

Brief Description of UDC Amendments brought forth by UDC Committee working with the City of Laramie Planning Department

Round 1 Amendments

Multiple topics, including:

- Change in when final plats are “grandfathered”;
- Allowed concurrent processing and review of Design Review [now Site Plan Review] and Building Permit applications and plans;
- Several changes to landscaping requirements (an overall reduction of up to 40% in requirements);

Round 2 Amendments

The LEDC UDC Committee had extensive input into this round of revisions. The package of amendments included:

- Clarified difference between Minor Temporary Use and Major Temporary Use permits, identifying different processes and performance standards therein;
- Realigned the terminology and measurement of Clear Vision Areas, which formerly appeared in two conflicting locations in code;
- Modified regulations pertaining to fences and walls – most notably by allowing installation of chain-link fencing (UDC had prohibited chain-link in most places);
- Re-defined “duplex” and “townhouse” terminology, and reconciled design regulations regarding townhouses;
- Provided for Gateway Overlay Zoning district residential exemption (GO District regulations were written for commercial development, but accidentally includes residential as well);
- Light pole maximum heights were changes to conform to industry standards;
- “Metal buildings” – Regulations were extensively changes to allow accent metals, to specify by zoning district a maximum percentage of facades that could be metal (as well as split face CMU and tilt-up panels), and to clarify that metal roofs are allowable;
- Additional changes to provide options for landscaping, including specific flexibility for parking-lot landscaping;
- Additional options for screening of dumpsters and trash enclosures, and loading areas;

- Revise the Use Table in Chapter 15.10. The original table involved reliance on obsolete definitions, was confusing and contradictory in some areas, and lacked flexibility and adaptability throughout. The time it took to create and refine the new Use Table and to shepherd it through review and adoption was extensive: a little over one year. The LEDC UDC Committee was instrumental in this process.

Round 3 Amendments

This set of amendments was the most extensive UDC revision. It took most of calendar year 2014 to complete, and addressed the following:

- Changes to restrict use of gates or barriers in residential areas where the gates would pose a potential risk for public safety;
- Extensive revisions to the securitization (bonding) requirements for public and private improvements, and complementary rewritten regulations covering issuance of Temporary and Final (permanent) Certificates of Occupancy;
- Completion of some remaining work in connection with the Use Table revisions, to provide for “grandfathering” flexibility during changes in use;
- Changes in Site Plan Review requirements, to provide for submittal of concept plans in cases where a full site plan is not required (this amendment also changed the name from “Design Review” to “Site Plan Review”);

Next Steps for UDC Revision

The UDC is a “living document”, as the phrase goes – as are development codes in all communities that take their regulatory and economic-development responsibilities seriously. The UDC Committee is currently working on a new round of revisions with City Planning and has helped identify some priority areas for near-future attention in the UDC. Future proposed amendments are as follows:

1. Chapter 15.18 (Improvements): The standards are confusing and in some cases dysfunctional for when and how a developer is required to improve off-site infrastructure, versus adjacent or on-site infrastructure. A comprehensive rewrite of Chapter 15.18 is necessary.
2. Chapter 15.22 (Non-Conformities): This Chapter has not exactly been dysfunctional, but clearly needs attention in some areas. Two examples are: The regulations for non-conforming parking lots, and the length of time before legal non-conforming status (grandfathering) is lost for a given use and/or structure. (The LEDC UDC Committee views this topic as a priority discussion issue.)
3. Chapter 15.28 (Definitions): The Definitions in UDC are virtually unchanged since the pre-UDC era; the last systematic look at this vital component in code was in 2001 (and was never completed then). As a matter of best practice in planning and in law, definitions should never be

used to regulate; however, some of the UDC's do that. Additionally, many terms are undefined, and others are defined imprecisely or (occasionally) incorrectly.

4. Chapter 15.08 (Zone Districts) – specifically, Aquifer Protection Overlay Zone: It has been expressed within the community discomfort with certain features of the APOZ, such as the requirements for a new Site-Specific Investigation with each project and the associated timeline, or the long list of *prima facie* prohibited uses. Staff would caution that changes in the APO regulations beyond a certain level are not feasible without amending the Casper Aquifer Protection Plan. (The LEDC UDC Committee views this topic also as a priority.)
5. Chapter 15.26 (Enforcement): The issue of enforcing UDC and land-development regulations goes beyond code revisions, involving staffing and resources. However, this chapter needs attention alongside other efforts to streamline and augment our enforcement functions.
6. Chapter 15.06 and elsewhere - Minor Modifications and Alternative Equivalent Compliance: Some tweaks during earlier amendment rounds have helped, but these regulations should receive ongoing consideration. Used properly, they can be a powerful tool in the economic-development arena.
7. Chapter 15.06 and Chapter 15.10, and elsewhere – Conditional Use Permits: The Planning Commission requested a Commission work session in January to review how this process is working and suggest improvements. The request arose from concerns over the length and complexity entailed by the Studio B dance studio (1730 Custer Street) Conditional Use Permit process.
8. Chapter 15.10 (Uses) – Temporary Uses and Structures, and Accessory Uses and Structures: These regulations have been minor but persistent trouble-spots for staff and property owners alike. The solutions should not be difficult, but they need attention.