

City of Taylor

Diagnostic Report | Land Development Code

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Introduction

This Diagnostic Report provides an initial evaluation of how well Taylor's existing Land Development Code (LDC) aligns with current conditions, community priorities, and emerging needs. As the City and its surroundings continue to grow, it is essential to understand key areas where the code's performance can be enhanced to align with Taylor's long-term goals.

The diagnostic phase brings together insights from a review of the LDC, stakeholder and community input, demographic and development trends, and an evaluation of City planning and development processes. Collectively, these sources reveal the key opportunities and challenges that will shape Taylor's future.

This report identifies key recommendations and items for consideration regarding potential amendments to the LDC. Its intent is to identify community preferences and experiences and compare them to the regulations currently in place, identifying where additional clarity or updates may be needed and which topics warrant greater focus during the upcoming LDC amendments. The findings highlight both strengths and gaps in the existing regulations and point to where adjustments could better support housing needs, mobility and safety, development processes, economic growth, quality-of-life amenities, and downtown vitality.

Stakeholder Engagement

Summary and Feedback

As part of this diagnostic phase, the project team held over forty individual and small-group interviews with Taylor stakeholders. The interviews included representatives from local businesses, real estate professionals, developers, the school district, the Chamber of Commerce, the Economic Development Corporation, current and former civic leaders, and community investors. The project team conducted interviews and discussions on the current Comprehensive Plan and Land Development Code. These discussions aimed to gain a deeper understanding of the current challenges, opportunities, and perceptions of Taylor's development environment.

Community Engagement Overview



What We Heard: Key Themes from Stakeholder Conversations

- **Community identity is a shared priority:** Stakeholders expressed pride in Taylor’s history, character, and cultural diversity. Stakeholders, particularly those who measure their time in Taylor in decades, spoke of the feeling of everyone knowing each other, disagreeing on business issues or politics but not letting it interfere with friendships and relationships. Likewise, they spoke of Taylor being “an easy place to live” where people felt content, and a self-supporting local economy in which Taylor was not typically impacted by regional economics. There is a strong interest in maintaining the City’s traditional features like the street grid, walkability, and distinctive architectural fabric. At the same time, many believe the community needs a clearer and more unified vision to steer growth. Several noted the importance of aligning City leadership, staff, and external partners to communicate a consistent direction for Taylor’s future.
- **Downtown remains a strength but faces persistent challenges:** Stakeholders value the historic character of downtown and see it as a differentiator for Taylor. At the same time, vacancies, building maintenance issues, and slow permitting processes hinder efforts to revitalize the area. Business owners noted difficulty navigating signage rules, fire suppression requirements, and the reuse of older buildings. Many view downtown as a major asset that requires consistent support, clear guidelines, and effective strategies to encourage reinvestment.
- **Housing needs are not being met across the market:** The community lacks a full spectrum of housing options. Stakeholders highlighted unmet demand for workforce housing, senior cottages, missing middle formats, and higher-end executive homes. Teachers, public employees, and young families struggle to find attainable units, while industries and employers note that the lack of housing limits their recruitment efforts. The market is active, but developers face barriers tied to utilities, approvals, and uncertainty about what is permitted.
- **Development processes lack predictability:** Stakeholders consistently described the development review process as slow, complex, unclear, and inconsistent. Many noted receiving varying interpretations of standards and a lack of clear points of contact, which can cause substantial project delays and additional costs. Stakeholders emphasized the need for transparency, timely communication, and straightforward guidelines that align with best practices.
- **Infrastructure capacity creates barriers for growth:** Water and wastewater limitations were repeatedly cited as obstacles for residential, commercial, and industrial projects. Several stakeholders reported difficulty obtaining clear commitments for service availability. These uncertainties discourage development and create additional financial risk. Improvements to utility planning, capacity forecasting, and coordinated infrastructure extensions will be crucial as the community expands and needs to be clearly integrated into the development process.
- **Safety and mobility concerns affect daily life:** Transportation challenges surfaced across all interviews. Parents and school district staff noted safety issues near campuses and along corridors such as FM 973 and Chandler Road. Business owners cited congestion, signal timing problems, and limited multimodal options. Stakeholders expressed interest in improved walkability, safe crossings, and more consistent sidewalk networks. Some also emphasized the potential for public transportation and better awareness of existing rail services.
- **Amenities and quality of life features are lacking:** Stakeholders emphasized the need for parks, trails, pools, and everyday gathering spaces. Families and new residents expect a broader range of

amenities than many new subdivisions currently provide, and existing residents perceive growth as not enhancing their quality of life and amenities to the level they hoped. The limited availability of shaded, comfortable, and well-designed public spaces reduces opportunities for community interaction. Amenities are viewed as essential to attracting young families, supporting health and wellness, and maintaining competitiveness with neighboring communities.

- **Economic diversification requires stronger alignment:** Economic development partners aim to foster a balanced economy that encompasses manufacturing, emerging industries, and locally oriented retail. Stakeholders noted the need to better align land use, infrastructure, and development policy to support employers and the workforce. Some see opportunities tied to the county's spaceport designation, while others stress the importance of strengthening local skills pipelines. Retail recruitment continues to face challenges due to demographic shifts, infrastructure limitations, and limited rooftops.

Interim Amendments

On March 26, 2026, City Council authorized City staff to prepare necessary amendments to the Land Development Code (LDC) to:

- Increase the required plans threshold to facilitate greater use of administrative and streamlined approval of smaller projects;
- Establish clear standards for high-resource-intensive uses, including data centers, addressing land use location and infrastructure demand;
- Building height or compatibility standards when higher-intensity uses are sighted adjacent to existing single-family uses;
- Define and develop appropriate standards governing Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs);
- Develop needed amendments and additions to Definitions section of the LDC (e.g., employment center);
- Define and address deficiencies in the LDC regarding current Non-Conforming uses and buildings, particularly in Downtown;
- Develop regulations for short-term rental of residential units;
- Develop appropriate parking requirements for uses or developments, including appropriate standards for new uses and infill uses.

Current State of Regulations

Overview

The project team's review of the current LDC focuses on making high-level recommendations based on stakeholder experiences and the code's current structure. Overall, stakeholders liked the values and aesthetic of the development the LDC promotes, but many described difficulties understanding the code or clearly defining its applicability. Accordingly, the project team's key recommendations pertain to enhancing the code's usability and streamlining the development process.

Key Recommendations

Make the Code User-Friendly

The top recommendation of this LDC diagnostic is to improve the code's usability. Internal and external stakeholders expressed confusion about the applicability of and processes contained within the code, as well as language inconsistent with regional norms. The LDC requires intensive staff interpretation by design. For example, the code describes pre-application meetings as opportunities for the City to "determine the appropriate submittal requirements and process(es)" for development applications. While details of the application process will necessarily need clarification from the City, required processes and applicable standards for development should be mostly clear through reading the LDC alone.

The organization of the code's processes tends to include high-level and clarifying information at the end of each process section. While providing clarifications and caveats towards the end of a section is typically a best practice, the code's unconventional processes (discussed below) do not lend themselves well to this treatment. At a minimum, restructuring the code to provide specific definitions and details of each process up front would aid readability.

Similarly, the LDC's usability could be improved by providing stronger cross-references throughout the document. In many cases, new concepts – like Neighborhood Plans – are used and referred to through several discrete processes before the code provides definitions or context. The need to skip backward and forward in the code to understand the concepts under discussion can create confusion for readers who need to understand the overall development process. Further, including cross-references (and hyperlinks) between sections of the LDC would increase user-friendliness by allowing code users to quickly refer to relevant sections of the document. Finally, codifying the Land Development Code with the rest of the City's ordinances would support both staff and external code users applying the code.

Revise the Development Process

The LDC's development process adapts the City's land use authority in an unconventional manner. The code complies with the State's legal requirements, yet the processes' unique structure is uncommon. For example, the development plan processes require details usually seen in small area plans or PUDs. These requirements present the potential for proposed developments to undergo several rounds of revision before developers have confidence in what can be built, reducing the predictability of outcomes and project timelines in ways that impact project viability and finance. Overall, stakeholders appreciated the quality of development under the LDC, but directed comments toward the level of difficulty it poses for development and that a better process should be sought to achieve outcomes.

Within the context of the regional growth surrounding Taylor and stakeholders' stated concerns about being "left behind" with respect to housing and commercial opportunities, the choice to use a development process with intense, costly, up-front involvement in development proposals should be weighed carefully. In Taylor's case, adjusting the development process to match regional best practices and minimize uncertainty could alleviate some of the burden of uncertainty on new development by instead leveraging prescriptive standards. Additionally, streamlined processes and

clear standards would reduce the level of interpretation required of staff. Currently, every development larger than 2.5 acres is required to go through a development layout process before a preliminary plat can be filed. This structure mirrors a typical Planned Development District approval process, which can add unnecessary staff time and risk to many projects.

Typically, strong development standards applicable within specific zoning districts are better for encouraging quality development than requiring complex processes with early public/stakeholder input. Specific standards for development should be the City's primary tool for regulating the built environment.

Calibrate the Development Standards

Further calibration of the development standards and building typologies should be a major feature of an LDC rewrite. Stakeholders liked the goals of the preferred development patterns but want additional options. The prevailing feeling is that the vision and outcomes coded into the LDC are desirable, but that there should also be simpler, by-right options for development and more demonstrated awareness of how development is practiced. Stakeholders noted that the complexity of the processes combined with the detailed standards of the current LDC requires development to follow a longer, less predictable, and more expensive process than in other nearby municipalities.

One item for consideration in adjusting the development standards is providing checklists or points-based systems for building and lot features. The existing code contains the essential elements suitable for conversion to a point system, and the restructuring could make it simpler for potential developments to be compared to the code's expectations as well as build in incentives and bonus structures for projects that exceed code minimums.

Check for Legal Compliance

Finally, updates from the 2023 and 2025 Texas legislative sessions and recent case law should be integrated into the LDC during any code update. The entire code will be reviewed for legal best practices during the update.

Some specific areas marked in FNI's review are: Subdivision plat types and timelines, vesting of development rights, zoning notifications, zoning upon annexation, auto-expiry of planned development districts, application submittal timelines, and sign regulations. These sections are generally compliant but may require updates to meet new state requirements and process opportunities created by new state law language. Several of these issues are noted for interim resolution measures (during the term of the code rewrite) in the Potential Interim Amendments Appendix below.

Detailed Review of Current Regulations

Chapter 1 - Intent and General Provisions

Summary

Chapter 1 contains the general provisions, purpose, and enabling language for the LDC. It establishes the rules of construction and elements of continuity associated with the LDC update. Major sections include:

- Section 1.1 (Title) notes that the LDC was adopted on November 9, 2023, which was between Comprehensive Plan updates #2 and #3.
- Section 1.3 (Intent) describes the scope and approach of the LDC: It regulates by setting standards at three scales, the city; the neighborhood; and the block, street, lot, and building. The LDC's provisions were assembled by studying and codifying Taylor's historic development patterns. This section describes the major themes to be realized at each scale.
- Section 1.9 (Transitional Provisions) provides a zoning equivalency table and standards for zoning newly annexed property. The equivalency provisions exempted planned developments with a two-year expiry timeline.
- Section 1.10 (Effect on Existing Conditions (Nonconformities)) sets standards for determinations of legal and illegal nonconforming statuses for lots, sites, structures, signs, and land uses. The Director of Development Services makes this determination with an appeal to the ZBA.
 - This section permits the DRC to allow reoccupation of abandoned nonconforming structures with an appeal to the ZBA. Conversions of nonconforming land uses to specific uses are allowed, as are conversions of nonconforming uses to other nonconforming uses of lower

impact at the Development Services Director's determination.

- Additionally, this section enables a general warrant process to request a deviation of up to 5% from any numerical standard through the DRC. Variances may be requested from the ZBA in the event of a warrant's denial (i.e., by appeal) or of a deviation of greater than 5%.

Feedback

- Stakeholders emphasized that the revised code should anticipate the growth happening around Taylor, incorporating strategies for both workforce-level and executive-level housing and commercial options. Stronger comprehensive plan and development code synchronization regarding growth on the periphery is critical, with a need to update the Comprehensive Plan to address this periphery being referenced by multiple people.
- Taylor's growth was commonly understood to be two to four years behind Hutto and Georgetown, leading stakeholders to prefer minimizing barriers to quality development.
- Stakeholders commented on the readiness of Taylor's historic areas for densification. Several noted that the code needs to be very flexible regarding historic or old properties that conflict with rights-of-way. This consideration was highlighted in land use, transportation, and development process discussions. There was also some concern about upzoning potentially but unintentionally creating risk for historic building demolition (See Chapter 6 and the Potential Interim Amendments Appendix below).

Recommendations

- Review and update the chapter's provisions for compliance with state law.
- Simplify Table 1.9.2(A) (Zoning Translation). This equivalency table is very descriptive, but too complex to be useful as a reference. A

simplified supplemental table could be added within the development process or zoning chapters.

- Generally, the translation scheme between growth sectors, future land use designations, and place types is difficult to grasp, and may be best addressed via an update to the Comprehensive Plan where the complexity rests. The connections between these designations and “development patterns” should be clarified and streamlined. Prioritize cross-references and consolidation of the separate dashboards, at a minimum.
- Review and consider the transitional provisions (expirations) for planned developments.
- Revise the purpose/value statements of the LDC (Section 1.3.1 – 1.3.3 The City; The Neighborhood; and The Block, Street, Lot, and Building) based on the comprehensive plan rewrite. The purpose statements should be direct and illustrate the connection between the Comprehensive Plan’s districts and the code measures used to achieve the districts’ goals. Keep non-regulatory language in the Comprehensive Plan. Codify requirements for the things mentioned in the vision statements, like alleys and walkable/bikeable routes to schools, whether as minimums or with offsets/incentives, providing appropriate flexibility for geographic contexts, topography, and adjacent development.
 - Consider updates to documents outside the comprehensive plan/LDC necessary to realize the center-first, infill-focused, and self-sustaining goals for development.
- Ensure 1.9.1 (Zoning Upon Annexation) incorporates relevant provisions from TLGC § 43.002 regarding continuation of prior uses and is consistent with state rules.
- Consider adding flexibility to the Section 1.10 (Effect on Existing Conditions (Nonconformities)) regulations, to allow and encourage

gradual upgrades/variations for residences and small businesses to support organic change (see the Potential Interim Amendments Appendix below).

Chapter 2 – Development Process

Summary

Chapter 2 outlines the development process contained within the LDC. It begins with an overview of the process, then details the application and review processes.

Typically, all development begins with a pre-development meeting. This is intended to involve staff at the earliest stage of the development design phase and is ostensibly required due to the LDC's unconventional processes. Pre-development meetings are facilitated by the Development Review Committee (DRC).

If a property requires a rezoning to a different place type, rezoning is the next step. Rezoning applications are reviewed by the DRC and heard at public hearings by the Planning and Zoning Commission and at City Council.

If no rezoning is required, a property may still need to go through a conceptual planning process prior to platting. The Infill Neighborhood Plan process applies to properties over 2.5 acres.

If a plat or replat is not required, the applicant must submit an Administrative Plat Application and building permits/site development plans. If a plat or replat is required, the applicant must submit a Preliminary Plat and Subdivision Improvement Plan prior to a Final Plat Application.

Section 2.3 (Review Authority) begins with an overview table of review authorities for the different application types identified above. Successively, the section describes the composition and roles of the Planning and Zoning Commission, Zoning Board of Adjustment, Historic Preservation Commission, and DRC.

Application Types

The chapter next details the detailed processes for the following application types:

- General Applications
 - Annexations
 - Comprehensive Plan Amendments
- Zoning Applications
 - Neighborhood Plans
 - Infill Neighborhood Plans
 - Employment Center Plans
 - Place Type Zoning Map Amendments
 - Special Use Permits
 - Place Type Zoning Verification Letters
 - Place Type Zoning Ordinance Text Amendments
 - Appeals of Place Type Related Administrative Decisions
 - Place Type Zoning Variances
 - Place Type Special Exceptions
 - Place Type Warrants
- Subdivision Applications
 - Neighborhood Plans
 - Infill Neighborhood Plans
 - Preliminary Plats
 - Subdivision Improvement Plans
 - Final Plats
 - Minor Plats
 - Amending Plats
 - Replats
 - Vacating Plats
 - Plat Certification Letters
 - Appeals of Subdivision-Related Administrative Decisions
 - Subdivision Warrants
 - Subdivision Variances

- Site Development Applications
 - Site Development Plans
 - Streamlined Site Development Plans
- Sign Applications
 - Sign Permits
 - Master Sign Plans
 - Sign Variances
- Historic Preservation Applications
- Certificates of Appropriateness

- Centralize the applicability and procedures provisions for Infill Neighborhood Plans and Neighborhood Plans. The applicability of these processes is unclear in this chapter and the following. Additionally, create cross-references/clarifications for how the Neighborhood Plans and Infill Neighborhood Plans work, as they are described in both the Zoning and Subdivision procedures sections.
- Clarify the standards for decisions on Neighborhood Plans. The Neighborhood Plan process requires a design charrette or urban design consultation as part of the approval procedures, but could be more explicit in describing conditions, limitations, and approvals/resubmittals.
 - Requirements for applicants to use particular consultants/firms as part of this process should be removed. The charrette/design consultation process itself should be removed.
- Resolve apparent contradictions in the Neighborhood Plan and rezoning processes. The priority of these application types is unclear: The Neighborhood Plan processes allow for simultaneous submittal of rezoning applications and plats in some cases, while the rezoning procedures section states that Neighborhood Plan applications replace rezoning applications in cases that seem to be the same. The same critique applies between Neighborhood Plans and Comprehensive Plan Amendments.
- Differentiate the Neighborhood Plan and Preliminary Plat processes further. These processes are duplicative and both are required except in special cases.
- Confirm or rewrite the Neighborhood Plan provisions pertaining to expiration. Since Neighborhood Plans incorporate zoning, automatic expiry may need to be revised to meet state law.

Feedback

- Stakeholders noted that uncertainty and long approval processes limit Taylor's attractiveness to development compared to other nearby cities. The discretionary approval process of neighborhood plan/infill neighborhood plan is frustrating for developers, particularly since a rezoning is not necessary. Some described it as the equivalent of requiring a PUD for nearly any new development.
- The Place Type Zoning Districts and Neighborhood/Employment Center Plans are unfamiliar to many builders, leading many to reach out to staff for interpretations. Stakeholders reported that the difficulty of interpreting the code means that many questions cannot be answered quickly, leading to loss of leases and sales.
- Stakeholders wished to prioritize expanding housing choice and making it easier to build additional units at all price points.

Recommendations

- Review and update the chapter's provisions for compliance with state law.
- Consider removing the Infill Neighborhood Plan, Neighborhood Plan, and Employment Center Plan processes. Recommendations related to these plan types, if kept, are as follows:

Detailed Review of Current Regulations

- Clarify the applicability of the warrant/variance process to Employment Center Plans. The provisions for these plans anticipate modifications to the standards but do not clarify whether the plans are flexible or whether the warrant/variance processes are expected. A better approach is to comprehensively evaluate for potential use-specific standards so the code can be more prescriptive and predictable, providing regulatory certainty.
- Clarify the applicability of the warrant/variance processes overall. Items in the development standards that are not simple numerical adjustments are described as eligible for warrants. Consider rephrasing warrants as some type of alternative compliance approach more common regionally.
- Consider allowing concurrent submittals of Subdivision Improvement Plans and Final Plat when pursuing a fiscal surety pathway. The processes are not designed to run concurrently, though subdivision improvements can be bonded for the purposes of submitting a Final Plat application.
- Confirm the plat and Subdivision Improvement Plan expiry timelines – there appear to be some cases where provisions for extensions do not reset/extend the expiry timelines for previous approvals.

Chapter 3 - Neighborhoods, Additions, Subdivisions

Summary

Chapter 3 describes the LDC's processes for Neighborhood Plans and includes regulations for the layout of new areas and documents required for different application types. This chapter is analogous to a typical subdivision ordinance.

The LDC uses Neighborhood Plans, Employment Center Plans, Engineering Plans, and plats for the subdivision of land with the City. Chapter 3 uses the former two plan types to create micro-plans when new development is proposed. Functionally, Neighborhood and Employment Center Plans are like small area future land use maps or planned unit developments.

The LDC bases the standard area for Neighborhood and Employment Center Plans on "pedestrian sheds" (roughly 80 acres). Groups of place type zoning designations are established and titled "development patterns". Each pedestrian shed requires a development pattern to be assigned to determine the typology of what is built within it. Each Neighborhood or Employment Center Plan can contain several development patterns.

The LDC allows Neighborhood Plans to be submitted concurrently with plats and place type zoning change applications. The intent of the procedures is that a preferred development type will be selected at the beginning of the development process, then the layout and characteristics of the neighborhood will be determined by the distribution of place types characteristic of that development pattern. Properties smaller than 2.5 acres do not require a development pattern. Properties greater than 2.5 acres but smaller than 80 acres use the TND development pattern or the adjacent development pattern(s).

After a Neighborhood or Employment Center Plan is approved, the applicant can submit a preliminary plat for the property. Subdivision Improvement Plans in accordance with the engineering criteria and the Preliminary Plat may be submitted after Preliminary Plat approval. A Final Plat may be submitted after the construction of the subdivision improvements or after

providing financial security for 110% of the value of the improvements. After the Final Plat is recorded, site development plans and building permits may be submitted.

Infill development is addressed separately through an abbreviated process. Infill is divided into two types: Infill on existing platted lots, and infill that requires modification to existing platted lots. Infill Neighborhood Plans are a special type of Neighborhood Plans that allow concurrent submission of the necessary plats and grant the DRC the ability to use the Infill Neighborhood Plan in lieu of a Preliminary Plat.

Section 3.8 (Neighborhood Design Standards) contains typical subdivision standards/regulations pertaining to blocks, lots, streets, and utilities. The LDC emphasizes trails, sidewalks, and other pedestrian features as the primary concern in subdivision design. Street designs from the Engineering Manual are referenced in this chapter, which assigns widths, intersection characteristics, and other features like tree buffers and street lighting characteristics. Street and sidewalk configurations are assigned based on the place type zoning district in which they are located.

Section 3.8 includes many provisions encouraging high-quality development. A key item is allowing paths and trails to count as public access to new lots. Likewise, the chapter sets variable block lengths and perimeters by place type zoning district. These standards should be adjusted, but they provide a solid base for modification.

Feedback

- Stakeholders stated strongly that clear, predictable rules and approval processes are preferred over discretionary approvals.
- Confusion over the unique and overlapping names of plan types and Place Type Zoning Districts was mentioned by several stakeholders.
- Requirements for mixed-use development constrain growth by limiting development opportunities to only developers who can build multiple product types and does not allow for the opportunity for engaging developments based on adjacencies and well-planned connectivity. Several stakeholders commented on the difficulty

single-use/single-product clients have in securing partnerships or funding for mixed-use projects.

- Stakeholders generally preferred developments with amenities, requesting that additional requirements for things like pools, parks, and trails be included in the code update.
- Stakeholders were in favor of adding requirements for alternative modes of transportation, especially near housing and schools.

Recommendations

- Review and update the chapter's provisions for compliance with state law.
- Include cross-references to the tables and standards within this chapter in the place type zoning district sections of Chapter 4.
- Create graphics illustrating the approval and review processes within this chapter.
- Clarify and add an illustration to the transition building line provision in Section 3.8.2.15.
- Consider whether Neighborhood Plans, Employment Center Plans, and Infill Plans can be removed to help streamline the development process. While these steps support desirable development patterns, their inclusion requires additional steps in the development process that are not typically seen in Texas, which may hinder future development. Provisions for alternative subdivision design (e.g., cluster development, diverse housing neighborhoods, traditional neighborhood design) could instead be permitted by-right and included with the subdivision design standards while still accomplishing similar design outcomes.
[Note: Other recommendations contained herein are provided related to these plan types in case the plan types are retained; if the plan types are removed, the related recommendations are no longer applicable. See also: the Potential Interim Amendments Appendix]
- Clarify on the two methods of exempting a property from the requirement to plat: Per Section 3.5.2, properties can be exempted from platting either through a warrant through the DRC or by a variance through PZC. It is not clear how the processes or requirements differ or why there are two options.
- Relocate the Section 3.6.1 discussion of Development Patterns to earlier in the chapter or with other subdivision design requirements.
- Clarify how the area assigned to the different place type zoning districts within each Development Pattern is calculated.
- Review and clarify the overlap between the "Employment Center" Development Pattern and the comprehensive plan growth sector, future land use designation, and a local plan type of the same name. The different zones may be titled the same because they are mutually inclusive, but some distinction would aid readability.
- Relocate the Section 3.6.1.7 definition of "pedestrian shed" to a place before the provisions relating to the distribution of place type zoning districts within Development Patterns. The current location is confusing since it is a method of measurement used in the Development Patterns discussion. Additionally, consider including a quantifiable size or area for a pedestrian shed. The size varies, but issues with interpretation and applicability may come up without a definite standard.
- Section 3.6.4.1: Consider revising the Neighborhood/Employment Center Plan process to require specific standards to be met. There is a high level of risk and investment required of applicants prior to any certainty about the process or outcome. Additionally, consider reducing the scope of permitted deviations.
- Section 3.8.2.3: The LDC has many excellent provisions allowing lots to front on *any* public ROW (meaning inclusive of trails and parks), but includes a requirement that appears to require PZC approval for blocks that are not bounded on all sides by streets.

Consider amending to clarify whether alternative ROWs are also acceptable boundaries.

- Section 3.8.2.4: This allows applicants to propose half-blocks along their subdivision boundaries “if the applicant can demonstrate that the remainder of the block can feasibly be completed on the adjacent property, and that upon completion, the block will comply with the maximum dimensions of this LDC,” which seems to bind a future adjacent developer of an unrelated project to a particular layout. Different place type zoning districts (with different block standards) may be assigned to adjacent properties depending on that property’s Neighborhood Plan/Development Patterns when they are established. An approach could be to establish more consistency in maximum block lengths so that such potential for conflict is reduced, and establish prescriptive circumstances in which administrative waivers are possible.
- Review Chapter 3 for regulations with built-in flexibility and consolidate the standards and ranges of flexibility in one place. For example, the civic space proximity regulations in 3.8.5.2 could be consolidated with the exception in 3.8.5.1 placed below it.
- Include roundabouts as a recommended intersection type in Section 3.8.1.6. Consider whether to prescribe roundabouts as the preferred approach to traffic management rather than signalized intersections based on the types of streets intersecting.
- Calibrate sidewalks, paths, and trails requirements to avoid future gaps. Require sidewalks, paths, and trails to be completed with streets and other transportation infrastructure.
- Remove the requirement in Section 3.8.3.8 that requires that “Lots shall be sized to provide the least amount of frontage necessary to accommodate the building type proposed for the lot”.
- Section 3.8.4.2(5): Add a requirement for drainage facilities to be either dedicated on the Final Plat or to have the instrument number

of the separate instrument recorded on the Final Plat and in the Final Plat notes.

Chapter 4 - Place Type Zoning Districts

Summary

Chapter 4 contains the Place Type Zoning District regulations. It outlines the ten Place Type Zoning Districts and provides development standards applicable in each. Section 4.2.3 (Establishment of Districts) details the intent and purpose of each, and Section 4.3 (Place Type Zoning District Development Standards) catalogues the dimensional, parking, and street, frontage, building, and sign type standards applicable within each district. Section 4.3.1 (Place Type Zoning District Details) provides single-page graphical dashboards for the standards of each district.

The place type districts are:

- P1: Nature
- P2: Rural
- P2C: Commercial
- P2.5: Large Lot
- P3: Neighborhood
- P3M: Manufactured Housing
- P4: Mix
- P5: Urban Center
- EC: Employment Center
- CS: Civic Space
 - The CS place type contains five sub-types: Park, Green, Square, Plaza, and Pocket Park.

The chapter reiterates the fact that the place types are derived from Taylor's existing development patterns and describes them as differing in development intensity, building types, relationship to the natural

environment, and mix of uses. The district dashboards and summary tables encapsulating the district standards communicate the essentials well and are readable.

The ten place types (through the equivalency table in Chapter 1, Section 1.9) are grouped in areas on the future land use map, describing the mix of Place Type Zoning Districts appropriate within each sector. The table below contains two columns from Table 1.9.2(A) (Zoning Translation), illustrating the connections between future land use designations and place types:

Future Land Use Designation	Place Type Zoning District
Area of Minimal Change	P2: Rural P2C: Rural Commercial
Neighborhood Greenfield	P2: Rural
Employment Center: Regional	EC: Employment Center
Employment Center: Community	EC: Employment Center
Special Employment District	EC: Employment Center
Neighborhood Infill	P3: Neighborhood P2.5: Large Lot P3M: Manufactured Housing P4: Neighborhood Mix CS: Civic Space
Civic Center: Neighborhood	CS: Civic Space
Civic Center: Community	CS: Civic Space

Future Land Use Designation	Place Type Zoning District
Market Center: Regional	P5: Urban Center
Market Center: Community	P5: Urban Center
Market Center: Neighborhood	P4: Neighborhood Mix
Employment Center: Neighborhood	P4: Neighborhood Mix

Feedback

- Stakeholders expressed concern that the Place Type Zoning Districts focus on buildings alone and prefer districts with clearer allowed/permitted uses and that require/encompass additional amenities/uses.
- Stakeholders generally find the Place Type terminology unfamiliar and require staff assistance to understand what is allowed. Several stakeholders mentioned the need for interpretation significantly slowing down development processes.
- Stakeholders preferred zoning districts, code requirements, and permitted uses that are easy to understand and straightforward. Several requested a summary of the districts that developers can reference to understand what can be built.
- One key issue stakeholders mentioned was the need for code interpretation or detailed consultation for common questions (e.g., where can which types of businesses be located; can an ADU be built on this lot; do I need a separate meter?).

Recommendations

- Review and update the chapter's provisions for compliance with state law.

- Revise the zoning district names to clarify what the intention of each district is.
- Consider revising the Private Frontage Type, Building Disposition, and Street Type standards to create a point-based design standard applicable to all districts. Consolidating the standards would aid interpretation and afford additional flexibility while maintaining a specific level of development quality.
- Add a simplified permitted use chart to help users understand the land use types allowed within each district.
- Revise the allowances for by-right development, providing a minimum certain level that is permissible without going through a rezoning or planning process. Section 4.1.1 states that the Place Type Zoning Map's zoning designations identify only the maximum density and do not entitle the whole property to be developed with that place type, meaning "the final allocation of place types shall be determined" through the Neighborhood or Employment Center Plan processes. This introduces a great deal of uncertainty to the development process and the typical pro forma necessary for developers to secure financing. An alternative, for example, may be to establish maximums and averages. Another alternative could steer away entirely from density and instead leverage height/bulk standards, lot coverage/FAR and lot width since "density" is a commonly misunderstood term as it pertains to actual built environment outcomes.
- Include cross-references and hyperlinks between the Place Type Zoning District dashboards and the relevant regulations/tables in the LDC.
- Consider adjusting the off-street parking and signage regulations in the P1: Nature Place Type Zoning District. This district allows uses that may need off-street parking and/or signage. Current permitted uses are: temporary commercial uses; carts, kiosks, and food trailers; and civic buildings.

Chapter 5 - Private Lot Development Standards

Summary

Chapter 5 contains the regulations relevant to development on individual properties. The chapter lists the Building Types and distributes them among the Place Type Zoning Districts established in Chapter 4. Simple limitations on the use permitted within each Building Type and district are established in Section 5.2.2 (Building Function by Building Types). Provisions applicable to all development, such as lighting, parking, and sign standards, are grouped in this chapter.

The development standards of each district are applied to lots by regulating the dimensions and design of four “zones” along frontages (including travel, parking, landscape, and sidewalk zones) and three “layers” (first, between the building and the street; second, between the front and rear of the building; and third, between the rear of the building and the rear property line).

Throughout the chapter, lot placement, private frontage type, parking, outdoor storage, landscaping, lighting, fencing, performance, and sign standards vary based on the Place Type Zoning District in which a property is located. Key to the application of these standards is that only some building types are allowed in each place type – meaning the corresponding standards for things like fences will vary. This allows flexibility in the design of properties, while setting certain minimum and maximum standards within each district.

Feedback

- Stakeholders expressed mixed opinions about the building types allowed within the historic downtown and downtown-adjacent neighborhoods. While the building typologies are developed based on examples from Taylor’s historic built environment, stakeholders believe that the development standards regarding the appropriateness of new buildings in established areas could be stronger or more sensitive to the immediate context.

- Stakeholders prefer that predictability, standardization, and transparency in the development process are emphasized over the negotiation of project details.
- Allow and encourage additional multifamily development. Stakeholders agreed that multifamily is needed, but it is not wanted in many areas. This seems related to maintaining quality over time as well as scale.
- Enable some flexibility but prioritize predictability. Stakeholders stated that developers want to know the zoning and development requirements upfront and receive timely answers/interpretations when necessary. At the same time, nearby residents seek similar predictability.

Recommendations

- Review and update the chapter’s provisions for compliance with state law.
- Revise the applicability of the development standards to the P1 district. Permitted uses in the district include civic buildings, but no building features are currently required or allowed.
- Section 5.4.3.5: Consider adding minimum size requirements for parking lot landscaped areas.
- Consider linking building design elements and landscape/site design elements, shifting to a points-based system that establishes minimums for each, along with a combined score, with bonuses/incentives unlocked when point levels are exceeded to certain degrees to reward higher quality development.
- Clarify how the principal building of a lot is determined for Building Types like Cottage Courts or Manufactured Home Parks with multiple units. Add this clarification to Section 5.3.5 (Building Disposition), which describes the lot positioning of principal buildings.

- Consider consolidating the height limitations in Chapter 4 and this chapter in one place, standardizing the height measurements in feet.
- Consider adjusting the Section 5.3.2.2 requirement for buildings within the 100-year floodplain to be built two feet above the base flood elevation to add “or above the curb level, whichever is higher.”
- Consider revising the 20% glazing requirement in private frontages in Section 5.3.7.2 to a lower requirement for residential uses.
- Section 5.6.1: Consider incorporating/cross-referencing additional landscaping regulations from the cited Taylor Code of Ordinances Chapter 28, where the landscaping standards are listed.
- Section 5.9.4.1, Performance Standards, requires “all buildings and sites” to be “designed to adapt over time to house different uses”. Clarify whether this requirement intends for residential structures to be built to commercial codes. Include prescriptive criteria if this provision is important, or clarify what features buildings and sites should include to provide the required adaptability.
- Section 5.10 (Sign Standards) and especially 5.10.4 (Signs Exempt from Requiring a Sign Permit) and 5.10.11 (Prohibited Signs): Review to ensure compatibility with legal best practices.

Chapter 6 - Historic Preservation

Summary

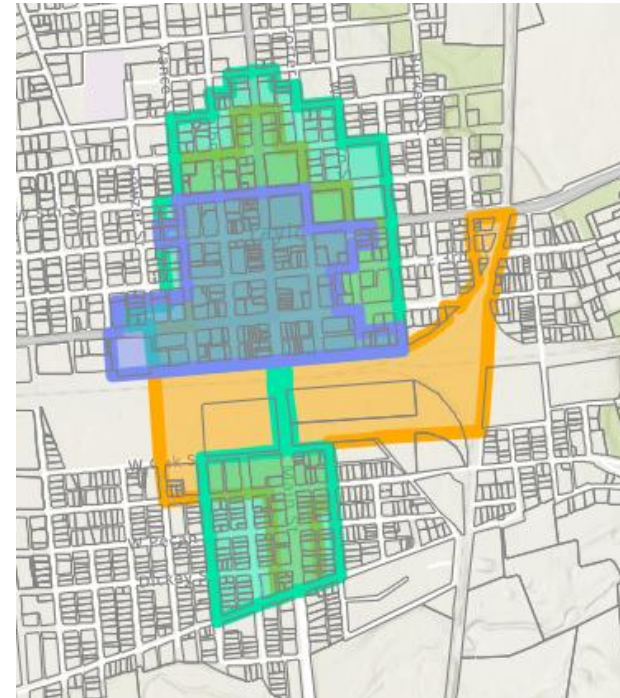
Chapter 6 houses the provisions pertaining to historic preservation. The chapter enables the Historic Preservation Officer, describes the designation of local historic landmarks and districts, and lists the NPS's criteria for the designation of historic resources.

Sections 6.1.5 (Ordinary Maintenance) and 6.1.6 (Minimum Maintenance Standards) establish minimum maintenance standards for historic resources. Section 6.1.7 (Demolition by Neglect) enables the protection of abandoned historic resources and enables City enforcement. Sections 6.1.8 through 6.1.11 set the standards, procedures, and criteria for certificates of appropriateness for new construction and alterations.

The regulations within and structure of this chapter mirror the best practices recommended by the Texas Historical Commission.

Feedback

- Stakeholders noted the difficulty of navigating both the Place Type Zoning District regulations and the historic building regulations – especially regarding sign regulations, saying that the high level of uncertainty leads to many requests for interpretation from City staff. This has also prompted some resistance to establishing locally-designated historic districts.
- Differences between the Central Business District, Main Street Program, and Historic District boundaries create confusion.
- Upzoning via the Place Type Zoning appears to have created a risk of losing historic resources outside the current Historic District boundary, or promoted infill designs that are not sympathetic to the context adjacent to historic resources.



Recommendations

- Review Chapter 6 for compliance with state law/Texas Historical Commission best practices.
- Create graphics illustrating the approval processes contained within this chapter.
- Evaluate potential expansion or establishment of new historic districts.
- Consider historic district alternatives for neighborhoods adjacent to the Historic District, such as neighborhood conservation districts, that introduce alternative requirements without stepping into discretionary review (e.g., Certificates of Appropriateness).

Chapter 7 - Definitions

Summary

Chapter 7 contains the definitions for the LDC.

Feedback

- Stakeholders mentioned the unfamiliarity of key terms (Place Type names, development process terms, development plan types).

Recommendations

- Review and update the chapter's provisions for compliance with legal best practices.
- Create cross-references/hyperlinks between terms and their first/significant usages within the LDC.
- Establish definitions for the permitted use chart, recommended in Chapter 4.

Conclusion

This diagnostic report provides a focused assessment of how Taylor's current Land Development Code functions in practice and how well it aligns with community priorities, market conditions, and state requirements. The findings contained herein point to a consistent need for clearer standards, improved usability, and more streamlined processes, while preserving the character and development quality valued by the community.

This report establishes a clear framework for the next phase of work. Phase Two will translate the diagnostic insights into targeted updates and amendments to the LDC, with an emphasis on restructuring the code, simplifying procedures, calibrating development standards, and ensuring consistency with Texas law and best practices. This effort will result in a more accessible and predictable regulatory framework that supports growth, reinforces community identity, and better serves residents, staff, and the development community.

Appendices

Proposed Code Outline

Chapter 1. General Provisions

- 1.1. Title
- 1.2. Purpose and Intent
- 1.3. Authority
- 1.4. Applicability and Jurisdiction
- 1.5. Minimum Standards and Conflicting Provisions
- 1.6. Rules of Construction
- 1.7. Transitional Provisions
- 1.8. Fees
- 1.9. Adoption
- 1.10. Enforcement

Chapter 2. Administration and Development Procedures

- 2.1. Administration
 - 2.1.1. Development Process Overview
 - 2.1.2. Administration and Enforcement
 - 2.1.3. Review and Decision-Making Bodies
 - 2.1.4. Delegation of Authority
 - 2.1.5. Interpretations
 - 2.1.6. LDC Text Amendments
- 2.2. Nonconformities
- 2.2. General Application Procedures
 - 2.2.1. Pre-Application Meetings
 - 2.2.2. Application Submittal and Requirements
 - 2.2.3. Application Review and Processing
 - 2.2.4. Validity, Modifications, and Expiration
 - 2.2.5. Noticing
 - 2.2.6. Appeals
 - 2.2.7. Comprehensive Plan Amendments
 - 2.2.8. Vested Rights Petitions, Project Dormancy and Expiration

2.3. Zoning Procedures

- 2.3.1. Zoning Map Amendments
- 2.2.6. Zoning Upon Annexation
- 2.3.3. Special Use Permits
- 2.3.4. Zoning Variances
- 2.3.5. Zoning Special Exceptions
- 2.3.6. Zoning Administrative Modification
- 2.3.8. Zoning Verification Letters

2.4. Development Review Procedures

- 2.4.1. Site Development Plans
- 2.4.2. Streamlined Site Development Plans
- 2.4.3. Building Permits
- 2.4.4. Certificates of Occupancy

2.5. Subdivision Procedures

- 2.5.1. Plat Types and Approval Process
- 2.5.2. Subdivision Improvement Approval and Acceptance
- 2.5.4. Subdivision Waivers
- 2.5.6. Plat Certification Letters

Chapter 3. Zoning Districts and Use Regulations

- 3.1. Zoning Districts
- 3.2. Building Types
- 3.3. Permitted Uses and Use-Specific Standards

Chapter 4. Subdivision Regulations

- 4.1. General Subdivision Provisions
- 4.2. Subdivision Design Standards
 - 4.2.1. Construction Standards
 - 4.2.2. Streets, Paths, Trails, and Alleys
 - 4.2.3. Blocks
 - 4.2.4. Lots

4.2.5. Utilities

4.2.6. Civic Spaces

4.2.7. Easements

Chapter 5. Development and Design Standards

- 5.1. Parking and Vehicle Circulation
- 5.2. Landscaping
- 5.3. Lighting
- 5.4. Fencing and Screening
- 5.5. Performance and Compatibility Standards
- 5.6. Signs

Chapter 6. Historic Preservation

- 6.1. Purpose and Applicability
- 6.2. Historic Preservation Commission
- 6.3. Historic Districts and Landmarks
- 6.4. Certificates of Appropriateness
- 6.5. Design Standards and Review Criteria
- 6.6. Appeals and Enforcement

Chapter 7. Definitions

- 7.1. Generally
- 7.2. Uses Defined
- 7.3. Terms Defined

Annotated Outline

Proposed			Existing Section or Subsection	
Chapter	Section	Subsection		
Chapter 1. General Provisions	Title	-	1.1	Title
	Purpose and Intent	-	1.2	Purpose
			1.3	Intent
	Authority	-	1.4	Authority
			3.3	Authority
	Applicability and Jurisdiction	-	1.5	Applicability
			1.6	Jurisdiction
	Minimum Standards and Conflicting Provisions	-	1.7	Minimum Standards and Conflicting Provisions
	Rules of Construction	-	1.8	Rules of Construction
	Transitional Provisions	-	1.9	Transitional Provisions
Chapter 2. Administration and Development Procedures	Fees	-	1.12	Fees
	Adoption	-	1.13	Adoption
	Enforcement	-	1.14	Enforcement
	Administration	Development Process Overview	2.1	Process Overview
		Administration and Enforcement	-	No existing equivalent located
		Review and Decision-Making Bodies	2.3	Review Authority
		Delegation of Authority	-	No existing equivalent located
		Interpretations	1.11	Written Interpretations
		LDC Text Amendments	2.2.12	Place Type Zoning Ordinance Text Amendment
	Nonconformities	-	1.10	Effect on Existing Conditions
	General Application Procedures	Pre-Application Meetings	2.2.2	Pre-Application Meeting
		Application Submittal and Requirements	2.2	Application
			2.2.1	General Requirements
		Application Review and Processing	-	No existing equivalent located
		Validity, Modifications, and Expiration	-	No existing equivalent located
		Noticing	-	No existing equivalent located
		Appeals	2.2.13	Appeal of a Place Type Related Administrative Decision
			2.2.28	Appeal of a Subdivision-Related Administrative Decision

Proposed			Existing Section or Subsection	
Chapter	Section	Subsection		
		Comprehensive Plan Amendments	2.2.4	Comprehensive Plan Amendment
		Vested Rights Petitions, Project Dormancy and Expiration	-	No existing equivalent located
	Zoning Procedures	Proposed to be removed	2.2.5	Zoning Applications
		Proposed to be removed	2.2.6	Neighborhood Plan
		Proposed to be removed	2.2.7	Infill Neighborhood Plan (Rezoning Required)
		Proposed to be removed	2.2.8	Employment Center Plan
		Zoning Map Amendments	2.2.9	Place Type Zoning Map Amendment
		Zoning Upon Annexation	2.2.3	Annexations
		Special Use Permits	2.2.10	Special Use Permit (SUP)
		Zoning Variances	2.2.14	Place Type Zoning Variance
		Zoning Special Exceptions	2.2.15	Place Type Special Exception
		Zoning Administrative Modification	2.2.16	Place Type Warrant
		Zoning Verification Letters	2.2.11	Place Type Zoning Verification Letter
	Development Review Procedures	Site Development Plans	2.2.31	Site Development Applications
			2.2.32	Site Development Plan
		Streamlined Site Development Plans	2.2.33	Streamlined Site Development Plan
		Building Permits	-	No existing equivalent located
		Certificates of Occupancy	-	No existing equivalent located
	Subdivision Procedures	Plat Types and Approval Process	2.2.20	Preliminary Plat
			2.2.22	Final Plat
			2.2.23	Minor Plat
			2.2.24	Amending Plat
			2.2.25	Replat
			2.2.26	Vacating Plat
		Subdivision Improvement Approval and Acceptance	2.2.21	Subdivision Improvement Plans
		Subdivision Waivers	2.2.29	Subdivision Warrant
			2.2.30	Subdivision Variance
		Plat Certification Letters	2.2.27	Plat Certification Letter
		Proposed to be removed	2.2.17	Subdivision Applications
		Proposed to be removed	2.2.18	Neighborhood Plan

Proposed			Existing Section or Subsection	
Chapter	Section	Subsection		
		Proposed to be removed	2.2.19	Infill Neighborhood Plan
Chapter 3. Zoning Districts and Use Regulations	Zoning Districts	-	4.1	Zoning Classification
			4.2	Place Type Zoning Districts
			4.3	Place Type Zoning District Development Standards
			5.1	Lot Structure
			5.3	Building Placement on the Lot
	Building Types	-	5.2	Building Types
	Permitted Uses and Use-Specific Standards	-		
Chapter 4. Subdivision Regulations	General Subdivision Provisions	-	3.2	Purpose
			3.5	Applicability
			3.1	General Provisions
			3.4	Engineer Required
		Proposed to be removed	3.6	Neighborhood Employment Center Plans
		Proposed to be removed	3.7	Infill Plans
	Subdivision Design Standards	Construction Standards	3.8	Neighborhood Design Standards
		Streets, Paths, Trails, and Alleys		
		Blocks		
		Lots		
		Utilities		
		Civic Spaces		
		Easements		
Chapter 5. Development and Design Standards	Parking and Vehicle Circulation	-	5.4	Parking and Vehicle Circulation on the Lot
	Landscaping	-	5.6	Landscaping Standards
	Lighting	-	5.7	Lighting Standards
	Fencing and Screening	-	5.8	Fencing Standards
			5.5	Outdoor Storage and Activities
	Performance and Compatibility Standards	-	5.9	Performance and Compatibility Standards
	Signs	-	5.10	Sign Standards
			2.2.34	Sign Applications
			2.2.35	Sign Permit

Proposed			Existing Section or Subsection	
Chapter	Section	Subsection		
			2.2.36	Master Sign Plan
			2.2.37	Sign Variance
			5.11	Enforcement
Chapter 6. Historic Preservation	Purpose and Applicability	-	6.1 2.2.38 2.2.39	Historic Preservation Historic Preservation Applications Certificate of Appropriateness
	Historic Preservation Commission	-		
	Historic Districts and Landmarks	-		
	Certificates of Appropriateness	-		
	Design Standards and Review Criteria	-		
	Appeals and Enforcement	-		
Chapter 7. Definitions	Generally	-	7.1	Definitions
	Uses Defined	-		
	Terms Defined	-		