

26-000035-ZA



SAVANNAH

savannahga.gov

Planning & Urban Design
20 Interchange Drive, Administration Bldg.
Savannah, GA, 31415
Phone: 912.525.2783 / Fax: 912.525.1562
www.savannahga.gov/planning

Zoning Text Amendment Application



110 E State St, Savannah, GA, 31401
P.O. Box 8246, Savannah, GA, 31412-8246
Phone: 912.651.1440 / Fax: 912.651.1480
www.thempc.org

Please type or print legibly. Attach additional sheets, if necessary, to fully answer any of the following sections. Incomplete applications will not be scheduled by the Metropolitan Planning Commission (MPC) until deficiencies are corrected. Additional instructions and information regarding the amendment process are attached. **SUBMIT AN ELECTRONIC COMPLETED APPLICATION TO PLANNING@SAVANNAHGA.GOV.** Applicants are requested to contact the MPC staff at 912.651.1440 and City Planning and Urban Design staff at 912.525.2783 prior to submitting an application.

I. Text Amendment Information

- A. Identify the specific section(s) number(s) of the Zoning Ordinance sought to be amended. 2.5, 2.6, 3.12, 3.18, 3.19, 3.21 and 3.23 (See attached)
- B. What is the existing text requested to be repealed, if any? Please provide attachment if more space is needed.
See attached.
- C. What is the proposed text, if any? Please provide attachment if more space is needed.
See attached.
- D. State the reason(s) for the text amendment. Please provide attachment if more space is needed.
See attached.

II. Text Amendment Review Criteria

Describe how the requested text amendment satisfies one or more of the following criteria.

- A. **Consistency:** The extent to which the proposed text amendment is consistent with the remainder of the Zoning Ordinance, including any purpose and intent statements. _____
- B. **New or Changing Circumstances:** The extent to which the proposed text amendment represents a new idea not considered in the existing Zoning Ordinance, or represents a revision necessitated by changing circumstances over time. _____
- C. **Error or Inappropriate Standard:** Whether or not the proposed text amendment corrects an error in the Zoning Ordinance, or otherwise improves upon existing requirements or standards. _____
- D. **Compliance with Higher Law:** Whether or not the proposed text amendment revises the Zoning Ordinance to comply with state or federal statutes. _____

III. Application History

Have any previous applications been made to rezone the subject property (Certificate of Appropriateness (COA), Subdivision, Site Permit (General Development Plan), Business Location Approval, Text Amendment)?

☐ Yes ☒ No If yes, please provide the Plan/Permit File Number(s): _____

IV. Petitioner Information (If the petitioner(s) will have an agent serve on his or her behalf, the petitioner(s) must complete Section V. Agent, if different from Petitioner of the application.)

Name(s): Mayor and Aldermen of the City of Savannah, Georgia

Registered Agent: Bridget Lidy

(Or Officer or Authorized Signatory, if Petitioner is not an individual)

Address: P.O. Box 1027

City, State, Zip: Savannah, GA 31402

Telephone: [REDACTED]

Fax: _____

E-mail address: [REDACTED]

V. Agent, if different from Petitioner

Name(s): _____

Firm or Agency: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Telephone: _____

Fax: _____

E-mail address: _____

VI. Disclosure of Campaign Contribution Form. To be filed within 10 days of filing this application. This is required to be filled out by the Petitioner, Property Owner, and/or Agent per the Conflict of Interest in Zoning Actions Act (O.C.G.A. § 36-67A).

(a) When any applicant for rezoning action has made, within two years immediately preceding the filing of that applicant's application for the rezoning action, campaign contributions aggregating \$250.00 or more to a local government official who will consider the application, it shall be the duty of the applicant to file a disclosure report with the governing authority of the respective local government showing:

- (1) The name and official position of the local government official to whom the campaign contribution was made; and
- (2) The dollar amount and description of each campaign contribution made by the applicant to the local government official during the two years immediately preceding the filing of the application for the rezoning action and the date of each such contribution.

(b) The disclosures required by subsection (a) of this Code section shall be filed within ten days after the application for the rezoning action is first filed.

(c) When any opponent of a rezoning action has made, within two years immediately preceding the filing of the rezoning action being opposed, campaign contributions aggregating \$250.00 or more to a local government official of the local government which will consider the application, it shall be the duty of the opponent to file a disclosure with the governing authority of the respective local government showing:

- (1) The name and official position of the local government official to whom the campaign contribution was made; and
- (2) The dollar amount and description of each campaign contribution made by the opponent to the local government official during the two years immediately preceding the filing of the application for the rezoning action and the date of each such contribution.

(d) The disclosure required by subsection (c) of this Code section shall be filed at least five calendar days prior to the first hearing by the local government or any of its agencies on the rezoning application.

Please answer the following questions:

A. Within two years immediately preceding the filing this application, have you and your agent (if applicable) made a campaign contribution in the amount of \$250 or more to any of the local government officials listed below?

☐ Yes ☐ No If you answered "Yes", please complete Question 2.

The Mayor and Aldermen of the City of Savannah	
Van R. Johnson, II, Mayor	Linda Wilder-Bryan, District 3
Carolyn Bell, At-Large (Post 1)	Nick Palumbo, District 4
Alicia Miller Blakely, At-Large (Post 2)	Dr. Estella Edwards Shabazz, District 5
Bernetta B. Lanier, District 1	Kurtis Purtee, District 6
Detric Leggett, District 2	

Chatham County-Savannah Metropolitan Planning Commission		
Laureen Boles, Secretary	Traci Amick	Joseph Welch
Travis Coles, Chairman	Coren Ross	Amanda Wilson
Stephen Plunk	Joseph B. Ervin	Jay Melder, Ex-Officio
Jeff Notrica, Treasurer	Dwayne Stephens	Michael Kaigler, Ex-Officio
Karen Jarrett	Tom Wolwode, Vice Chairman	

B. If you checked "Yes" to Question 1, complete the section below:

Contribution			
Name of Official to Whom Contribution was Made	Official Position at Time of Contribution	Date of Contribution	Description & Dollar Amount of Contribution

VII. Items Required to be Submitted with this Application

A. **Application Fee.** The non-refundable filing fee is based on the type of use for which relief is requested. Make check payable to City of Savannah. Fee is subject to change.

- Text Amendment: \$3,000.00

B. **Meeting with MPC staff.** Prior to the submittal of an application for a Text Amendment to the Zoning Ordinance, the applicant shall participate in a pre-application conference with the MPC staff.

- MPC Meeting date: _____

VIII. Application Checklist

Pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 8-2-26, this checklist must be completed and submitted with each permit application. Please check every item as either "Y" for items that are included with the application or "N" for items that are not included with the application. Items without an "N" checkbox are minimum requirements initially due with the application if applicable.

Yes No

- ☐ Part I. Text Amendment Information
- ☐ Part II. Text Amendment Review Criteria
- ☐ Part III. Application History
- ☐ Part IV. Petitioner Information
- ☐ ☐ Part V. Agent Information
- ☐ Part VI. Disclosure of Campaign Contribution Form.
- ☐ Part VII. Items Required to be Submitted with this Application (Fee)
- ☐ Part VIII. Application Checklist
- ☐ Part IX. Certification of Application (Signed application)

Please note: Supplemental information may be required during plan review to address deficiencies

Certified Application

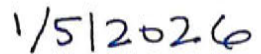
By my signature below, I certify that the information contained in this application is true and correct to the best of my knowledge at the time of the application. I acknowledge that I understand and have complied with all of the submittal requirements and procedures, and that this application is a complete application submittal. I further understand that an incomplete application submittal may cause my application to be deferred to the next posted deadline date. I understand that the approval of an application for Special Use Permit by The Mayor and Aldermen does not constitute a waiver from any applicable local, state, or federal regulations.



Signature of Petitioner or Petitioner's Agent



Printed Name



Date

Contacts:

Planning & Urban Design: 20 Interchange Drive, Administration Building, Savannah, GA, 31415
P.O. Box 1027, Savannah, GA, 31402 (Phone: 912.525.2783)

The Planning Commission: 110 E State St, Savannah, GA, 31401 (Located at the State Street Garage)
P.O. Box 8246, Savannah, GA, 31412 (Phone: 912.651.1440)

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Instructions

1. Applicants are requested to contact the Metropolitan Planning Commission (MPC) and City of Savannah Planning and Urban Design Office (City) prior to submitting an application.
2. The application form must be completed according to Sec. 3.1.4 including the appropriate fee and all required supplemental materials before it will be processed and scheduled for a hearing.
3. **All applications must be submitted electronically to planning@savannahga.gov**. If the document size is larger than 20 MB, please contact 912.525.2783.
4. The petitioner or agent may include exhibits (e.g., letters or photos) to support the request.
5. A schedule of the application deadlines as well as the Planning Commission and City Council meeting dates are part of this application.

Zoning Text Amendment Process (After the Application is Submitted)

1. All text amendment applications will be considered by the Planning Commission at a public hearing prior to the Mayor and Aldermen holding the zoning hearing.
2. Once an application submittal is determined to be complete according to Sec. 3.1.4, the MPC will schedule the petition for review by the Planning Commission and prepare a staff recommendation.
3. The MPC will notify the petitioner of the public hearing date and time. They will also publish a public notification in the newspaper.
4. The Planning Commission meeting will be held in the Arthur A. Mendonsa Hearing Room at the MPC, 112 E State Street doorway.
5. Digital presentations must be provided to MPC staff at least two days prior to the hearing. To ensure the protection of its network, the MPC does not allow Petitioners to use thumb drives on its computers. Copies of any materials used to support your petition must be submitted for the record at the time of the public hearing. The Petitioner shall provide a sufficient number for the Board and Board Secretary.
6. The Planning Commission will make a recommendation to the Mayor and Aldermen regarding the petition. Their recommendation may be to approve, approve with modifications, deny or continue the petition.
7. Once the Planning Commission has made a recommendation, the petition will be forwarded to the Mayor and Aldermen for consideration. The City will notify the petitioner of the date and time of the City Council meeting and publish the public notice for the zoning hearing in the newspaper.
8. The City Council meeting will be held in the Council Chambers on the 2nd Floor of City Hall, 2 E Bay Street.
9. The Mayor and Aldermen must have at least two meetings to consider the petition and the Planning Commission's recommendation; a zoning hearing and then the first and second readings of the ordinance amendment. The first and second readings may be held at the same meeting as the zoning hearing.
10. Once the Mayor and Aldermen hear the petition, they make a decision to approve, approve with modifications, deny, continue the petition to the next meeting or a date certain, or return the proposed text amendment to the Planning Commission for further study and recommendation.
11. If the Mayor and Aldermen deny an application for a zoning text amendment, the applicant will not be able to resubmit a zoning text amendment application for the same item for a period of 12 months from the date of the written decision by the Mayor and Aldermen.
12. Notification of the Mayor and Aldermen's final decision will be sent to the petitioner by the City.
13. The petitioner or agent should be in attendance at all Planning Commission and City Council meetings. If no one is present to represent the petition, the petition may still be discussed.

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2026 Application Submittal Deadlines for Planning Commission Meetings & City Council Meetings

Application Submittal Deadline <i>(Application submittal deadlines are on Fridays unless otherwise noted.)</i> Submittal Due: 5:00 p.m. Submittal Location: <u>planning@savananhga.gov</u>	Planning Commission Meeting Date <i>(All meetings are scheduled for every three weeks on Tuesdays unless otherwise noted. Contact MPC at 912-651-1440.)</i> Meeting Location: MPC 112 E State St Arthur A. Mendonsa Hearing Room	City Council Meeting (Zoning Hearings and 1st & 2nd Readings) <i>(All meetings are scheduled for the second and fourth Thursdays of every month unless otherwise noted. Contact 912-525-2783.)</i> Meeting Location: City Hall, 2 E Bay St, Council Chambers on the 2 nd Floor.	
	Pre-meeting: 12:30 p.m. Meeting Time: 1:30 p.m.	Meeting Time: 2:00 p.m.	
DEC 13, 2025	JAN 6	JAN 8	JAN 22
JAN 2	JAN 27	FEB 12	FEB 26
JAN 23	FEB 17	MAR 12	MAR 26
FEB 13	MAR 10	APR 9	APR 23
MAR 6	MAR 31	MAY 14	MAY 28
MAR 27	APR 21	JUN 11	JUN 25
APR 17	MAY 12	JUL 9	--
MAY 8	JUN 2	AUG 13	AUG 27
MAY 29	JUN 23	SEP 10	SEP 24
JUN 18	JUL 14	OCT 8	OCT 22
JUL 10	AUG 4	NOV 12	TUES, NOV 24*
JUL 31	AUG 25	DEC 10	--
AUG 21	SEP 15		
SEP 11	OCT 6		
OCT 2	OCT 27		
OCT 23	NOV 17		
NOV 20	DEC 15		
DEC 11	JAN 5, 2027		

O.C.G.A. § 36-66-4(a): A local government taking action resulting in a zoning decision shall provide for a hearing on the proposed action. At least 15 but not more than 45 days prior to the date of the hearing, the local government shall cause to be published within a newspaper of general circulation within the territorial boundaries of the local government a notice of the hearing. The notice shall state the time, place, and purpose of the hearing.

Background

Over the past year, City staff have worked with MPC staff to review issues related to variances and special exceptions. Inconsistencies with review authority and evaluation criteria were identified, which were revised. The amendment provides clearer guidance for the Historic District Board of Review (HDBR), the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC), the Planning Commission, and the Zoning Board of Appeals.

Feedback was received when the City presented the proposal to the HDBR on April 9, 2025, and HPC on April 23, 2025. The revisions have been vetted by the City Attorney's Office.

Proposed Text Amendment

The following is a detailed outline of the proposed revisions.

Section 2.5 Historic Preservation Commission

- **2.5.2.b.:** This change is a clerical change to improve readability and numbering of the ordinance. There is no change in the content.
- **2.5.2.c.:** This revision is a clerical change to ensure the final authority of the HPC is directly related to Certificates of Appropriateness (COA) for buildings in local historic districts and properties not within the Savannah Downtown Historic Overlay District. This revision was requested by the City Attorney's Office.

Section 2.6 Savannah Downtown Historic District Board of Review

- **2.6.2.:** This section has several clerical changes to address inconsistencies in the title of the HDBR and Savannah Downtown Historic Overlay District. The changes suggested, with the exception of the one listed below, are only to provide a consistent title of the HDBR and the Savannah Downtown Historic Overlay District. There is no change in the content.
- **2.6.2.c:** This revision has added variances to the list of final authorities granted to the HDBR. This will provide consistency with Section 3.21.9.c that identifies HDBR as having variance granting authority.

Section 3.12 Special Exceptions

- **3.12.2.x:** The proposed modification would allow for special exceptions to non-measurable standards, while measurable standards could still request changes through the variance process—with the exception of height which is not variable. The change enables HPC and HDBR the ability to review non-measurable standards, giving the boards most directly connected to the district and with the most expertise in the historic character of the overlay districts, the ability to determine if the standard should be adjusted and if adjusting the standard would alter the sense of place and special character of that historic district. This will help to reduce the overlap of variances and special exceptions, creating two different,

clearly defined paths for review.

- **3.12.7.d:** New language is proposed to provide clear criteria to the HDBR and HPC for special exception requests. This revision removes the use category as a criterion and acknowledges the need for the special exception to align with the character of the historic districts. This language was suggested by the HDBR to address concerns about a criterion (use categories) that are not currently in their direct purview.
- **3.12.9:** The timeframe for the expiration of approved special exceptions has been revised from 12 months to 24 months. This provides consistency with the expiration dates of variances and COAs.

Section 3.18 Certificates of Appropriateness for Local Districts and Local Historic Properties

- **3.18.9:** This revision ensures consistency in time limits with COAs.

Section 3.19 Certificates of Appropriateness for the Savannah Downtown Historic District

- **3.19.7:** This revision allows minor changes to noncontributing structures to be reviewed at a staff level for applicants in the Savannah Downtown Historic Overlay District.
- **3.19.8:** Minor changes are proposed in this section to provide consistency in naming nomenclature of the HDBR.
- **3.19.9:** Minor changes are proposed in this section to provide consistency in naming nomenclature of the HDBR.
- **3.19.10.a:** This revision clarifies COA time limits and maintains the consistency mentioned in 3.18.9.

Section 3.21. Variances

- **3.21.1.:** This revision adjusts a scrivener's error in the naming of the Planning Commission and removes the HPC from the commentary, providing clarification that the HPC does not issue variances.
- **3.21.2.:** This revision adds the HDBR to variance authority and aligns Sections 3.21.9 and 2.6.2.c to provide further clarity and consistency.
- **3.21.3:** This revision removes the HPC from the process chart. This is correcting a scrivener's error, and aligns with Section 3.21.1.

- **3.21.8:** This revision adds language to the commentary to clarify that single family detached lots may request a reduction in minimum lot area. Historically this provision has been interpreted in this manner, this proposed change provides a direct reflection of that interpretation in the ordinance.
- **3.21.9c.:** This revision creates consistency for the criteria of all boards reviewing variances.
- **3.21.10:** Language has been added for consistency and acknowledges that the Planning Commission and the Savannah Downtown Historic Board of Review have authority in granting variances.
- **3.21.11.:** This language provides consistency with the expiration date of variances approved by the Planning Commission and HDBR, which is 24 months. The change was made to reflect that large projects may have longer time frames of construction and multiple development applications to complete the project.

Section 3.23. Appeals

- **3.23:** Language has been added to specify the appeals process for final decisions made with variances and further provides consistency in naming nomenclature of all respective boards.

GPS Alignment

The recently adopted GPS Strategic Plan provides multiple goals that support this amendment including:

- Goal 2, Part III., Item 1: Identify and protect Savannah's diverse local history and culturally significant assets, including the renovation and restoration of the Savannah Civic Center to a world class facility that serves the entire community.
- Goal 4, Part I., Item 4: Update building standards to support safe, resilient and sustainable construction practices by incorporating industry standards, best practices, green design principles and environmental sustainability.
- Goal 4, Part III., Item 5: Strengthen and expand existing initiatives to preserve historic sites, restore historic buildings, and further promote Savannah's cultural history.