

26-002369-ZA

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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. _____
Articles 2.0 REVIEW BODIES AND ADMINISTRATORS, 3.0 APPLICATION AND REVIEW PROCEDURES, and 6.0 SPECIAL PURPOSE DISTRICTS
- B. What is the existing text requested to be repealed, if any? Please provide attachment if more space is needed.
Please refer to attached revisions and presentation from April 21, 2026 Planning Commission meeting.

- C. What is the proposed text, if any? Please provide attachment if more space is needed. _____
Please refer to attached revisions.

- D. State the reason(s) for the text amendment. Please provide attachment if more space is needed. _____
Please refer to presentation from April 21, 2026 Planning Commission meeting.

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 petitioners(s) must complete Section V. Agent, if different from Petitioner of the application.)

Name(s): The 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 31402-1027

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 Woiwode, 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: Various meeting dates since Sept. 2025 and April 21, 2026 Presentation

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.

Bridget Lidy

Digitally signed by Bridget
Lidy
Date: 2026.05.08
16:03:01 -04'00'

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: planning@savannahga.gov	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.

Proposed Revisions

Note:

*Text revisions to be enacted shown in blue, bold, and underlined.
Text revisions to be repealed shown in red, bold, and strikethrough.*

ARTICLE 2.0 REVIEW BODIES AND ADMINISTRATORS

Sec. 2.7 ~~Planning~~MPC Director

2.7.1 Defined

The Executive Director of the Metropolitan Planning Commission shall be the ~~Planning~~MPC Director.

2.7.2 Delegation of Authority

The ~~Planning~~MPC Director may designate any staff member to serve as his/her designee for those functions identified in this Ordinance. The ~~Planning~~MPC Director shall remain responsible for any final action, as applicable.

2.7.3 Powers and Duties

a. General Authority

- i. The ~~Planning~~MPC Director shall perform related duties as directed by the Planning Commission or any other applicable ordinances.
- ii. The ~~Planning~~MPC Director shall have the powers and duties listed below, in addition to those provided elsewhere in this Ordinance and the City of Savannah Code of Ordinances, as applicable.

b. Review Authority

With respect to this Ordinance, the ~~Planning~~MPC Director shall review and make recommendations regarding:

- i. Comprehensive plan amendments;
- ii. Zoning map amendments;
- iii. Planned development districts;
- iv. Zoning text amendments;
- v. Planning Commission Development Plans;
- vi. City of Savannah Development Plans, as required by this Ordinance;
- vii. Traffic impact analyses;
- viii. Special use permits;
- ix. Subdivisions;
- x. Local historic district designations, including amendments to height and contributing resource maps;
- xi. Local historic property designations;

- xii. Certificates of Appropriateness for local historic districts and historic properties;
- xiii. Certificates of Appropriateness for the Savannah Downtown Historic District with the exception of those listed below; and;
- xiv. Other duties as specified by this Ordinance.

c. Final Authority

With respect to this Ordinance and the Subdivision Ordinance, the ~~Planning~~MPC Director shall be responsible for final action regarding:

- i. Certificates of Appropriateness for actions identified in Sec. 3.19.7; and
- ii. Other duties as specified by this Ordinance.

*****Within the Zoning Ordinance, all references to Planning Director shall be revised to MPC Director. *****

ARTICLE 3.0 APPLICATION AND REVIEW PROCEDURES

~~Section~~Sec. 3.1 Purpose

Sec. 3.1 Purpose

3.1.2. Pre-application Conference.

Before submitting an application for development approval, an applicant shall ~~schedule-attend~~ a pre-application conference with the ~~Planning~~MPC Director to discuss procedures, standards and regulations required for approval in accordance with this Ordinance. The City Manager or his or her designee shall be invited to pre-application conferences applicable to all items listed in this section.

The pre-application meeting may be in person or via conference call. A mandatory pre-application meeting conference is required for the following applications and where specified elsewhere in this Ordinance:

- a. Development of Regional Impact;**
- b. Comprehensive Plan Amendment;**
- c. Rezoning (Map Amendment);
- d. Rezoning, Planned Development District;
- e. Zoning Text Amendment;
- f. Planning Commission Development Plan Review (Variance requested);
- g. Special Use Permit;**
- h. Special Exceptions;**
- i. Local Historic District Designation;
- j. Local Historic Property Designation;
- k. Amendment to Local Historic District Contributing Resources Map or Height Map; and
- l. Certificate of Appropriateness for Local Historic District;
- m. Variances, and**

n. Relief for uses and structures.

3.1.4 Determination of Completeness

a. Completeness Determination

Applications for items listed in 3.1.2 and Sec. 3.23 Appeals will be submitted to the MPC Director ~~City Manager or his or her designee~~ and checked for completeness within three (3) working days of submittal. An application is determined to be complete if all required information and documents have been prepared in accordance with the specific application requirements outlined in this Article.

b. Complete Application

Once an application has been deemed to be complete, MPC Director ~~City Manager or his or her designee~~ shall transmit the application to the appropriate reviewing authority for review and recommendation. The MPC Director ~~City Manager or his or her designee~~ shall notify the applicant and the City Manager or his or her designee that the application is complete.

If an application requires a public hearing, the application shall be placed on the next available agenda of the appropriate reviewing body.

Sec. 3.2 Public Notice

3.2.1 Applicability

All hearings of the Mayor and Aldermen and the Planning Commission which involve rezonings, zoning map amendments, zoning text amendments and special use permits are public and are subject to notification requirements under the State Zoning Procedures Law, O.C.G.A. Chapter §36-66-1, et seq., where applicable. All hearings of the Mayor and Aldermen, Historic Preservation Commission and the Savannah Downtown Historic District Board of Review which involve historic designations and certificates of appropriateness are public and subject to notification requirements of the State Historic Preservation Act. The MPC Director shall provide public notice as required by this section unless otherwise specified by this Ordinance. Where a zoning action is initiated by or on behalf of the Mayor and Aldermen, and Planning Commission review is not requested, notice shall be provided by the City Manager or his or her designee.

3.2.5 Published Notice

c. Timing of Published Notice

i. Public Hearings

1. All applications that require published notice, except as hereinafter provided, the notice shall be published at least 15, but no more than 45 days prior to the public hearing.
2. For applications to designate a local historic district or to designate a local historic property, notice of the public hearing shall be published at least 10 but not more

than 20 days prior to the public hearing as provided in O.C.G.A. §44-10-26 ("Georgia Historic Preservation Act"), or as amended. Notice of the public hearing shall be published on at least three (3) occasions prior to the public hearing.

3. ~~Except as provided hereinafter, all Zoning Board of Appeals, Savannah Downtown Historic District Board of Review, and Historic Preservation Commission applications for variances, special administrative permits, special exceptions, conditional use permits, other similar permits not enumerated in the Zoning Procedures Law, O.C.G.A. §36-66-1 et seq., applications for appeal of administrative decisions, and Planning Commission review of Development Plans provided in Sec. 3.8.3.b.ii. shall require at least 30 days published notice prior to the public hearing which shall include the time, place, and purpose of the public hearing. In addition, notice shall be mailed to the owner of the property that is the subject of the application.~~ Notwithstanding any provision to the contrary, where the grant or denial of a variance or condition concurrent is considered in conjunction with a decision to adopt or deny an amendment to the zoning ordinance to rezone property or in conjunction with the decision to grant or deny a special use permit, only one public hearing is required and notice of the public hearing shall be published at least 15 but not more than 45 days prior to the date of the hearing which shall state the time place and purpose of the hearing.

3.2.6 Posted Notice

a. Content of Notice

When required, as provided in Table 3.2-1, posted notice shall include the following information listed below on the sign:

- i. The type of application;
- ii. Description of the proposal or request;
- iii. The date, time and location of the scheduled public hearing;
- iv. The application file number; and
- v. A phone number to call for additional information.

b. Posting of Notice

Posting of property shall comply with the requirements listed below.

- i. Responsibility for Posting
Signs shall be posted by the applicant, except applications initiated by the Mayor and Aldermen shall be exempt from this requirement.
- ii. Form of Required Signs
Notice shall be posted on weather resistant signs in a form established by the City Manager or his or her designee.
- iii. Preparation of Signs
Signs shall be prepared by the MPC Director or City Manager or his or her designee, as applicable.

Sec. 3.4 Comprehensive Plan Amendment

3.4.1 Purpose

An application for a Comprehensive Plan amendment, text or map, may be initiated by the Mayor and Aldermen or the Planning Commission. Any person owning property within the City, or agent for such property owner, may initiate an application for a Comprehensive map amendment to change the Future Land Use Map category for their own property only.

3.4.2 Pre-Application Conference Required

Prior to the submittal of an application for a comprehensive plan amendment, the applicant shall request and participate in a pre-application conference in accordance with Sec. 3.1.2, Pre-application Conference.

3.4.3 Comprehensive Plan Amendments Initiated by the Mayor and Aldermen

Notwithstanding any other provision in this ordinance to the contrary, any amendment initiated by or on behalf of the Mayor and Aldermen shall not be submitted to or considered by the Planning Commission unless specifically requested by the City Manager or his or her design.

Sec. 3.5 Rezoning (Map Amendment)

3.5.3 Application Procedures

- a. Prior to the submittal of an application for a rezoning, the applicant shall participate in a pre-application conference ~~with the Planning Director~~ as described in Sec. 3.1.2.

3.5.6 Review by the Planning Commission

- a. **Consideration by Planning Commission**

All rezoning applications shall be considered by the Planning Commission at a public hearing, prior to public hearing by the Mayor and Aldermen.

- b. **Standards and Criteria**

The Planning Commission shall review and make a recommendation on the proposed rezoning based upon the standards in Sec. 3.5.8, Review Standards for Rezoning Applications.

- c. **Planning Commission Recommendation**

A recommendation shall be prepared and forwarded to the Mayor and Aldermen. The recommendation shall indicate if the proposed rezoning should be:

- i. Approved;
- ii. Approved with conditions;
- iii. Approved with an alternative zoning district;
- iv. Continued to the next meeting or to a date certain; or
- v. Denied.

3.5.10 ~~Rez~~Zoning Applications Initiated by the Mayor and Aldermen

- a. One purpose of a ~~rezoning~~ initiated by or on behalf of the Mayor and Aldermen may be to rezone areas in conformance with the principles of comprehensive land use planning and staged development as reflected by established plans and policies, as well as planned public facilities.
- b. Notwithstanding any other provision in this ordinance to the contrary, any ~~rezoning~~ initiated by or on behalf of the Mayor and Aldermen shall not be submitted to or considered by the Planning Commission unless specifically requested by the City Manager or his or her designee ~~Mayor and Aldermen~~.
- c. The same review criteria shall apply to ~~rezonings~~ initiated by or on behalf of the Mayor and Aldermen as to all other rezonings as set forth in Sec. 3.5.8 Review Standards for Rezoning Applications.

Sec. 3.6 Rezoning (Map Amendment), Planned Development District

Sec. 3.7 Zoning Text Amendment

3.7.3 Application Procedures

Prior to the submittal of an application for a text amendment, the applicant shall participate in a pre-application conference ~~with the Planning Director~~ as described in Sec. 3.1.2.

3.7.5 Review by the Planning Commission

- a. **Consideration by Planning Commission**
All text amendment applications shall be considered by the Planning Commission at a public hearing, prior to public hearing by the Mayor and Aldermen. The Planning Commission public hearing shall be held no more than 120 days after the receipt of a completed application.
- b. **Standards and Criteria**
The Planning Commission shall review and make a recommendation on the proposed text amendment based upon the standards in Sec. 3.7.7, Review Criteria for Text Amendment Applications. The Planning Commission shall make a recommendation no more than 120 days after the first meeting during which a public hearing is held for a rezoning.
- c. **Planning Commission Recommendation**
~~After consideration of the review criteria in Sec. 3.7.7, the Planning Commission shall provide a recommendation which~~ A recommendation shall be prepared and forwarded to the Mayor and Aldermen. The recommendation shall indicate that the proposed text amendment should be:
 - i. Approved as submitted by the applicant;
 - ii. Approved as recommended by the ~~Planning~~ MPC Director;

- iii. Approved with modifications;
- iv. Continued to the next meeting or a date certain or
- v. Denied

3.7.6 Action by the Mayor and Aldermen

Within seven (7) days of the recommendation of the review authority, the ~~Planning-MPC~~ Director shall forward the recommendation to the Mayor and Aldermen for final action.

a. Public Hearing

The Mayor and Aldermen shall hold a minimum of one (1) public hearing to consider the proposed text amendment after receiving a recommendation from the responsible review authority. Within seven (7) days of receiving the recommendation, the Mayor and Aldermen shall notify the applicant of the scheduled date for the public hearing. Notwithstanding any other provision in this ordinance to the contrary, any text amendment initiated by or on behalf of the Mayor and Aldermen shall not be submitted to or considered by the Planning Commission unless specifically requested by the ~~Mayor and Aldermen~~ City Manager or his or her designee.

Sec. 3.8 Development Plan Review

3.8.3 Review Authority for Development Plans

There are two review authorities for Development Plans with varying review and approval procedures. The authorities are provided below:

a. City of Savannah Development Plans (Minor)

Prior to the submittal of an application for a Development Plan listed in part i.3 below, the applicant shall participate in a pre-application conference as organized by the City Manager or his or her designee.

i. Final Authority: Development Plans that are reviewed and approved by the City Manager or his or her designee include the following:

1. Temporary use permits (see Sec. 3.11, Temporary Use Permits);
2. Accessory structures or uses as provided in Sec. 8.7 Accessory Structures and Uses as determined by the City Manager or his or her designee; or
3. Development Plans that do not require Planning Commission level review described below. The ~~Planning-MPC~~ Director may participate in the City of Savannah Development Plan Review for such plans.

b. Planning Commission Development Plan Review (Major)

Development Plans that are reviewed and approved by the Planning Commission. Prior to the submittal of an application for any Development Plan listed in parts i and ii below, the applicant shall participate in a pre-application conference as described in Sec. 3.1.2. The MPC Director may waive the pre-application conference requirement for variances, special exceptions, and major subdivisions.

i. **Review Authority:**

The Planning Commission shall review the following Development Plans and make recommendations to the Mayor and Aldermen:

1. Rezoning for a Planned Development District (see Sec. 3.6 Planned Developments); and
2. Special use permits (see Sec. 3.10, Special Use Permits).

ii. **Final Authority**

The Planning Commission shall review and have the final authority to approve or deny the following Development Plans:

1. Any special exception that requires a Development Plan (see Sec. 3.12, Special Exceptions);
2. Any use that requires a Development Plan as provided in Article 8.0, Use Standards;
3. Any variance requested for any Development Plan; or
4. Major subdivisions in accordance with the requirements of the Subdivision Regulation Ordinance, Savannah City Code, Part 8, Chapter 2.

Sec. 3.9 Traffic Impact Analysis

Sec. 3.10 Special Use Permit

3.10.3 ~~Reserved~~ Pre-Application Conference Required

Prior to the submittal of an application for a special use permit, the applicant shall request and participate in a pre-application conference in accordance with Sec. 3.1.2, Pre-application Conference.

Sec. 3.11 Temporary Use Permit

Sec. 3.12 Special Exceptions

3.12.1 Purpose

This Section establishes procedures for providing relief from specified standards within this Ordinance. It is not the intent of the special exception to eliminate such standards, but rather to provide a process by which exceptions can be made for individual circumstances. **Prior to the submittal of an application for a special exception, the applicant shall request and participate in a pre-application conference in accordance with Sec. 3.1.2, Pre-application Conference.**

Sec. 3.13 Home Occupation Permit

Sec. 3.14 Wireless Communications Facilities

Sec. 3.15 Sign Permit

Sec. 3.16 Local Historic District Designation

Sec. 3.17 Local Historic Property Designation

Sec. 3.18 Certificate of Appropriateness for Local Historic Districts and Local Historic Properties

Sec. 3.19 Certificate of Appropriateness for the Savannah Downtown Historic District

Sec. 3.20 Proactive Preservation

Sec. 3.21 Variances

3.21.3 Application Process

As described below, an application for a variance shall be submitted to the applicable review authority.

a. Zoning Board of Appeals

Prior to the submittal of an application for a variance, the applicant shall participate in a pre-application conference **in accordance with Sec. 3.1.2, Pre-application Conference.**

b. Planning Commission

Prior to the submittal of an application for a variance, the applicant shall participate in a pre-application conference **in accordance with Sec. 3.1.2, Pre-application Conference.**

Sec. 3.22 Written Interpretations

Sec. 3.23 Appeals

Sec. 3.24 Relief for Nonconforming Uses and Structures

ARTICLE 6.0 SPECIAL PURPOSE DISTRICTS

6.1.3 Initiation of a Planned Development Rezoning

An application for a Planned Development rezoning may be initiated by any person, or agent for such person, who seeks to rezone his or her own property. **Prior to the submittal of an application for a Planned Development rezoning, the applicant shall participate in a pre-application conference as described in Sec. 3.1.2.**

Clarifying Roles & Improving Service Delivery

between the City of Savannah &
Chatham County-Savannah
Metropolitan Planning Commission

Tuesday, April 21, 2026



Purpose & Key Outcomes

Purpose of Changes:

- Improve processes
- Clarify roles between MPC & City's Planning & Urban Design
- Align with Savannah GPS Strategic Plan
- Strengthen collaboration & accountability

Expected Outcomes:

- Better service delivery for applicants & the public
- Reduced overlap & confusion
- Clear roles without changing approval authority



GPS Alignment

Goal 6: Always Be a High Performing Government

1. Ensure every dollar of public funds is spent wisely, transparently and to the maximum benefit of our community.
3. Save Money to the taxpayer by implementing operational efficiencies, eliminating redundancy and waste, and optimizing partnerships to leverage shared services.



Current Services - MPC

- MPC Planning Director & delegated staff serves as the City professional planning agency providing these services:
 - **Development Services:** Reviews subdivisions & provides final administrative authority to approve minor subdivisions that do not require variances
 - **Discretionary Review Processes:** Supports the Planning Commission & Zoning Board of Appeals in review of rezoning, Comp Plan, & text amendments; annexation petitions; special use permits, special exceptions, variances, & appeals petitions; & holds pre-application conferences for zoning actions.
 - **Advance Planning:** Develops & updates the Comprehensive Plan to ensure consistency with long-term community goals.
 - **Historic Preservation:** Supports the Historic District Board of Review (HDBR), Historic Preservation Commission (HPC), & Chatham County-Savannah Historic Sites & Monuments Commission (HSMC)



Current Services - City

- Centralizes & strengthens urban planning, preservation, & design services by advancing City planning goals while promoting progressive urban design & safeguarding Savannah's architectural & historic resources. Department staff serve these functions under the direction or delegation of the City Manager:

- ***Ordinance interpretation & development:*** Updates/corrects zoning ordinance; interprets zoning ordinance by issuing of zoning confirmation letters; & advances policy directives with revisions (affordable housing, hotel overlay, etc.)
- ***Construction permit review:*** Reviews building permits/site plans to ensure compliance with zoning standards; reviews permits for demolition, signs, swimming pools, antennas (cell towers), & solar panels.



Current Services - City

- **Use permitting & review activities:** Manages issuance of permits for STVRs & business location approvals; reviews alcohol beverage licenses, encroachment permits, & temporary uses; administers the impact fee program.
- **Application intake & public notification:** Receives, processes, & determines completeness for applications for Comp Plan amendments, rezoning, planned developments, text amendments, special use permits, variances, special exceptions, appeals, & local historic district & property designations; & processes annexation petitions.
- **Small area plans & special projects:** Leads neighborhood & small area planning initiatives (e.g., Canal District Master Plan, Southside Retrofit, Eastside Plan, Hudson Hill, CNU Studies); supports special projects & corridor plans (e.g., Fairgrounds, River Street, Civic Legacy, Railroad District, 1-16 Flyover); & develops citywide preservation program.



Proposed Changes - MPC

MPC will now handle:

- Application intake & processing
- Determine completeness of applications
- Public notification

Applies to:

- Comp Plan amendments
- Rezoning
- Planned Developments
- Text amendments
- Special Use Permits
- Variances
- Special Exceptions
- Appeals
- Local historic district & property designations



Proposed Changes - City

City will continue to lead:

- Policy development
- Ordinance interpretation (final authority)
- Special projects & planning initiatives
- Required City participation in pre-app meetings



What Stays the Same?

- No change to approval authority
- City retains permit review
- MPC retains board support & review roles
- City retains authority to initiate rezoning & text amendments, with Planning Commission review only when directed by City Council

What Changes for the Public?

- Where applications & fees are submitted
- More streamlined & predictable processes
- Clearer points of contact



Next Steps

May 12	• Revisions considered by Planning Commission
May-June	• Training for staff
June 14	• Consideration by City Council
July 1	• Implementation
July – August	• Support Transition

