



METROPOLITAN PLANNING COMMISSION

"Planning the Future - Respecting the Past"

M E M O R A N D U M

DATE: DECEMBER 11, 2018

TO: THE MAYOR AND ALDERMEN OF THE CITY OF SAVANNAH

FROM: METROPOLITAN PLANNING COMMISSION

SUBJECT: MPC RECOMMENDATION

PETITION REFERENCED:

Text Amendment to the City of Savannah Zoning Ordinance

**Re: Amendment to Article K, Mid-City District – Expand
District Boundaries**

Applicant: Staff-Initiated

File No. 18-005534-ZA

MPC ACTION:

Amend the Zoning Map and Mid-City Ordinance (Article K) as proposed.

MPC STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Amend the Zoning Map and Mid-City Ordinance (Article K) as proposed.

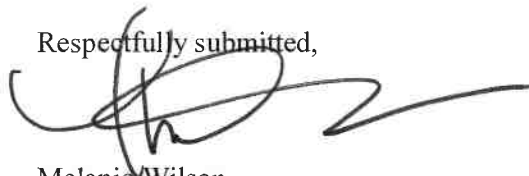
MEMBERS PRESENT: 8+ Chairman

Joseph Ervin, Chairman	Linder Suthers
Travis Coles	Tom Woiwode
Ellis Cook	
Roberto Hernandez	
Lacy Manigault	
Wayne Noha	
Eula Parker	

PLANNING COMMISSION VOTE: Approve Staff Recommendation (9-0)

APPROVAL Votes: 9	DENIAL Votes: 0	ABSENT
Ervin Cook Coles Hernandez Manigault Noha Parker Suthers Woiwode		Branch Jarrett Milton Smith Welch

Respectfully submitted,



Melanie Wilson
Executive Director

/jh

Enclosure

cc Luciana Spracher, Interim Clerk of Council
Brooks Stillwell, City Attorney
Lester B. Johnson, Assistant City Attorney
Jennifer Herman, Assistant City Attorney
Beth Barnes, Department of Inspections



MOL



Chatham County - Savannah Metropolitan Planning Commission

December 11, 2018 Regular MPC Meeting

Title

ZONING MAP AND TEXT AMENDMENT | Mid-City District Expansion | 18-005534-ZA

Description

A staff-initiated petition to expand the boundaries of the Mid-City local historic district to the center-line of Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard roughly between Anderson Lane and Victory Drive, rezone properties within the expansion area to one of four Mid-City zoning districts, and amend the Mid-City District Ordinance (Article K) to reflect the expanded boundaries.

Recommendation

Amend the Zoning Map and Mid-City Ordinance (Article K) as proposed.

Contact

Financial Impact

Review Comments

Attachments

- 🔗 [18-005534-ZA Staff Recommendation.pdf](#)
- 🔗 [Application 5534.pdf](#)
- 🔗 [Mid-City District with MLK Corridor Expansion .pdf](#)
- 🔗 [EXHIBIT A - Existing Zoning Map.pdf](#)
- 🔗 [EXHIBIT B - Mid-City District Zoning Map 11-27-2018.pdf](#)
- 🔗 [EXHIBIT C - FLU Mid-City Expansion.pdf](#)
- 🔗 [EXHIBIT D - Ordinance and Contributing Resources_DRAFT_12-11-18.pdf](#)
- 🔗 [Mid-City Expansion Presentation 11-8-18.pdf](#)



METROPOLITAN PLANNING COMMISSION

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M E M O R A N D U M

TO: Mayor and Aldermen of the City of Savannah

FROM: The Metropolitan Planning Commission

DATE: December 11th, 2018

SUBJECT: Text Amendment to the City of Savannah Zoning Ordinance
Re: Amendment to Article K, Mid-City District – Expand District Boundaries
Applicant: Staff-Initiated

MPC FILE NO: 18-005534-ZA

ISSUE:

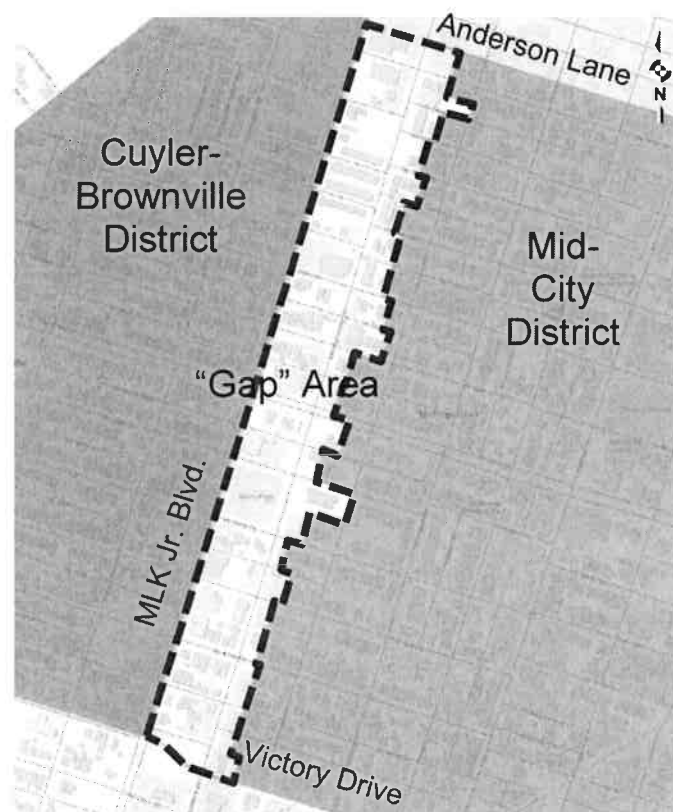
A staff-initiated petition to expand the boundaries of the Mid-City local historic district to the center-line of Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard between Anderson Lane and Victory Drive, rezone properties within the expansion area to one of four Mid-City zoning districts, and amend the Mid-City District Ordinance (Article K) to reflect the expanded boundaries.

BACKGROUND:

The Mid-City Ordinance was adopted in 2005 as part of a rezoning of the entire neighborhood. The Mid-City Ordinance establishes zoning districts specific to the Mid-City district, outlines procedures for development approval, and contains design and general development standards. Additionally, the ordinance establishes the review process for issuing Certificates of Appropriateness (COAs) for all alterations to existing buildings, new construction, and demolitions.

Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd. and Montgomery Street are important north-south corridors, and in many ways serve as the western “gateway” into the downtown area. However, portions of these corridors are not currently within the boundaries of a local historic district and are thus located in a “gap area” (See **Figure 1**). Over the years, the lack of historic protection and design standards has led to improper auto-oriented land uses and design along these streets. By expanding the Mid-City District to the west (to the centerline of MLK), The City of Savannah hopes to protect historic buildings, promote compatible land uses and urban design, and ultimately revitalize properties along these corridors.

Figure 1. – “Gap Area”



FINDINGS:

1. A public notice advertising the proposed expansion was published within the newspaper, as required per Article M of the Zoning Ordinance.
2. MPC staff held an open house on November 8th to discuss the proposed boundary expansion.
3. A notice advertising the December 11th MPC meeting was sent out to all property owners within the expansion boundary.
4. The existing “gap area” is bounded by the Mid-City District to the east, Cuyler-Brownville District to the west and Victorian Planned Neighborhood Conservation District to the north.
5. The existing “gap area” contains a number of base zoning districts, including B-C (Community Business), R-B (Restricted Business), RIP (Residential – Institutional – Professional), and R-4 (Four-Family Residential). The “gap area” is not located within a local historic district (refer to **Exhibit A**, attached, for existing zoning).
6. The proposed Mid-City expansion would extend the western boundary of the Mid-City District to the center-line of Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd.

7. The Mid-City District offers four (4) zoning designations, described as follows:

Traditional Neighborhood (TN-2): Allows for limited nonresidential uses that were historically deemed compatible with the residential character of neighborhoods, specifically located as corner stores and limited ground-floor uses. Permits residential and limited non-residential uses.

Traditional Commercial 1 (TC-1): Provides for commercial areas that are developed at a mass and scale harmonious with nearby residential neighborhoods. Permits residential and non-residential uses.

Traditional Commercial 2 (TC-2): Provides for arterial commercial corridors that traverse historic neighborhoods and serve through traffic and as well as local markets. Permits residential and non-residential uses.

Civic (CIV): Provides for civic and institutional district uses that serve a large area or produce intensive activities not readily assimilated into other districts.

The proposed zoning designations for the Mid-City District expansion are depicted on **Exhibit B**, attached.

8. Staff recommends the zoning designations based on the patterns of existing uses, existing zoning designations, future land use classifications (**Exhibit C**, attached), and studies relating to the development of Savannah's New Zoning Ordinance (NewZO).
9. In addition to map amendments, the expansion of the Mid-City District will require several minor text amendments to the Mid-City District Ordinance. The text amendments incorporate the revised boundaries and include a revised Contributing Structures Map; the Contributing Structures Map has been updated to include the expanded boundaries. Refer to **Exhibit D**, attached, for the proposed text amendments.
10. New construction, demolition, and building relocations within the Mid-City District are subject to a number of general development and design standards. General development standards regulate parking, vehicular and pedestrian access, and lighting. Design standards regulate building foundations, exterior building materials, window and door placement, roofs, and walls and fences. Exterior modifications require a **Certificate of Appropriateness (COAs)** from either Metropolitan Planning Commission staff or the Metropolitan Planning Commission Board.

POLICY ANALYSIS:

The proposed Mid-City District expansion will essentially close the existing gap between the Mid-City District and the Cuyler Brownville District. The proposed expansion aims to promote a

flexible mix of uses and design standards compatible with both adjacent residential uses and the greater downtown area. If approved, exterior building modifications and demolition of contributing structures will be subject to the Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) approval process. The MPC recommends the proposed Mid-City zoning designations (**Exhibit B**, attached) based on existing uses and zoning, future land use categories, and studies relating to the development of NewZO.

ALTERNATIVES:

1. Recommend approval of the request to amend the Zoning Ordinance and Zoning Map as proposed.
2. Recommend an alternate amendment.
3. Recommend denial of the request.

RECOMMENDATION:

The MPC hereby recommends that the Mayor and Aldermen of Savannah **approve** the amended Zoning Map and Mid-City Ordinance (Article K) as proposed.

*Amendments recommended to be enacted are shown in **Exhibit D** in red strike-through and underline*