

REZONE SYRACUSE

A Citywide Zoning Update



NYSERDA

CLARION ASSOCIATES, LLC

In association with:
Environmental Design & Research (EDR)
Costello, Cooney & Fearon

Meeting Overview

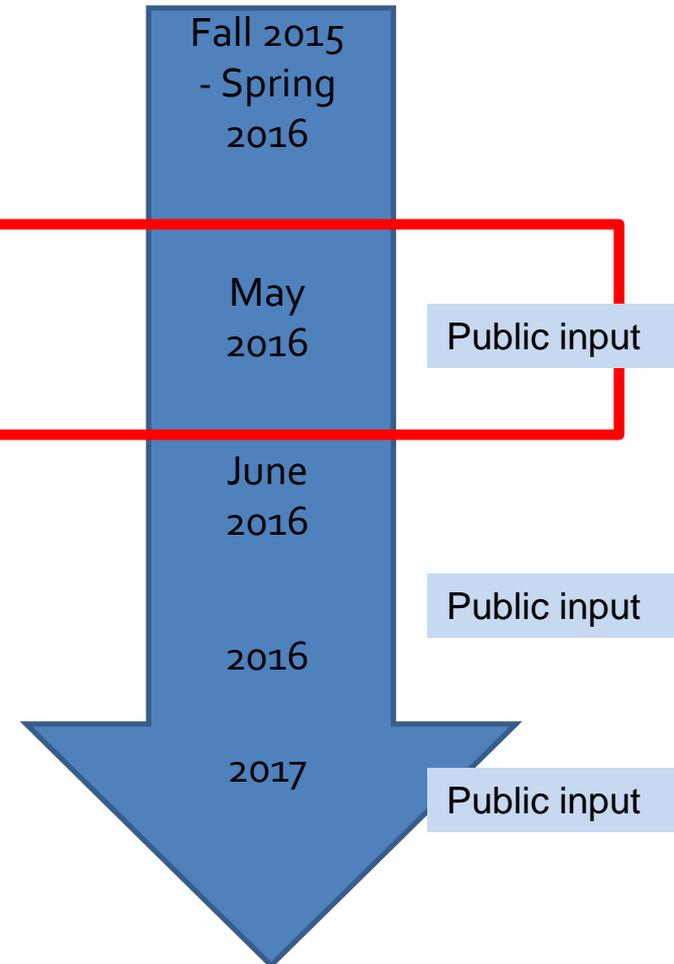
- **Overview of ReZone Syracuse Project**
- **Summary of Assessment Report**
- **Next Steps**

Project Goals

- Protect and enhance the **character and "sense of place"** of Syracuse's neighborhoods
- Ensure **high-quality, attractive design** throughout the City
- Promote **environmentally sustainable** land use patterns, transportation options, and site plans
- Ensure that development regulations and review processes are **efficient, predictable, and transparent**

Project Overview

- Project Initiation
- Research and Analysis
- **Technical Review and Assessment Report**
- Annotated Outline
- Content Drafting
- Final Review and Adoption of UDO and Map



Technical Review

- **Fall 2015**

- Team begins review and analysis:**

- How is the current ordinance working well?
 - How is the current ordinance ineffective or difficult to use?
 - Consistency between actual policies/ practices and adopted plans/ regulations?
 - Changes necessary to comply with NY laws?

Outreach

- Stakeholder interviews
- Staff interviews
- Survey
- Project Advisory Committee

City of Syracuse - Zoning Ordinance and Map Revision

Questions for Discussion

As part of our initial outreach, the project team would love to hear from citizens and other stakeholders on the strengths and weaknesses of the current land use regulations. We have developed a short list of questions for your consideration, below. Please feel free to respond to all of the questions, or just those for which you have feedback. This survey is also available online at the city's website. We encourage you to pass this information along to others community members who may be interested in the future of Syracuse's land use regulations.



Generally

1. Do you use the land use regulations? If so, how?
2. What sections of the Syracuse land use regulations do you believe are working particularly well and should be retained with few, if any, changes?
3. Are there particular weaknesses of land use regulations? If so, what are they?
4. How could the way you access regulatory information be improved?

Land Uses and Zoning Districts

5. Are the regulations implementing the City's newly adopted Comprehensive Plan? If not, how could the regulations be improved to implement the Comprehensive Plan?
6. What types of land uses would you like to see in Syracuse?
7. Are there particular land uses in Syracuse that are problematic or otherwise difficult to manage?
8. Are there specific examples of development in Syracuse that you would like to see more of?

Development Standards

9. Do the current regulations result in high-quality development? If not, what are some areas where you believe the regulations could be improved? (e.g. Building design, parking, landscaping, signage, etc.)
10. Are there ways in which the development standards are too restrictive, or areas where the code should be relaxed?
11. Are there particular elements of the regulations that are challenging to enforce? (e.g. off-street parking and loading, landscaping, outdoor storage, fences and screening?)

Administration and Procedures

12. Do the development approval procedures result in a fair, predictable, and timely process? If not, how could the procedures be improved?
13. How do you stay informed about City projects?

Other Comments or Suggestions?

Do you have recommendations for other topics that should be considered or addressed in this process? Are there groups or individuals that you would like to have contacted for briefings or comments on the current land use regulations?

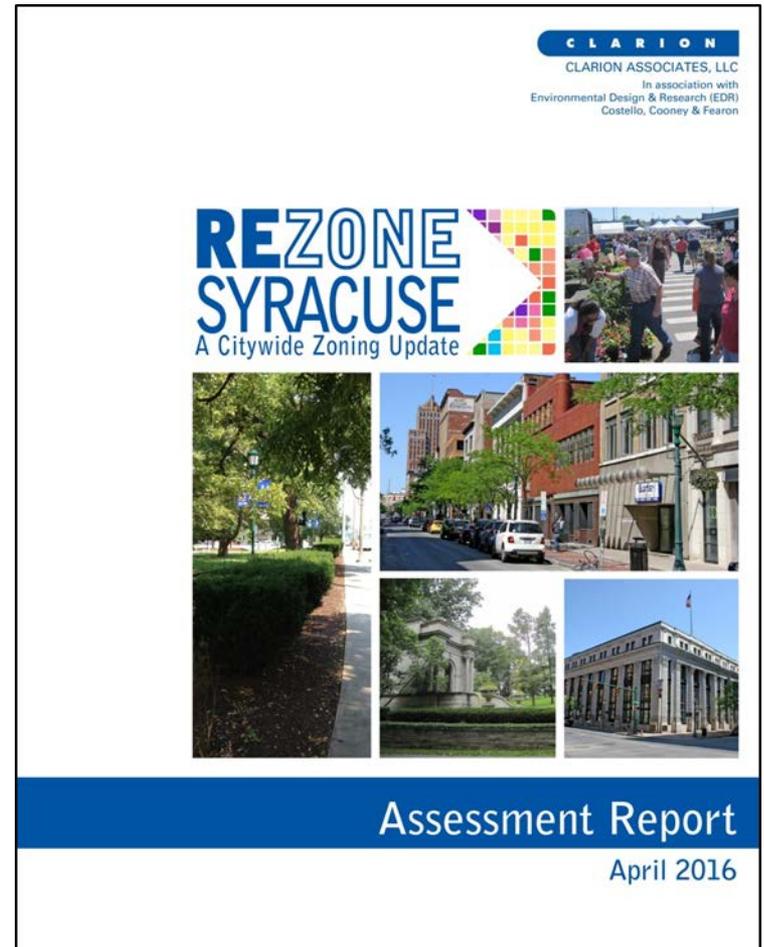
We welcome and appreciate any other feedback you can provide. Please contact:

Owen Kerney

Assistant Director, City Planning
Syracuse – Onondaga County Planning Agency
OKerney@syrgov.net (315) 448-8110

Assessment Report

1. Create a User-Friendly Ordinance
2. Update the Zoning Districts to Implement the LUDP
3. Modernize the Land Uses
4. Streamline the Development Review Procedures
5. Introduce Uniform Standards to Improve the Quality of Development



Create a User-Friendly Ordinance Assessment

- Challenging organization
- Regulations scattered (e.g., parking)
- Terms not well-defined

C-I-6

Trees may be located within the required front yard provided all branches are trimmed up to a height of seven (7) feet.

4. Type:

- Screening devices permitted within required front yards shall be of an open design such as chain link, ornamental iron, rail, and picket where the ratio between space and fence material is at least 50:50 or its equivalent. Opaque fences such as basket-weave and stockade are not permitted within the required front yard.
- Barbed wire or electrical screening devices shall not be used. Exception to this prohibition shall apply to properties zoned Industrial A and B which are located farther than five hundred (500) feet from property zoned residential or used for residential purposes.
- Screening devices required for off-street parking facilities shall be constructed in accordance with the requirements of Part C, Section III, Article 1 and Part C, Section I, Article 5 of the Zoning Ordinance.

5. Maintenance:

All screening devices and plantings shall be maintained in a sound and safe condition at all times.

6. Nonconforming Screening Devices:

Where a lawful screening device exists at the effective date of adoption or amendment of this Article that could not be constructed under the terms contained herein by reasons of restrictions on height, visibility characteristics, location, or any other requirement concerning said screening device, such screening device may be continued so long as it remains otherwise lawful, subject to the following provisions:

- No such screening device may be enlarged or altered in a way that increases its nonconformity, but any such screening device or portion thereof may be altered to decrease its nonconformity.
- Where a screening device is damaged due to any cause, including deterioration due to the elements, or is declared unsafe, and the cost of restoration, or correction exceeds 50% of the replacement cost of the entire screening device, the same shall not be so corrected or restored except in compliance with the provisions of this Article.
- Should such a screening device or portion thereof be relocated within a lot, that portion so relocated shall be subject to the provisions of this Article.
- Screening devices heretofore allowed by special act of the Common Council of the City of Syracuse shall be continued subject to the restrictions set forth in said special legislative acts but otherwise subject to the provisions of this Paragraph 6.

7. Passageway Restrictions:

No screening device or portion thereof in excess of two and one-half (2½) feet in height shall be located closer than three (3) feet to the exterior wall of a principal or accessory structure, except where said screening device is connected to said exterior wall or terminated at a post or similar fixture adjacent to said exterior wall. For the purpose of avoiding narrow passageways, that portion of a screening device terminating at the exterior wall of a principal or accessory structure or to a post or fixture adjacent thereto, shall not have an interior angle with reference to the exterior wall of said structure less than forty five (45) degrees.

2

Create a User-Friendly Ordinance

Approaches

- Create a clear organization
- Define all key terms
- Improve page layout

Dynamic Header

Prominent Titles

Nested Text

Balance Between Text and White Space

Illustrations with Captions

Adoption Date
Page Numbers

District-Specific Development Standards
Town Center Residential District
Subsection 5.3. Site Layout and Building Organization

5.3 Site Layout and Building Organization

A. INTENT

- (i) To ensure the layout and organization of infill development is compatible with the varied pattern of established residential development in the Town Center Residential District, and
- (ii) To facilitate a range of housing options within walking distance of the Main Street District.

B. CONTEXTUAL FRONT YARD SETBACKS

- (i) Town Center Residential development shall comply with standards for Contextual Front Yard Setbacks as contained in Section 2 of this Article (Figure 10)
- (ii) Where an established pattern of setbacks has not been established along the block by three or more homes, front yard setbacks shall be a minimum of:
 - (1) 10 feet for detached single-family, and
 - (2) 15 feet for townhomes and multi-family.

Figure 10

SITE LAYOUT AND BUILDING ORIENTATION: TOWN CENTER RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT

1 Contextual front yard setback not applicable where less than three existing homes exist on a block

2 Minimum front yard setback applies

3 Existing homes oriented towards street

4 Introduction of infill development is coordinated with existing development

5 Multi-family buildings with multiple front setbacks provide setbacks along each street frontage

Morrisville Town Center Code—Final Draft, December 2009 FZB Recommendation Version

49

Create a User-Friendly Ordinance Approaches

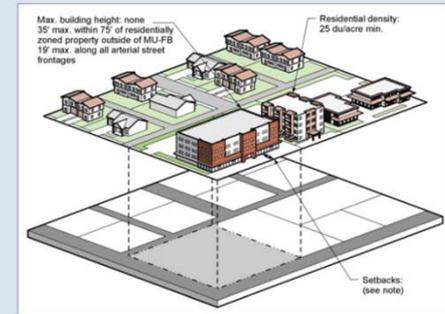
- Add graphics, tables, photos, and other visual aids



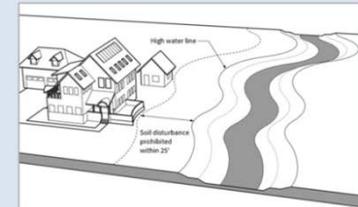
1 Use of similar roof forms enhances compatibility of infill within established neighborhood.

2 Use of contrasting roof forms on infill home is incompatible with the character of the historic home it adjoins.

Sample graphic to illustrate an important concept (infill) in another ordinance.



This recent drawing illustrates some of the basic dimensional requirements for a mixed-use zoning district. Each draft zoning district in this community includes a similar graphic to depict general lot and building dimensional standards.



The graphics above were recently developed for the Town of Frisco, Colorado. The drawing on the left illustrates stream buffer requirements, and the drawing on the right depicts basic building design standards in the residential overlay district. Throughout Frisco's draft updated code, Clarion used this simplified, yet elegant black and white style template for each of the graphics produced.

The draft drawing to the right illustrates building height requirements for a small town along their Main Street. For particularly complex provisions, graphics like these go a long way in communicating the minimum requirements.



Update Districts to Implement LUDP *Assessment*

- **Some zoning districts are obsolete, are overly detailed, or too restrictive**
- **Character areas from Land Use & Development Plan not well-reflected**

Existing Syracuse Zoning District Line-Up	
RA-1	Residential District, Class A-1
RA	Residential District, Class A
RAA	Residential District, Class AA
RA-2	Residential District, Class A-2
RB-1	Residential District, Class B-1
RB-1T	Residential District, Class B-1 Transitional
RB	Residential District, Class B
RB-T	Residential District, Class B Transitional
RC	Residential District, Class C
RS	Residential Services District
OA	Office District, Class A
OB	Office District, Class B
BA	Local Business District, Class A
CBD-R	CBD – Retail District
CBD-OS	CBD – Office and Service District
CBD-OSR	CBD – Office and Service District (Restricted)
CBD-GS	CBD – General Service District
CBD-GSA	CBD – General Service A District
CBD-LB	CBD – Local Business District
CBD-HDR	CBD – High Density Residential District
CBD-MDR	CBD – Medium Density Residential District
CA	Commercial District, Class A
CB	Commercial District, Class B
IA	Industrial District, Class A
IB	Industrial District, Class B
PID	Planned Institutional District
HSD	Highway Service District Class A
P	Preservation District
PDD	Planned Development District
PSD	Planned Shopping District

Update Districts to Implement LUDP Approach

- Introduce an updated district line-up to address potential:
 - Consolidation
 - Renaming
 - Elimination
 - New districts

Existing Syracuse Zoning District Line-Up	
RA-1	Residential District, Class A-1
RA	Residential District, Class A
RAA	Residential District, Class AA
RA-2	Residential District, Class A-2
RB-1	Residential District, Class B-1
RB-1T	Residential District, Class B-1 Transitional
RB	Residential District, Class B
RB-T	Residential District, Class B Transitional
RC	Residential District, Class C
RS	Residential Services District
OA	Office District, Class A
OB	Office District, Class B
BA	Local Business District, Class A
CBD-R	CBD – Retail District
CBD-OS	CBD – Office and Service District
CBD-OSR	CBD – Office and Service District (Restricted)
CBD-GS	CBD – General Service District
CBD-GSA	CBD – General Service A District
CBD-LB	CBD – Local Business District
CBD-HDR	CBD – High Density Residential District
CBD-MDR	CBD – Medium Density Residential District
CA	Commercial District, Class A
CB	Commercial District, Class B
IA-LI	Industrial District, Class A Light Industrial
IB-HI	Industrial District, Class B Heavy Industrial
PID	Planned Institutional District
HSD	Highway Service District Class A
P	Preservation District
PDD	Planned Development District
PSD	Planned Shopping District

Modernize Land Uses *Assessment*

- Each district has a disorganized and inconsistent list of highly specific uses

SECTION III LOCAL BUSINESS DISTRICTS

Article 2 Local Business District, Class A

1. Purpose and Intent:

The intent of this district is to provide areas within the City of Syracuse, but outside of the Central Business District, which permit the intensive development of land for mixed residential, retail, service and certain industrial uses. The specific purpose of this district is to create local and general business areas which provide goods and services to the public requiring both direct and frequent access; and to provide compatibility of residential and nonresidential land uses by permitting retail business and service uses that have operating characteristics of such a degree so as not to be considered hazardous, obnoxious, deleterious or a nuisance to the uses permitted in and adjacent to this district, or to the public that this district is intended to serve.

2. Uses Permitted:

- a. Local retail and service stores, including, but not limited to department stores, catering services, radio and television stations (but not to include transmitting facilities or accompanying antennae; provided however, that this prohibition shall not include transmitting facilities normally associated with mobile communication units).
- b. Office buildings, hotels, motels, banks, tourist lodging houses, but not so-called tourist camps or cabins.
- c. Studios, galleries, undertaking establishments and public buildings.
- d. Dry cleaning and dyeing, provided that not more than five (5) employees are engaged in said dry cleaning and dyeing business and that same is conducted without objectionable or dangerous machinery or processes, odors, fumes, vibration or noise.
- e. Restaurants (as limited by Part C, Section IV, Article 2), business and commercial schools, trade and vocational schools.
- f. Job printing plants.
- g. There may also be erected, altered or used so-called "frozen food locker plants" (but not including so-called cold storage warehouses), for storage of food and meat for individual consumers for their own immediate families' private consumption only, but not for resale either at retail or wholesale, provided further that no such plant shall be authorized or permitted which permits the slaughtering of any animals thereon or objectionable machinery, or processes or objectionable odors, fumes, dust, vibration or noises.
- h. Animal hospitals, clinics, and dog kennels are also permitted; provided, any structure or area used for such purpose, including pens and exercise yards shall be at least two hundred (200) feet from any residential district.

Modernize Land Uses Approaches

- Create a consolidated use table
- Review uses by district
- Establish use-specific standards (e.g., corner store?)

TABLE 5.1-1 TABLE OF ALLOWED USES
 ● = Permitted ○ = Conditional Use
 Blank cell = Not allowed

Use Category	Use Type	Residential					Commercial/ Mixed-Use					Other			Use-specific Standards	
		R-S	R-N	R-L	R-M	R-H	AC	CO	CT	CC	MU	OS	PR	PF		
RESIDENTIAL USES																
Household Living	Attached or stand-alone townhouse			●	●	●										
	Cabin housing		●	○	●	●				●	○					5.2.2
	Duplex		●	●	●	●										
	Fractional ownership unit					○	●			○	○					
	Multi-unit dwellings				●	●	○									
	Residential dwelling unit									○	○					
	Residential dwelling unit above ground floor commercial									●	●					
	Residential dwelling unit not along Main Street										●					
	Single-household detached dwelling	●	●	●	●	●										
Group Living	Group care facility					○										
PUBLIC, INSTITUTIONAL, AND CIVIC USES																
Community and Cultural Facilities	Activities for conservation of natural resources and the environment														●	
	Arts and entertainment center						●	●		●	●					

Modernize Land Uses

Approaches

TABLE 4.1-1 TABLE OF ALLOWED USES

P = Permitted C = Conditional Use		Residential					Mixed-Use			Non-Residential and Other				Use-Specific Regulations
Use Category	Use Type	R A	R T	R 6	R 1 2	R 1 8	M U R	M U C	M U T C	C	L I	O S	P S	
RESIDENTIAL USES														
Household Living	Dwelling, duplex		C	P	P	P	P							4.2.1.A.
	Dwelling, live/work						P	P	P	P	P			4.2.1.B.
	Dwelling, mobile home	C	C											
	Dwelling, multi-family					P	P	P	P					4.2.1.C.
	Dwelling, single-family detached	P	P	P	P	P	P							
	Dwelling, timeshare						C	C	C					
	Dwelling, townhouse		C		P	P	P	P	P					4.2.1.E.
	Mobile home park	C	C											4.2.1.D.
Group Living	Group living facility, large							C	C	C				
	Group living facility, small (Type A)	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	C	C				
	Group living facility, small (Type B)				C	C	P	P	C					
	Nursing care home				P	C	P	P	P				P	
	Nursing care facility				C	C	C	C	C	C			P	
PUBLIC , INSTITUTIONAL, AND CIVIC USES														
Community and Cultural Facilities	Government administration and civic buildings						C	P	P	P				P
	Social, fraternal lodges						C	P	P	P				P
	Public assembly	C	C	C	C	C	P	P	P	P				P
	Public safety facility	C	C	C	C	C	C	P	P	P	P	P	P	
Child Care Facilities	Child care center				C	C	C	P	P	P				C

Streamline Review Procedures Assessment

Zoning Reviews & Approval Paths

Typical Review Times	No Outside Referrals	Referral to Outside Agency(ies)
Administrative Reviews:	3 - 4 weeks	5 - 7 weeks
Public Hearings (PC & BZA):	6 - 7 weeks	8 - 12 weeks

Other Common Factors Affecting Review Times:	
• Incomplete submissions	• Complexity of project
• Noncompliance with Zoning ordinance or other regulations	

Planning Commission: Public hearings are held for the Planning Commission's review of:

- **Special Permits** – depending on the zoning district, the following uses commonly require a Special Permit:
 - Parking Lots
 - Gas Stations
 - Car Wash
 - Care Homes
 - Restaurants
 - Bed & Breakfast
 - Waste Oil transport & underground storage
 - Indoor Amusement & Recreation
 - Light and Heavy Duty Motor Vehicle Repair
- **Other Planning Commission Reviews:**
 - Resubdivisions
 - Site Plan Reviews
 - Abandonments
 - Time Extensions
 - Planned Development Districts & Project Plan Reviews
 - Project Site Reviews, if not approved Administratively
 - Appeals of decisions made by Zoning Administrator
- **Multi Building Reviews**
- **Three Mile Limit Reviews**
- **Consideration of Protected Sites**
- **Changes of Occupancy**
- **Planned Development Districts & Project Plan Reviews**
- **Project Site Reviews, if not approved Administratively**
- **Appeals of decisions made by Zoning Administrator**

Board of Zoning Appeals: Public hearings are held for the Board of Zoning Appeals' review of proposals to use land in a manner not permitted by right in the City of Syracuse Zoning Ordinance, as amended.

Use Variances – waivers to allow the use of land or structure in a manner otherwise prohibited

Area Variances – waivers for the dimensional or physical requirements such as setbacks, density, area, etc.

Administrative Reviews: The Zoning Administrator reviews Coverage Waivers, Sign Waivers, Lot Alterations, Encroachments, and Project Site Review – Project evaluation based on and compared with adopted plans, design standards, or the surrounding characteristics, when use is allowed by right. Applies to commercial properties and projects involving more than four dwelling units for:

- New construction
- Additions
- Exterior renovations facing street, or re-orientation of existing buildings
- Demolition of building & reclamation of sites
- Projects affecting Architecturally Significant properties or properties located within a National Register district, individually listed, or eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places.

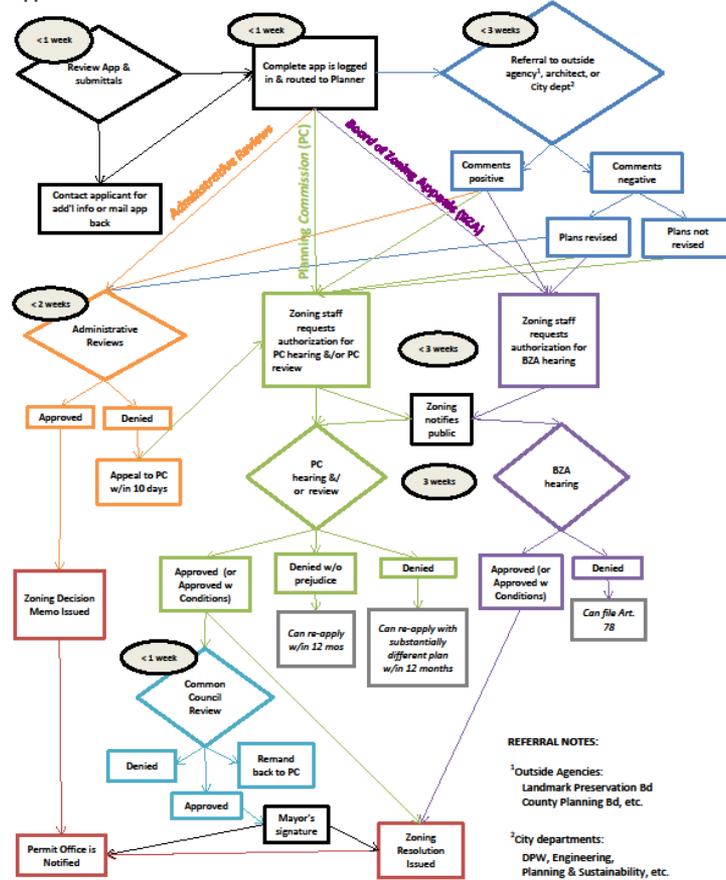
Outside Agency Reviews: If required, these reviews are in addition to review(s) by the Zoning Administrator, Planning Commission, or Board of Zoning Appeals

- **SLPB - Landmark Preservation Board:** For properties located within a National Register district, individually listed, or eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places.
- **OCPB - Onondaga County Planning Board:** NYS law requires Zoning to refer projects within 500' of a municipal, county or state road, facility, building, etc. to the OCPB.
- **City Departments:** Projects involving drainage, paving, street cuts, curb cuts, and other construction issues may be referred to Engineering, DPW, Planning & Sustainability and/or other City departments for their review.
- **Architects contracted by City** - plans may be referred to architects for design comments & recommendations

Syracuse Common Council: Reviews recommendations for approval made by the Planning Commission

- Council approval is required for Special Permits, Abandonments and other types of applications

Rev 10-17-11



REFERRAL NOTES:

- 1 Outside Agencies: Landmark Preservation Bd County Planning Bd, etc.
- 2 City departments: DPW, Engineering, Planning & Sustainability, etc.

Streamline Review Procedures

Assessment

- **Important procedural steps are not clear**
- **Project Site Review is complex**
- **All development proposals (big or small) subject to essentially the same procedures**
- **General inflexibility results in many variance, waivers, or exceptions**

Streamline Review Procedures

Approaches

- **Clarify responsibilities and standardize procedures**
- **Incorporate existing procedures that work well**



Streamline Review Procedures

Approaches

- **Introduce new procedures**
 - New site plan review process (to replace PSR)
 - Major v minor project thresholds
 - Expanded administrative approvals



Introduce Development Quality Standards *Assessment*

- **Few citywide development standards**
- **Ordinance does not encourage infill or redevelopment**
- **Few neighborhood protection standards**

Introduce Development Quality Standards

Approaches

- **Clearly state City's standards up-front:**
 - Implement adopted plans
 - Save time and money
 - Provide greater predictability and consistency
 - Focus more on building form and quality

- **Parking, landscaping, signs**
 - Consolidate, update, enhance

Introduce Development Quality Standards

Approaches

- **New citywide building and site standards**

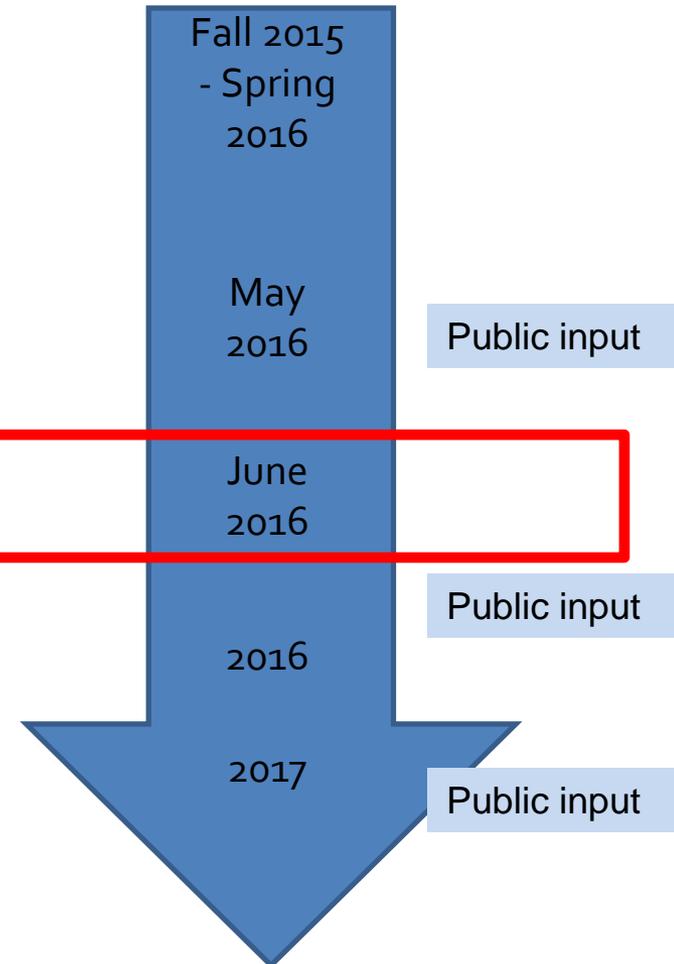
- Commercial
- Multi-family
- Neighborhood transitions



- **Integrate updated preservation ordinance prepared by staff**

Project Overview

- Project Initiation
- Research and Analysis
- Technical Review and Assessment Report
- **Annotated Outline**
- Content Drafting
- Final Review and Adoption of UDO and Map



Feedback and Discussion

Please provide feedback on the Assessment Report by Tuesday, May 31.

Ways to provide feedback:

- Project email: [ReZoneSyracuse@syr.gov.net](mailto:ReZoneSyracuse@syr.gov)
- Project website: <http://www.syr.gov.net/ReZoneSyracuse.aspx>
- Online survey:
<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/ReZoneSyracuseSurvey>
- Email: Owen Kerney [Okerney@syr.gov.net](mailto:Okerney@syr.gov)
Heather Lamendola [Hlamendola@syr.gov.net](mailto:Hlamendola@syr.gov)



Home > ReZone

- Project Team
- Syracuse Land Use & Development Plan 2040
- Syracuse Comprehensive Plan 2040
- Project Survey
- Contact Us

REZONE SYRACUSE

A Citywide Zoning Update

Search www.syracuse.ny.u Search



Mayor Stephanie A. Miner
Mayor's Biography Mayor's Comments NEWS & PHOTOS

Welcome to ReZoneSyracuse

Project Description

The ReZone Syracuse project will comprehensively revise and update the City's Zoning Ordinance and Map to facilitate the implementation of the Syracuse Land Use & Development Plan 2040 (LUP), a component of the City's adopted Comprehensive Plan 2040. The five overarching goals of the LUP are:

1. Preserve and enhance Syracuse's existing land use patterns
2. Protect and enhance the character and "sense of place" of Syracuse's neighborhoods

Latest Documents

Assessment Report April 2016

REZONE SYRACUSE

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