

PZCE Case No. 2022-0129

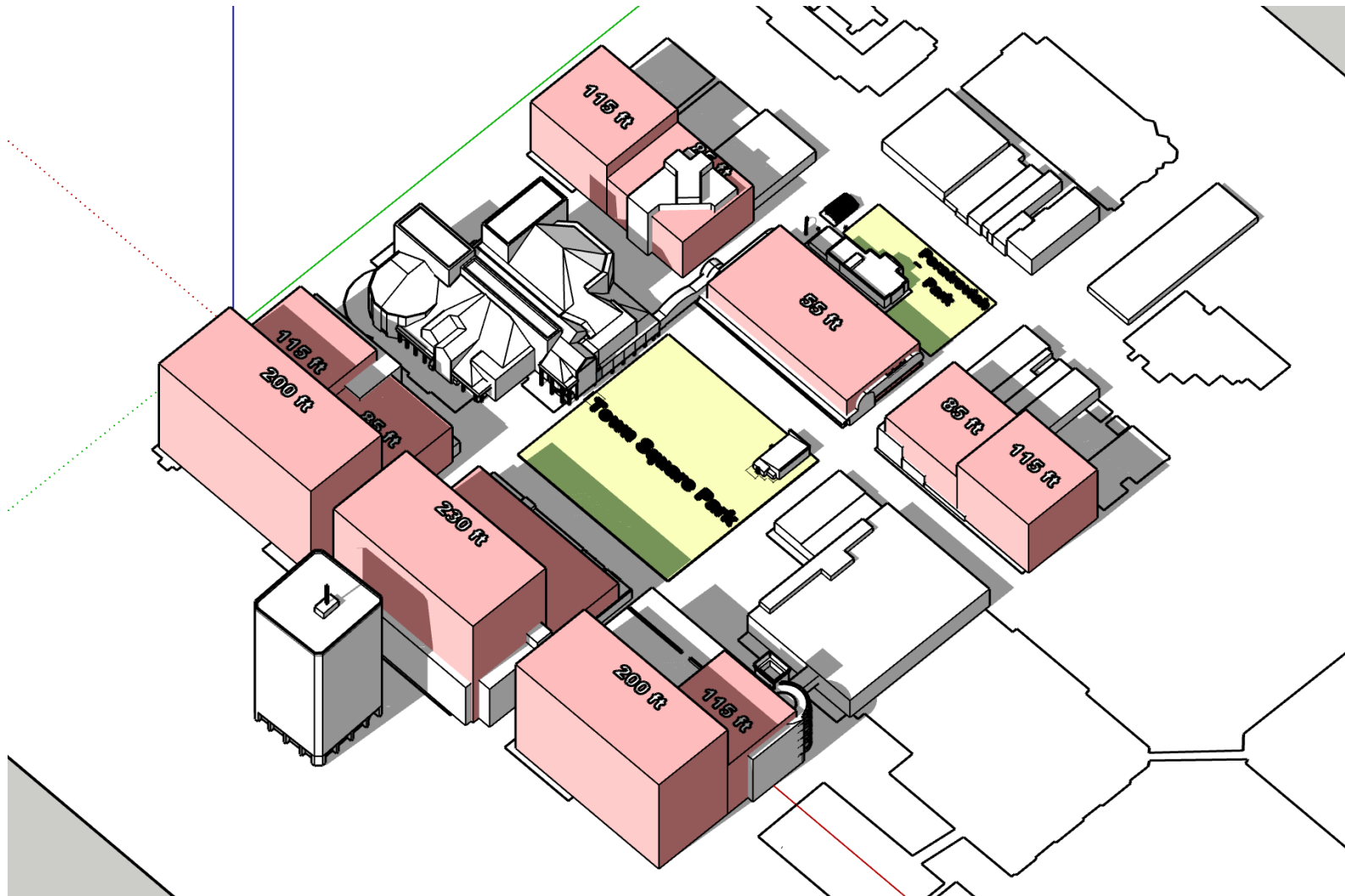
To update the Chapter 11: Downtown zoning districts code

- A. Table 21-11-5: Max Height Near Townsquare and Peratrovich Park
B. Mixed-Use Visualizations
C. Comment / Responses – Comments Received 12/9

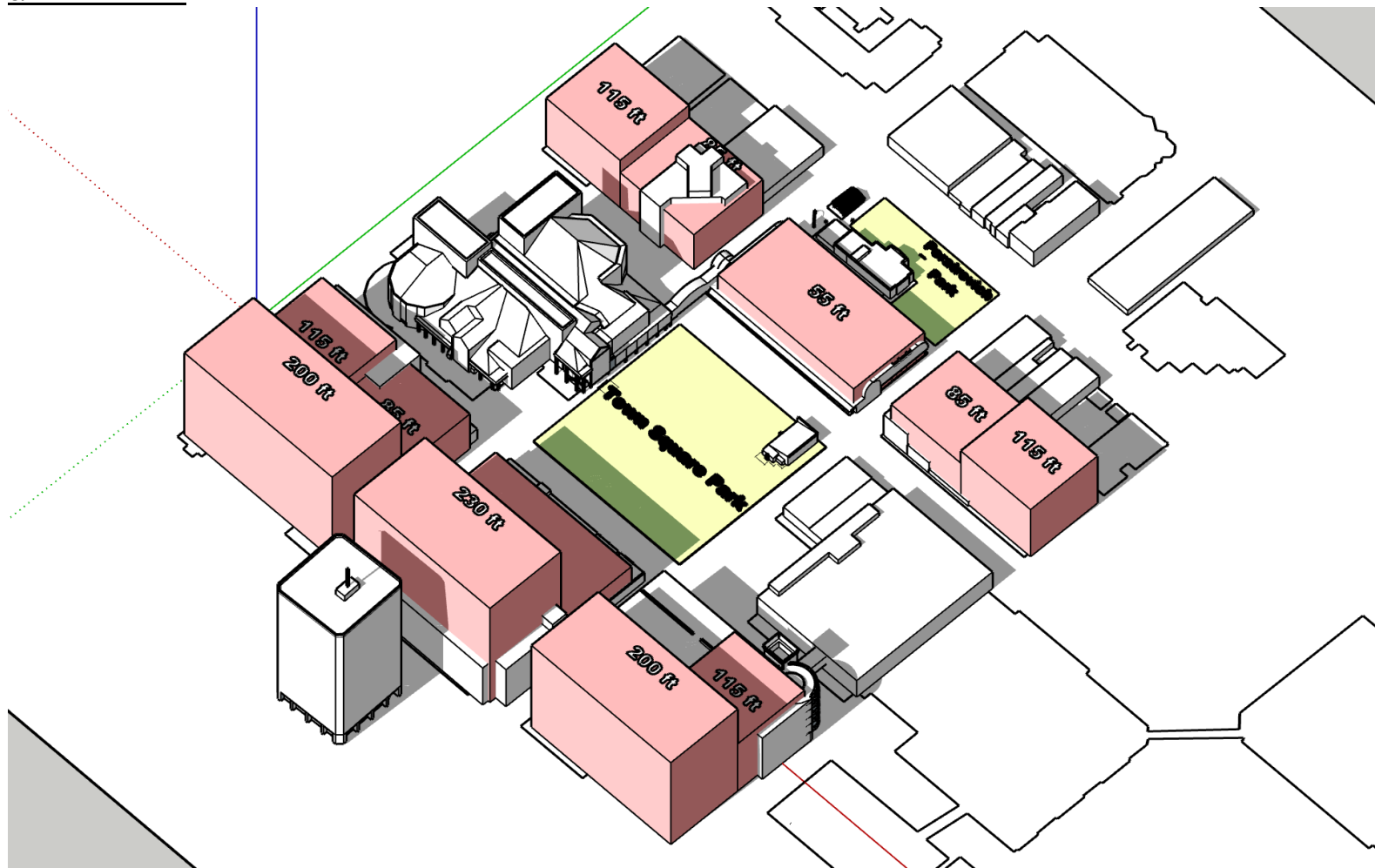
Solar Access Study Townsquare and Peratrovich Park between 4/21 and 8/21 at 12 noon, and 6/21 at 9 a.m.

A 3D perspective rendering of a building complex. The architecture features several red rectangular blocks of varying sizes, some with white roofs or sections. A central courtyard is paved in light green, while another area to the right is yellow. The buildings are interconnected by ramps, stairs, and walkways. A small white structure with a flat roof is visible in the lower left. The overall design is modern and geometric.

4/21 at 12 noon:



8/21 at 12 noon



B. Mixed Use Visualizations

ANCHORAGE DOWNTOWN DISTRICT PLAN 2021



Downtown Plan: Denali View

The Denali View subdistrict is the second district characterized by broader mixed-use development. Law and professional offices and the Alaska Court System complex are centered here. Medium to high-density office uses are encouraged. The north and west bluffs of Denali View are impacted by seismic hazard zones #4 and #5. The Denali View subdistrict is part of the Original Townsite platted in 1915. It contains some of Anchorage's oldest remaining homes along 2nd and 3rd Avenues. Several buildings and viewsheds in this area could be eligible for nomination to the Anchorage Local Landmark Register. Single-family homes converted to offices provide affordable option for small businesses. This plan supports the continued use of historic buildings to ensure small businesses are not priced out of the Downtown area, Maker Spaces and Live / Workspaces consistent with the zoning for this land use district. L Street to 3rd Avenue is a prime bicycle and pedestrian connection from the Coastal Trail and is mentioned as the location for a bike boulevard.

Development Specifications

- Medium to high density
- 2-10 stories (seismic overlay considered)
- Housing, Office, Retail, Restaurants/Cafes, Laundry, Grocery, small public spaces,
- preserve view corridors
- 20 mph roads (Mixed Use roads and Pedestrian Roads on this block)
- Bike Boulevard connections to area trails

Site Features (Title 21 Design Amenities)

Mixed-use building located on block 56 (Seismic Zone 5)
Retail Ground level /Office Levels 2-3 / Residential Levels 4-5
Upper levels stepped back for viewsheds + solar access
Street trees, seating, pedestrian lights + landscaping
Widened textured sidewalks
Arcade and covered walkways
Enclosed bike parking
Restaurant entries at street level
Exterior seating + plaza for Dining
Parking structure accessible from alley

21-10-01 DRAFT CONCEPT



Development Specifications

Chapter 4 Land Use Districts; Denali View

- Medium to High Density Housing + Mixed-Use
- Protect viewsheds and step buildings down in height to preserve view corridors
- Housing, Office, Retail, Restaurants/Cafes, Grocery, Laundry, small public spaces

Chapter 6 Urban Design; Streets

- Mixed-Use streets focus on providing safe enjoyable experience for all users
- Bike Boulevard to connect to areas /regional trail network

Title 21 Design Amenities

1. Mixed-Use building, parking below grade; L1 Retail; L2-3 Office; L4-5 Residential
2. Mixed-Use Tower; Parking below grade; L1 Retail; L2-5 Office; L6-9 Residential

Site Amenities

3. Entry Plaza, Retail + restaurant entries at street level
4. Exterior seating + plaza for dining

5. Street trees, seating, pedestrian lighting, Arcade/covered walkways and landscaping
6. Sidewalks, widened and textured
7. Crossings for pedestrian safety
8. Parking structure accessible from alley to minimize sidewalk crossing



Development Specifications

Chapter 4 Land Use Districts; Park Strip North

- Medium Density Housing + Mixed-Use
- Protect viewsheds, step buildings down in height to preserve views/sunlight access
- Housing, Retail, Restaurants/Cafes, Grocery, Laundry, small public spaces

Chapter 6 Urban Design; Streets

- Mixed-Use streets focus on providing safe enjoyable experience for all users
- Bike boulevard to connect to areas/regional trail network

Title 21 Design Amenities

1. Mixed-Use building, parking below grade
L1 Retail + Grocery; L2-4 Residential + Terraces

Site Amenities

2. Stepped structure to maintain sunlight access for adjacent blocks
3. Retail + grocery entries at street level
4. Transit stops coordinated with amenities

5. Street trees, seating, pedestrian lighting, Arcade/covered walkways at retail entries and landscaping
6. Sidewalks, widened and textured
7. Crossings for pedestrian safety
8. Parking structure accessible from alley to minimize sidewalk crossings
9. Preserve cottage industry structures



Development Specifications

Chapter 4 Land Use Districts; Park Strip North

- Medium Density Housing + Mixed-Use
- Protect viewsheds, step buildings down in height to preserve views/sunlight access
- Housing, Retail, Restaurants/Cafes, Grocery, Laundry, small public spaces

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2. Stepped structure to maintain sunlight access for adjacent blocks
3. Retail + grocery entries at street level
4. Transit stops coordinated with amenities

5. Street trees, seating, pedestrian lighting, Arcade/covered walkways at retail entries and landscaping
6. Sidewalks, widened and textured
7. Crossings for pedestrian safety
8. Parking structure accessible from alley to minimize sidewalk crossings



Development Specifications

Chapter 4 Land Use Districts; Park Strip North

- Medium Density Housing + Mixed-Use
- Protect viewsheds, step buildings down in height to preserve views/sunlight access
- South half: Housing, with layered public to private spaces
- North half: Retail, Housing, Restaurants/Cafes, Grocery, Laundry, small Public Spaces

Chapter 6 Urban Design; Streets

- Residential streets focus on providing safe enjoyable experience for all users
- Activate alleys with art, feature lighting, secure bike parking

Title 21 Design Amenities

1. Multi-Unit Housing, Parking at grade L1-3 Residential + Terraces
2. Mixed-Use Retail, Office + Housing, Parking structure wrapped by L1-2 Retail/Office, L3-7 Residential

Site Amenities

3. Lower structure to maintain sunlight access for residential units on north block

4. Landscaping, seating, pedestrian lighting, small yards and porches encourage street level activity
5. Pedestrian access on all street edges
6. Sidewalks, widened and textured
7. Crossings for pedestrian safety
8. Parking/utility access from alley side



Development Specifications

Chapter 4 Land Use Districts; Park Strip North

- Medium Density Residential
- Protect viewsheds, step buildings down in height to preserve views/sunlight access
- South half: Housing, with layered public to private spaces
- North half: Retail, Housing, Restaurants/Cafes, Grocery, Laundry, small Public Spaces

Chapter 6 Urban Design; Streets

- Residential streets focus on providing safe enjoyable experience for all users
- Activate alleys with art, feature lighting, secure bike parking

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Site Amenities

3. Lower structure to maintain sunlight access for residential units on north block

4. Landscaping, seating, pedestrian lighting, small yards and porches encourage street level activity
5. Pedestrian access on all street edges
6. Sidewalks, widened and textured
7. Building/Parking rooftop activation
8. Parking/utility access from alley side, activated with bike parking, etc

C. Comment / Responses – Comments Received 12/9-12/10

Origin	Comment	Staff Response	PZC Response
CIHA email 12/9/2022	1. Is there a reason that the density limitation on the B2B district for multifamily is 25 dwelling units/acre?	This was a legacy from old sections of code. It has been removed from the most current drafts.	
CIHA email 12/9/2022	2. Is there a reason housing is not allowed at all in the central B-2-A core? Does this include mixed-use (for example, residential floors on top of office or hotel) or standalone residential?	Housing is allowed within a mixed-use development.	
CIHA email 12/9/2022	3. Are there implications for historic preservation if single family homes are no longer allowed? This is a distinctive use type downtown; many former homes have been preserved and repurposed as offices. Do these become non-conforming structures even if used for non-residential purposes? We would like to believe that continuing to upkeep and use these old homes is part of downtown's unique character.	Single-family homes that are being used as single-family homes are allowed to remain until the use changes. Single family homes are not allowed as a use. Using these structures for other types of activities such as offices, museums, etc., is allowed.	
CIHA email 12/9/2022	4. Have the proposed changes been "tested" on any new or recently rehabilitated buildings downtown? For example, could Elizabeth Place be built under the new requirements? If not, is there a strong reason?	The working group included two architects and one engineer who have worked on recent or current projects downtown, these recent experiences helped shape the code. Bettisworth North also provided some modeling and design possibilities. The working group did not do a full analysis of whether Elizabeth place could be built but the code was intended to accommodate this type of development. This code update removes ALL setbacks which would have been advantageous for Elizabeth Place, in that there would have been no commercial space requirement forcing the loss of potentially one to three additional housing units.	

Origin	Comment	Staff Response	PZC Response
CIHA email 12/9/2022	<p>Comment: Clarify that surface parking is an allowed accessory use. While we appreciate efforts to make it more difficult to create new stand-alone parking lots, some amount of parking accessory to business and residential uses (such as Elizabeth Place) will be essential for the foreseeable future.</p>	<p>This is an issue of the entire Title 21 code, which considers accessory parking part of a primary use—the code does not list it as accessory use in any zone. When parking is placed on a separate lot, it is considered a primary use.</p>	
CIHA email 12/9/2022	<p><u>21.11.070, Development and Design Standards, Section D.1.e</u></p> <p>Comment: This requirement is unclear and appears unnecessary. We are unsure why it appears the entry must be recessed from the plane of the building, rather than creating a guideline that more generally requires visible entries that offer weather protection to the degree appropriate to the scale of their use. Elizabeth Place has entries to both our residential building and commercial space. Entry doors are located on the plane of the building (not recessed), but we added a canopy to create weather protection, support signage, and identify the entry. It is common that an entry door is covered, enters a vestibule, and then the lobby. Recessing the entry from the building plane creates challenges on the interior to how a vestibule functions.</p> <p>There also appears to be a conflict between the requirement to recess building entries 36", and the frontage design menu standard for building articulation (D.2.b), which regulates the depth and width of the recesses. It appears the optional menu standards would kick in with the recess requirement. Recommendation: Delete or expand 21.11.070.D.1.e. Clarify that weather protection of primary entries can be accomplished via canopies or recessing entries, for example.</p>	<p>This recess requirement was included to ensure that doors do not swing into the sidewalk or across a property line. This could potentially be removed as this issue may be dealt with in Title 23.</p> <p><u>e. Building entries shall be recessed a minimum of 36 inches. To meet this requirement, the entries must open into a circulation space or an occupiable space and must be intended for regular use by building users.</u></p>	

Origin	Comment	Staff Response	PZC Response
<p>CIHA email 12/9/2022</p>	<p><u>21.11.070, Development and Design Standards, Section D.2</u></p> <p>Comment: Even if presented as options, the majority of these requirements appear quite significant and may not be appropriate for the scale of the development or the use. Three of them appear to be improvements to the public realm; while a developer should be able to make improvements to the public space, requiring it seems to penalize a downtown development. Many rights of way may simply not be able to accommodate the improvements. Many sidewalks in downtown are not 11.5 feet – are we saying that a first required step is for the downtown development to create that sidewalk, then further to place landscaping, or lighting, or plaza, or canopies into that space? Many effectively serve as a penalty to a developer by requiring public right-of-way improvements.</p> <p>Recommendation: Other than tower regulations, ground floor glazing, and covered entries, we do not feel that 21.11.070.D.2 is needed.</p>	<p>The working group spent several meetings discussing who should be responsible for improvements to the public realm. The group developed these standards as a compromise between what previously existed, what was possible under the bonus table, and a desire to simplify development.</p> <p>A project is only required to rebuild a sidewalk and other ROW-associated improvements when the project disturbs the sidewalk and ROW.</p>	
<p>CIHA email 12/9/2022</p>	<p><u>21.11.070, Development and Design Standards, Section D.2.b</u></p> <p>Comment: We understand that articulation is promoted to mitigate massing, but we actually want large buildings in downtown. Since the articulation requirements came to be in the “new” Title 21, most of CIHA buildings look very similar. We believe that articulation stifles architectural creativity. Previous sections of code regulate towers; we think articulation is unnecessary, especially given the range of buildings that could be built downtown (large and small).</p> <p>Recommendation: Delete 21.11.070.D.2.b in its entirety.</p>	<p>Building articulation is one of five options for meeting the requirements. The options table was developed in close collaboration with architects, engineers, and designer.</p>	

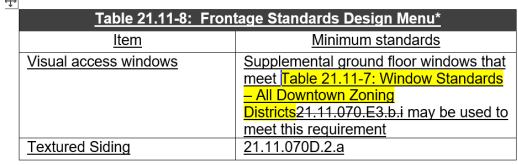
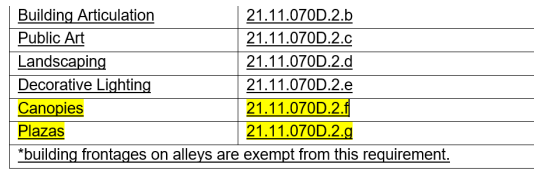
Origin	Comment	Staff Response	PZC Response
CIHA email 12/9/2022	<p>Comment: The entryway recess design requirement has the potential to create a more complicated and expensive structure the way it has been diagrammed (diagonal first floor walls and structure). It appears to respond to a few specific scenarios downtown. It would that seem narrow, deep recesses without active glazing and visibility create spaces that are not desired. However, changing the requirement to recess entries at all (Section D.1.e) would eliminate this concern in a more cost effective and practical way. Elizabeth Place (pictured) has numerous recesses throughout to create building articulation that would be impacted by these design requirements; meaning our entries are not recessed but are weather covered. We have 4 entries along I Street and would have been required to recess all four doors</p> <p>Recommendation: If retaining the recess requirement in Comment #2, we recommend only focus on relatively small, recessed areas of 8 feet or less in width and 4 feet in depth. Consolidate or reconcile this section with 21.11.070.D.1.e.</p>	<p>Staff proposes removing this specific requirement to require a recess of 36”:</p> <p><u>e. Building entries shall be recessed a minimum of 36 inches. To meet this requirement, the entries must open into a circulation space or an occupiable space and must be intended for regular use by building users. Exit-only doors are exempt from this requirement. Building entries shall meet the building recess visual access requirements of 21.11.070.D2.b.i and Figure 21.11-1</u></p>	
CIHA email 12/9/2022	<p><u>21.11.070. Development and Design Standards, Section D.2.c</u></p> <p>Comment: We support public art downtown but believe a 60% coverage effectively requires large scale murals and could exclude different types of art.</p> <p>Recommendation: We recommend reducing the requirement and/or creating an up to number informed by the MOA’s 1% for Art director.</p>	<p>The options table was developed in close collaboration with architects, engineers, and designers. This number was what the design group determined was most appropriate.</p>	

Origin	Comment	Staff Response	PZC Response
<p>CIHA email 12/9/2022</p>	<p><u>21.11.070, Development and Design Standards, Section D.2.d</u></p> <p>Comment: We feel that these requirements are overly prescriptive. At Elizabeth Place, it would not have made sense to install a series of trees around the property. The sidewalks are relatively narrow and achieving this would have required we set the building back and have less buildable area. We did provide planters for landscaping along 7th Street to soften the building and provide separation from ground floor units; it would not be appropriate to plant trees in these beds and otherwise meet landscaping standards of 21.07.080 but we feel the landscaping is a nice treatment and should be an option.</p> <p>Recommendation: Modify 21.11.070.D.2.d to allow for creative landscaping on private property adjacent to the public realm. Treatment should be more flexible and not be required along the entire length of the building (entryways, enhanced sidewalk areas). We also believe it should not be the role of private development to provide street trees.</p>	<p>No standards need to be changed. Alternative equivalent compliance can allow for creative landscaping options other than what is defined in code.</p>	

Origin	Comment	Staff Response	PZC Response
CIHA email 12/9/2022	<p><u>21.11.070, Development and Design Standards, Section D.2.e</u></p> <p>Comment: We don't understand this section as a feature. Even if optional, the code is suggesting that streetlighting is somehow matching other parts of downtown, and that there is room within the ROW to accommodate additional streetlights in addition to existing streetlights. Again, see Elizabeth Place as an example where larger streetlights exist, and more streetlights would simply crowd the public sidewalk. There are decorative streetlights installed around the Marriott Building to the southeast of Elizabeth Place. On the north side, the streetlights encroach into the right-of-way and create a narrower sidewalk. It is not clear that wall-mounted decorative streetlighting would be allowed. Again, we blur the lines here between public and private realms.</p> <p>Recommendation: Modify 21.11.070.D.2.e or delete.</p>	<p>This code section is intended to address lighting for pedestrians rather than vehicles in the ROW.</p> <p>From Julie Makela, Civil Engineer II, PME:</p> <p>"There is no set plan that tells you where and what type of lighting to install anywhere in town. But there is a criterion in the Design Criteria Manual for lighting. It is up to the project electrical and civil design engineers to determine how to meet the criteria. Things they need to determine based on roadway speed, classification, pedestrian usage levels, etc. include type of poles (pedestrian and/or roadway), design of poles (height, mast arm length, Title 21 and Downtown Comp Plan requirements, etc.), pole spacing, luminaire type (light pattern, wattage, etc.), and more. "</p>	
CIHA email 12/9/2022	<p><u>21.11.070, Development and Design Standards, Section D.2.g</u></p> <p>Comment: This menu item assumes a very large building in downtown. A 2,000 square foot minimum plaza may not be appropriate size for a relatively small building, though a small plaza or outdoor space could be a nice feature..</p> <p>Recommendation: Modify 21.11.070.D.2.e or adjust the minimum square footage.</p>	<p>This is an optional feature, not a requirement. This feature was carried from the bonus table in old code and revised to be more flexible.</p>	

Origin	Comment	Staff Response	PZC Response
CIHA email 12/9/2022	<p><u>21.11.070, Development and design standards, Section G</u></p> <p>Comment: Any development that touches the right-of-way appears to be responsible for landscaping along the street frontage. This seems like a penalty to a developer to have to install public right-of-way requirements. We do not think this is appropriate, nor conducive to a cohesive downtown environment. In the example of Elizabeth Place, we're not even sure there would have been enough room to install landscaping in the right-of-way. If we had, this may have been to the detriment of pedestrians, snow storage, on-street parking and other user needs. CIHA did add landscaping along a portion of the building frontage to provide some visual interest, as well as create separation from ground floor uses.</p> <p>Recommendation: In the current code, to get points under landscaping is extremely prescriptive. Are the ground-floor planters pictured above sufficient to meet this as a menu item? If not, consider modifying.</p>	Pg 41 line 9: if a project on private property disturbs the ROW, it is required provide the attendant improvements laid out in 21.07.	
CIHA email 12/9/2022	<p><u>21.11.070, Development and Design Standards, Section H</u></p> <p>Comment: The common open space requirement is not necessary because of downtown's specific context. We recognize efforts to reduce the current private open space requirement, but we think the proposal can go further. Open space requirements add unnecessary cost to housing projects and is not required for non-residential uses. Any downtown building sits near trails, parks (including the Delaney Park Strip), and a walkable neighborhood with lots to see and do. The higher cost of building in downtown, and therefore the cost of housing, is offset by looking at all of downtown as a walkable amenity. If this requirement is retained, staff should clarify what is meant by "habitable" (is this residential living and common space in a development, or just residential living?) and whether the common open space would need to be contiguous.</p> <p>Recommendation: Delete 21.11.070.H in its entirety or modify to clarify the definition of "habitable space" and whether common open space must be contiguous.</p>	Staff can support removing this private common open space requirement.	

Origin	Comment	Staff Response	PZC Response
Jared Gardner PZC Chair, email 12/10/2022	Are there any differences between the description of Alternative Equivalent Compliance provided in 21.11.020.E (pages 3-5 of Attachment 1) and the description in 21.07.010D? If not, would it be simpler to exclude 21.11.020.E and rely on 21.07.010.D to provide the Alternative Equivalent Compliance standards?	The Alternative Equivalent Compliance section proposed for Chapter 11 allows this process to be used for all regulations in the title. The Chapter 7 process allows it to be used for fewer aspects of development.	
Jared Gardner PZC Chair, email 12/10/202	Pg. 30, Lines 14-16 of Attachment 1: I don't think I understand this sentence. Are the listed requirements (circulation/occupiable space and regular use) in addition to the 36-inch recess requirement? Or is this saying that entries that aren't intended for regular use and don't open to circulation space don't have to meet the recess requirement?	<p>This requirement was intended to ensure that building doors did not swing into ROW and impede access. This may be dealt with in Title 23, and thus unnecessary in this chapter. Staff recommends the following change:</p> <p><u>e. Building entries shall be recessed a minimum of 36 inches. To meet this requirement, the entries must open into a circulation space or an occupiable space and must be intended for regular use by building users. Exit-only doors are exempt from this requirement. Building entries shall meet the building recess visual access requirements of 21.11.070.D2.b.i and Figure 21.11-1</u></p>	
Jared Gardner PZC Chair, email 12/10/202	Pg. 30, Line 24: should the word "Table" be in front of "21.11-8 Frontage Standards Design Menu"?	<p>Thank you for finding this. Yes, the word table could be added for clarity.</p> <p><u>2. Three additional items required for building frontages. The remainder of the building frontage shall include a minimum of three items from the Table 21.11-8 Frontage Standards Design Menu. The frontage treatments shall extend the full width of the lot frontage, except at vehicular access points.</u></p>	

Origin	Comment	Staff Response	PZC Response
Jared Gardner PZC Chair, email 12/10/202	Pg. 31, Table 21.11-8: Is "21.11.070.E3.b.i" a typo? I don't see that section.	<p>Thank you for finding this obsolete reference. This should be changed for clarity.</p> 	
Jared Gardner PZC Chair, email 12/10/202	Pg. 32, Table 21.11-8: I think Plazas and Canopies should be switched in order to be aligned with the correct code section.	<p>Thank you for finding this typo. This should be changed for clarity.</p> 	
Radhika Krishna PZC, email	I'm hoping you could send (or share at the meeting tomorrow) a little more information about the new proposed height limitations around Peratrovich Park. Specifically, I'm wondering: -Could you point me towards a map that shows the properties affected (current and proposed)?	Please see the images at the beginning of this document.	
Radhika Krishna PZC, email	-How did the working group or the Planning Department determine the need for new height restrictions around Peratrovich Park?	Public comment regarding sun and view access led to establishing a similar guideline for this park on 4 th Avenue. A solar study was performed to determine any impacts that taller buildings may pose. That study is included in this attachment.	
Radhika Krishna PZC, email	Any information you have about how the restrictions around Town Square Park have worked would be helpful as well.	No tall buildings have been built around Town Square Park.	