

# REZONE SYRACUSE

A Citywide Zoning Update



## Module 3: ADMINISTRATION & PROCEDURES



NEW YORK  
STATE OF  
OPPORTUNITY.

**NYSERDA**  
Supported

**CLARION**



# Agenda

- **Overview of ReZone Syracuse Project**
- **Overview of Module 3: Administration and Procedures**
- **Questions and Discussion**



ASTER  
*Handcrafted*

NURS  
CITY OF BOSTON

# PROJECT OVERVIEW

# Project Overview

- ✓ • Project Initiation
- ✓ • Research and Analysis
- ✓ • Technical Review and Assessment Report
- ✓ • Annotated Outline
- **Content Drafting**
- **Final Review and Adoption of Ordinance/Map**

Fall 2015  
- Spring  
2016

Public input

May  
2016

Public input

June  
2016

2016/2017

Public input

Early  
2018

Public input

# Drafting the New Ordinance

1



## Module 1: Zoning Districts and Use Regulations

- What can I do on my property?
- Where can I do it?
- How much / how big?

2



## Module 2: Development Standards

- What level of quality is required?
- What about redevelopment?

3



## Module 3: Administration and Procedures

- How do I get a project approved?
- Are there exceptions?

# Drafting the New Ordinance

1



- Staff Draft
- Public Draft

2



- Staff Draft
- Public Draft

3



- Staff Draft
- Public Draft

Late 2017

**Consolidated Draft**

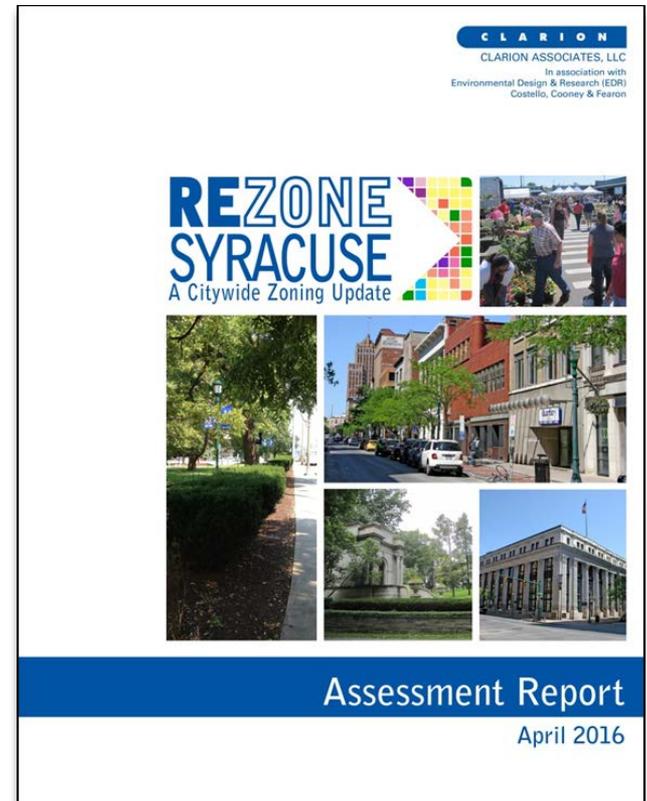
Early 2018

**Adoption Draft**

Staff Review  
Additional Public Meetings  
Adoption  
Final Ordinance

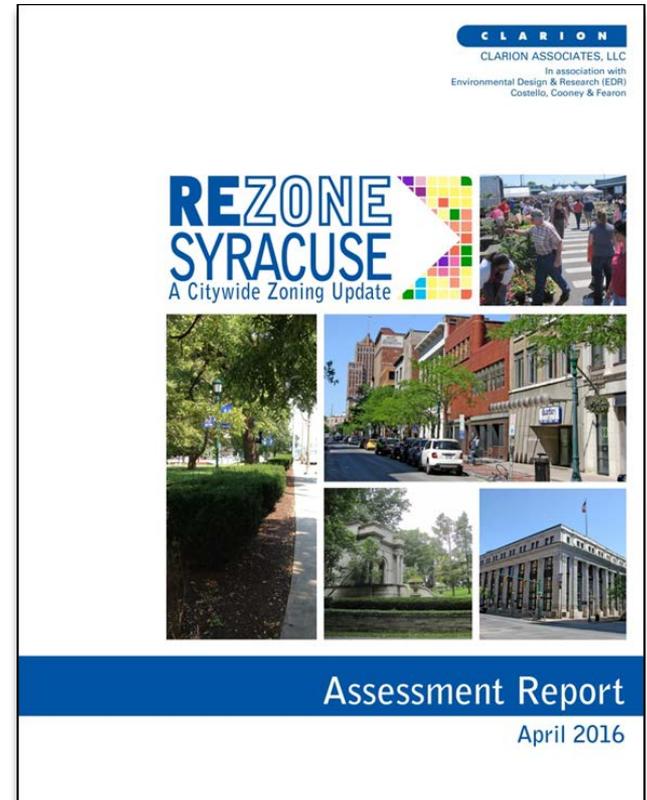
# Assessment Report

- ✓ 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



# Assessment Report

- Important procedural steps are not clear
- All development proposals (big or small) subject to essentially the same procedures
- Heavy reliance on Project Site Review and Special Use Permits
  - To address quality
  - Lack of predictability and consistency
- General inflexibility results in many variance, waivers, or exceptions



# Assessment Report

## Recommendations: Streamline Procedures

- Clarify responsibilities and standardize procedures
- Incorporate existing procedures that work well
- Introduce new review procedures that include:
  - Major v minor project thresholds
  - Expanded administrative approvals



# ReZone Syracuse – Outline

Article 1 – General Provisions

Article 2 – Zoning Districts

Article 3 – Use Regulations

Article 4 – Development Standards

Article 5 – Administration/ Procedures

Article 6 – Definitions



1



2



3



**Article 1**

**GENERAL PROVISIONS**

# Article 1: General Provisions

- 1.1 Title/Effective Date
- 1.2 Purpose
- 1.3 Authority
- 1.4 Applicability and Jurisdiction
- 1.5 Nonconformities
- 1.6 Enforcement
- 1.7 Severability
- 1.8 Transition from Prior Regulations

## Article 1: General Provisions

### Commentary:

This article includes mostly new general provisions that apply to the entire Ordinance, such as the overall purpose and intent, and the applicability and jurisdiction of the Ordinance. Important sections include nonconformities and enforcement. This article also includes transitional provisions that address how applications will be processed during the transition from the current ordinance to the new Ordinance.

### 1.1 Title and Effective Date

This document is the Zoning Ordinance of the City of Syracuse, New York, and is referred to internally in this document as "this Ordinance." This Ordinance shall become effective on insert month/day/20.

### 1.2 Purpose<sup>1</sup>

The general purpose of this Ordinance is to protect the public health, safety, and welfare of the City of Syracuse and to implement the policies from the City of Syracuse Comprehensive Plan. This Ordinance is specifically intended to:

- A. Encourage and facilitate the most appropriate use of land throughout the City;
- B. Designate, regulate, and restrict the location of buildings, structures, and land;
- C. Regulate and limit the height, number of stories, and size of buildings and other structures;
- D. Establish requirements for site layout, site development, and other dimensional, design, and development standards;
- E. Provide for administration and enforcement of this Ordinance;
- F. Protect the economic stability of existing land uses that are consistent with the Comprehensive Plan;
- G. Lessen congestion on streets, roads, and highways; and
- H. Provide for utilities and facilities such as transportation, water, sewage, schools, parks, and other public requirements.

### 1.3 Authority

This Ordinance is adopted pursuant to Article V, Chapter 13 of "The Charter of the City of Syracuse – 1960," adopted by Local Law #13 of 1960.

### 1.4 Applicability, and Jurisdiction

#### A. General Applicability

This Ordinance shall apply to all land, buildings, structures, and uses thereof, located in the City of Syracuse, unless an express exemption is granted within this Ordinance.

<sup>1</sup> New. Intended to replace existing Part A, Section 1.

# Nonconformities?

(Uses, structures, lots, signs)

- **Traditional/stricter approaches:**  
**Nonconformities may remain, but no substantial modifications without full code compliance**
  - Faster implementation of new plans/policies
  - Greater uniformity and easier administration
- **More liberal approaches:**  
**A wider range of modifications will be considered**
  - High standards can discourage infill and redevelopment, especially on challenging sites
  - Nonconformities often provide unique character

# Nonconformities

Proposed Syracuse approach for uses, structures, lots:

- Nonconformities can continue, but no major expansions

Policy Question:

- To what extent do we require redevelopment projects to upgrade to meet new standards?



# Nonconforming Site Features

## Parking



# Nonconforming Site Features

## Loading Area Screening



# Nonconforming Site Features

## Buffering and Screening



# Nonconforming Site Features Proposed Approach

**Establishes triggers for when site features are required to be brought into compliance with new ordinance**

- **Off-Street Parking**
  - Increase in building area by  $\geq 50\%$  over 2-yr period
  - Remodeling  $\geq 50\%$  of assessed value over 2-yr period
- **Buffers, Landscaping, Screening, Lighting**
  - Increase in vehicular use area
  - Increase in building area by 500 square feet or 20%
  - Building elevation changes by 50 percent
  - Increase in outdoor storage areas
- **Generally: a balance between compliance with new standards, but not discouraging reinvestment**



## Article 5

# ADMINISTRATION AND PROCEDURES

# Article 5: Administration & Procedures

## 5.1 Purpose and Organization

## 5.2 Summary Table of Procedures

## 5.3 Common Review Procedures

## 5.4 Development Permits Procedures

## 5.5 Flexibility and Relief Procedures

## 5.6 Ordinance Amendment Procedures

## 5.7 Review & Decision-Making Bodies

### Article 5: Administration and Procedures

#### Commentary:

This article describes the process for reviewing and approving development applications in Syracuse. The article begins with a **summary table** that provides a snapshot of the review procedures, the review and decision-making authorities, and public notice requirements.

The next section includes the **common review procedures** that apply to most development application types. Common review procedures (as recommended in the Assessment Report) will help Syracuse avoid repetition throughout the Ordinance and eliminate conflicting information among development applications. The remaining sections describe the **application-specific** development procedures, linking back to applicable common review procedures, and noting any modifications or additions. Each specific procedure includes a flowchart depicting the steps for review and approval. The final section of this article describes the **decision-making authorities** in Syracuse as they relate to this Ordinance.

The term "**Zoning Administrator**" is used throughout this article as the chief administrative officer in charge of administering and enforcing the Ordinance, and is defined as the Zoning Administrator or his or her designee.

In this article, we refer to an "**administrative manual**," which is proposed to include the requirements for application submittal materials, fees, time periods for review, and other administrative information that does not need to be included in this Ordinance. Keeping such material outside the Ordinance allows it to be updated more regularly without formal Ordinance amendments. Syracuse already hosts a lot of development information on the City's website, so the "manual" could simply expand on that framework. This draft also refers to the "Technical and Engineering Specifications Manual," which is intended as a separate document.

#### 5.1 Purpose and Organization of this Article<sup>29</sup>

- A. The purpose of this Article is to provide consistent, equitable procedures for the review of development proposals and to ensure that proposed development will be in accordance with the purposes and standards of this Ordinance.
- B. This Article describes the review and approval procedures for application for land use and development in the City, and is divided into the following sections:
  - (1) Section 5.2, *Summary Table of Review Procedures*, contains a summary of all development application types authorized in this Article.
  - (2) Section 5.3, *Common Review Procedures*, describes the standard procedures that apply to most development application types.
  - (3) Sections 5.4 through 5.6 contain specific information on each application type within three categories (development permits, flexibility and relief procedures, and ordinance amendments), including approval criteria and any additions or modifications to the common review procedures.
  - (4) Section 5.7, *Review and Decision-Making Bodies*, describes the review and decision-making authorities, including the Syracuse Common Council, City Planning Commission, Board of Zoning Appeals, Syracuse Landmark Preservation Board, Zoning Administrator, and other City officials.

<sup>29</sup> New.

# Summary Table of Review Procedures

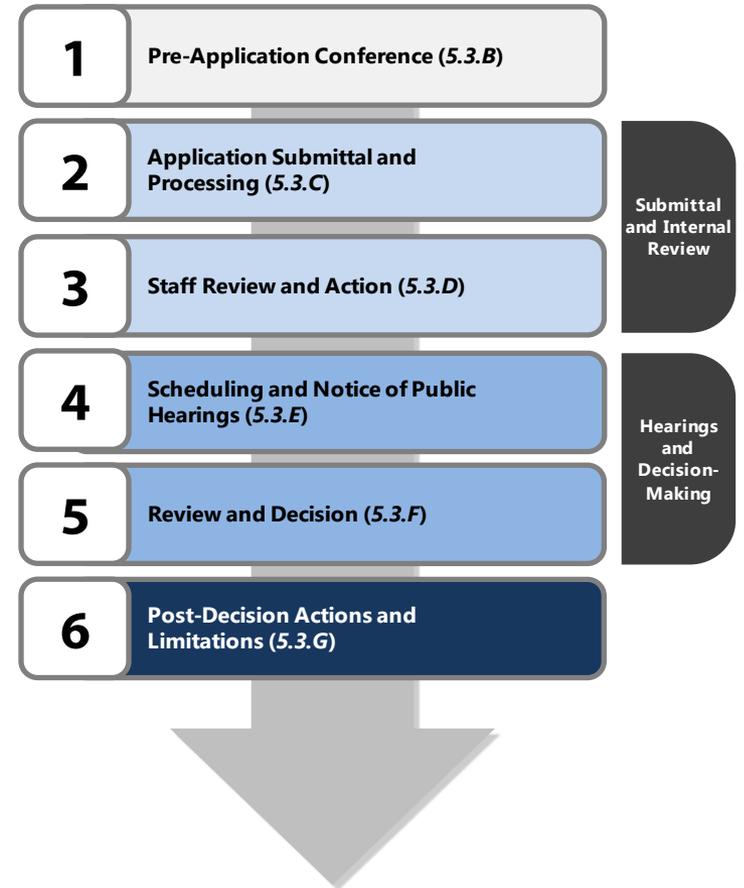
**Table 5.1: Summary Table of Review Procedures**

R = review and recommendation D = review and decision A = appeal  
 < > = public hearing required ✓ = required

Procedure	Section	Notice			Pre-Application Conference	Staff	Syracuse Landmark Preservation Board	Board of Zoning Appeals	Planning Commission	Common Council
		Published	Written	Posted						
<b>Development Permits</b>										
Site Plan Review	Minor	5.4A(3)			Optional	D			<A>	
	Major	5.4A(4)	✓	✓	✓	R			<D>	
Special Use Permit		5.4B	✓	✓	✓	R			<D>	
Sign Review		5.4C			✓	Optional	D		<A>	
Temporary Use Permit		5.4D			✓	Optional	D		<A>	
Certificate of Appropriateness		5.4E				Optional	R	<D>	<A>	
Construction Plans		5.4F				Optional	D		<A>	
<b>Flexibility and Relief</b>										
Variance		5.5A	✓	✓	✓	✓	R	<D>		
Administrative Adjustment		5.5B				Optional	<i>Decision-maker is same as associated application.</i>			
Appeal of Administrative Decision		5.5C	✓	✓	✓	Optional	R	<D>	<D>	
<b>Ordinance Amendments</b>										
Rezoning		5.6A	✓	✓	✓	✓	R		<R>	<D>
Rezoning to Planned Development (PD/PI)		5.6B	✓	✓	✓	✓	R		<R>	<D>
Ordinance Amendment (text)		5.6C	✓	✓	✓		R		<R>	<D>

# Common Review Procedures

- Apply to multiple specific application types.
- Prevent repetition (and potential inconsistency) within specific application procedures.
- Specific application procedures refer back to common review procedures.



# 5.4: Development Permit Procedures

- Site Plan Review [new]
- Special Use Permit
- Sign Review
- Temporary Use Permit [new]
- Certificate of Appropriateness
- Construction Plans [new]

## Administrative Manual

- Not part of Zoning Ordinance
- Can be physical manual or online content
- includes application submittal requirements, review time periods, fees, and other technical information

# 5.4: Development Permits

## Site Plan Review (5.4A)

- Replaces Project Site Review with new site plan review (minor and major)
- Site plan review is common in NY and across the country

<b>Table 5.2: Site Plan Review Thresholds</b>		
<b>Type of Development</b>	<b>Minor Site Plan (Zoning Administrator decision)</b>	<b>Major Site Plan (Planning Commission decision)</b>
<b>Residential</b>	Establishment of 5 to 7 dwelling units <sup>72</sup>	Any development on a site larger than 3 acres; Development of 8 or more dwelling units
<b>Nonresidential</b>	Less than 10,000 square feet gross floor area	Any development on a site larger than 3 acres; Development of at least 10,000 square feet gross floor area

# 5.4: Development Permits

## Site Plan Review (5.4A)

- Ensures compliance with design & development standards
- **Applicability**
  - New construction
  - Alteration, repairs, additions that increase GFA  $\geq 25\%$
  - Exterior renovations facing street
  - Demolitions
  - Projects affecting landmarks and eligible properties
- **Exemptions**
  - Change in use, conversion up to three dwelling units, small alterations, etc.
- **Site plan approval required prior to submitting construction plans**
  - (unless applicant opts to submit concurrently)
- **Referral: Administrator may refer minor site plans to PC**

# 5.4: Development Permits

## Special Use Permits (5.4B)

- **Requires a public hearing to evaluate special or unique uses**
- **Clarifies Planning Commission as decision-maker**
- **Optional concurrent submission with site plan (to expedite overall process)**

# 5.4: Development Permits

## Sign Review (5.4C)

- **Simplifies text and process**
- **Distinguishes**
  - Sign permits (Building Official decision)
  - Additional sign review for certain sign types
    - Generally Zoning Administrator
    - Sometimes Planning Commission (off-premises advertising, historic areas)

# 5.4: Development Permits

## Construction Plans (5.4F)

- Proposed new process for reviewing engineering and other detailed materials
- Ensures compliance with site plan
- Responds to concerns about too much detail required upfront
- Lets applicants postpone \$ commitment until getting zoning/site plan approval
- Could be administered by ZA, or outside zoning

# 5.5: Flexibility and Relief

- Variance
- Administrative Adjustment  
[new]
- Appeal of Administrative Decision



# 5.5 Flexibility and Relief

## Administrative Adjustments (5.5B)

- **Allows modifications/deviations from dimensional and numeric standards in the Ordinance, without a formal rezoning or variance.**
- **Does NOT allow:**
  - Increases in density
  - Change in uses
  - Deviation from floodplain regulations
  - Modification of requirements for public improvements

# 5.5 Flexibility and Relief

## Administrative Adjustments (5.5B)

Would allow the following adjustments by the Zoning Administrator:

<b>Table 5.3: Allowable Administrative Adjustments<sup>110</sup></b>	
<b>Code Standard</b>	<b>Allowable Administrative Adjustment (maximum percentage)</b>
<b>Site Standards</b>	
Lot coverage, maximum	5
<b>Lot Dimensional Standards</b>	
Front setback, minimum	10
Side setback, minimum	10
Rear setback, minimum	10
Encroachment into setback, maximum	10
<b>Building Standards</b>	
Building height, maximum	10
Accessory building height, maximum	10
Separation between buildings, minimum	10
<b>Development Standards</b>	
Number of required parking spaces, maximum or minimum	10
Lighting height, maximum	10
Sign height, maximum <sup>111</sup>	10
Fence or wall height, maximum <sup>112</sup>	10 (1 foot maximum)
Minimum landscaping requirements	10

# 5.6 Ordinance Amendments

- Rezoning [new]
- Rezoning to Planned Development (PDD/PID) [new]
- Ordinance Amendment (text) [new]

## 5.7 Review and Decision-Making Bodies

- **Common Council**
- **Planning Commission**
- **Board of Zoning Appeals**
- **Landmark Preservation Board**
- **Zoning Administrator**
- **Other City Officials**



**Draft New Procedures**  
**SAMPLE SCENARIOS**

# SCENARIO 1: Mixed-Use Downtown

- Infill on prominent downtown corner (MX-5)
- Less than 10,000 square feet nonresidential (example, restaurant and/or retail) uses on ground floor
- Three dwelling units proposed on second floor
- => Minor site plan



# SCENARIO 1: Mixed-Use Downtown

- **OPTION 1:  
Administrator Decision**
  - Administrator reviews and approves or denies application for minor site plan
- **OPTION 2: Administrator Refers to  
Planning Commission**
  - Administrator prefers public review due to prominent location downtown
  - Refers site plan to Planning Commission
  - Planning Commission reviews and decides application at a public hearing



# SCENARIO 2: Auto Dealership

- Use/location requires a special use permit (CM district)
- Proposed two-story building with 18,000 square feet (major site plan)
- Applicant wants to exceed ordinance limits on rear setbacks and building height



# SCENARIO 2: Auto Dealership

- **Special use permit**
  - Planning Commission reviews and decides application for special use permit
- **Major site plan**
  - Applicant elects to submit SUP and major site plan application concurrently
  - Planning Commission hearing and approval
- **Administrative adjustment**
  - Decided by Planning Commission as part of review
- **Construction plans**
  - Applicant submits following approval of SUP and major site plan



# Next Steps

- **Zoning Ordinance**
  - Next: Full consolidated ordinance(!) later this year
- **Zoning Map**
  - Draft 2 has been posted online
  - Watch for notice of upcoming mapping meetings
- **Adoption Process (late 2017/early 2018)**

# Feedback and Discussion

Please provide feedback on Module 3 by:  
**Friday, August 25, 2017**

Ways to provide feedback:

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

# syrgov.net

The screenshot displays the website for the ReZone Syracuse project. At the top, the Syracuse logo is accompanied by the text "New York" and "Stephanie A. Miner, Mayor". A navigation bar includes links for SERVICES, CITY HALL, LIVING, VISITING, and DEPARTMENTS. A search bar is located on the right, and a dropdown menu for "I WANT TO" is visible. The main content area features a large graphic with the text "REZONE SYRACUSE A Citywide Zoning Update" and a colorful grid pattern. Below this, a "Welcome to ReZoneSyracuse" message is followed by a "Project Description" section. The description states that the 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 listed, with the first goal being to "Preserve and enhance Syracuse's existing land use patterns". On the right side of the page, there is a search bar, a profile for Mayor Stephanie A. Miner with links to her biography and comments, and a "Latest Documents" section listing various reports and presentations from 2016 to 2017.

**Syracuse**  
New York  
Stephanie A. Miner, Mayor

SERVICES CITY HALL LIVING VISITING DEPARTMENTS

I WANT TO I Want To... A A A

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

**Latest Documents**

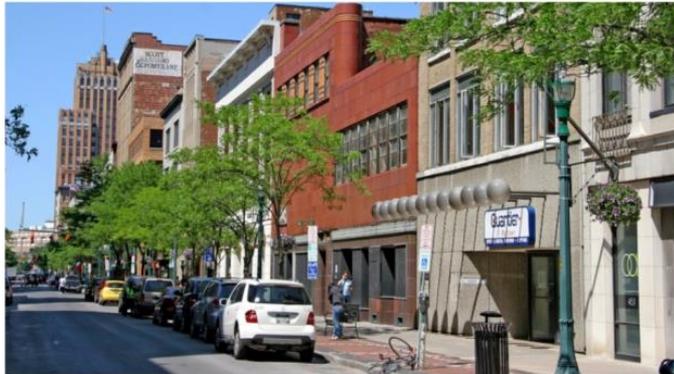
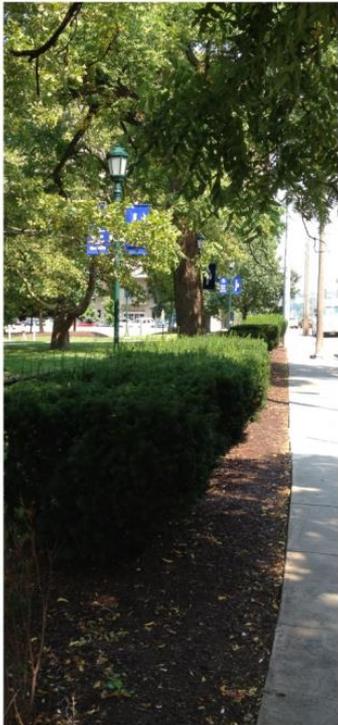
- Assessment Report April 2016
- Public Meeting Presentation May 9 2016
- Annotated Outline July 2016
- Public Meeting Presentation July 2016
- Module 1 Draft November 2016
- Public Meeting Presentation December 2016
- Module 2 Draft April 2017
- Public Meeting Presentation April 2017

**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

# REZONE SYRACUSE

A Citywide Zoning Update



## Module 3: ADMINISTRATION & PROCEDURES

**THANK YOU!**

**Matt Goebel**  
**Tareq Wafaie**  
Clarion Associates