

UDC Text Amendment (PLN-1300023)
Staff Report – Urban Loft Multifamily Building Type
January 14, 2014

This UDC Text Amendment is being presented following the review of a petition submitted by the Planning Services Director to the Planning Commission on January 6, 2014. The Planning Commission approved the petition for consideration.

The amendment to the Unified Development Code would add an additional Lot Type to address an emerging issue related to development in the West Edge of Cheyenne. Specifically, in reviewing the vision for the West Edge project, urban residential apartment buildings have been identified as a desirable development pattern. Such housing products typically range between 3-6 stories in height, with parking often located under the building. The current Unified Development Code allows for a suburban model of multifamily building development. And while another configuration would allow for a more urban context, the Mixed Use Building Type does require a ground level commercial component. While mixed use is desirable in close proximity to residential loft projects, not all areas or projects may be able to support a retail or commercial component. It is recommended to add a new Urban Loft Lot Type to enable urban design and dimensional standards that would fit the West Edge area.

The current multifamily apartment building type which require larger building setbacks and less lot coverage allowances are appropriate for suburban contexts, but are not reasonable considering more urban contexts. Urban contexts typically see buildings constructed nearer to property lines and streets, with taller buildings and higher property coverage ratios. While a building fitting this context could be developed under the current UDC, a bundle of variances would be required.



Above: A typical urban context multifamily building. Note the building placement has minimal setbacks from streets.



Above: A residential building with parking at grade below the building.

Due to the more compact nature of this development pattern and the close proximity of the 3 to 6 story buildings to the public right of way, the design of such projects is an important consideration. In order to integrate new buildings into Cheyenne’s urban context and emphasize the relationship and orientation of buildings to public streetscapes, staff recommends that such projects be required to follow the Small Scale Commercial and Mixed Use Design Standards (6.7).

Below: A more traditional suburban apartment project includes more green area, surface parking, and garage units.



Review Criteria:

1. The amendment is in accordance with the general goals and policies of the Comprehensive Plan.
 - a. Principle 1.4: Revitalization and infill in our urban core will provide choices for housing, employment, and services in our older neighborhoods and districts.

Policy 1.4.a: Infill Opportunities

The community will support infill in existing neighborhoods, but ensure that infill is compatible with neighborhoods and districts through design standards (e.g., to address scale, height, and character of infill as it relates to existing development).

- b. Principle 2.3: Our future urban neighborhoods will contain a mix of housing types, styles, and densities.

Policy 2.3.a: Mix of Housing Types

The community will strongly encourage using a variety of housing types and models, sizes, and price ranges in new neighborhoods to provide expanded housing options. Incorporating a mix of housing types at both the neighborhood scale and the block scale helps create varied and interesting streetscapes and a diverse community.

- 2. The amendment is consistent with the Wyoming Statutes, and specifically the Municipal Planning and Zoning Statutes.
 - a. The proposed amendment is in accordance with the Comprehensive Plan and is consistent with the referenced statutes.
- 3. The amendment promotes the general health, safety and public welfare.
 - a. The amendment would create opportunities for more diverse housing options, increasing opportunities for workforce housing, in locations that are more urban in context, typically nearby existing utilities and service areas.

Proposed Lot Type Dimensional Standards:

Type NB3: Urban Loft Building

Lot Area: 2,000 or up to ½ block, whichever is greater

Lot Frontage: 25' – 200'

Setbacks: Front: 0' – 20'

Side: 0' if party wall [a] or corner lots, 5' in all other cases

Rear: 15', 5' if alley loaded

Building Height: 2 to 6 stories

Total Lot Coverage (max.): 90%

[a] 0' setbacks on attached buildings require a party wall meeting all building code standards and proper designation on a recorded plat.

(Adjust lot type numbers in NB to make room for the new NB3, shift remaining higher numeral.)

Add “urban loft building” to residential definitions and land use table;

Urban Loft Building: A residential use in a building designed for more than two principal dwelling units and situated on a single fee simple lot. This building type contemplates a taller multifamily building, often with parking structured or at grade with the building above, located in a walkable, mixed use context.

Use Table:

Residential Uses: Urban Loft Building

NR-3: C 5.3.9. d. Add 13. Urban Loft (Type NB3). 5.3.9.f. Add “Due to the nature of the Urban Loft Lot Type, the Mixed Use and Small Scale Commercial Design Standards in Section 6.7 shall apply for this lot type in the NR-3 District.

NB: P

MUB: P Clarify Design Standards 6.7 Applicable under 5.4.5.f.1. – Add “Urban Loft” to F1.

MUR: C Clarify Design Standards 6.7 Applicable under 5.4.4.f.1. – Add “Urban Loft” to F1.

6.7.2. Add “e. NR-3, for the Urban Loft Building Type.”

Staff Recommendation:

Staff recommends approval of the text amendment.