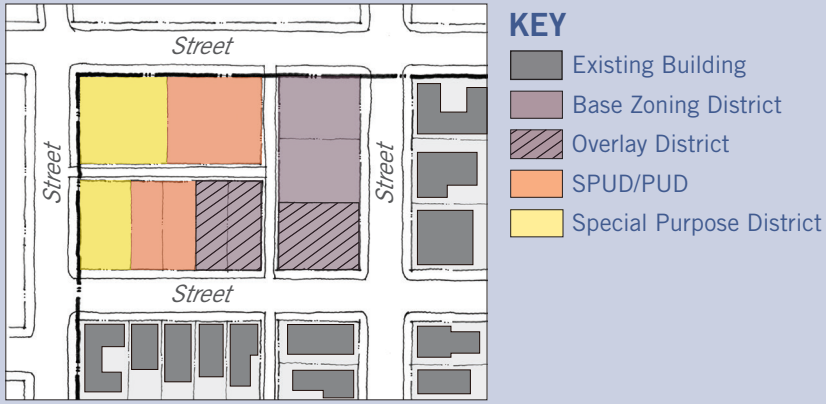
The current structure and hierarchy of the five documents makes it hard to tell how regulations relate to one another, which regulations override others, where to go in the document to find the information you need, and how to review all of the regulations that apply to specific projects. In other words, the current Development Codes have major usability issues because there are too many places to look for regulations, inconsistencies in how information is presented and/or organized, and repetitive (sometimes conflicting) information. That being said, each of these layers has good intent and generally good content. However, the regulations are not effective because the overall system is hard to administer, difficult to use, and has good and bad built results. Ultimately, to achieve the city's goals of an increase in usability and clarity, as well as to achieve the plan**okc** objectives, the five documents need to be coordinated, consolidated, and restructured.

MANY COMBINATIONS AND LOW PREDICTABILITY



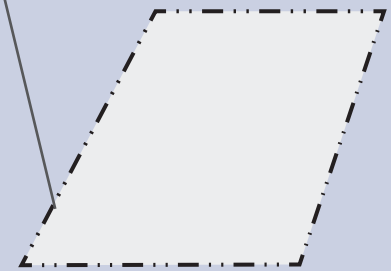
A single parcel can potentially be zoned under any of these 4 approaches, which can create unpredictability in the physical form, use, and intensity of development.

*This block demonstrates the variety of zoning that can exist under the current standards. This creates uncertainty in development from one lot to the next. Even though plan**okc** provides more direction on form, use, and intensity. This wide variety of zoning tools still leads to a lot of unpredictability.*

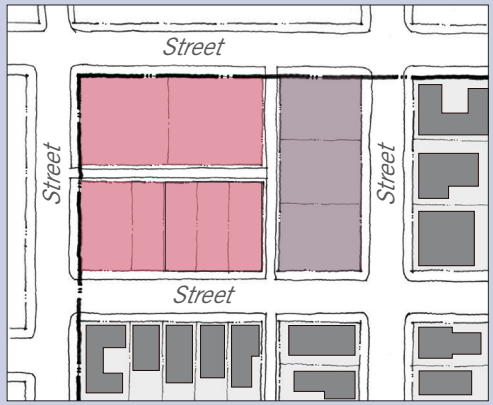


PROPOSED ALTERNATIVE

BASE ZONING DISTRICT THAT IMPLEMENTS PLANOKC LUTA



This block demonstrates a more predictable scenario where each parcel is given a base zoning district. Parcels within the same block may have different zoning districts, but without complicated overlays. This approach is possible by taking the time to align the standards in zoning districts with the intended physical character and range of uses. This ensures more predictability for the development of the block and its compatibility with neighboring blocks.



KEY

- Existing Building
- Base Zoning District 1
- Base Zoning District 2

4.2 Ineffective Base Zoning Districts

Base Zoning Districts Do Not Recognize Appropriate Form or Different Types of Places

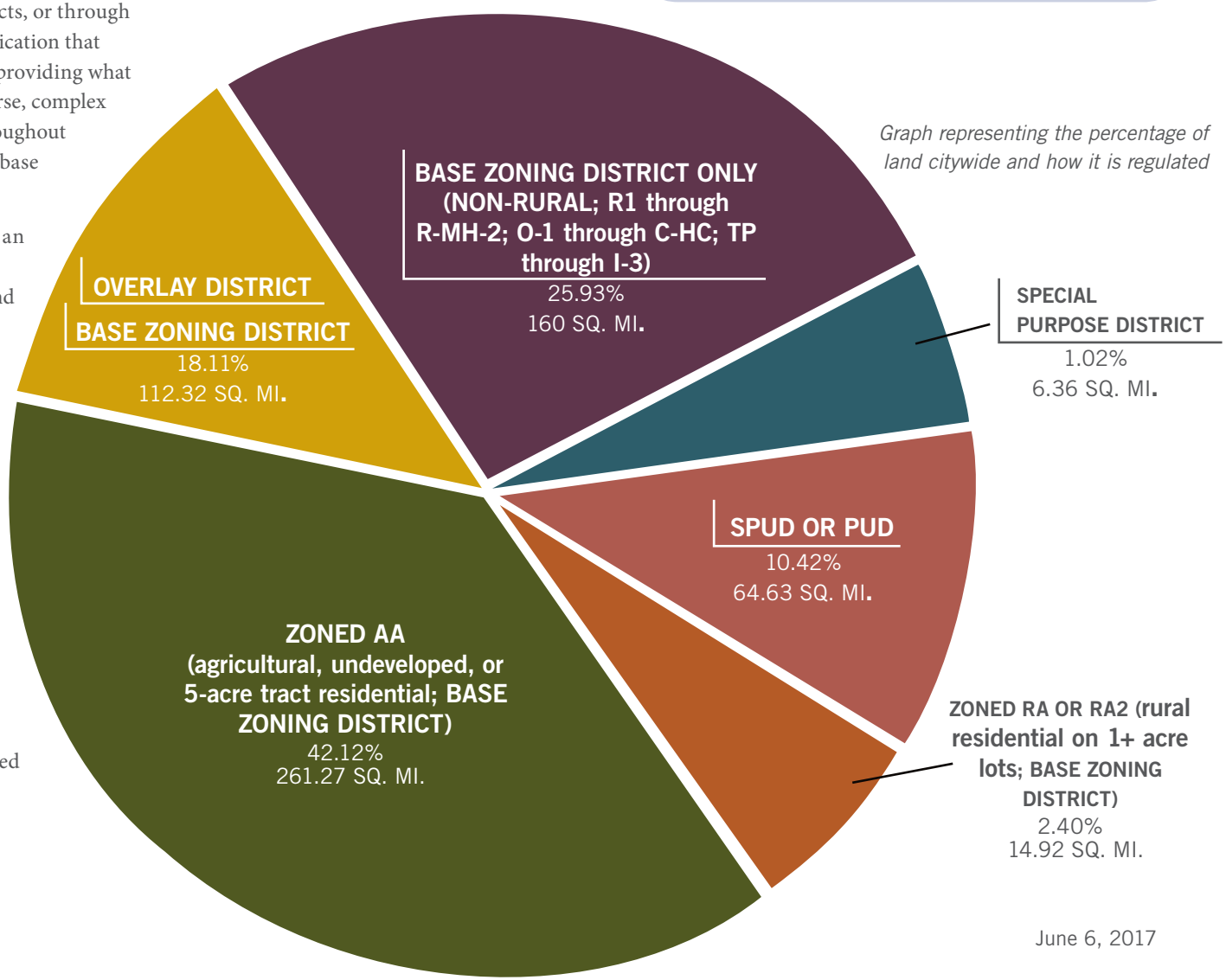
Oklahoma City has 26 base zoning districts, which is high, even for a city of its size: 23 non-rural zones and 3 rural/agricultural zones. The other parcels are zoned through either a combination of a base zoning district and one or more of 26 overlay districts, through 7 special purpose districts, or through site-specific SPUDs and PUDs. This is a clear indication that the current palette of base zoning districts is not providing what is needed and is ineffective in regulating the diverse, complex built environments that exist or are intended throughout Oklahoma City. The two primary issues with the base zoning districts are:

1. They do not regulate or offer predictability on an appropriate/compatible form because they are use-based and form is a secondary concern; and
2. They do not reflect the physical realities and needs of Oklahoma City's different contexts.

The zoning districts have functioned reasonably well in new growth areas within auto-oriented suburban contexts, but have been particularly ineffective in rural areas and central Oklahoma City's walkable urban corridors and neighborhoods, which were mostly built before the 1940s and 50s. These places have a fine-grained pattern of small blocks and lots, quick transitions from major corridors to neighborhoods, and a wide range of building types and mix of uses. Overlays, special purpose districts, and SPUDs/PUDs aim to address these needs. But ultimately, these are primarily use-based approaches to a physically-based set of issues.

Only 26% of Oklahoma City's non-agricultural/rural parcels are zoned with regular, base zoning districts. The other 30% of non-agricultural/rural parcels have had special zoning applied to make the base zoning work or replaced it with a special purpose district, a SPUD/PUD, or an additional overlay. This second group covers 182 square miles of Oklahoma City's total land, which is larger than many entire cities.

Graph representing the percentage of land citywide and how it is regulated



BASE ZONING DISTRICTS: 26

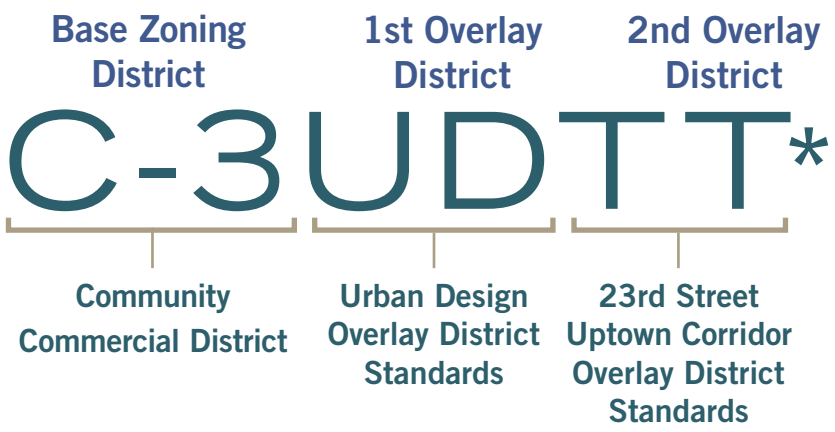
AGRICULTURAL AND RESIDENTIAL	
AA	Agricultural
RA2	Single-Family Two-Acre Rural Residential
RA	Single-Family One-Acre Rural Residential
R-1	Single-Family Residential (6,000 sf min.)
R-1ZL	Single-Family Residential Zero Lot Line
R-2	Medium-Low Density Residential
R-3	Medium Density Residential
R-3M	Medium Density Multiple-Family Residential
R-4M	Medium-High Density Multiple-Family Residential
R-4	General Residential
R-MH-1	Manufactured (Mobile) Home Subdivision
R-MH-2	Manufactured (Mobile) Home Park

OFFICE AND COMMERCIAL DISTRICTS	
O-1	Limited Office
O-2	General Office
RC	Rural Commercial
NB	Neighborhood Business
C-1	Neighborhood Commercial
C-2	Shopping Center
C-3	Community Commercial
C-4	General Commercial
C-CBD	Central Business
C-HC	Highway Commercial
INDUSTRIAL DISTRICTS	
TP	Technology Park
I-1	Light Industrial
I-2	Moderate Industrial
I-3	Heavy Industrial

SPECIAL PURPOSE ZONING DISTRICTS: 7

BC	Bricktown Core Development
DBD	Downtown Business
DTD-1	Downtown Transitional Limited
DTD-2	Downtown Transitional General
HP	Historic Preservation
NC	Neighborhood Conservation
SYD	Stockyards City Development

Deciphering Zoning District Names



**It is not uncommon to find parcels with multiple overlay districts applied.*

Example of confusing code
R2-UCD: it is very difficult to understand in which of the 11 UCD subdistricts this is located.

OVERLAY DISTRICTS: 26

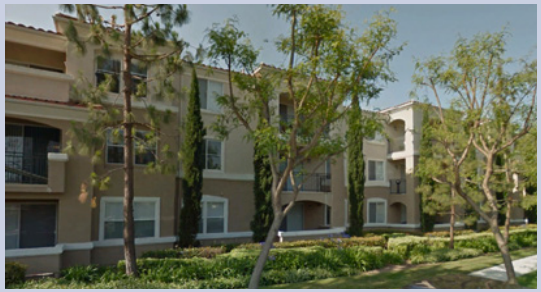
AE-1	Airport Environs Zone 1
AE-2	Airport Environs Zone 2
ABC-1	Alcoholic Beverage Consumption, Restaurant with Limited Alcohol
ABC-2	Alcoholic Beverage Consumption, Restaurant with Alcohol
ABC-3	Alcoholic Beverage Consumption, Club with Alcohol
CBO	Classen Boulevard
HL	Historic Landmark
MH	Manufactured Home
DP	Downtown Parking
FP	Fringe Parking
SRO	Scenic River
SRODD	Scenic River Design
SYT	Stockyards City Transitional Development
TT	Twenty-third Street Uptown Corridor
UCD	Urban Conservation Districts (11)
UD	Urban Design

DENSITY AND FAR AS MEASUREMENT TOOLS

Density

The residential zoning districts use density as a key regulation for controlling building size and intensity. Residential density regulations are numerical standards focused on the number of dwellings that may be allowed on a site. Interestingly, the regulations should be dealing with the density of individual buildings. But because the regulations are not structured in that manner, they address density for the site regardless if that relates to the realities of individual buildings. In response to these standards, projects arrange buildings on a site in ways that technically comply with maximum density but are not always physically appealing or compatible with their neighbors, or both. Density restrictions are unhelpful to the very neighborhood fabric they intend to protect because they inadvertently prohibit buildings that would otherwise comply except for the arbitrary numerical restrictions (see comparison at right).

For example, the Single Family Residential district (R-1) has a minimum lot size of 6,000 sf. This is a very specific number without reference to how it was generated or why that specific number generates what the community expects. Further, the zoning regulations only address height and setbacks while being silent on many other important topics that truly affect physical compatibility. Yet, compatible buildings exist in these areas, but would not be allowed again because they exceed the current numerical maximum density. Similarly, the R-3M Medium Density Multiple Family Residential zoning district identifies a maximum density of 19.8 units per acre. This number sounds like it should enable many of these types but it doesn't. There are many wonderful building types that fit into neighborhood contexts while offering human-scaled and physically compatible buildings with a variety of housing choices other than stacked apartments and single-family houses. We have identified these compatible building types as 'The Missing Middle'. (See page 31 for more information).



Above building has 60 units, with a density of **30 units per acre**. The building below has 5 units, with a density of **29 units per acre**– nearly the same, but in a house-scale form.

Recommendation

Through these unnecessarily specific and arbitrary density requirements, Oklahoma City's zoning is prohibiting choices and affecting costs for no real purpose. We recommend a discussion on understanding the Missing Middle and where it already exists in Oklahoma City and use it to help sensitively and simply offer a wider variety of housing choices.

FAR or Floor Area Ratio

FAR is a numerical standard that is typically focused on the total amount of building area that is allowable on a site. None of the existing zoning districts use FAR as a regulation. However, this discussion is provided for those interested in regulation with FAR. The base and special purpose zoning districts apply building height and setback standards to generate a 'building envelope' with the expectation that the resulting envelope will help to achieve positive results. This can help to achieve positive results but not on its own. Much like FAR, building envelopes that do not correspond to the types of buildings that are likely to be built leave the questions for later. Building height and setbacks are important factors but only two of several important factors dealing with building size. These two factors and FAR can only deal with quantity without anything important about building height, width or length. In our experience, most codes, including Oklahoma City's, are silent on the critically important topics of how wide or long buildings are allowed in different contexts across a community. What works in one area of your community is not appropriate in all areas of your community.

Recommendation

For walkable urban and rural areas, we recommend to not use FAR as a regulation. The critical issues can be addressed through properly prepared standards that recognize the difference between house-scale buildings and block-scale buildings. For auto-oriented suburban areas, we recommend to not use FAR and instead apply basic building size regulations. If FAR needs to be used, we recommend that it only be used as a resultant of the desired form.

WHAT IS THE MISSING MIDDLE?

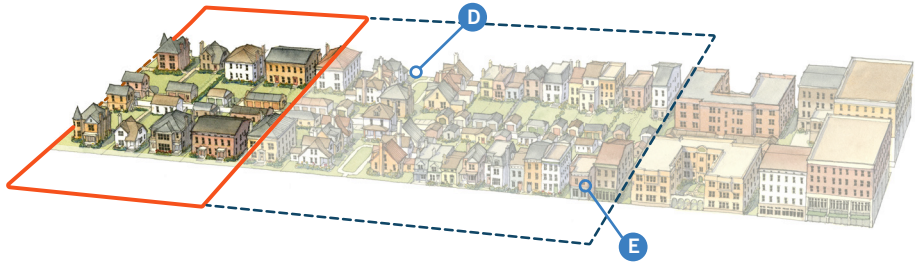
In post-World War II America, changes came in both the development community and the financial lending systems. These changes lent themselves to models of development that were narrowly focused, and targeted individual markets such as single-family homes on large lots, large apartment complexes, commercial strip centers, and indoor malls. Each was developed and placed in isolation in contrast to the older patterns of neighborhoods where single-family, multifamily, and commercial were more integrated and mixed. The art of both mixing these kinds of development and building smaller middle-density types was lost.

Oklahoma City's neighborhoods have a great history of these "Missing Middle" building types that were built before World War II. These building types included townhouses, duplexes, fourplexes, small courtyard apartment buildings, and mixed-use main street buildings. These Missing Middle building types provide a range of housing choices and provide a residential intensity that help support neighborhood main streets, while catering to a variety of age groups and demographics.

And, while plan**okc** does not use the "Missing Middle" term, it does support development codes that encourage and allow Missing Middle housing in urban areas.

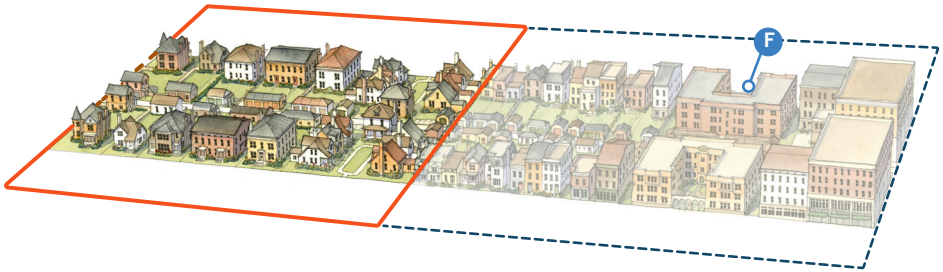
Single Family and Low Density Residential Districts (R-1, R-1ZL)

These zoning districts only allow single-family houses, leaving out many other affordable housing options that are similar scale.



Medium Density Residential Districts (R-2, R-3, R-3M)

These zoning districts allow for single-family houses, duplexes, fourplexes, and apartment buildings but encourage bigger development in contrast to most historic "Missing Middle" housing types that are prevalent throughout Oklahoma City. Housing types such as fourplexes, cottage courts, townhouses, and courtyard apartments could be great options for promoting house-scale medium density housing and walkable communities.



Medium-High Density and General Residential Districts (R-4M, R-4)

These zoning districts allow for single-family houses, duplexes, fourplexes, and could allow for cottage courts, but leave out other compatible higher density housing types.

Types of Missing Middle Housing

A *Carriage House*

B *Duplex*

C *Fourplex or quadplex*

D *Cottage Court*

E *Live/Work*

G *Mixed-Use*

F *Stacked Flat*

Key

Allowed

Recommended based on preliminary analysis and observations

GENERIC COMMERCIAL ZONES WITHOUT REGARD TO PLACE

While the existing commercial zoning districts have a declared purpose, zoning districts such as Neighborhood Business, Community Commercial, Neighborhood Commercial, and Rural Commercial often appear to overlap and lack significant distinction from one another. This raises the question of whether or not each zoning district is capable of generating the environment it describes. Or, is this expectation even known? At this preliminary level of analysis, it appears that the intent to have such zoning districts is good but the actual standards do not carry out or deliver the types of environments that actually serve such different places as Neighborhood Main Streets, Neighborhood Centers, and Rural Centers.

Recommendation

We recommend a detailed evaluation of all zoning districts to determine if they are implementing plan**okc**'s expectations for the different physical environments described by each zone. Further, we recommend evaluating the locations where these zoning districts are applied to identify how these zoning districts do or do not serve those areas. Future zoning districts can then be calibrated to promote these distinctions.

Neighborhood Main Streets, for example, are increasingly an amenity that give identity and appeal to their surrounding areas. They can be an invaluable asset to the adjacent neighborhoods and help to define a neighborhood while reducing automobile trips. Several of these exist in Oklahoma City and should be promoted or applied to provide walkable services. However, through the current scale and type of development allowed by the existing commercial base districts, the results are not fully supportive of preserving and encouraging neighborhood main streets. This issue will be addressed by implementing plan**okc**'s direction that future zoning require commercial uses at primary nodes and allow more flexibility outside of these nodes within the same physical form and types of buildings.

A ONE-SIZE-FITS-ALL APPROACH TO RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

Many of Oklahoma City's established neighborhoods consist of a variety of housing choices or 'building types'. Yet these choices are not clearly expressed as expectations in the residential zoning districts. This is especially concerning for single-family development and for multifamily development because of the disconnect between the rich variety of built examples in Oklahoma City and the very regulations that apply to those properties.

Single Family

In Oklahoma City there are numerous examples of how single-family houses can vary according to their physical context while offering variety for their tenants/owners. Such variety provides visual interest and real choice for people wanting an option to the single family house. However, the subject of single-family houses is addressed only through density and overall height requirements that lack the information to consistently generate compatible results. The long-term trend of these regulations is that unless the building is an historic resource, they don't encourage any new development to be based on the existing, appealing physical character that people find so positive about Oklahoma City. This trend results in more generic buildings with the first priority being the ability to make it through the approval process rather than producing careful insertions into Oklahoma City's strong and appealing physical character.

Multifamily

The same situation applies to Oklahoma City's multi-family buildings. Oklahoma City contains numerous positive examples of multi-family buildings that blend in with and are compatible with single family houses and offer a wide variety of housing choices in what otherwise appears as a single-family neighborhood. Increasingly, people want multi-family options to the large stacked apartment building. As with the single-family regulations, the multifamily regulations also address buildings primarily from the perspective of quantity without addressing other important factors such as building width, length, house-scale or block-scale and the amount and location of parking. So, while compliant with the applicable requirements, many of Oklahoma City's recent multi family buildings actually interrupt the positive existing physical character and walkable nature of Oklahoma City's established neighborhoods.

Recommendation

We recommend evaluating Oklahoma City's neighborhoods to determine first what types of neighborhoods comprise the community. Second, we recommend evaluating what types of buildings make those neighborhoods and how different building types are used on a block to generate a scale of houses that happen to contain multiple families. Through this evaluation, the types of buildings and patterns that provide the positive physical character or that present operational issues can be identified. All of this information is helpful in understanding how to adjust Oklahoma City's zoning standards for positive and sustainable reinvestment in its neighborhoods and other areas that will receive housing.

4.3 Overuse of PUDs and SPUDs

Overuse of PUD Zoning

Based on the ineffective base zoning districts, it is understandable why the PUD and SPUD (PUD) have been used so much in Oklahoma City. However, over time administration of the PUDs proves challenging because the standards for each PUD need to be maintained and followed as new development or remodels are proposed in the area covered by the PUD. Each PUD is unique and sometimes not by much. But each requires administrative time to manage and time by each applicant to generate.

With physically-based zoning for walkable urban and rural areas, and improved base zoning for auto-oriented suburban areas, PUDs and SPUDs will not be necessary for new applications. Clarification and reliance on other procedures may also remove the need, increase by-right development, and streamline the process overall.

Recommendations

With improved base zoning regulations, the updated Zoning Code should reduce the reliance on and need for PUDs and SPUDs. For parts of the city covered under physically-based standards, PUDs can be an option but will no longer be necessary.

The updated Zoning Code should introduce needed flexibility, while streamlining the permitting process. This is possible if the base zoning districts are effective.

The Zoning Code update should also clarify and create differentiation in the intent and application of Master Plans. Master Plans should be used only when the intent of plan**okc** needs to be further clarified and detailed in order to guide how the base zoning districts will implement that vision. Master plans should not be used to plan an area that can otherwise be implemented through the updated Zoning Code, including updated procedures.

2,599+

Existing PUDs and SPUDs

Average of 84 per year or 7 per month

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Analysis of Key Existing Zones

chapter 5

5.1 Base Zoning Districts

Chapter 59 includes 26 base zoning districts with requirements that describe general land use activity and even more general environments.

The 26 base zoning districts consist of the following:

- One district for agriculture
- Eleven districts for residential areas: Rural, Low Density, Medium Density, Medium High Density, General, and mobile homes
- Ten districts for commercial areas: Limited Office, General Office, Rural Commercial, Neighborhood Business, Neighborhood Commercial, Shopping Center, General, Central Business, Highway Commercial
- Four districts for industrial and industrially-compatible areas: Technology Park, Light Industrial, Moderate, and Heavy

INTENDED PHYSICAL CHARACTER

Generally, none of the base zoning districts convey enough information about the intended physical character that is to be protected or generated. This lack of clarity tends to put a high level of pressure on the review process and has led to numerous overlay districts, special purpose districts, or PUDs/SPUDs. This also tends to put a high level of importance on often abstract numerical factors aimed at controlling development such as density. Oklahoma City's codes currently only use density, which is an important factor, but should be the result of having identified the range of desired outcomes rather than a numerical point of beginning that may unintentionally leave out desirable outcomes. In our experience, effective standards result from understanding the physical characteristics that are important to a particular area. This information is missing from the intent statements in each base zoning district.

REQUIREMENTS

Agricultural and Residential Districts

The following evaluation focuses on the consistencies and inconsistencies between plan**okc** policy outcomes and existing regulations for three key base residential zoning districts.

1. The current Code does not include building form standards, which makes the results of the current requirements for setbacks, lot coverage, etc. unpredictable. In addition, the current standards do not protect the existing rural character of Oklahoma City, or generate new rural development.

2. There are too many variables for the Bulk Standards tables (Footnotes, Table 6100.2), which makes them less effective in clearly presenting the standards and unpredictable. For example, there are many exceptions for maximum height within the Bulk Standards tables.

3. The existing numbering system is not user friendly while the layout of the Code is out-of-date when compared to current best practices. The current consecutive numbering system is not intuitive and makes it difficult for users to navigate between Articles and Sections.

4. There is an overall lack of graphics in the zoning districts, including illustrative graphs for development standards. Graphics help clarify regulations, measurements, and development standards; such as those related to setbacks, parking location, sign types, and measuring height.

5. Definitions of key terms are interspersed throughout the standards, demonstrating an overall lack of document-wide organization and consistency.

Policy Outcome: #1 – Integrate Uses While Ensuring Compatibility

The R-2, R-3, and R-4 residential zoning districts do not allow for a mix of compatible residential and commercial uses. Commercial, retail, and personal service uses are not allowed by-right, only with a Conditional Use Permit in the R-2, R-3, or R-4 zoning districts. Further, the R-2, R-3, and R-4 zoning districts do not include performance-based regulations or development standards to address incompatibility issues between lower and higher density residential land uses, or between residential and compatible commercial uses (policies SU-7 and L-33).

Policy Outcome: #2 – Allow Increased Densities Where Appropriate

The R-2, R-3, and R-4 zoning districts allow for different residential densities for specific use types (see Table 5.1.A below), but they do not identify the specific locations where higher or lower densities are appropriate (Policy ST-22). This gap results in unanswered questions that delay the development process.

Table 5.1.A: R-2, R-3, and R-4 Base Residential Zoning District Density Standards

Residential Use	R-2	R-3	R-4
Single-Family	1 du/5,000 sf		
Two-Family	1 du/3,000 sf	1 du/2,500 sf	
Three-Four Family	n/a	1 du/1,750 sf	n/a
Other	n/a	n/a	1 du/1,250 sf

The R-2, R-3, and R-4 zoning districts do not include provisions that allow densities aimed to incentivize infill development on vacant, underutilized, and brownfield sites (Policy ST-22), nor are there provisions that increase density potential by allowing, for example, accessory dwelling units (Policy SU-9).

Policy Outcome: #5 – Integrate Residential Unit Types and Sizes and Ownership/Leasing Arrangements

As previously noted, the R-2, R-3, and R-4 zoning districts allow for some integration of varied densities within each district through standards specific to housing types (see Table 5.1.A above) (Policy SU-5). To better achieve the City's vision of integrating various residential densities and building types, additional building types consistent with the residential character of each zoning district (such as those defined as Missing Middle Housing) need to be considered. However, the R-2, R-3, and R-4 zoning districts do not allow for differing ownership and leasing arrangements, or housing types such as accessory dwelling units, live-work spaces, and modular housing to promote mixed-income neighborhoods (Policy L-12).

Policy Outcome: #6 – Increase Walkability

The R-2, R-3, and R-4 zoning districts do not include standards to encourage walkability, such as standards specific to street frontages (Policy SU-11) or internal/external street connectivity (Policy ST-17). Existing standards in the R-2, R-3, and R-4 zoning districts hinder walkability: high off-street parking requirements combined with little to no requirements for parking placement, both of which preclude the placement of buildings near the sidewalk to promote attractive and walkable environments. Finally, the R-2, R-3, and R-4 zoning districts do not allow for a mix of land uses that support a walkable environment – such as commercial, retail, and personal service uses.

Policy Outcome: #7 – Increase Bikeability

The R-2, R-3, and R-4 zoning districts do not include standards or guidelines that encourage cycling as an alternative mode of transportation, such as required bicycle parking within multi-family developments (Policy C-25). In addition, they do not allow for a compatible mix of uses/destinations where residents can bike as an alternative mode of transportation to fulfill their daily needs.

Policy Outcome: #8 – Improve Neighborhood Safety

The R-2, R-3, and R-4 zoning districts do not include development standards or procedures that ensure safety is factored into development projects, including those related to Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles (policies L-7 and SE-1). As noted above, constraints to mixed-use development in these zones hinder walkability and bikeability, which are both important factors that contribute to neighborhood safety.

Commercial Districts

1. The current Code does not include building form standards, which makes the results of the current requirements for setbacks and lot coverage, etc. unpredictable.

2. There are too many variables for the Bulk Standards tables (Footnotes, Table 6100.2), which makes them less effective in clearly presenting the standards and unpredictable. For example, there are many exceptions for maximum height within the Bulk Standard tables.

3. The existing numbering system is not user friendly while the layout of the Code is out-of-date when compared to current best practices. The current consecutive numbering system is not intuitive and makes it difficult for users to navigate between Articles and Sections.

4. There is an overall lack of graphics in the zoning districts, including illustrative graphs for development standards. Graphics help clarify regulations, measurements, and development standards; such as those related to setbacks, parking location, sign types, and measuring height.

5. Definitions of key terms are interspersed throughout the standards, demonstrating an overall lack of document-wide organization and consistency.

Policy Outcome: #1 – Integrate Uses While Ensuring Compatibility

The NB, C-1, and C-3 zoning districts generally allow for a compatible mix of commercial land uses within each district based on intent. These zoning districts allow for "Dwelling Units and Mixed Uses" by-right. However, it

is unclear what type of residential uses are allowed under the "Dwelling Units and Mixed Uses" use classification as this term is not clearly defined. For example, the only residential use permitted by-right in these zoning districts is single-family residential in the NB zoning district.

The NB, C-1, and C-3 zoning districts include some standards that focus on compatibility with the surrounding urban form. For example, all require greater setbacks when abutting residential zoning districts and lower building height based on their proximity to certain zoning districts (AA, HL, HP). No zoning districts include performance-based regulations to address incompatibility between lower and higher intensity land uses (Policy SU-7).

Policy Outcome: #6 – Increase Walkability

The NB, C-1, and C-3 zoning districts do not include standards that encourage walkability. Similar to the base residential zoning districts, existing standards tend to impair walkability. For example, the C-1 and C-3 zoning districts require a 25-foot front setback (no front setback is required in the NB district) and permitted uses have high parking requirements along with no requirements for parking placement. These standards allow buildings set back from the street edge and large parking lots adjacent to the sidewalk which are not conducive to a walkable environment.

Policy Outcome: #7 – Increase Bikeability

The NB, C-1, and C-3 zoning districts do not include standards that encourage cycling, such as required bicycle parking within commercial developments (Policy C-25).

Policy Outcome: #8 – Improve Neighborhood Safety

The NB, C-1, and C-3 zoning districts currently do not include standards or procedures intended to ensure that safety is considered in development projects, including the incorporation of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles (policies L-7, SE-1).

RECOMMENDATIONS

Generally, the basic zoning districts should be adjusted, revised, or replaced to ensure that the community's desires for physical form and land use are more closely aligned. The details of each zoning district will be reviewed and discussed in the next phase of the zoning code update process.

5.2 Illustrated Analysis of Key Base Zoning Districts

The following analysis reviews the existing intent and standards for three residential zoning districts and one commercial district. This analysis summarizes the zone's intent, the allowable building envelope and typical form that results from applying the zone's standards, along with the limiting factors and issues that we observed. These observations are intended to expose the strengths and weaknesses of the current base zoning. Generally, the following observations stand out as worthy of further discussion.

- The majority of existing zoning districts assume that most visitors will arrive by personal vehicle and do not support other modes of transportation.
- The residential zoning districts intend to generate compatible development but lack the information or regulations with which to do so.
- The residential zoning districts inadvertently prohibit otherwise appealing and compatible housing choices through arbitrary numerical density maximums (e.g. '7.26 and 19.8' units per acre)[1].
- The residential zoning districts allow much more volume and building area than one would expect in Oklahoma City's neighborhoods. This is because of the requirements focusing on setbacks, height, and density. Meanwhile, the building size goes unaddressed (See diagrams on the following pages for residential zoning districts).
- The non-residential zoning districts attempt to address physical compatibility with adjacent neighborhoods through height and setbacks. This is important but not all of the information necessary to achieve compatibility. Other important issues that need to be addressed are building width and length within a certain distance of neighboring houses.
- The ability to mix certain uses exists in the Zoning Code but it is not clear enough and relies on additional review processes.
- Minor relief from the standards requires either a variance from the Board of Adjustment after proving a hardship or, if part of a PUD application, there is a need for a simple process that provides flexibility for the applicant. This encourages more PUDs (see 4.3 overuse of PUDs and SPUDs).
- The zoning districts address the general intent to support certain types of development but their content and regulations focus on the individual site without much information for how those sites combine on a block, or into an intended environment and physical character.

The above issues have been addressed to varying degrees by overlay districts and special purpose districts. However, these help individual projects but don't really fix the bigger problem: the base district is not delivering the types of desired results. In addition, for the 160 square miles of base zoning districts that don't have overlay district standards, it's an even bigger problem.

The above observations affect Walkable Urban, rural, and Auto-Oriented Suburban development. The next phase of the Zoning Code Update process needs to provide analysis for determining if the existing zoning will remain, be modified, or be replaced by zoning that fully addresses physical form and character.

[1] *The R1 and R3M base zoning districts do not express these density limitations. These numbers result from applying the requirement for the minimum lot area per dwelling.*

Medium-Low Density Residential (R-2)

Issues Resulting from Current Regulations

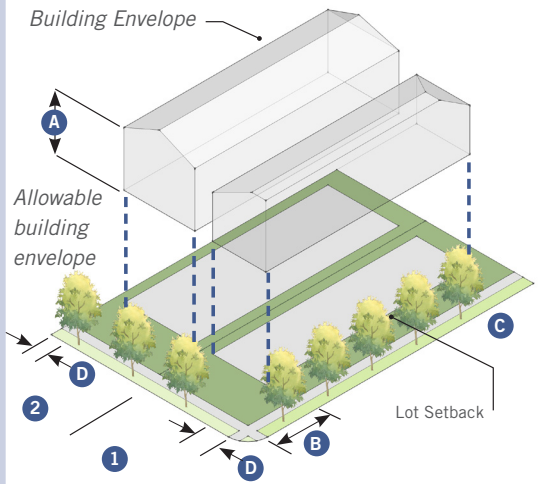
- There are no form standards, making the results of the current requirements highly unpredictable.
- The lack of parking location requirements results in highly unpredictable location(s) of parking, often resulting in tighter backyards and less visually appealing front yards and side streets.
- Although the duplex shown on the larger, interior lot is highly impractical, it is allowed by current regulations and shows the inability of the current standards to protect or enhance the pattern of house-scale buildings in low density residential neighborhoods.
- Maximum lot coverage of 50% still allows for large forms that may be incompatible with surrounding context.

Medium-Low Density Residential District Regulations		
Min. Lot Area	5,000 sf	
Min. Lot Width	50'	
Max. Lot Coverage	50%	
Min. Lot area/ dwelling unit	1 du/3,000 sf (2 units) (14.52 units per acre)	
Max. Height	2½ stories or 35 ft.	A
Front Setback	25 ft. min.	B
Rear Setback	10 ft. min.	C
Side Setbacks	5 ft. min. (15' min. at corners)	D
Off-Street Parking	2 spaces / du min. + garage	

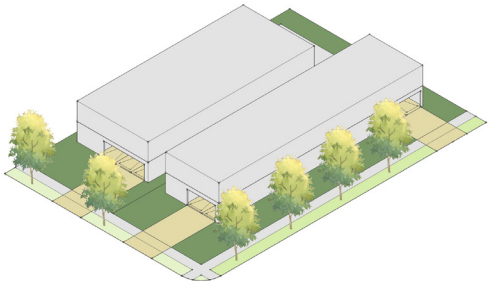
1 *Corner Lot Example*
2 *Interior Lot Example*

Although many properties in this zoning district are aided by overlay districts, 160 square miles of this land and other base zoning districts do not have those additional regulations. The latter group of properties is what these diagrams address.

WHAT DOES THIS ZONE ALLOW?



Limiting Factors
Required Off-Street Parking
Building Setbacks



Build-Out Assumptions: 2 units on each lot; building can be located anywhere within Building Envelope; interior lot uses tandem parking to fit 4 spaces

Allows parking in front of the building, with no requirements for ground floor to relate to the street.

Existing house-scale multifamily with parking in the rear of the lot.

Medium Density Residential (R-3)

Issues Resulting from Current Regulations

- There are no form standards and the maximum lot coverage is 100%, allowing for unpredictable building sizes, even after applying setbacks.
- Lack of parking location requirements results in unpredictable parking scenarios, often resulting in tighter back yards and less visually appealing front yards and side streets.
- Although the buildings shown are highly impractical, they are allowed by current regulations. This shows the inability of the current requirements to protect or enhance the pattern of house-scale buildings in current low density residential neighborhoods.
- High off-street parking standards result in excessive interruptions along sidewalk and loss of street trees.

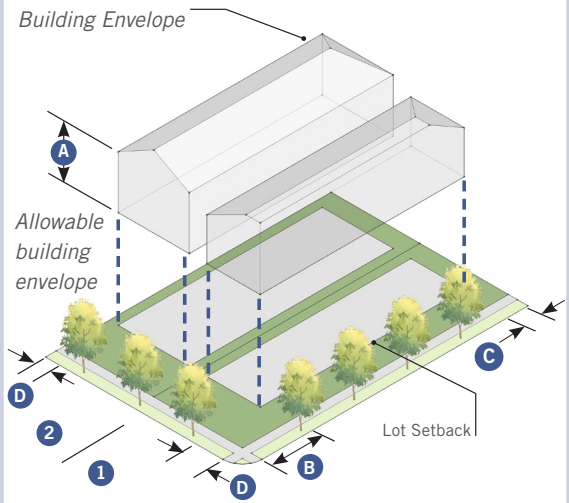
Medium Density Residential District Regulations		
Min. Lot Area	7,000 sf (more than 3 units)	
Min. Lot dimensions	50' min. width	
Max. Lot Coverage	100% (not possible w/ setbacks)	
Min. Lot area/ dwelling unit	1 du/1,750 sf (3 to 4 units) (24.89 units per acre)*	
Max. Height	2½ stories or 35 ft.	A
Front Setback	25 ft. min.	B
Rear Setback	10 ft. min.	C
Side Setbacks	5 ft. min. (15' min. at corners)	D
Off-Street Parking	2 spaces / du min.	

1 *Corner Lot Example*
2 *Interior Lot Example*

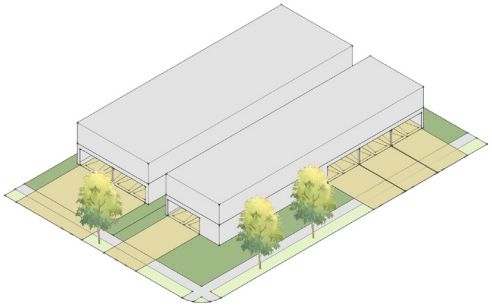
**R3M allows up to 8 units per building but only at 19.8 units per acre.*

Although many properties in this zoning district are aided by overlay districts, 160 square miles of this land and other base zoning districts do not have those additional regulations. The latter group of properties is what these diagrams address.

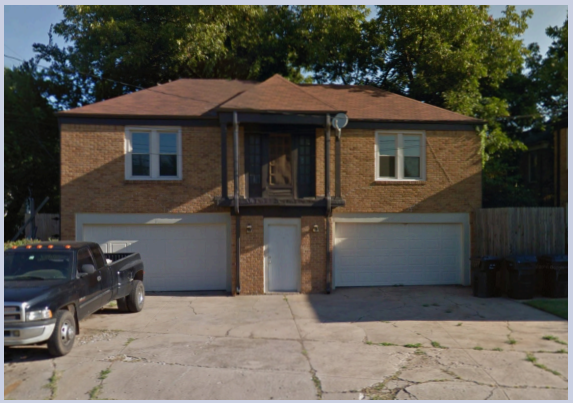
WHAT DOES THIS ZONE ALLOW?



Limiting Factors
Required Off-Street Parking
Building Setbacks



Build-Out Assumptions: 100% lot coverage (max.); 2 to 4 units on each lot; building can be located anywhere within Building Envelope; interior lot uses tandem parking to fit 6 to 8 spaces



Allows parking in the front of lot, creating a ground floor frontage of parking lots along the sidewalk.

Existing house-scale multifamily with parking in the rear of the lot and good connection of ground floor frontage to sidewalk.

General Residential (R-4)

Issues Resulting from Current Regulations

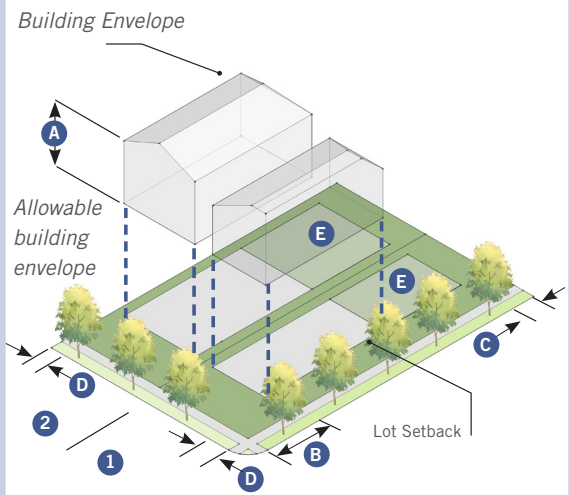
- There are no form standards, making the results of the current requirements highly unpredictable.
- The lack of parking location requirements results in highly unpredictable location(s) of parking that significantly weakens the streetscape.
- The high common open space requirement is well intended but results in parking dominating the front and sides; much of ground floor occupied by parking
- The high off-street parking requirements result in excessive interruptions along the sidewalk and the loss of street trees.

General Residential District Regulations		
Min. Lot Area	7,500 sf (for more than 2 units)	
Min. Lot Width	50’	
Max. Lot Coverage	–	
Min. Lot area/ dwelling unit	1 du/1,750 sf (3+ units) (24.89 units per acre)	
Max. Height	20'-35' or None, depending on the situation	A
Front Setback	25 ft. min.	B
Rear Setback	15 ft. min.	C
Side Setbacks	5 ft. min. (15’ min. at corners)	D
Off-Street Parking	2 spaces / du min. + garage	
Common Open Space	40% min.	E

1 *Corner Lot Example*
2 *Interior Lot Example*

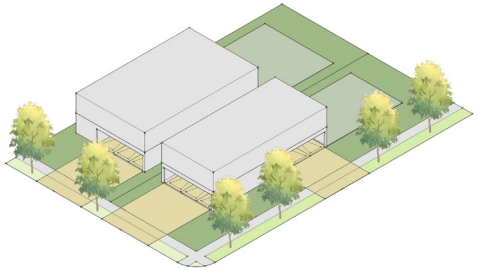
Although many properties in this zoning district are aided by overlay districts, 160 square miles of this land and other base zoning districts do not have those additional regulations. The latter group of properties is what these diagrams address.

WHAT DOES THIS ZONE ALLOW?



Limiting Factors

Required Off-Street Parking
Building Setbacks
Open Space Requirement



Build-Out Assumptions: shows max. lot coverage resulting from applying common open space requirement; 2 to 3 units on each lot; building can be located anywhere within Building Envelope

Though access is provided to parking at rear of lot, parking allowed in front of lot weakens ground floor frontage and sidewalk connection.

Existing house-scale multifamily with small parking court at the rear of lot and common open space.

Community Commercial (C-3)

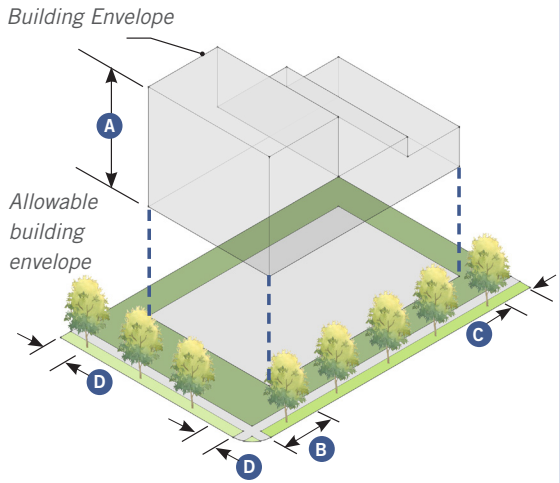
Issues Resulting from Current Regulations

- There are no building form standards, making the results of the current requirements highly unpredictable.
- The lack of parking location requirements results in highly unpredictable location(s) of parking , often with the parking between the buildings and the street.
- Although the building shown in the example is very impractical, it is allowed by current regulations, and shows the inability of the current requirements to protect or enhance the pattern of buildings along

Community Commercial District Regulations		
Min. Lot Area	12,000 sf	
Min. Lot dimensions	50' min. width	
Max. Height	20 ft. (1 story) to 35 ft. to 60 ft.	A
Front Setback	25 ft. min.	B
Rear Setback	15 ft. min.	C
Side Setbacks	15 ft. min.	D
Off-Street Parking	1 space / 200 sf GLA	

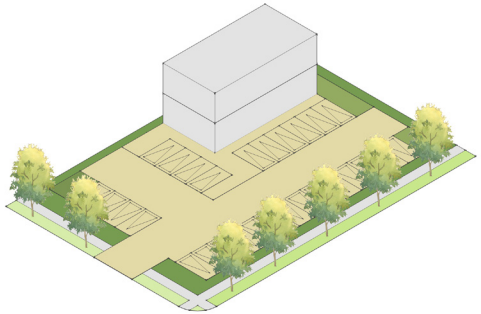
Although many properties in this zoning district are aided by overlay districts, 160 square miles of this land and other base zoning districts do not have those additional regulations. The latter group of properties is what these diagrams address.

WHAT DOES THIS ZONE ALLOW?



Limiting Factors

Required Off-Street Parking
Building Setbacks



Build-Out Assumptions: no max. lot coverage; building can be located anywhere within Building Envelope; building height is stepped to reflect 3 varying height requirements of the zoning district; parking can occupy building, but not landscape setback; lot is abutting residential uses

Allows parking in front of lot and weakens connection to street while pushing building closer to rear yards of adjacent houses.

Existing building with parking in the back abutting residential lots. Ground floor frontages result in better connection to street.

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Other Key Standards

Chapter 6

6.1 Subdivision Standards

The following evaluation focuses on the consistencies and inconsistencies between plan**okc** policy outcomes related to existing Subdivision Regulations.

Policy Outcome: #1 – Improve Transportation System Connectivity

Policy Outcome: #6 – Increase Walkability

Policy Outcome: #7 – Increase Bikeability

Policy Outcome: #8 – Improve Neighborhood Safety

Policy Outcome: #10 – Establish New Access Management Requirements

- Section 5.2.7 Access from Arterial Streets. "Residential lots shall not, in general, derive access from an arterial street. Driveways shall be designed and arranged so vehicles avoid backing into arterial streets."
- Figure 5.2 Minimum of 500 feet between intersections.
- Section 5.2.8 (C, D). "Subdivisions with one hundred and one to two hundred (101 to 200) lots may be constructed with a single entrance. Subdivisions with more than two hundred (200) lots must be constructed with at least two (2) separate means of access."
- 5.3.1 E. Blocks. Wherever practical, blocks along arterial streets shall not be less than 500 feet in length.
- 5.8.2 Sidewalks. "The Planning Commission may require…unobstructed easements…"

The intent of these standards is understood but the long-term effect of not using arterials for direct access has had more negative than positive effects in the thousands of communities that have similar standards. Allowing controlled access entries to entire developments disrupts the street network and negatively affects many while benefitting relatively few. Requiring at least 500 feet between intersections invites vehicular speeds that are not supportive of walking and bicycling. This type of standard prioritizes vehicular activity over other modes. Leaving sidewalks up for negotiation invites speculation on the importance of the public realm from project to project, potentially resulting in disconnected developments as well as the public street and sidewalk network.

Policy Outcome #9 – Incorporate Street Typology Standards

- Table 5.1 Urban Residential and Non-Residential Minimum Design Standards for Streets and Table 5.3 Design Standards for Rural Roads

Table 5.1 establishes minimum design standards for all non-rural roads. A total of eight classifications of streets from local street to expressway are identified along with their minimum right-of-way, paving, and maximum grade. Table 5.3 establishes the standards for rural roads. Tables 5.1 and 5.3 heavily influence the activity of motorists, bicyclists and pedestrians while leaving many important details to be worked out in the review process. With that in mind, these standards would serve the community better if they included more information and options for how to design each street within Oklahoma City's varied contexts. In addition, this information would be better located in a new chapter dedicated to thoroughfares and their standards coordinated with the community's intended range of physical environments.

Policy Outcome #14 – Facilitate Cluster/Conservation Subdivisions

In our review, the Subdivision Regulations do not contain standards that would achieve this policy outcome. Standards that would achieve this outcome direct that a certain majority percentage of the project site remain in agricultural or natural condition to consolidate the project's footprint in rural or environmentally sensitive areas while making for a more visually interesting and appealing development.

Policy Outcome #16 – Improve Siting & Design of Parks & Open Space

- Section 5.12.2 Open Space and Density in Urban Residential Developments
- Section 5.5.2 Design Requirements

The current standards are very limited and not responsive to the different existing and expected physical environments in Oklahoma City. It is understood that these issues are addressed in the PUD or SPUD process. In our experience, it is more effective to have consistent, clear standards available to establish sound site planning of integral open spaces with streets fronted by buildings/houses. This lets the focus and effort move forward to the actual design details of open space and the fronting buildings.

Policy Outcome #20 – Encourage Unified Planning for Adjoining Land Owned by the Same Person

In our review, the Subdivision Regulations do not contain language or standards that would achieve this policy outcome. It is our experience that standards for this objective benefit both the owner(s) and the community through coordination of multiple systems and issues.

Policy Outcome #23 – Introduce Transitional Platting

In our review, the Subdivision Regulations do not contain language or standards that would achieve this policy outcome. We understand the idea behind this policy outcome and have previously generated standards that provide clarity about what can be developed in the future while providing the owner(s) with flexibility as market conditions change over time.

Overall, we recommend that the standards and procedures related to site planning and making of new blocks and streets be moved to a new chapter in a new Unified Development Code. The standards not related to site planning, blocks, and streets can remain in the current subdivision regulations. We have found this organization of the standards effective and user-friendly.

6.2 Signage Standards

The standards applicable to permanent and temporary signs are in Chapter 3 (Advertising and Signs) of the Oklahoma City Municipal Code. This chapter is organized into five articles, each of which provides standards and procedures that apply generally to advertising and signs, advertising on vehicles, intermittent lights, handbills, and sign regulations for permanent and temporary signs.

Under the U.S. Supreme Court's 2015 decision in Reed v. Town of Gilbert, the City can no longer distinguish between signs based on a sign category determined by the message it conveys and its content (i.e. real estate signs, subdivision signs, or political signs) without a compelling governmental reason (i.e. strict scrutiny). Categorizing them based on their location (i.e. wall sign) or type (i.e. billboard or window signs) is acceptable.

Under the City's current sign regulations, while generally content-neutral, there are several signs that could be categorized by content, including the sign types identified in Section 3-100, such as, political signs, real estate signs, subdivision signs, construction signs, etc., which have been determined to be content-specific temporary signs. To resolve this, a recommended approach is to create a broad "temporary sign" designation that applies to all temporary signs that may be categorized as wall banners signs or portable signs (e.g. an A-Frame or Yard Sign) so that reasonable, content-neutral time, place and manner restrictions can be imposed on all temporary signs.

Existing Chapter 3 is poorly organized which makes it hard to find specific information. A recommended approach is to rename the chapter as "Sign Standards" and to rearrange the advertising provisions from the current Code within this updated chapter to provide a more logical flow and organization. A revised table of contents that is consistent with legal requirements and the desires of the City could be as follows:

.010 Purpose
.020 Applicability
.030 Sign Permit Requirements
.040 General Restrictions for All Signs
.050 General Requirements for All Signs
.060 Permanent Signs
.070 Comprehensive Sign Programs (New)
.080 Sign Design Performance Standards (New)
.090 Temporary Signs
.100 Sign Districts of Special Designation (New)
.110 Nonconforming Signs
.120 Enforcement
.130 Appeals
.140 Severability (New)

The Sign Standards should be organized to provide overall maximum standards (i.e. sign height and area) for all building mounted and freestanding signs by zoning district and context area (urban, suburban or rural). Thereafter, detailed standards for each sign type should be included. In this way, it's possible to provide more flexibility for property owners/businesses to install various building mounted sign types or freestanding sign types subject to specified rules (e.g. no signs facing a residential zone), provided they comply with the overall maximum area and height standards for the zoning district. This approach provides a proven mechanism to help the City manage sign clutter.

A new Master Sign Program/Comprehensive Sign Program section should be included in the Code to allow for greater flexibility and design control with the application of sign standards for large projects. A related component of this idea is the ability to provide incentives for more creative and better quality sign designs. The City's existing policy regarding PUDs and SPUDs will need to be carefully considered if this recommendation is pursued.

Other recommended improvements to the sign regulations include a comprehensive overhaul of sign definitions, combining all standards for sign maintenance into a new section, evaluating the existing standards for billboards, creating incentives for the removal/replacement of existing billboards, and new regulations to encourage the removal of abandoned signs and sign structures if a business closes.

The following evaluation focuses on consistencies/inconsistencies between plan**okc** policy outcomes and existing signage regulations. The focus of the evaluation is on two desired policy outcomes relevant to signs.

Policy Outcome: #3 – Mitigate Negative Impacts of Compact Development

The current sign regulations provide comprehensive standards for sign type, height, area, placement, etc. based on the zoning district in which they are located, but they do not consider the urban, suburban or rural context within which the sign is located. The sign regulations generally allow for a significant amount of signage, especially in commercial districts and corridors, which

has led to concerns with the amount of sign clutter in these areas. This is exacerbated by a lack of enforcement tools to require the removal of signs and sign structures even if a business is no longer on the property. There is a need to reduce visual clutter by including updated and new sign standards, especially in commercial districts as the current Code is only weakly supported by plan**okc** Policy SU-10.

Policy Outcome: #32 – Establish/Improve Design Standards for Signs

The City's existing sign regulations provide standards for the regulation of permanent and temporary signs by zoning district. However, many of the standards are imprecise and incomplete, lack clarity and internal consistency, and are ineffective at providing clear standards to regulate signs in the City. Furthermore, especially regarding temporary signs, the current Code does not in all respects meet the U.S. Supreme Court's 2015 decision in Reed v. Town of Gilbert (refer to page 48 for a more complete explanation of this important decision). Improved design standards for signs are needed to ensure that plan**okc** Policies E-14 and ST-17 are fully implemented.

6.3 Nuisance Standards

The standards applicable to nuisances are primarily in Chapter 35 (Nuisances) of the Oklahoma City Municipal Code. This chapter is organized into nine articles, each of which provides standards and procedures that apply to a broad range of topics, including;

1. Generally to nuisances;
2. Abandoned and wrecked vehicles;
3. Weeds and noxious plants;
4. Trash;
5. Graffiti;
6. Abatement of criminal activities as a public nuisance;
7. The prohibition of sale and possession of aerosol spray by minors;
8. Exotic wildlife; and
9. Abandoned buildings.

A review of the remainder of the Oklahoma City Municipal Code has determined that there are other chapters that also provide standards and procedures that are relevant to nuisances in general or the nuisances included in Chapter 35, and which should also be considered in this context. These chapters are listed below:

Chapter 4 Air Pollution
Chapter 8 Animals
Chapter 24 Housing and Property Maintenance Code
Chapter 27 Litter
Chapter 34 Noise
Chapter 43 Police Department
Chapter 46 Rat Control
Chapter 53 Trees and Shrubs

As improper exterior lighting may also be considered a nuisance, the provisions of Section 59-12350 (Site lighting requirements) under Chapter 59 (Zoning and Planning Code) have also been considered as well as the requirements of Section 59-12400 (Environmental performance standards) for nuisances such as glare, heat, air pollution, noise, vibration, and odors.

While general nuisance provisions are included in Chapter 35 (Nuisances), there are also nuisance regulations in many other chapters of the Municipal Code as summarized in Table 6.3.A on the following page. This table shows the amount of overlap between certain regulated nuisances and it provides initial recommendations on how the City's nuisance regulations could be reorganized and updated.

In consultation with staff it is recommended that the City's approach to regulating nuisances be carefully reconsidered, and that as explained in Table 6.3.A, related nuisance regulations could be combined (e.g. Article IV (Trash) and Chapter 27 (Litter) or the provisions related to graffiti and the sale of aerosol spray to minors (Articles V and VII, respectively). Similarly, the provisions for criminal activities could be moved from the nuisance regulations to the chapter(s) more appropriately enforced by the City's Police Department. It is further recommended, that the nuisance regulations be reorganized and updated so that, for example, all definitions are in one section to ensure consistency, all common procedures related to enforcement actions are also in one place with appropriate cross-references, and that the Code is updated, simplified, and clarified.

Table 6.3.A: Comparative Analysis of planokc Policy SU-10 to Existing Nuisance Code Regulations

Policy/nuisance elements	Provisions of Chapter 35 - Nuisances	Other OKC Chapters related to Nuisances	Recommended Action
SU-10: Mitigate negative impacts of compactness by updating the nuisance code to better address noise, smell, vibration, property maintenance, panhandling, animal control, delivery hours limits, and other possible negative effects. (2018).			
	Article I – In General		Update as needed.
Abandoned and wrecked vehicles	II Abandoned and wrecked vehicles	--	Keep in Chapter 35, updated and improved
Weeds and noxious plants	III Weeds and noxious plants	--	Keep in Chapter 35, updated and improved
Trash	IV Trash	Chapter 27 - Litter	Consider combining w/ Chapter 27 Litter. Update as needed.
Graffiti	V Graffiti	--	Keep in Chapter 35, updated and improved
Criminal activities	VI Criminal activities as a public nuisance	Chapter 43, Police Department	Consider combining with Chapter 43, Police Department. Update as needed.
Aerosol spray/graffiti	VII Prohibition aerosol spray to minors	--	Consider combining w/ Article V, Graffiti, update.
Animal control	VIII Exotic wildlife	Chapter 8, Animals	Consider combining with Chapter 8, Animals. Update as needed.
Property maintenance	IX Abandoned buildings	Chapter 24, Housing and Abandoned Buildings	Consider combining with Chapter 24, Housing and Abandoned Buildings. Update as needed.
Noise (sound)	--	Chapter 34, Noise	Update Chapter 34, Noise, as needed
		§ 59-12400 (Environmental performance stds.) of Zoning & Planning Code	Cross-reference to updated Chapter 34, Noise
Smell (odors)	--	§ 59-12400 (Environmental Performance Stds.) of Zoning & Planning Code	To remain in § 59-12400, updated as needed
Vibration	--	§ 59-12400 (Environmental Performance Stds.) of Zoning & Planning Code	To remain in § 59-12400, updated as needed
Panhandling	--	--	Consider including as part of Chapter 43, Police Department.
Glare and heat	--	§ 59-12400 (Environmental performance stds.) of Zoning & Planning Code	To remain in Environmental performance stds., updated as needed
Air pollution	--	§ 59-12400 (Environmental performance stds.) of Zoning & Planning Code	Cross-reference to updated Chapter 4, Air Pollution
Delivery hours	--	--	Consider including in Chapter 34, Noise w/ new standards
Exterior lighting	--	§ 59-12350 (Site lighting requirements) of Zoning & Planning Code	To remain in Site lighting requirements, updated as needed
Rat control	--	Chapter 46, Rat Control	Update Chapter 46, Rat Control, as needed
Trees and shrubs	--	Chapter 53, Trees and Shrubs	Update Chapter 53, Trees and Shrubs, as needed

The following evaluation focuses on consistencies/inconsistencies between plan**okc** policy outcomes and existing nuisance codes. The focus of the evaluation is on two desired policy outcomes relevant to nuisances.

Policy Outcome: #2 – Allow Increased Densities Where Appropriate

Policy Outcome: #3 – Mitigate Negative Impacts of Compact Development

The City's nuisance Codes are fragmented and located within numerous chapters of the Municipal Code. There is a frequent lack of clarity and internal consistency, and some standards and procedures appear to be imprecise and incomplete, all of which makes the nuisance standards and procedures hard to apply. As the desired outcomes of plan**okc** relative to nuisances are only weakly supported, it is recommended that a comprehensive evaluation of the City's nuisance provisions be prepared in the next phase of the Code Update process.