

18.40.720 Massing, scale, and proportion

One of the primary defining characteristics of Golden's downtown area is the lower scale of the commercial buildings and those structures and uses that form the transition to adjacent neighborhoods. In order to maintain the harmonious relationships and continuity between existing and new buildings, this section includes standards and guidelines for the height and mass of new buildings and additions in three specific height zones. [The three height zones and the criteria for constructing taller buildings are based upon the topography and scale of existing development.](#)

Visual continuity of the downtown district is created by the repetition of similarly-sized building elements. New construction should appear similar in mass and scale to nearby historic structures.

18.40.722 Guidelines

- (1) New construction should appear similar in mass and scale to nearby structures. [When taller buildings are constructed adjacent to shorter buildings care must be taken in the design of such transitions. Step backs or recesses may be appropriate ways to handle such change in scale.](#)
- (2) Commercial buildings adjacent to historic buildings should respect the character and scale of the adjacent buildings. Sloping roof forms, smaller building masses, etc. may be used to integrate [and blend the newer buildings with the existing context.](#)
- (3) Façade heights of new buildings should be similar to the established range of the block. Floor-to-floor heights should appear similar to those of historic buildings in the area.
- (4) Existing two story cornice and parapet wall lines should be continued along the block to achieve compatibility. This continuation of the existing pedestrian scale is especially important where three or four story buildings are proposed.
- (5) Create view corridors using open spaces that focus on architectural landmarks, natural land forms, or special activity areas. View Corridor means the line of sight, identified as to height, width, and distance, of an observer looking toward an object of significance to the community (e.g., ridgeline, river, historic building) from a public right-of-way or public property; the route that directs the viewer's attention.
- (6) Traditional building widths along Washington Avenue are 25' to 50' feet. Where a building must exceed this width, implement changes in design features to suggest the traditional building widths. Buildings in excess of 60 feet should appear as a collection of 25' to 50' buildings through the use of façade materials, window designs and trim details.

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18.40.724 Standards

[The sections below have been developed to maintain appropriate scale and character in the downtown core, while allowing for the potential construction of four story buildings where appropriate, based upon specific criteria.](#)

- (1) Zone A consists of the western portions of the downtown design district, adjacent to the historic 8th and 9th Street and 12th Street historic neighborhoods. This zone consists primarily of one and two story buildings, with a couple three story structures. Notwithstanding the provisions of Sections 18.28.200 and 18.28.210 of this Title, no building greater than two stories above grade, with a maximum of 30 feet in height will be permitted except upon issuance of a special use permit by Planning Commission. In addition to the criteria for approval of special use permits in Section 18.30.020(5), applications to exceed the above limits must comply with the applicable standards and guidelines in this Chapter, [the criteria in subsection 4 below](#), and the specific height and mass criteria described in [subsection 5, below](#). No structure may exceed the maximum height limits for the applicable zone district.
- (2) Zone B consists of the historic commercial core of Golden's main street, Washington Avenue. Historically, most buildings were one to three stories in height. While there are a number of modern four story buildings in

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existence, the introduction of new buildings must be handled in a manner to complement the existing scale and fabric of the commercial core. Notwithstanding the provisions of Section 18.28.200 and 18.40.210 of this Title, no building greater than three stories in height, with a maximum of ~~40 feet above grade will be permitted except~~ upon issuance of a special use permit by Planning Commission. In addition to the criteria for approval of special use permits in Section 18.30.020(5), applications to exceed the above limits must comply with the applicable standards and guidelines in this Chapter, ~~the criteria in subsection 5 below,~~ and the specific height and mass criteria described in ~~subsection 5, below.~~ No structure may exceed the maximum height limits for the applicable zone district.

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(3) Zone C contains the balance of the downtown design district. This area is characterized by larger buildings that transition into the Coors Brewery. Within this zone, the standard zone height limits shall apply however, all structures shall comply with the height and mass criteria described below.

(4) Requests for Special Use Permit for additional stories in Zones A and B shall be evaluated against the following additional criteria:

a) All required parking for the structure will be provided on-site. Notwithstanding the foregoing, for properties subject to Chapter 18.52, no more than 25% of the required parking requirement may be requested under City Council's discretionary authority to accept substitutional cash in lieu payments.

b) All new construction shall exceed minimum applicable International Energy Conservation Code standards adopted by the City by at least 15%.

c) The project shall demonstrate support for adopted sustainability goals by including one of the following:

i. At least 25% of residential units in the project shall be permanent affordable dwellings available for households making no more than Area Median Income (AMI) by household size.

ii. At least 25% of modeled electric usage for the project shall be provided by on-site renewable sources.

(5) Additional massing standards:

a. Any building greater than two stories shall set back the vertical wall plane of the portion of the building above the second story cornice line a minimum of ~~six (6) feet and an average of eight (8) feet along any street frontage.~~

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ADDITIONAL PROVISIONS

18.40.740 Clear Creek Corridor

The Clear Creek Corridor includes properties adjacent to Clear Creek as well as the city-owned campus along 10th Avenue.

18.40.742 Guidelines

(1) Properties along Clear Creek should provide open visual corridors to the Creek to promote the appearance of accessibility.

(2) Development should take advantage of the natural setting of the creek and trail by creating first floor uses that are open to the public and enhance the pedestrian and recreational environment. First floor uses such as

restaurants, plazas and retail that compliment and activate the corridor are encouraged for enhanced safety and community vitality.

18.40.744 Standards

- (1) Properties adjacent or within 100 feet of Clear Creek shall provide an unobstructed public access sidewalk through the property to the creek. The sidewalk shall tie into the existing public creek-side walk.
- (2) At least one primary entrance shall face the creek. The entrance shall be architecturally enhanced to show interest towards the creek.
- (3) Notwithstanding the requirements of Section 18.40.532, the creek shall be considered a primary front and parking shall be toward the interior and away from the creek and street sides.
- (4) Buildings facades, landscaping and entrances shall be attractive and welcoming to users of the Clear Creek trail. Amenities such as wide stairways, outdoor use areas, and opportunities for seating, both formal and informal, are examples of treatments that are strongly encouraged.
- (5) Parking areas adjacent to the creek shall be screened by a non-transparent landscape element, such as non-deciduous trees or shrubs. A minimum 10-foot buffer strip shall be provided as screening for automobile use areas.
- (6) Development shall provide a minimum 10-foot buffer between private uses and the Clear Creek trail. For private uses that facilitate interaction between creek trail users and the private use (i.e. restaurant, retail, outdoor use areas), the required buffer may be reduced to 3 feet. In no case shall the distance between private uses and the Clear Creek trail edge be less than 5 feet.

Deleted: (2) - Notwithstanding the requirements of Section 18.40.532, the creek shall be considered a primary front and parking is encouraged to be toward the interior and away from the creek and street sides.¶
(3) - Buildings should address the creek and creekside facades should be welcoming to users of the Clear Creek trail. The use of wide, open stairways, outdoor use areas, and opportunities for seating are encouraged.¶

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