



PLANNING COMMISSION STAFF MEMORANDUM

DATE: December 3, 2025
TO: Chairman Shockey and Planning Commissioners
FROM: Emily Weber, Contract Staff - Planning Department
SUBJECT: **LEGISLATIVE** – Resolution Number 15-2025 – Planning Commission discussion and recommendation on proposed text amendments regarding the Central Business District and applicable design standards.

Overview and Analysis

At the direction of the Board of Trustees, staff has prepared language for the Central Business District (CBD) Design Standards guidebook. The guidebook is intended to be a supplemental resource to reinforce the language in the Town Code related to the historic western character of Grand Lake. To support the guidebook, staff is proposing text amendments to the Town Code that modify the boundary of the CBD and reference the design standards.



Proposed Central Business District Boundary

The purpose of the proposed text amendments and guidebook is to establish clear, actionable design standards that ensure new development and redevelopment are compatible with Grand Lake's unique identity while supporting development feasibility. The guidebook enhances existing code language and further emphasizes the desired character. Additionally, the guidebook provides a more precise definition of "historic western" character in the context of Grand Lake by identifying common architectural elements that contribute to this identity.



Background

The Planning Commission and Board of Trustees held a joint work session on October 22, 2025, to discuss the overall intent and details of the proposed design standards language. Based on that discussion, staff has revised the language to reflect the feedback provided during the session.

The Board of Trustees is the decision-making body with authority to adopt legislative actions, such as code changes. The Planning Commission’s role is to review the proposed text amendments and guidebook and then make a recommendation to the Board.

Proposed Text Amendments

1. Section 12-2-26 (A) of the Municipal Code of the Town of Grand Lake with the addition of the **bold underlined** language as follows:

(A) *Mixed-Use Regulations for the CT, C and RST Districts.*

1. Mixed-use developments in the above listed districts will be subject to the following supplementary regulations. These regulations are minimum requirements and will also apply to Planned Developments within these districts.
2. Multiple family dwellings may be constructed above commercial uses provided:
 - (a) Access to dwelling units is not through commercial establishments.
 - (b) Trash, service and loading areas shall be screened from view from the dwelling units and from street entrances to dwelling units.
 - (c) Outdoor lighting associated with commercial uses within the structure, including lighting for parking, service and loading areas, shall be designed and located such that the direct source is not visible from any dwelling unit within nor shall there be any glare.
 - (d) At least two (2) means of ingress and egress from each floor of dwelling units shall be provided and that all other regulations as may pertain to fire protection be met.
3. Mixed-Use projects shall conform to the following schedule of (Private) Open Space Land Area Requirements:

Group	Gross Square Footage of Floor Area Of Structure or Land Use Area	Land Use or Floor Area	Minimum Open Space Land Area Required
I.	75%—99%	Commercial (C.)/ Office (O.)	20%
	25%—1%	Residential (R.)	
II.	50%—75%	C. & O.	25%
	50%—25%	R.	
III.	25%—50%	C. & O.	35%
	75%—50%	R.	
IV.	10%—25%	C. & O.	45%
	90%—75%	R.	
V.	1%—9%	C. & O.	50%
	99%—91%	R.	

4. In all applicable districts, the developer shall submit a proposal for the Open Space Land Area Required for Mixed-Use projects. The Open Space Land Area Requirement is to be provided on-site, in accordance with the Section 12-2-6 Definitions.



5. **When a mixed-use development is located within the Central Business District, it must comply with all applicable design standards outlined in the *Central Business District Design Standards* guidebook.**

2. Section 12-7-2 - Purpose of the Municipal Code of the Town of Grand Lake with the addition of the **bold underlined** language as follows:

An historical perspective is extremely important to the Town, therefore it is the intent that new materials and innovations will strengthen and be harmonious with the "historic western" feel of the Town. A creative and rigorous approach to the best selection and application of building materials will generate a more inviting, vibrant and harmonious appearance to the Town.

As Grand Lake becomes more densely built, there is a need to create a symbiotic relationship between buildings and public and open spaces. The Town of Grand Lake seeks to preserve the historical, rustic, and unique western small-town character of Grand Lake while also integrating its preservation with new and pioneering creative designs. Intending to help enhance quality and strengthen visual continuity while preserving historically significant properties, allowing innovation and encouraging creativity, the purpose of these standards is to stimulate creative design solutions for individual properties while promoting and preserving a sense of cohesiveness among the entire Town of Grand Lake.

A successful project will combine the design elements of composition, scale, proportion and rhythm in proposed materials, surfaces and massing, designing buildings, open and public spaces that are timeless and in character with our Town and harmonious to the human eye. In addition, materials, surfaces and massing create a sense of entry and a desirable sense of place.

The provisions of this Article shall apply to any structure, including temporary facilities, within the Town limits on or after the effective date of the Ordinance for the following:

- (A) New construction of any building.
- (B) Exterior remodeling or painting of any existing building, even if a Town of Grand Lake Building Permit is not required.
- (C) Re-roofing, enlargements, expansions of or additions to any existing building.

Where a property is located within the Central Business District and meets the above criteria, both the design standards in this Article and those in the *Central Business District Design Standards* guidebook shall apply. If a conflict arises between the provisions of this Article and the *Central Business District Design Standards*, the more stringent shall apply. Where the *Central Business District Design Standards* guidebook is silent, the provisions of this Article shall apply.

3. Section 12-7-3 - Definitions of the Municipal Code of the Town of Grand Lake with the removal of the ~~strike~~through language and the addition of the **bold underlined** language as follows:

Central Business District — Commercially zoned, or commercial transitionally zoned lots **generally** located **between Broadway Street and Hancock Street and between Park Avenue and Lake Avenue. Properties within the CBD are subject to the *Central Business District Design Standards*, a supplemental guidebook that establishes specific design requirements and development goals for this district. The guidebook also provides a map identifying the exact boundaries of the Central Business District.** ~~on or between Hancock Street and Haskell Street, on Grand Avenue, and between Hancock Street and Vine Street on Park Avenue, and between Hancock Street and Ellsworth Street on Lake Avenue.~~

4. Section 12-7-3 (C) (3) (e) of the Municipal Code of the Town of Grand Lake with the removal of the ~~strike~~through language and the addition of the **bold underlined** language as follows:



(e) *Infill/building additions in the central business district.*

1. When a new use (infill)/addition is proposed to an existing commercial development the newly constructed portion of the building should appear as an originally conceived part of the design. The new additions should match the scale and reflect the proportions of the original structure where they adjoin or are adjacent. New construction of a different height and bulk, than that of the original structure, should not occur abruptly.
2. New additions should match the existing approved architecture of the existing central business district. See for example, Figures 1 and 2 below. Such matching approval shall be in the sole discretion of the Town. The extension of canopy elements, lighting, boardwalks, planting areas, fenestration (window) patterns, structural rhythms, and use of materials should exhibit a seamless transition between existing and new construction.
3. Large setbacks from the street rights-of-way should be discouraged for new building construction.
4. New construction should not incorporate precise replication of town center architecture but utilize similar colors, materials, textures, pattern, repetition, rhythm, and proportions to achieve architectural unity.

5. All properties within the Central Business District shall meet the standards established in the Central Business District Design Standards guidebook.

Planning Commission Discussion and Next Steps

The Planning Commission is asked to review and discuss the proposed language in the Central Business District Design Standards guidebook, along with the corresponding Town Code text amendments. Following this review and discussion, the Commission is asked to provide a recommendation to the Board of Trustees.

Attachment

1. Draft Central Business District Design Standards Guidebook