

## Chapter 18.155

### DOWNTOWN OVERLAY DISTRICT (DT)

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#### **18.155.010 Purpose.**

The purpose of the downtown overlay district is to implement the adopted La Center Downtown Design Plan and Guidelines (2005) (see La Center city council Resolution No. 05-253). [Ord. 2006-17 § 1, 2006.]

#### **18.155.020 Applicability.**

~~All developments within the DT overlay district are subject to the provisions of this chapter. If the cost of interior remodeling is estimated to exceed 50 percent of the assessed building value of a structure, then this chapter shall have full force and effect. [Ord. 2006-17 § 1, 2006.] The Downtown Overlay standards apply to all new commercial, mixed-use, and multifamily uses within the Downtown Overlay Zone as designated on the City's Zoning Map. These standards also apply to major exterior redevelopment or rehabilitation that requires a building permit.~~

The standards in this chapter do not apply to the following:

- (1) New single-family construction or the exterior remodel of single-family residential uses;
- (2) The interior remodel of buildings;
- (3) Exterior building improvements that do not require a building permit
- (4) Replacement of windows, awnings, roofing materials, or other exterior building elements for maintenance reasons only to match existing materials and design.

#### **18.155.030 Uses.**

The following uses are allowed uses within the DT overlay district:

- (1) All permitted and lawfully established uses existing prior to January 1, 2007.
- (2) All uses specifically permitted or conditional in the base zoning district(s) shall continue to be allowed in accordance with the review procedures of this title. [Ord. 2006-17 § 1, 2006.]

#### **18.155.040 Process.**

All development or remodeling activities as defined by LCMC 18.155.020 are subject to pre-application review pursuant to LCMC 18.30.020. Pre-application review submittals shall include, in addition to submittal requirements of LCMC 18.30.020, a written narrative describing compliance or noncompliance with the standards of this chapter. To the extent that the information provided is accurate and complete, the city planner shall provide written findings and a determination within the pre-application conference report that the proposal is compliant or noncompliant with the standards of this section.

- (1) If the proposal is determined to comply with this chapter, the city shall review the application as a Type II site plan review per LCMC 18.30.090 and Chapter 18.215 LCMC.
- (2) If the proposal is determined to not comply with this chapter, the city shall review the application as a Type III conditional use per LCMC 18.30.100 and Chapter 18.250 LCMC. The findings and determination of noncompliance shall be incorporated into the public record. [Ord. 2006-17 § 1, 2006.]

**18.155.050 Development standards.**

Development in the DT overlay district shall comply with the dimensional and development standards of the underlying zoning district(s) except as otherwise required under this chapter. All development applications shall comply with the following standards:

(1) Building Facades.

(a) New construction and redevelopment of existing buildings shall be developed with architectural styles that were prevalent in the days of La Center's historic role as a port for riverboat navigation. Acceptable architectural styles include: Victorian, Classic Revival, Craftsman, Cascadian, Frontier, and Arts and Crafts. Unacceptable architectural styles include any modern style that was not commonly used between 1850 and 1930.

(b) Commercial activities shall use original building facades, or replications thereof, and appropriately sized and designed signs. New construction should be compatible with surrounding design.

(c) Facades shall be varied and articulated to provide visual interest to pedestrians. Within larger projects, variations in facades, floor levels, architectural features, parapet height, and exterior finishes shall create the appearance of several smaller buildings with a maximum apparent storefront width of 60 feet.

(d) Storefronts shall generally abut street rights-of-way. Business activities shall be oriented towards the street through the use of primary entrances, sidewalk cafes, pedestrian awnings or similar features. Buildings may be set back as much as 10 feet if the space between the building and right-of-way is used for permanent landscaping, outdoor display of merchandise, or outdoor seating for dining establishments. These areas may not be fenced off from the street except for a decorative fence not to exceed four feet in height.

(i) Within multi-building complexes, building frontages internal to a city block shall consider internal walkways and parking areas as street rights-of-way.

(e) All structures shall provide ground floor retail, services, or offices.

(f) With the exception of gas stations, new drive-through facilities are prohibited.

(g) Blank walls are prohibited.

(i) The lower facade shall contain a recessed entry or entries, large display windows and other such appurtenances as described in this subsection which shall, as a whole, constitute 50 percent of the entire front facade.

(ii) Upper floors shall display smaller, regularly spaced windows or false windows.

(iii) Decorative trims, such as window hoods surrounding upper floor windows, are encouraged.

(iv) Decorative cornices near or at the top of the facade are encouraged.

(v) Buildings must include changes in relief on 10 percent of their street side facades. Relief changes include cornices, bases, fenestration, fluted masonry, or other treatments for pedestrian interest and scale.

(h) Designated historic buildings shall be maintained consistent with the identified character-defining elements of the building unless recognized by the city as an "unsafe structure" under the International Property Maintenance Code (2003).

(i) Developments shall:

(i) Maintain and extend the existing block pattern in order to develop a bigger yet more cohesive district.

(ii) Develop new, and redevelop existing, commercial areas using the existing 200 (plus or minus) foot blocks with 60-foot rights-of-way.

(j) Any exterior remodeling shall clearly delineate upper and lower facades by architectural features such as awnings and exterior moldings.

(k) The backs of buildings on the south side of East 4th Street shall be finished with windows, balconies, and other features similar to those used on the front for two reasons: first, to encourage uses that relate to the view of the Lewis River and the Wildlife Refuge, and second, to enhance and preserve the view of downtown from the Lewis River Bridge. All garbage equipment and facilities shall be screened from view.

(l) Ornamental devices, such as molding and friezes, are required at the roofline. Where such ornamentation is present in the form of a linear molding or board, the band must be at least 12 inches in height.

(m) Buildings must incorporate features such as arcades, roofs, porches, alcoves, porticoes, and awnings to protect pedestrians from the rain, wind, and sun. Awnings and entrances may be designed to be shared between two structures. If the building abuts a street right-of-way, then the weather protection feature must be extended at least five feet over the sidewalk with appropriate easements or agreements with the city to allow placement within the right-of-way. If the building does not front on the right-of-way, the weather protection feature must be extended at least five feet along any pedestrian area between the building and an adjacent pedestrian walkway or sidewalk.

(2) Sidewalks, Crosswalks, and Streets.

(a) Sidewalks within the available 60-foot right-of-way shall generally be 11 feet wide with a three-and-one-half-foot street furniture and landscaping zone and a seven-and-one-half-foot pedestrian zone. The street furniture zone is to accommodate street trees, lighting, benches, street signs, mail boxes, newspaper boxes and other urban accessories.

(b) Awnings are required of all building frontages along sidewalks and over pedestrian entryways facing parking areas.

(c) Curb extensions shall be provided at every street corner. These extensions are the width of the parking lanes. The extensions are designed to follow a consistent radius around each intersection.

(d) Crosswalks shall be delineated by a distinctive color, material, or texture to differentiate them from the street paving.

(3) Street Trees and Landscaping.

(a) Street trees shall be provided at approximately 45 feet on center. The trees are to be planted in five-foot by five-foot cutouts in the sidewalk located in the street furniture/landscaping zone. Decorative tree grates should be provided to both protect the trees and provide another opportunity to introduce a design element into downtown. Trees shall be of species approved by the city and shall have a one-and-one-half-inch minimum caliper DBH. Irrigation and maintenance shall be provided until trees are fully established.

(b) Street trees shall be coordinated with parking and street lights to lessen conflicts with parked cars and pedestrian movements.

(4) Outdoor Lighting.

(a) Street lighting fixtures shall be of a design approved by the city. Fourteen-foot-tall decorative street lights shall be provided at all street corners and each midblock on both sides of the right-of-way.

(b) Exterior lighting fixtures shall complement the character, style, and scale of the building to reinforce the character of La Center.

(c) Exterior lighting fixtures are encouraged to perform architectural functions, such as indirect lighting of signs and building facades. Applicants should consider the light from within the building storefront windows as it contributes to the general streetscape illumination, as well as adding animation and interest to the nightscape.

(d) Street lights and street trees shall be separated by a minimum of 15 feet. The placement of street lights and street trees shall be coordinated to minimize conflicts and give maximum amenity value while providing safety to the community.

(e) Security lighting shall be provided in all off-street parking areas to a minimum of one-half foot-candle level with a maximum pole height of 14 feet. Consistent with either a full cut-off or partial cut-off standard.

(f) All street and parking lot lighting to have optics or shielding to direct the lighting downward.

(g) Exterior lighting sconces at the pedestrian level along building facades are encouraged.

(h) Exterior shielded building lighting from the top or roofline is encouraged.

(i) Commercial lighting shall not produce glare or light trespass onto any residential use.

(5) Parking.

(a) Existing on-street parking shall be maintained.

(b) New parking areas shall be located behind buildings. Parking lots are not allowed between the front of a building and the street.

(c) Parking shall be encouraged in the internal portion of blocks along public alleys or private drives. These small parking areas may also serve as a second frontage for the adjacent businesses.

(d) Access to internal-block parking areas shall be encouraged along east/west alleys or drives accessing the north/south streets.

(e) Parking requirements of the development code for individual uses are encouraged to be met through combined parking areas rather than through individual lots.

(f) A joint parking facility for downtown employees is encouraged to be located on the periphery of the downtown area.

(g) All parking lots shall contain a consistent distribution of street trees in order to enhance the lot's appearance and to provide shade, thereby lowering air temperatures. Trees shall be provided in landscaped islands in off-street parking areas at the rate of one tree per eight spaces in the interior and, in addition, at a rate of one tree per four lineal spaces around the perimeter. Trees in the interior may be evenly spaced or clustered.

(h) Off-street parking areas that abut streets must be adequately screened with landscaping and/or a sight-obscuring wall that is a minimum of four feet tall. Required vision clearance (i.e., corner sight-distance triangles) must be maintained.

(i) Continuity and connection must be provided between adjacent parking areas for both autos and pedestrians.

(j) Driveway access to arterial streets shall be minimized. Access to local streets shall be encouraged.

(k) Access to off-street parking or parking lots within 60 feet of street corners is discouraged. Corner sight-distance triangles must be maintained.

(l) Where new drive-through facilities are permitted, access shall be prohibited from east/west streets.

(6) Building Materials.

(a) Metal is prohibited as the primary exterior building material, but it may be used for accents including awnings. Materials such as masonry, stone, stucco, and wood are encouraged. Exterior building materials shall convey an impression of durability.

(b) Decorative patterns must be incorporated where masonry is used for exterior finish. Examples of these decorative patterns include quoins, multicolored masonry units such as brick, stone, or cast stone, in layered or geometric patterns, or split-faced concrete block to simulate a rusticated stone-type construction.

(c) Wood siding must be bevel, shingle siding, or channel siding and must not be applied in a diagonal or herringbone pattern. T1-11 style siding is not permitted.

(d) Permitted colors for exterior building finishes are darkened and enriched shades of primary and secondary colors. White, earth tones, creams, and pastels of earth tones are also allowed. Primary and secondary colors, metallic colors, and black may not be used as primary wall colors, but may be used as trim colors when trim in such color does not exceed five percent of the total wall area.

(e) Accessory structures such as attached and detached canopies, utility buildings, storage sheds, sales kiosks, etc., shall conform to the design and color guidelines and be built in the same style as the main building.

(7) Roof Materials, Parapets, and Roof Pitch.

(a) Pitched roof structures shall have a minimum roof pitch of 6:12. Large buildings, meaning those with a footprint of at least 3,000 square feet, may have portions of the roof at a lesser pitch, as long as the roofline is varied with areas of lesser pitch, dormers, or other significant architectural features.

(b) Rooflines shall establish a distinctive “top” to a building. Except where impractical due solely to the size of the building, all new roofs shall be of a peak roof style. No flat, mansard, or shed roof styles are allowed. On larger buildings where peak roofs cannot be used, architectural features shall be used that exhibit a peak roof style with facades, partial roofs, and other techniques that meet the intent of these provisions. In building areas without a peak roof, a flat or shed roof shall be used. When flat roof areas are proposed, a cornice or frieze molding a minimum 12 inches high projecting a minimum six inches from the wall at the top of the wall or parapet shall be provided.

(i) Parapet corners must be stepped or the parapet must be designed to emphasize the center or primary entrance(s), unless the primary entrance is at the corner of the building.

(ii) Visible sloped roofs must be dark gray, black, or dark brown.

(iii) Visible roof materials must be wood or architectural grade composition shingle or sheet metal with standing or batten seam.

(iv) All roof- and wall-mounted mechanical, electrical, communications, and service equipment, including satellite dishes and vent pipes, must be screened from public view by parapets, walls, or by other approved means.

(8) Windows.

(a) First floor walls fronting streets shall have a minimum of 50 percent openings in the form of glazed storefronts, glazed doorways or glazed entries. Windows which allow views to the interior activity or display areas are required.

(b) Ground floor windows are also required on facades facing any parking lot. The minimum requirement is 10 percent of the facade.

(c) Window frames and shutters in proportion to the window will count against the required openings percentage of subsection (8)(a) of this section. All storefront glazing will be clear glass so as to be used for displays. Blank walls are prohibited.

(d) Windows shall include sills at the bottom and pediments at the top. Required windows must have a sill no more than four feet above grade. Where interior floor levels prohibit such placement, the sill must be raised to allow it to be no more than two feet above the finished floor level, up to a maximum sill height of six feet above grade.

- (e) Glass curtain walls, reflective glass, and painted or darkly tinted glass shall not be used.
- (f) Windows should be wood or vinyl in a color appropriate to the building.
- (g) Operable windows will be casement or sash, not sliding.
- (h) Windows on a second story and above should be vertical in proportion with dimensions not to exceed seven feet tall and five feet wide.
- (i) At least half of all the window area in upper floors must be made up of glass panes with dimensions no greater than two feet by three feet. Windows that have mullions on an approximate one-foot by one-foot grid inside double-pane glass are appropriate and are encouraged.

(9) Building Heights.

- (a) Buildings should be multi-story wherever possible.
- (b) Buildings are limited to 35 feet or two stories, whichever is greater, for office, service, and retail uses.
- (c) Buildings are limited to 45 feet or three stories, whichever is greater, when a ground level of office, service, or retail use is combined with a residential use above.

(10) Building Lighting.

- (a) All building entrances and exits must be well lighted. The minimum lighting level for building entries is four foot-candles. Lighting must be a pedestrian scale and the source light must be shielded to reduce glare.
- (b) Exterior lighting must be an integral part of the architectural design and be consistent with the overall architectural character of the downtown. Building accent lighting, sconces, detail lighting, and other lighting techniques that enhance the building design and that do not create glare or detract from other properties or the street and sidewalk are encouraged.
- (c) All exterior building lighting shall be shielded and directed downwards.

(11) Environmental Design.

- (a) Roof systems that retain and treat rainwater are encouraged.
- (b) The city encourages new buildings that are designed and built to achieve LEEDS (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) certification. [Ord. 2018-10 § 5 (Exh. C), 2018; Ord. 2009-01 § 2, 2009; Ord. 2006-17 § 1, 2006.]