

PLANNING MEMO

TO: Planning Commission
Glenn Steckman, City Manager
FROM: Erin Reinders
RE: Downtown Zoning Update - Community Meeting Overview
DATE: May 7, 2024

SUMMARY: This memo outlines where the Planning Commission is within the process of creating a new downtown zoning district. Specifically, it provides an overview of the written feedback received during the April 29th Community Meeting, a key component of the Collaboration Phase. This meeting today provides an opportunity for the Planning Commission to review this material and reflect on what you all heard as well. The Commission may want to reconsider what it was originally proposed based on this feedback. No formal action is required at this time.

BACKGROUND: To review, the Common Council requested that the City Manager work with the Planning Commission to update zoning regulations in the Front Street area of Nome. Council expressed concern that the zoning regulations had been too restrictive. The purpose of creating this new district is to help spur redevelopment or development and to encourage mixed use development in this particular area. This overall creation process can be broken down into four primary phases, summarized below. These phases are summarized below.

1. Preparation - activities we have been involved with since January when the Planning Commission came to consensus regarding the purpose and direction of this new district. This phase was January - March of 2024.
2. Collaboration - memo to Common Council, targeted outreach to potential district and informal public notices, community meeting with Planning Commission. This is our current phase.
3. Adoption - formal process directed by municipal code including formal notices and public hearings. This phase is dictated by various 30-day notice requirements. We are working to confirm the details of these requirements.
4. Post Approval Action - formal process directed by municipal code. This would take place post approval.

The Planning Commission held a Community Meeting on April 29, 2024. Approximately 40 people were in attendance. We thank all those who come out (please see the attached flier). The goal of this meeting was to seek feedback from the community on concepts such as the purpose of the district, the land uses, dimensional standards, and geographic boundary, and take that feedback into consideration as we move forward. We had initially planned on proceeding directly to the Adoption phase following the Community meeting, however, that would have required mailing out public notices prior to the Planning Commission reviewing the valuable feedback received at the Community Meeting. That review begins tonight.

DISCUSSION: Below is a summary of what was proposed by the Planning Commission and the feedback received at the Community Meeting. The meeting included a short presentation, discussion, and opportunity to mark up papers/maps or talk with Commissioners about their ideas.

Purpose. Each zoning district has an “intent section,” describing the purpose. Proposed wording is as follows: ***The downtown mixed use zoning district is intended to encourage active commercial use and building development, contextually appropriate residential uses, and allow for ample parking.*** This wording is based on guidance from the Comprehensive Plan. *There were no written comments received about this at the Community Meeting.*

Land Uses. The table below outlines Nome’s land uses by zoning districts currently in the downtown area along Front and River Streets for context as well as what is currently proposed.. This list was developed from the summary table in Chapter 18.110. *Comments received related to each use are provided in the right column.*

<u>Land Use / Zoning District</u>	<u>General</u>	<u>Commercial</u>	<u>Industrial</u>	<u>Proposed Downtown</u>	<u>Comments</u>
Residential uses					
Single family dwellings	Permitted	Conditional use	Conditional use	Not Allowed	- <i>Written support (from Nugget Inn to Steadman on Front Street).</i> - <i>Another comment said they should be allowed.</i>
Duplex dwellings	Permitted	Conditional use	Conditional use	Not Allowed	- <i>Written support (from Nugget Inn to Steadman on Front Street)</i> - <i>Another comment said they should be allowed.</i>
Multiple-family dwelling	Permitted	Conditional use	Conditional use	Permitted	- <i>Should not be allowed. (3) (One of those three stated that they were okay on First only)</i>
Mobile homes and mobile home parks	Permitted	Conditional use	Conditional use	Not allowed	- <i>Written support of not being allowed.</i>
Residential use of the upper floor above a commercial or industrial use	Permitted	Conditional use	Conditional use	Permitted	- <i>Written support.</i>
On premise dwelling for owner or caretaker of commercial use	Permitted	Permitted	Permitted	Permitted	- <i>Written support.</i>
Civic/Institutional/Public uses					
Parks and Playgrounds	Permitted	Permitted	Conditional use	Permitted	
Churches	Permitted	Permitted	Not allowed	Permitted	
Public and governmental buildings and uses	Permitted	Permitted	Permitted	Permitted	
Fire station and emergency medical aid station	Permitted	Permitted	Permitted	Permitted	

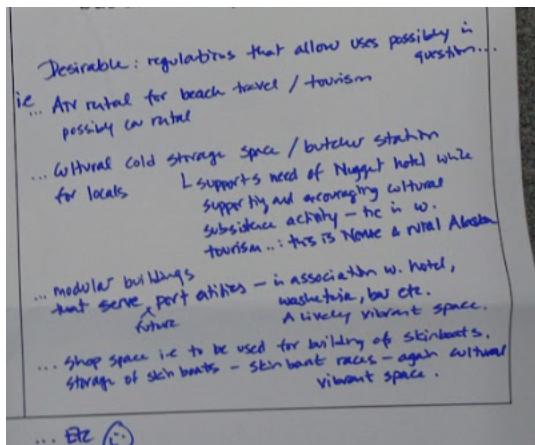
Schools	Permitted	Permitted	Not allowed	Permitted	<i>-Should not be allowed. (3) (One of those three stated that they were okay on First only)</i>
Museums and cultural facilities	Permitted	Permitted	Not allowed	Permitted	
Public utility facilities or structures	Conditional use	Not allowed	Permitted	<i>Conditional use</i>	
Snow dump and storage sites	Conditional use	Conditional use	Permitted	<i>Conditional use</i>	<i>-Should not be allowed (4) (One of those four stated that they were okay on First only)</i>
Youth correction facilities	Conditional use	Conditional use	Not allowed	<i>Not allowed</i>	
Halfway houses	Conditional use	Conditional use	Not allowed	<i>Not allowed</i>	
Correctional facilities	Conditional use	Conditional use	Not allowed	<i>Not allowed</i>	
Cemetery	Not allowed	Not allowed	Permitted	<i>Not Allowed</i>	
Interpretative area or visitors center	Permitted	Permitted	Not allowed	Permitted	
Public watershed area and related facilities	Not allowed	Not allowed	Not allowed	<i>Not allowed</i>	
Business/Commercial/Retail uses					
Hospitals, medical and dental clinics	Permitted	Permitted	Not allowed	Permitted	<i>- Should not be allowed on Front, but okay on First only.</i>
Home businesses and occupations	Permitted	Conditional use	Conditional use	Permitted	
Private storage, including junk, or small warehouse associated with residential use/home occupations	Not allowed	Conditional use	Conditional use	<i>Not allowed</i>	
Private storage, not including junk, or small warehouse associated with residential use/home occupations	Permitted	Conditional Use	Conditional use	<i>Conditional Use</i>	<i>-Should not be allowed (3)</i>
Retail and wholesale businesses	Permitted	Permitted	Permitted	Permitted	
Offices	Permitted	Permitted	Permitted	Permitted	
Restaurants, taverns and entertainment establishments	Permitted	Permitted	Permitted	Permitted	
Hotels and motels	Permitted	Permitted	Not allowed	Permitted	
Funeral homes	Permitted	Permitted	Permitted	Permitted	<i>-Should not be allowed</i>

					(3) (One of those three stated that they were okay on First only)
Clubs or fraternal, religious or philanthropic associations and union hall	Permitted	Permitted	Not allowed	Permitted	
Personal service businesses	Permitted	Permitted	Not allowed	Permitted	
Recreational facilities	Permitted	Permitted	Permitted	Conditional Use	
Day care houses and facilities	Permitted	Conditional use	Not allowed	Conditional Use	
Industrial uses					
Outdoor storage, including junk, as an accessory use to any permitted or conditional use in the district	Not Allowed	Permitted	Permitted	Not Allowed	
Outdoor storage, "not" including junk, as an accessory use to any permitted or conditional use in the district	Permitted	Permitted	Permitted	Conditional use	-Should not be allowed (3) (One of those three stated that they were okay on First only)
Incidental, small-scale manufacturing, processing, and storage of goods for wholesale or retail sale on the premises	Permitted	Permitted	Permitted	Permitted	-Should not be allowed (4) (One of those four stated that they were okay on First only)
Service stations	Conditional use	Permitted	Permitted	Not allowed	
Vehicle and equipment repair facilities	Not Allowed	Conditional use	Permitted	Not allowed	
Manufacturing, processing, assembling, wholesale or storage	Not Allowed	Not allowed	Permitted	Not allowed	
Boat marinas and docks	Not Allowed	Permitted	Permitted	Conditional use	-Should not be allowed
Marine transportation and port facilities	Not Allowed	Permitted	Permitted	Conditional use	
Navigation aids and facilities	Not Allowed	Permitted	Permitted	Not allowed	
Bulk Petroleum storage, including aviation fuel	Not Allowed	Not allowed	Permitted	Not allowed	
Junkyards, commercial, and auto wrecking yards	Not Allowed	Not allowed	Permitted	Not allowed	
Aircraft storage, loading, parking, repair and aviation related facilities	Not Allowed	Not allowed	Permitted	Not allowed	

Warehousing and storage	Conditional use	Permitted	Permitted	Not allowed	
Air transport terminals for passengers and freight	Not Allowed	Not Allowed	Permitted	Not allowed	
Transportation facilities, including bus and taxi operations	Not Allowed	Permitted	Permitted	Conditional use	
Dredging and filling	Not Allowed	Not Allowed	Permitted	Not allowed	
Dog kennels and lots	Not Allowed	Not Allowed	Conditional Use	Not allowed	
Mining of minerals, aggregate, sand, gravel or other earth products; and accessory uses and buildings	Not Allowed	Not Allowed	Not Allowed	Not allowed	
Helicopter landing pad	Permitted	Not Allowed	Permitted	Not allowed	

Following the presentation, there was a group discussion prior to breaking out. This discussion brought out the concern that perhaps there was still too much restriction in terms of the uses allowed, with single family homes and warehousing being mentioned as well as the additional hurdles of uses identified as conditional. Written feedback specific to land uses collected during the break out included:

1. Green space on southside of Front street from Bering to Steadman.
2. Recreation Facilities, Cold Storage Space and Modular Housing are desirable (associated with hotel development). More details are outlined below. There is concern that, although much of this is keeping with the intent of the new zoning district, that the listing of allowed uses would not allow for these particular uses. After our discussion, I can take a look at the listing in more detail and see how these uses might apply. (see images below)
 - a. ATV rental for beach travel and tourism, possibly car rental.
 - b. Cultural cold storage space and butcher station for locals. Support needs of Nugget Hotel while supporting and encouraging culture substance activity, tie in with tourism (this is Nome and rural Alaska).
 - c. Modular buildings. Could serve as future port amenities in association with hotel, washateria, etc. with the goal of creating vibrant space.
 - d. Shop space that could be used for building skinboats, storage of skinboats, skinboat races, again with the goal of creating vibrant space.



Dimensional Standards. The Planning Commission is currently proposing 0-foot setbacks from all property lines, keeping the 10-foot setback from drainage ditches and systems, as well as keeping the minimum lot size at 5,000 square feet.

<u>Dimension Standard</u>	<u>Current</u>	<u>Proposed</u>
Lot Size	5,000 sf	5,000 sf
Set back from ROW	10 feet	0 feet
Other set back	5 feet	0 feet
Set back from the top bank of any drainage ditch	10 feet	10 feet
Set back from a closed drainage system	10 feet	10 feet

Following the presentation, there was a group discussion about zero lot lines. The distinction was made between side yard and front yard setbacks. Snow drifts and loads with respect to neighboring structures, as well fire risk and access were mentioned as concerns related to the 0-foot side yard setbacks. It was noted that Front Street narrowed east of Steadman making the 0-foot front yard setback less desirable past Steadman.

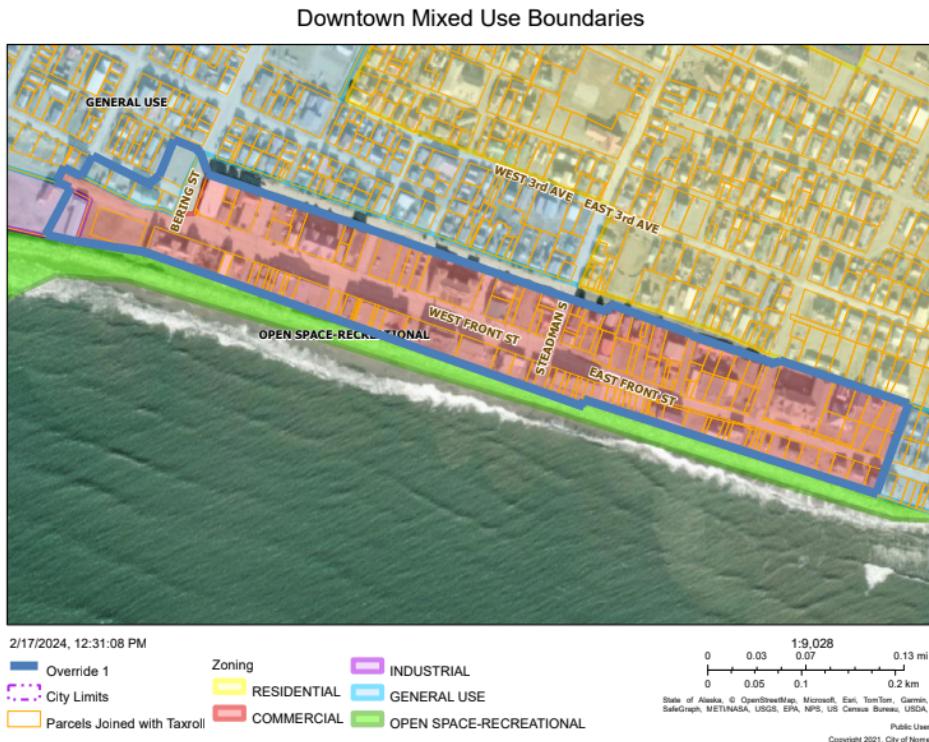
Written feedback specific to dimensional standards included:

1. 0-foot Setbacks from Mini to Steadman, and 10-foot setback east of Steadman.
2. Zero lot line not desirable for existing hotel. This was identified as a concern of current landowners and with the consideration of investment in repair of the adjacent building. Potential view obstruction was mentioned.
3. 0-foot setbacks from Nugget Hotel to Polar Bar. (see image below)



Geographical Boundaries. The Planning Commission spent a great deal of time working to determine the potential geographical boundaries for this new zoning district. In March, the Planning Commission decided to begin the collaboration phase with the boundary as shown below, which includes all of the currently zoned Commercial District downtown as well as a small area of General Use and Industrial Zoning Districts to the west of Bering Street. This includes the Mini Convention Center. This was with the

understanding that this boundary may be reduced and refined based on feedback throughout the process, including the Community Meeting.



Feedback specific to boundaries included:

1. Eastern edge should be at Steadman (3) (*Note: one was a comment specifically about the boundaries, another was a comment about setbacks from Mini to Steadman, another was a comment about land uses from Nugget Hotel to Steadman*).
2. Eastern edge should be at Mettler (2) .
3. Western edge should be at Bering and the Nugget Hotel (3) (*Note: one was a comment specifically about the boundaries, another was a comment about setback from Nugget Hotel as the western boundary, another was a comment about land uses from Nugget Hotel to Steadman*)
4. District should not be facing First, and focus on Front Street.

Other Comments. Community members were invited to share other comments as well. This list may provide insight into other projects related to Front Street.

Benches (2)	Green spaces (2)	Public restrooms	Reserve portion of vacant lot next to Mini as parking for Mini
Play area	Interpretive signage	Pretty street lamps	Diagonal Parking on Front Street
Art	Beach access	Trash cans	High cost of construction in flood prone areas
Dust control	Commercial tax incentives to revitalize Front Street	Mushing District of Nome	