



City of Tomball

# Unified Development Code

Summary of Major Revisions

June 10, 2025

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# Overall

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## 1. Creation of a UDC

Consolidated the zoning, subdivision, signs, and manufactured homes ordinances into a single Unified Development Code (UDC).

## 2. Document Clean-Up

Completed revisions throughout the document to update and streamline the code:

- Updated outdated Vernon's Texas Codes Annotated (VTCA) references to Texas Local Government Code (TLGC)
- Added summary tables throughout
- Updated graphics to depict regulations
- Inserted flowcharts for processes to improve clarity

# Article 1. General Provisions

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## 3. Universal Procedures and Provisions (Sec. 1.03)

Created universal procedures and provisions to simplify and keep processes in an orderly manner.

## 4. Preliminary Conference Requirements with Staff (Sec. 1.03.B)

Shifted required pre-development conferences to be with City Staff and not the Planning and Zoning Commission to reflect current practices.

## 5. Plan and Permit Validity and Expiration (Sec. 1.03.E)

Added a uniform two-year lapse for Concept Plans, Site Plans and Building Permit Plans unless state-defined "progress" benchmarks are met; extensions may be granted by the Director.

# Article 2. Zoning Regulations

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## 6. Permitted Use Chart (Sec. 2.04.B)

Updated the land uses to modernize terminology while limiting the potential for creating nonconformities. Ensured each land use term is defined.

7. Use-Based Standards (Sec. 2.04.C)

Included use-based standards found previously throughout the zoning ordinance (e.g., use-based parking regulations).

8. Mixed-Use Land Use Classification (Sec. 2.04.B)

Added provisions to allow mixed-use development more broadly. Currently, mixed-use development is only allowed in the “OT and MU” zoning district, which limits its application. The updated code instead addresses mixed-use development as a use classification, which would be allowed by-right in the D, MF-1, MF-2, C, and OT districts. Only the residential types and nonresidential uses permitted in those districts would be allowed within the development.

9. Old Town District Name and Standards (Sec. 2.03.F.1)

Renamed the district for improved clarity and updated standards to align with State law. Since mixed-use development will be a use classification permitted in other districts, there is no longer a need for the “Old Town and Mixed Use” district to specify “mixed use”, so the district has been shortened to “Old Town”. Building material and related requirements have been removed to comply with current State law.

10. New MF-1 Medium Density Zoning District (Sec. 2.03.D.7)

Added a new Medium-Density Multifamily Residential (MF-1) Zoning District to allow triplexes and quadplexes to provide smaller-scale “Missing Middle” housing options. Note that this district is not currently zoned on the map and would require rezoning action to implement.

11. Accessory Dwelling Unit Provisions (Sec. 2.04.C.2.a)

Added Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) provisions to be permitted in residential districts subject to certain standards (e.g., no more than one ADU, no more than one household unit, not more than 50% of floor area of main dwelling).

12. Planned Development Flexibility (Sec. 2.02.D)

Removed the prescriptive standards for patio, zero-lot line and townhome products within Planned Developments (PDs), giving applicants broader design flexibility. PDs are now positioned as a tool for innovative projects that implement the comprehensive plan and provide a public benefit.

13. Rezoning Resubmittal Waiting Period (Sec. 2.02.B.7.f)

Added a waiting period to resubmit a denied rezoning request (12 months unless Council determines conditions changed or there is new information).

14. Site Plan Applicability (Sec. 2.02.G)

Updated the requirement to submit Site Plans to apply in all zoning districts (including residential).

15. Zoning Variance Provisions (Sec. 2.02.I)

Updated criteria to match current state law.

16. **Alternative Compliance Provisions (Sec. 2.02.K)**

Added Alternative Compliance provisions to allow City staff discretion on pre-authorized deviations to the zoning development standards requirements (i.e., reduced off-street parking requirements and alternative landscaping plans).

17. **Consolidated Dimensional Standards (Sec. 2.03.C)**

Created an overall dimensional standards section to address building height, setbacks for special situations, and sight visibility requirements.

18. **Exterior Building Material/Façade Overlay District Removed (Sec. 2.05.A)**

Eliminated the façade overlay district, as its application is now prohibited by State law.

19. **Nonresidential Design Requirements (Sec. 2.05.A.4)**

Added new design requirements for nonresidential development, including building orientation toward a public street, building articulation and offsets, roofing standards, and a requirement to achieve a minimum number of quality design elements that may be selected from a menu of architectural elements and features (e.g., materials, enhanced lighting, patio seating, display windows).

20. **Multifamily Amenity Requirements (Sec. 2.04.C.2.d)**

Added a menu of indoor, outdoor, and social area amenity options from which an applicant must select to incorporate into a multifamily development.

21. **Outdoor Lighting Regulations (Sec. 2.05.F)**

Incorporated outdoor-lighting standards to require outdoor lighting be fully shielded to prevent light trespass beyond property lines.

## Article 3. Subdivision Regulations

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22. **Plat Approval by the Community Development Director (Sec. 3.02.B)**

Delegated plat approval authority to the Community Development Director. Any subdivision requiring a waiver will require Planning and Zoning Commission approval.

23. **Minor Plats Removed**

Removed minor plat provision, as minor plats were removed from the Texas Local Government Code when the State Legislature authorized administrative approval for all plats.

24. **Application Details Moved to Checklist**

Pulled out specific plat application details and instead referenced the plat review checklist maintained by the Community Development Department. Form and content information will now be located on the application form or checklist. This allows regular updates to the plat applications as needed over time.

25. **New Plat Vacation, Right-of-Way Abandonment, and Subdivision Waiver Procedures (Sec. 3.02.F, 3.02.G & 3.02.I)**

Added clear procedures for Plat Vacations (remove an existing plat), Right-of-Way Abandonments (reverse right-of-way dedication), and Subdivision Waivers (deviations from the Subdivision Regulations authorized by the Planning & Zoning Commission).

26. **Sight Visibility Triangle Regulations (Sec. 3.04.E)**

Consolidated sight visibility triangle regulations within the UDC. Currently, Chapter 38 Article II (outside the UDC) includes portions of the regulations, while other elements are within the Zoning Regulations. The updated UDC consolidates all sight visibility triangle regulations into one section within the UDC. The applicable section of Chapter 38 Article II should be removed or reference the UDC to avoid potential future conflicts.

27. **New Maximum Block Length and Stub-Out Requirements (Sec. 3.04.E)**

Established a cap on block lengths to enhance walkability and connectivity and required street stub-outs to adjoining undeveloped parcels to secure future roadway connectivity.

28. **Trail Dedication Requirement (Sec. 3.04.L)**

Added a requirement for an easement dedication where the City's Parks, Recreation and Trails System Master Plan identifies a future trail location.

## Article 4. Signs

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29. **Sign Code Updates (Article 4)**

Clarified prohibited sign types, standardized the sign-measurement method, and clarified details for each individual sign category. Removed references to sign content to ensure neutrality consistent with Federal and State case law.

## Article 5. Definitions

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30. **Consolidated Definitions**

Consolidated all zoning, subdivision, sign, and manufactured home definitions in Article 5. Land use classifications remain in Article 2 for proximity to the Permitted Use Chart.