

SAVANNAH  
savannahga.gov



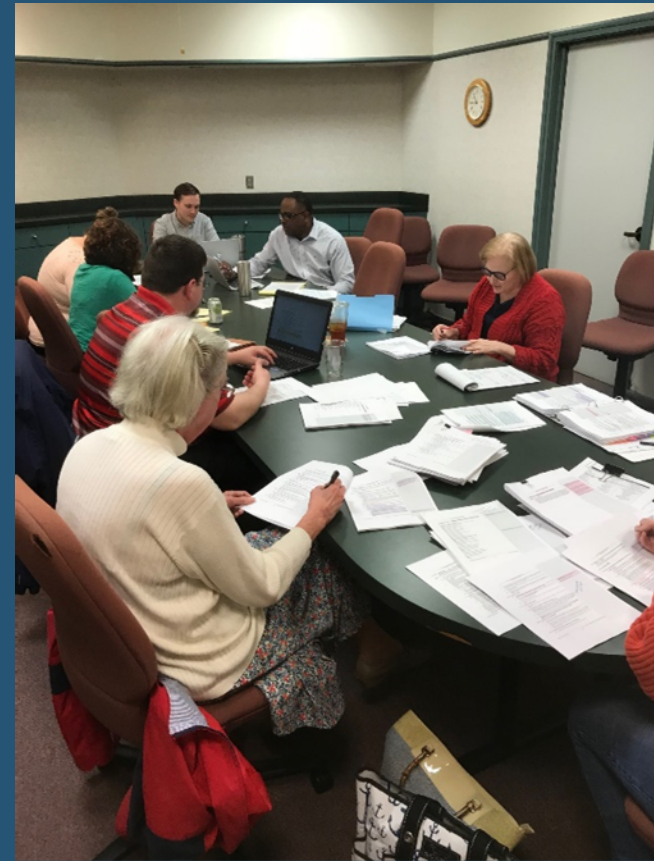
# SAVANNAH ZONING ORDINANCE UPDATE

City Council Workshop  
February 20, 2019



# Today's Presentation

- **History**
- **Background**
- **Zoning and Development Issues Addressed**
- **Zoning Conversion**
- **Stakeholder Collaboration**
- **Draft Zoning Map**
- **Adoption Resolution**





# History

## Post 1960 Adoption Commentary

Former Director Don Mendonsa, 1962 – “...*the zoning ordinance for the City of Savannah is not doing the job that it should in accomplishing the land development objectives of the community.*” He noted the following issues:

- *Numerous Amendments*
- *Variances and Incorrect Zoning*
- *Existing Development Patterns and Character*
- *Relationship between Zoning and Development.*
- *Ambiguous Zoning Ordinance*



# History

## Post 1960 Adoption Commentary

### Former Director Eugene Culpepper, 1967 –

*“...the ordinance has many overlapping and conflicting sections, is difficult to read, and even more difficult to administer. In many instances, the requirements in the existing ordinance are over burdensome on the developer or individual and in other instances, needed controls and standards are not even covered in the ordinance...”*



# History

## Post 1960 Adoption Commentary

### Consultant Lane Kendig, 1997 –

- *“The number of zoning districts is unreasonably large...”*
- Too many districts encourage zoning change requests
- Some distinctions have been made to deal with single uses
- *“When a staff and board must process a large number of zoning changes, the burden keeps staff and Commission from doing real planning...”*



## NewZO Background

- **January 9, 2007 was the first public meeting with the Planning Commission in which the zoning ordinance update was discussed.**
- **Between 2007 and June 2011 approximately 75 meetings were held leading up to the publishing of Draft 1.**
- **Meetings included Technical and Advisory Committees, Community Groups, the Planning Commission and Elected Officials. The subsequent draft releases followed a similar process and included over 350 total meetings.**



# Addressing Longstanding Issues

## Zoning and Development Issues

- **Reduce Nonconformity**
- **Reduce Requests for Variances**
- **Improve Usability of the Ordinance**
- **Reduce Impacts of Incompatible Zoning**
- **Promote higher residential density where appropriate**
- **Provide Framework for Improving Neglected Communities**



# Zoning and Development Issues

## Reduce Nonconformity

- Non conformity is substantially reduced by NewZO
- Particularly in residential communities with historic development patterns characterized by small lots with or without lane access.



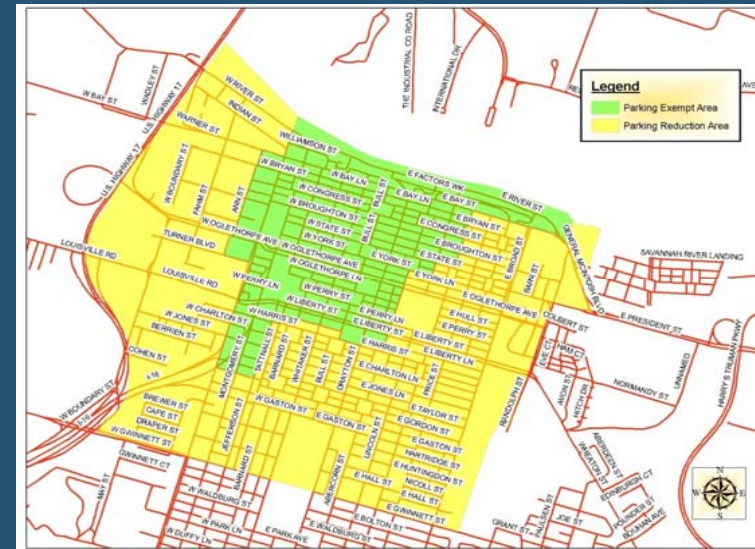
# Zoning and Development Issues

## Reduce Variance Requests

Lot Area  
Lot Width  
Lot Coverage  
Parking Requirements

NEWZO proposes lower parking minimum requirements and increases distance-based thresholds for parking sharing:

- 1,300 feet in Downtown parking district
- 600 feet for other non-residential
- 300 feet for other residential
- NewZO applies appropriate dimensional standards to residential properties making more properties conforming



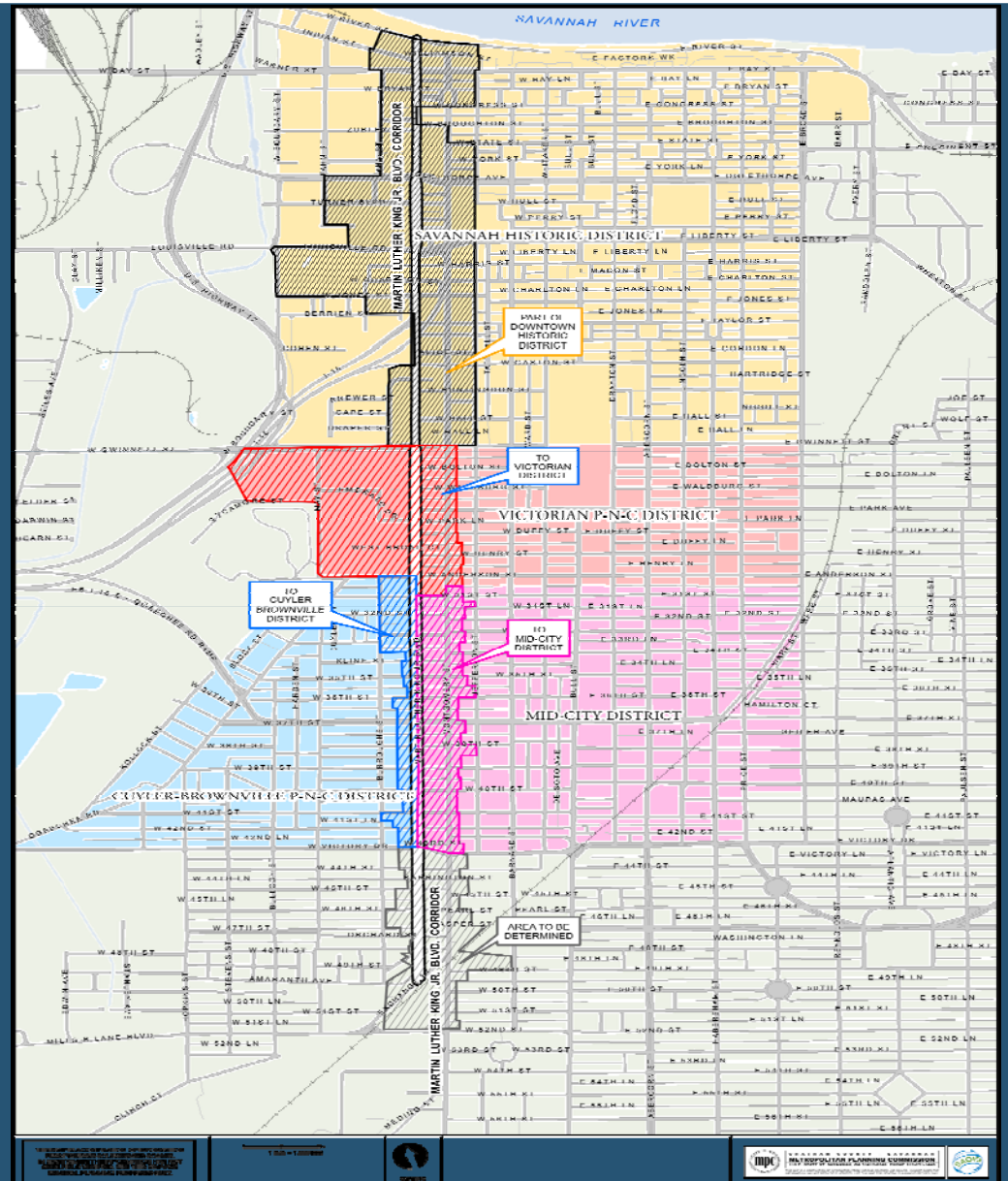
Existing



Proposed

# Zoning and Development Issues

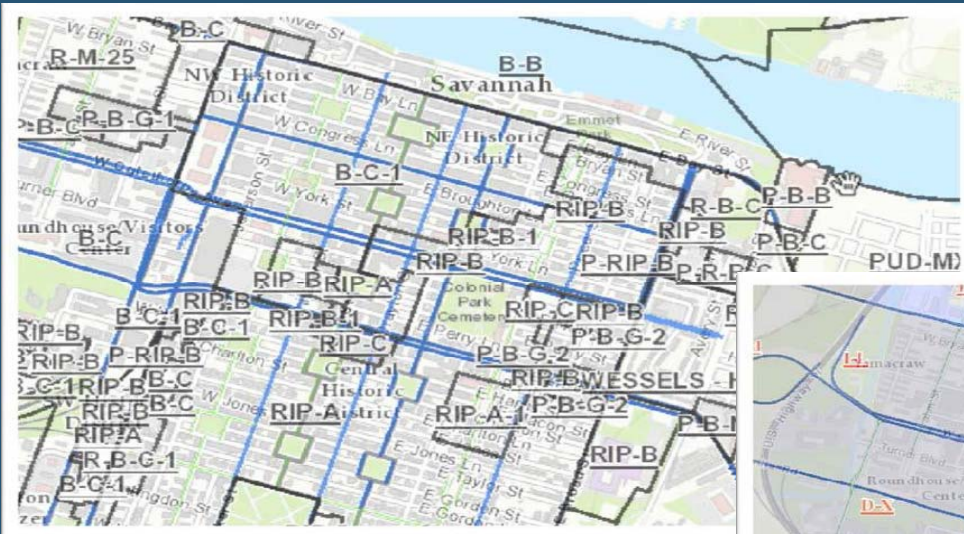
- Some areas of the city have not benefited from neighborhood specific planning efforts.
- In conjunction with NewZO, planning efforts will commence for these neighborhoods as they align with City of Savannah priorities.





# Zoning Conversion

- The Zoning Map for the City of Savannah is being converted in this process.
- While most zoning classifications primary change is in nomenclature, a process has to be put in place to review requests for zoning changes prior to the effective date of the ordinance.



Existing

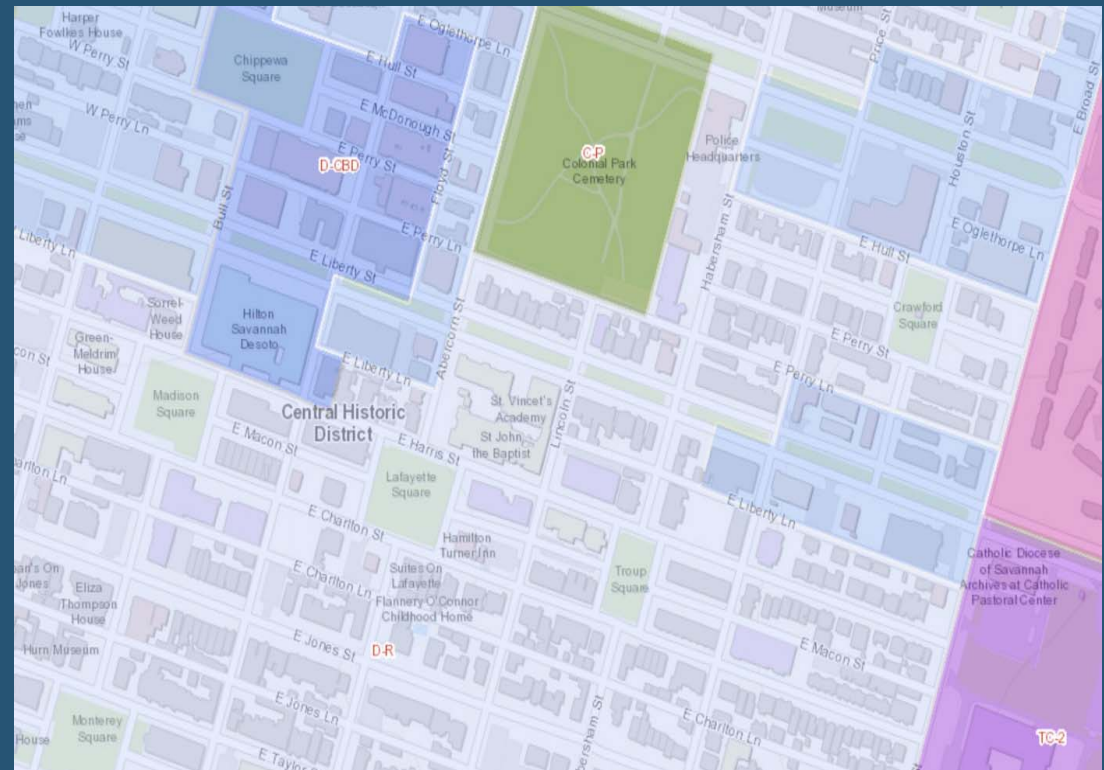


Proposed



# New Zoning Map

- Zoning map is the part of the ordinance
- Identifies the zoning classification that has been proposed for each parcel in the City
- The map, once adopted by the Mayor and Aldermen and reaching the effective date, becomes the official zoning map of the City





# NewZO Comparison

## Zoning Ordinance Chapters

- General Provisions (1.0)
- Review Bodies and Administrators (2.0)
- Application and Review Procedures (3.0)
- Measurements and Exceptions (4.0)
- Base Zoning Districts (5.0)
- Special Purpose Districts (6.0)
- Overlay Districts (7.0)
- Use Standards (8.0)
- General Site Standards (9.0)
- Natural Resources (10.0)
- Nonconformities (11.0)
- Violations, Penalties and Enforcement (12.0)
- Definitions and Abbreviations (13.0)







# Simplification of Districts

R-B	RB-1	B-H	B-N	BN-1	B-C	BC-1	B-G	BG-1	BG-2	B-B	I-L	IL-B	I-H	P-IL-T	R-B-C	R-BC-1	O-I					
CA	CM	CR	R20	R10	R-6	R6A	R6B	R6C	R4	RM	RIP	RIPA	RIPA1	RIPB	RIP-B1	RIPC	RIPD	IP	RMH	RMH-1	RD	AI



C	C-M	C-P	A-1	RSF-E	RSF-30	RSF-20	RSF-10	RSF-6	RSF-5	RSF-4	RTF	TR-1	TR-2	TR-3	RMF-1	RMF-2	RMF-3	RMHP	TN-1	Interior Lot	TN-2	Corner Lot	TN-2	TN-3	TC-1	TC-2	D-R	D-N	D-C	D-CBD	D-W	OI-T	OI	OI-E	B-L	B-N	B-C	B-M	IL-R	IL-T	I-L	I-H
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# Public Notice

Proposal	Pre-Application Conference	Mailed	Posted	Published		Neighborhood Meeting
				Public Meeting	Public Hearing	
Development of Regional Impact (DRI)		n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Comprehensive Plan Text Amendment		n/a	n/a	n/a	x	n/a
Comprehensive Plan Map Amendment		x	x	n/a	x	n/a
Rezoning (Map Amendment)		x	x	n/a	x	x
Rezoning, Planned Development District		x	x	n/a	x	x
Zoning Text Amendment		n/a	n/a	n/a	x	n/a
Planning Commission Development Plan Review (No Variance)		x	n/a	n/a	n/a	x
Planning Commission Development Plan Review (Variance requested)		x	x	x	n/a	x
Traffic Impact Analysis		n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Special Use Permit		x	x	n/a	x	x
Temporary Use Permit		n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Special Exceptions		x	x	x	n/a	n/a
Home Occupation Permit		n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Wireless Communications Facility	See Sec. 8.9, Wireless Communications Facilities					
Sign Permit		n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Local Historic District Designation [1]		x	x	n/a	x	x
Local Historic District Property Designation		x	n/a	n/a	x	n/a
Amendment to a Local Historic District Contributing Resources Map or Height Map		x	n/a	n/a	x	n/a
Certificate of Appropriateness for Local Historic Districts (No Variance)		n/a	x	n/a	n/a	n/a
Certificate of Appropriateness for Local Historic Districts (Variance requested)		x	x	x	n/a	n/a
Proactive Preservation		x	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Variance (Zoning Board of Appeals)		x	x	x	n/a	n/a
Appeals	See Sec. 3.26.6		x	n/a	x	n/a
Relief for Nonconforming Uses		x	x	x	n/a	x



# Changes in Base Parking Standards

Decrease	
Increase	
No Change	
Change In Standard	

USE	EXISTING	NEWZO
<b>RESIDENTIAL USE</b>		
Single-family detached and semidetached dwelling units	2 per unit	1 per unit
Accessory dwellings	-	1 per unit
<b>Multifamily</b>		
studio	1.25 per unit	1 per unit
one-bedroom	1.5 per unit	1 per unit
two-bedroom	1.75 per unit	1 per unit
three+ bedroom	2.0 per unit	1 per unit
Manufactured Home Park		2 per lot + 1 per 4 lots for visitors
Continuing Care Retirement Community	1 per 2 units + 1 per 2 employees	based on requirement for each housing type
<b>Group Living</b>		
Assisted Living	1 per 2 units + 1 per 2 employees	1 per 2 beds + 1 per employee
Children's Home	1 per 2 beds	1 per 4 beds + 1 per employee
Dormitory, College	1 per 2 beds + 1 per 2 employees	1 per 2 beds + 1 per 2 employees



# Changes in Base Parking Standards

Decrease	
Increase	
No Change	
Change In Standard	

<b>Other Civic Uses</b>		
Place of worship	1 per 8 seats	1 per 6 seats
Private club/lodge	as determined by zoning admin	1 per 100 SF
Detention and correctional facilities	as determined by zoning admin	1 per 3 seats in visitation area + 1 per employee
Correctional Transition Center	as determined by zoning admin	1 per 300 SF of office area + 1 per employee
<b>COMMERCIAL USES</b>		
<b>Office</b>		
Office, general	1 per 200 SF leasable area + 1 per 200 SF reception area	1 per 300 s.f
Call center	-	1 per 100 SF
Day labor employment center	1 per 200 SF leasable area + 1 per 200 SF reception area	1 per 200 SF
Office, medical	1 per 175 SF leasable area	1 per 200 SF
Contractor's office	-	1 per 1000 SF
Studio/Multimedia Production Facility	1 per 400 SF leasable area	1 per 300 SF
<b>Indoor Recreation</b>		
Arena; convention center	1 per 4 seats	1 per 5 seats
Indoor amusement	as determined by zoning admin	1 per 250 SF
Indoor firearm/archery range	as determined by zoning admin	1 per shooting position
Indoor sports facility	as determined by zoning admin	1 per 225 SF gross floor area
Theater/cinema	1 per 4 seats	1 per 4 seats
Bowling Alley	as determined by zoning admin	4 per lane
Performing Arts Theater	1 per 4 seats	1 per 4 seats + 1 per employee



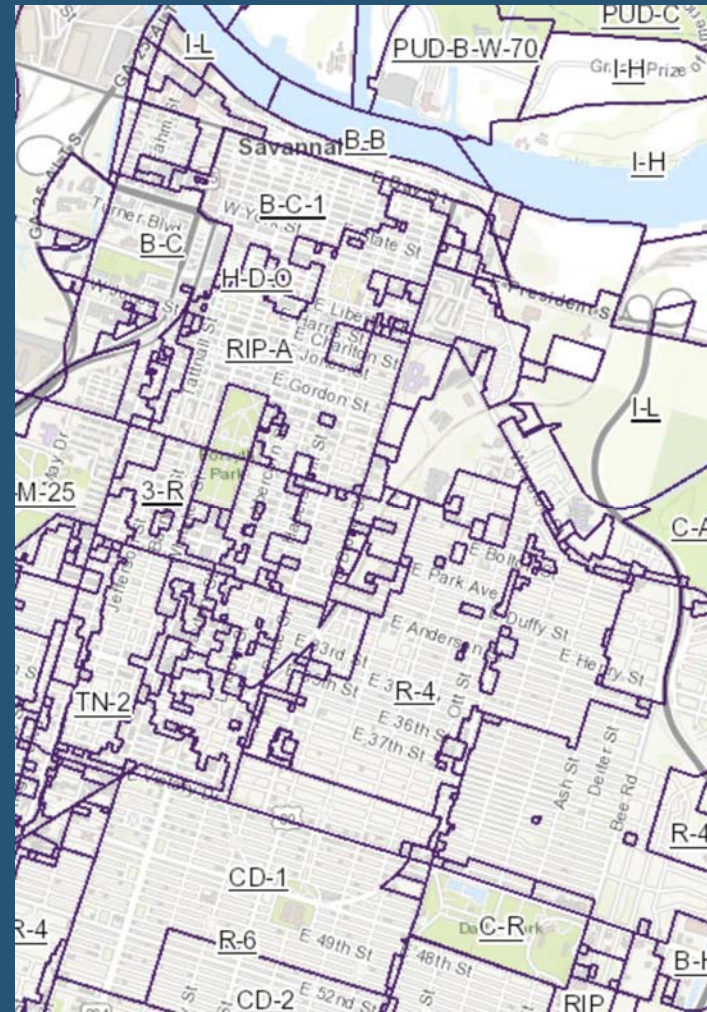
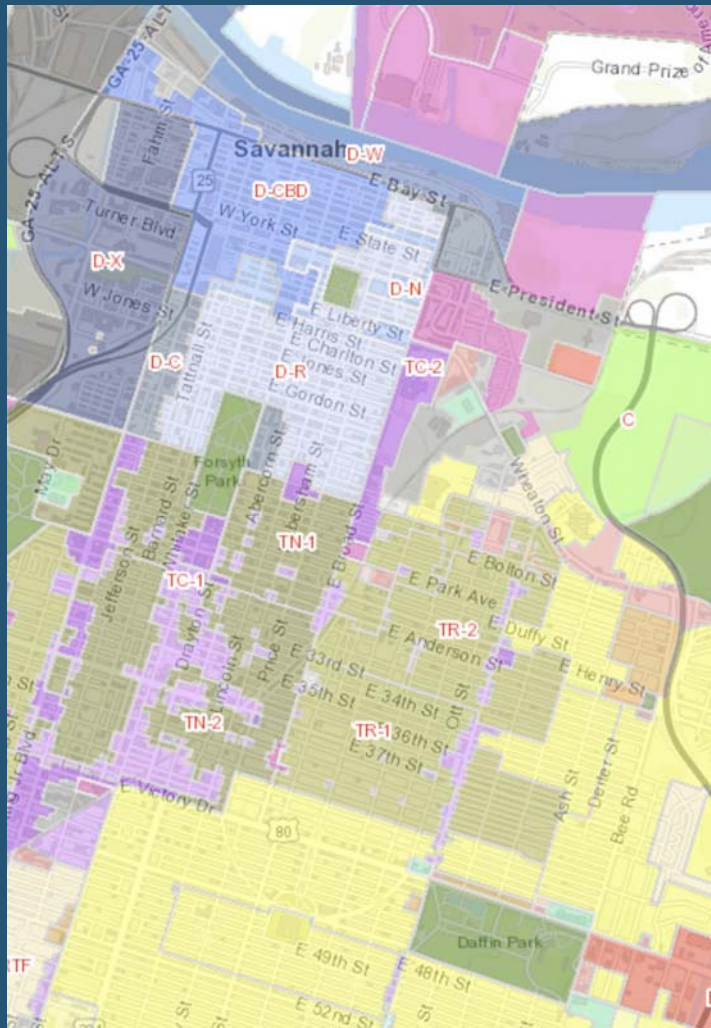
# Changes in Base Parking Standards

Decrease	
Increase	
No Change	
Change In Standard	

<b>Retail Sales</b>		
Retail, general	1 per 250 SF leasable area	1 per 250 SF
Shopping center	1 per 200 SF leasable area	1 per 225 SF
Art/photo studio, gallery	1 per 400 SF leasable area	1 per 400 SF
Furniture sales	1 per 800 SF leasable area	1 per 600 SF
Appliance sales	1 per 400 SF leasable area	1 per 400 SF
Apparel/Clothing sales	1 per 250 SF leasable area	1 per 225 SF
Manufactured home, storage building, carport sales, outdoor sales		1 per 300 SF of office area + 1 per employee
Pharmacy	1 per 200 SF leasable area	1 per 275 SF
Plant nursery	-	1 per 250 SF of retail area
Garden center	1 per 250 SF leasable area	1 per 250 SF of retail area
<b>Services</b>		
Service, general	-	1 per 300 SF
Animal services	1 per 300 SF leasable area	1 per 250 SF
Veterinary clinic	1 per 175 SF leasable area or 3 per vet	1 per 200 SF
Animal boarding	-	1 per 4 kennels
Bank	1 per 175 SF + 4 per drive-in window	1 per 200 SF
Business support services		1 per 300 SF



# Map Simplification





# Organizational Confusion

Sec. 8-3027 Planned neighborhood conservation district.

Article J: Wireless Telecommunications Facilities

Sec. 8-3028 Victorian planned neighborhood conservation district.

Article K: Mid-City (Thomas Square) District Zoning Ordinance

Sec. 8-3029 Cuyler-Brownsville planned neighborhood conservation district.

Article L: New Hampstead PUD

Sec. 8-3030 Historic district.

Article M: Public Notice

Article N: Savannah River Landing Planning Unit Development



# Changes in Base Parking Standards

NewZO Category		Current Category(ies)
Acronym	Full Name	Acronym
C	Conservation	C-M/C-R
C-M	Conservation-Marsh	C-M
C-P	Conservation-Park	C-R
A-1	Agricultural	C-A
RSF-E	Residential Single-Family-Estate	C-A
RSF-30	Residential Single-Family-30000 SF	--
RSF-20	Residential Single-Family-20000 SF	R-20
RSF-10	Residential Single-Family-10000 SF	R-10
RSF-6	Residential Single-Family-6000 SF	R-6
RSF-5	Residential Single-Family-5000 SF	--
RSF-4	Residential Single-Family-4000 SF	--
RTF	Residential Two-Family	R-4/R-6-A
TR-1	Traditional Residential 1	R-4/R-6-A/R-6-B
TR-2	Traditional Residential 2	R-4/R-6-A/R-6-B
TR-3	Traditional Residential 3	R-M/R-4
RMF-1	Residential Multi-Family 1	R-M
RMF-2	Residential Multi-Family 2	R-M
RMF-3	Residential Multi-Family 3	R-M
RMHP	Residential Mobile Home Park	R-M-H/R-M-H-1

NewZO Category		Current Category(ies)
Acronym	Full Name	Acronym
TN-1	Traditional Neighborhood 1	1-R, 2-R, 3-R
TN-2	Traditional Neighborhood 2	TN-2
TN-3	Traditional Neighborhood 3	--
TC-1	Traditional Commercial 1	TC-1/1-B/2-B
TC-2	Traditional Commercial 2	TC-2/2-B/3-B
D-R	Downtown Residential	RIP-A
D-N	Downtown Neighborhood	RIP-B/RIP-A-1/RIP-C
D-C	Downtown Commercial	RIP-B/RIP-B-1
D-CBD	Downtown Central Business District	B-C-1
D-W	Downtown Waterfront	B-B
OI-T	Office and Institutional-Transition	R-B/I-P
OI	Office and Institutional	O-I/I-P
OI-E	Office and Institutional-Expanded	I-P/R-B
B-L	Limited Business	BN-1/R-B/BG-1
B-N	Neighborhood Business	B-N
B-C	Community Business	B-C
B-M	Maritime Business	P-D-M
IL-R	Light Industrial-Restricted	I-L-B
IL-T	Light Industrial-Transition	P-I-L-T
I-L	Light Industrial	I-L
I-H	Heavy Industrial	I-H



## Relationship to the Strategic Plan



### PUBLIC SAFETY

- 1.1 CALL RESPONSE → density and infill
- 1.3 RESIDENTS FEELING SAFE IN THEIR NEIGHBORHOODS → facilitate infill construction, increase density and mix of uses (eyes on the street)





## Relationship to the Strategic Plan



### NEIGHBORHOOD REVITALIZATION

- 3.1 REESTABLISH AND PRESERVE NEIGHBORHOODS → better and more flexible design standards, zoning that better suits historic neighborhoods
- 3.3 MOBILITY AND NEIGHBORHOOD CONNECTIVITY → parking reforms, bicycle parking
- 3.5 ACCESS TO QUALITY HOUSING → design standards and higher density, more affordable housing



## Changes in Base Parking Standards



### ECONOMIC STRENGTH & POVERTY REDUCTION

- 4.2 COMMERCIAL CORRIDORS → allow a greater range of uses and mixed uses, create dedicated districts for historic commercial areas
- 4.6 RESILIENT DIVERSIFIED ECONOMY → allow a wider range of uses in different places, which supports entrepreneurship, allows people to live closer to work, and creates more vibrant public spaces



## Relationship to the Strategic Plan



### GOOD GOVERNMENT

- 5.2 ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE → create an ordinance that is much more straightforward, understandable and user-friendly.
- 5.4 EFFICIENT GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS → fewer variances and rezoning requests
- 5.6 CITY CODE UPDATE AND REVIEW → NewZO!



# Stakeholder Collaboration

- **Document Release Dates**

- Draft 4: May 4, 2018
- Draft 5: August 27, 2018
- Final: January 25, 2019

- **Stakeholder Meetings:**

- Savannah Area Chamber of Commerce
- Savannah-Hilton Head International Airport
- Commercial Realtors Alliance
- Military
- Higher education
- Restaurants serving alcohol
- Restaurants not serving alcohol
- Special event venues
- Retail
- Hospitals
- Homebuilders
- Marinas
- Warehouse and industrial
- Car dealers
- Convenience stores
- Churches
- Mobility Advisory Committee/Healthy Savannah
- Emerging businesses/entrepreneurs
- Lodging accommodations
- Signage
- Neighborhood Associations
- Savannah College of Art & Design



# Stakeholder Collaboration

## Outreach letter

- 60,000+ letters to all persons receiving water bill

## Media

- City Span (Channel 8)
- Radio Show
- TV interviews
- Articles in SMN

## Public Meetings & Open Houses

- May 10, 16, 17 & 23





# Stakeholder Collaboration

## Planning Commission Meetings

- May 22, 2018
- July 24, 2018
- September 25, 2018
- October 30, 2018
- November 27, 2018
- February 12, 2019

## City Council Workshops

- April 12, 2018
- August 16, 2018

- Neighborhood notification (Sec. 3.2.7),
- Application completeness (Sec. 3.1.5)
- Grandfathering of off-street parking spaces (Sec. 9.3.4)
- Interim protection when applying for historic district designation (3.16.3)
- Discrepancies on large-scale development (Secs. 3.6 and 13.0)
- Composition of the new Historic Preservation Commission (Sec. 2.5)
- Aesthetic issues related to signage & impervious pavement
- Review procedures for Airport



# Town Hall Meetings

- **Alderman John Hall, District 3**  
Mon, Oct 29, Johnson High School
- **Alderman Tony Thomas, District 6**  
Thurs, Nov 1, Windsor Hall
- **Alderman Durrence, District 2**  
Wed, Nov 7, Civic Center Ballroom
- **Alderwoman Estella Shabazz, District 5**  
Mon, Nov 19, Tatemville Center
- **Alderman Van Johnson, District 1**  
Mon, Nov 26, Civic Center Ballroom
- **Alderman Julian Miller, District 4**  
Wed, Nov 28, Candler Hospital Marsh Auditorium



# Timeline

- Special Call MPC Meeting: February 12
- MPC Public Meeting: March 12
- City Council Zoning Hearing: March 28
- City Council 1<sup>st</sup> Reading: April 11
- City Council 2<sup>nd</sup> Reading: April 25
- Educate Residents & Staff: April-June
- Implement of Code & Map: July 1
- Rollout of EnCode: July 1