



COUNCIL STAFF REPORT

CITY COUNCIL of SALT LAKE CITY

TO: City Council Members

FROM: Brian Fullmer
Policy Analyst

DATE: September 10, 2024

RE: Driveways and Loading Text Amendment
PLNPCM2023-00937

Item Schedule:

Briefing: September 10, 2024

Set Date: September 17, 2024

Public Hearing: October 1, 2024

Potential Action: October 15, 2024

BRIEFING UPDATE

During the September 3, 2024 briefing, a question was raised about whether public safety access was considered. Planning staff responded that the proposal was circulated to City departments and divisions and no concerns were raised. No significant concerns or questions were raised and the public hearing was set for October 1.

The following information was provided for September 3, 2024 Council meeting. It is included again for background purposes.

The Council will be briefed about a text amendment requested by Mayor Mendenhall regarding driveway and loading area standards in the City code parking chapter. Planning staff found that some standards created unintended consequences. They worked with the Transportation Division on elements of the proposal that correct the issues, address vehicular needs, and support good urban design principles. The Administration noted issues with the following driveway and loading standards which are summarized in the additional information section below:

- The maximum driveway width applies to the combined width of all driveways on a property.
- Applicability of these standards.
- The terms “driveway” versus “access.”
- Required loading areas and design.

The draft ordinance includes the following amendments:

- Eliminates the standard for maximum driveway width.



- Additional regulations for the maximum number of curb cuts and distance between these cuts and street corners will help reduce sidewalk interruptions.
- Adds the ability for curb cuts to be installed for every additional 250 feet of street frontage.
- Distinguishes between “driveway” and “drive approach” and incorporates consistent use of the terms to provide clarity.
- Revises use of terms in City code such as “loading berth,” “dock,” and “area” to “loading facilities” for clarity and consistency.

Planning staff initially recommended eliminating the requirement to provide off street loading facilities. They believed for some uses there isn’t enough demand for loading areas to justify the required space that could potentially be used for other purposes. Planning’s opinion was that a loading area could be provided if needed.

The Planning Commission first reviewed the proposal at its March 27, 2024 meeting and held a public hearing at which no one spoke. Commissioners expressed concern that if there is not a requirement for loading facilities at multi-family developments, they may not be provided, and the street would be used for loading, resulting in blocked traffic. The Commission tabled the proposal to give Planning staff time to address this concern.

The Commission reviewed the revised proposal at its May 8, 2024 meeting. Planning staff retained the loading facilities requirement in the revision. In addition, Planning recommended reducing the required vertical clearance for loading facilities in multi-family developments with 80 units or more from 14 feet to nine feet. The reasoning provided is that it may result in taller than average parking garage ceiling height, thereby taking space that could be utilized for other uses such as additional housing units. Commissioners were concerned that a minimum nine-foot loading facility height for multi-family developments recommended by Planning staff might not be sufficiently high to accommodate moving trucks.

A public hearing was held at which no one spoke. **The Commission voted unanimously to forward a positive recommendation to the Council with an additional recommendation that the 14-foot vertical clearance for loading facilities at multi-family developments is retained. The Commission also recommended the City Council “look at the standard of when the loading dock is required based on number of dwelling units or configuration of units within the building.”**

The draft ordinance maintains a requirement for loading facilities and a minimum of 14 feet vertical clearance for loading areas.

Goal of the briefing: Review the proposed text amendment and determine if the Council supports moving forward with the proposal.

POLICY QUESTIONS

1. Council Members may wish to discuss whether they support Planning staff’s updated recommendations which received Planning Commission support.
2. The Council may wish to discuss whether to include loading facilities in multi-family and other developments, and the criteria for when to include them.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Issues with Driveway Standards:

- Maximum Combined Driveway Width. Maximum driveway width applies to the combined width of all driveways on a property and varies depending on zoning district. In some districts such as manufacturing, the maximum combined driveway width of 50 feet is insufficient to meet the needs of large trucks that service the properties.

To address this the Administration proposes regulating individual driveway approach widths. It would better align the number of driveways and widths of each with the property use and size while regulating curb cuts.

- Applicability of the Driveway Width Standards. Under the current code driveway width standards apply to front and corner side yards. In zoning districts without a requirement for these yards to apply the width to, unlimited driveway widths are possible, which is inconsistent with the standard's purpose.

The proposal applies the width standard to drive approaches and requires that driveways must match the drive approach.

- Driveway versus Access. The proposal also clarifies that driveways provide vehicle access on private property, while a drive approach is in the public right of way and provides access from there to private property. Proposed language will provide consistent use of the terms.

Issues with Loading Standards:

- Consistency with Language. Various terms are found in City code that refer to loading including area, berth, and dock. The proposal eliminates these and uses the term "loading facility" uniformly.

KEY CONSIDERATIONS

Planning staff identified two key considerations related to the proposal, found on pages 4-5 of the March 27, 2024 Planning Commission staff report, and summarized below. For the complete analysis, please see the Planning staff report.

Consideration 1 – How the proposal helps implement city goals and policies identified in adopted plans:

Planning staff found that the proposed amendment aligns with guiding principles and initiatives found in *Plan Salt Lake* including Transportation and Mobility, Beautiful City, and Economy. Planning noted that the changes are intended to align urban design goals while providing vehicle access to private property that supports use of the property without negatively affecting transportation goals.

Consideration 2 – Impact created by proposed changes:

As discussed above, Planning staff found that combined maximum driveway widths of 50 feet on a property is insufficient for developments in some areas, particularly in industrial zones. It is Planning staff's opinion that allowing a maximum driveway and approach width of up to 30 feet for each driveway will accommodate the needs of large trucks and industrial uses.

Also noted above, Planning staff initially recommended removing the requirement for loading facilities for certain uses. They also recommended reducing the minimum height for loading facilities from 14 feet to nine feet. As a reminder, the Planning Commission expressed concerns with these changes. The draft ordinance does not include these changes.

ANALYSIS OF STANDARDS

Attachment B (pages 14-15) of the March 27, 2024 Planning Commission staff report outlines zoning text amendment standards that should be considered as the Council reviews this proposal. The standards and findings are summarized below. Please see the Planning Commission staff report for additional information.

Factor	Finding
Whether a proposed text amendment is consistent with the purposes, goals, objectives, and policies of the City as stated through its various adopted planning documents.	<i>Complies</i>
Whether a proposed text amendment furthers the specific purpose statements of the zoning ordinance.	<i>Complies</i>
Whether a proposed text amendment is consistent with the purposes and provisions of any applicable overlay zoning districts which may impose additional standards.	<i>Complies</i>
The extent to which a proposed text amendment implements best current, professional practices of urban planning and design.	<i>Complies</i>

PROJECT CHRONOLOGY

- November 15, 2023 – Application accepted and assigned to Madison Blodgett, Principal Planner.
- November 2023-February 2024 – Petition reviewed internally, and staff drafted language to support goals of the petition.
- November 16, 2023 –
 - Notice to all recognized community councils.
 - Application posted for the online open house.
- March 15, 2024 – Planning Commission agenda posted to website, emailed to the listserv, and notice of public hearing posted at libraries.
- March 27, 2024 – Planning Commission meeting and public hearing. Item was tabled.
- April 26, 2024 – Planning Commission agenda posted to website and emailed to the listserv.
- May 8, 2024 – Planning Commission meeting and public hearing. Positive recommendation with additional recommendations was forwarded.
- June 25, 2024 – Signed ordinance from Attorney’s Office received by Planning Division.
- July 19, 2024 – Transmittal received in City Council Office.