

PLANNING MEMO

TO: Glenn Steckman, City Manager
FROM: Erin Reinders
RE: Downtown Zoning
DATE: 2/28/24

SUMMARY: This memo includes the following:

1. **BACKGROUND**, providing an overview of the process thus far.
2. **DISCUSSION**, focusing on points of consensus regarding boundaries, dimensional requirements, and permitted and conditional land uses; as well as next steps.

BACKGROUND: 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 and to encourage mixed use development in this particular area.

The October memo outlined the guidance from the Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Ordinance. The memo introduced two potential paths forward - new zoning district or a sub-area. Together, we came to an agreement on the path forward, a new zoning district, and developed a sound starting point for dimensional requirements, and permitted and conditional land uses.

In January we discussed the new zoning district concept with the Planning Commission. We defined a purpose/intent statement for this zoning district, began to consider potential boundaries, agreed on several dimensional requirements, and came to consensus on the majority of permitted and conditional land uses.

In February we confirmed the areas of consensus from the previous meeting, adjusted a few items related to the permitted and conditional land uses based on additional research, determined the set back from the top bank of any drainage ditch and closed drainage systems based on discussions with staff, and came to general consensus regarding the proposed boundaries of this new district.

DISCUSSION: This memo and the March Planning Commission meeting will focus on the following:

- Confirm consensus on:
 - appropriate uses for the district based,
 - dimensional requirements,
 - and proposed geographic limits.
- Discuss approach for the next steps for the collaborative outreach and formal approval process.

Confirm Consensus

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. This list was developed from the summary table in Chapter 18.110.

Land Use / Zoning District	General	Commercial	Industrial	<i>Proposed Downtown</i>
Residential uses				
Single family dwellings	Permitted	Conditional use	Conditional use	<i>Not Allowed</i>
Duplex dwellings	Permitted	Conditional use	Conditional use	<i>Not Allowed</i>
Multiple-family dwelling	Permitted	Conditional use	Conditional use	<i>Permitted</i>
Mobile homes and mobile home parks	Permitted	Conditional use	Conditional use	<i>Not allowed</i>
Residential use of the upper floor above a commercial or industrial use	Permitted	Conditional use	Conditional use	<i>Permitted</i>
On premise dwelling for owner or caretaker of commercial use	Permitted	Permitted	Permitted	<i>Permitted</i>
Civic/Institutional/Public uses				
Parks and Playgrounds	Permitted	Permitted	Conditional use	<i>Permitted</i>
Churches	Permitted	Permitted	Not allowed	<i>Permitted</i>
Public and governmental buildings and uses	Permitted	Permitted	Permitted	<i>Permitted</i>
Fire station and emergency medical aid station	Permitted	Permitted	Permitted	<i>Permitted</i>
Schools	Permitted	Permitted	Not allowed	<i>Permitted</i>
Museums and cultural facilities	Permitted	Permitted	Not allowed	<i>Permitted</i>
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>
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	<i>Permitted</i>

Public watershed area and related facilities	Not allowed	Not allowed	Not allowed	Not allowed
Business/Commercial/Retail uses				
Hospitals, medical and dental clinics	Permitted	Permitted	Not allowed	Permitted
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	Not allowed
Private storage, not including junk, or small warehouse associated with residential use/home occupations	Permitted	Conditional Use	Conditional use	Conditional Use
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
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
Incidental, small-scale manufacturing, processing, and storage of goods for wholesale or retail sale on the premises	Permitted	Permitted	Permitted	Permitted
Service stations	Conditional	Permitted	Permitted	Not allowed

	use			
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
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

Dimensional Standards. Dimensional standards in the draft ordinance are as follows. The zero foot setback from the ROW and other lot boundary lines are what differentiates this district from all other districts.

Dimension Standard	<i>Proposed</i>
Lot Size	<i>5,000 sf</i>
Set back from ROW	<i>0 feet</i>

Other set back from other lot boundary lines	<i>0 feet</i>
Set back from the top bank of any drainage ditch	<i>10 feet</i>
Set back from a closed drainage system	<i>10 feet</i>

Potential Boundaries. After much consideration, the Planning Commission determined at the February meeting, that it would be best for this new zoning district to incorporate all of the current area zoned Commercial area along Front street and First Avenue, and, in addition, extend west to incorporate a few lots past Bering Street that includes five lots currently zoned General Use and the Mini Convention Center that is zoned Industrial. Part of the rationale for this approach is that scaling back created such small remainders of the original commercial district, some lots being virtually surrounded by this new district. The attached map demonstrates this area.

Another option that had been considered, and may be worth revisiting depending on community feedback, is to have the eastern boundary stop at Steadman.

Next Steps

This process can be broken down into four primary phases. The attached chart outlines the actual timeline, but these phases are summarized below.

1. Preparation - activities we have been involved with since January where the Planning Commission came to consensus regarding the purpose and direction of this new district. This phase was January - March.
2. Collaboration - joint work sessions with Common Council, targeted outreach to potential district and informal public notices, community meeting with Planning Commission. This phase is proposed to take place March - May.
3. Adoption - formal process directed by municipal code including formal notices and public hearings. This phase is proposed to take place May - July and is dictated by various 30 day notice requirements.
4. Post Approval Action - formal process directed by municipal code. This would take place post approval planned for July.

The timeline is subject to change based on actual meeting times and availability, as well as the level of feedback received throughout the process from the community, administration, Common Council and yourselves. However, this overall approach would remain the same.