

Memorandum

Date: May 12, 2016
To: Blair Larsen, Stanfield City Manager
cc: Ali Turiel, DLCD
From: Serah Breakstone
Re: **Stanfield Code Assistance - Task 3.1 Final Code Evaluation**

Overview

The goal of this TGM¹ Code Assistance project is to update Stanfield's Development Code in order to help the city enhance its downtown area. Specifically, identified objectives for this project are:

- Emphasize the pedestrian environment in the downtown core.
- Encourage a mix of new uses - including residential, commercial, office and light industrial - within the downtown area.
- Remove potential barriers to downtown development that may exist in the current code.
- Emphasize design standards related to building facades, public spaces and the downtown streetscape.

This memo presents an evaluation of Stanfield's existing Development Code that will provide the foundation for subsequent tasks in this Code Assistance project. The intent of this evaluation is to identify opportunities and barriers within the existing code and identify options for possible code amendments related to the above objectives. This evaluation also compares the Stanfield Development Code with the TGM *Model Development Code and User's Guide for Small Cities - 3rd Edition* (Model Code) and other smart development principles and practices.

This evaluation primarily focuses on Stanfield's Downtown District (Chapter 2.2); however additional sections of the Development Code and other key documents were reviewed as part of this task. Those include:

¹ *This project is partially funded by a grant from the Transportation and Growth Management (TGM) Program, a joint program of the Oregon Department of Transportation and the Oregon Department of Land Conservation and Development. This TGM grant is financed, in part, by federal Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century (MAP-21), local government, and the State of Oregon funds. The contents of this document do not necessarily reflect views or policies of the State of Oregon.*

Chapter 3.1 Access and Circulation

Chapter 3.2 Landscaping, Street Trees, Fences and Walls

Chapter 3.3 Vehicle and Bicycle Parking

Chapter 3.4 Public Facilities

Chapter 4.1 Procedures

Chapter 4.2 Design Review

Downtown District (DD)

Chapter 2.2 of the Stanfield Development Code contains standards and regulations that apply to development in the downtown core. Generally speaking, the Downtown District provides a solid foundation for promoting the type of development that will achieve the identified objectives of this project. However, this section of code has not been updated for over a decade and there are areas that will benefit from new and/or revised language. Below, subsections of Chapter 2.2 are summarized with a brief discussion of possible amendments.

Purpose

The purpose statement (Section 2.2.100) for the Downtown District identifies a list of principles that guide development in downtown Stanfield. Those principles promote:

- efficient use of land and services
- a mix of uses to encourage walking
- community gathering places
- “storefront character” that defines downtown
- connections to nearby neighborhoods and employment centers
- amenities for visitors/tourists

These principles are generally well aligned with the objectives of this project. However, the city could consider adding some language to further emphasize the importance of promoting a pleasant, safe and convenient pedestrian environment.

Permitted Land Uses

Section 2.2.110 lists all uses that are allowed in the Downtown District, either as an outright use or as a conditional use subject to review. Overall, the uses allowed downtown are appropriate and consistent with those recommended in the Model Code and uses seen in other, similar downtown areas. Two revisions are suggested below.

- The use table uses asterisks and footnotes to indicate when uses are subject to special use standards and/or conditional use approval. This system is somewhat confusing and requires the user to read back and forth between the table and its footnotes. The table would benefit from some re-formatting/revisions to clarify when special use standards or conditional use apply, and where those sections of code can be found.
- Consider making “churches and places of worship” and “schools, public and private” Type III conditional uses in the Downtown District. These uses can have a significant impact on surrounding uses and the downtown environment. Requiring conditional use approval will

allow the city to review them on a case-by-case basis and use discretion to apply conditions of approval as needed to ensure compatibility with downtown development.

Development Standards

Development standards for the downtown area include building setbacks, lot coverage, maximum building height and building orientation requirements. Generally, these standards are appropriate for a downtown main street; they promote a storefront character with pedestrian amenities while maintaining some flexibility in site layout and design. Two revisions are recommended, both to clarify an apparent conflict or typo in language.

- In Section 2.2.140.A.2, the building orientation language states that “the standard shall not apply to buildings which are subject to site design review...” This is likely a typo and should read “...shall not apply to buildings which are **not** subject to site design review...”
- In Section 2.2.140.A.3, the second sentence states “On corner lots, buildings and their entrances shall be oriented to the street corner, as shown above...” However, there is no graphic (before or after) showing a corner entrance. This language is likely outdated or a typo and should be deleted.

Design Standards

Section 2.2.160 of the code contains standards for storefront design, particularly on the ground floor, and design of larger-scale buildings. For multifamily development, the code refers to Chapter 2.1, Section 190, which contains detailed design standards for residential uses. The standards in this section are somewhat minimal and not as comprehensive as those found in the Model Code or seen in other small cities. As such, the following revisions are recommended.

- Delete Section 2.2.160 and replace it with new language similar to the Model Code that regulates the elements below (Note: the following would apply to non-residential development. Residential development design standards are covered in Chapter 2.1):
 - All building elevations must have architectural design features
 - Pedestrian entrances must be partly transparent and oriented to the street for natural surveillance
 - Corner entrances are encouraged where applicable
 - Street level entrances should open to the sidewalk and be ADA compliant
 - Street-facing elevations should provide display windows and doors to express a storefront character
 - Ground floor, street-facing elevations must provide at least 60 percent transparent windows (Note: the exact percentage can be modified). Side and rear-facing elevations are subject to a lower standard (30 percent, typically)
 - Upper building stories must be visually defined
 - Window trim, reveals, recesses or similar detailing must be provided
 - Windows and display cases may not extend past the front plane of the building at the ground floor level (flower boxes can be an exception)
 - Building articulation that “breaks up” the wall plane must be provided
 - Building elevations should include change in materials to define the building elements
 - Building must provide a minimum level of pedestrian shelter (awnings, recesses, shelters, etc.)

- Mechanical equipment must be located away from the street or screened from view
- Consider adding a section at the beginning of 2.2.160 that references the additional design standards in Chapter 3 that will also apply in the Downtown District (access and circulation, landscaping, bike parking, etc.).

Pedestrian Amenities

Section 2.2.170 contains standards that require new development to provide some kind of pedestrian amenity (plaza, benches, art, etc) for the public realm. These standards are appropriate and only one minor revision is suggested:

- 2.2.170.B.3 includes weather protection (awning, shelter, etc) as a possible pedestrian amenity. However, if pedestrian shelter becomes a requirement as noted above, then the weather protection language would need to be removed from this section.

Building Exterior Color Theme

Currently, Stanfield does not have requirements specific to exterior building colors downtown. However, city staff has expressed an interest in exploring options for a unified color palate to help provide visual continuity among buildings along Main Street. To provide examples of options for incorporating color standards, the cities of Sandy and Troutdale are described here.

The City of Troutdale, Oregon regulates exterior building materials and colors in its downtown commercial district as follows:

A.105 Building Materials and Colors.

- A. Facades shall be varied and articulated to provide visual interest to pedestrians. Within larger projects, variations in facades, floor levels, architectural features, and exterior finishes shall create the appearance of several smaller buildings.*
- B. Exterior building materials shall convey an impression of durability. Materials such as masonry, stone, stucco, and wood are encouraged. Metal is not allowed as the primary exterior building material, but it may be used for accents including awnings.*
- C. Where masonry is used for exterior finish, decorative patterns must be incorporated. Examples of these decorative patterns include multicolored masonry units such as brick, stone, or cast stone, in layered or geometric patterns, or splitfaced concrete block to simulate a rusticated stone-type construction.*
- D. Wood siding must be bevel, shingle siding, or channel siding and must not be applied in a diagonal or herringbone pattern. T1-11 style siding is not permitted.*
- E. Preferred colors for exterior building finishes are earth tones, creams, and pastels of earth tones. High-intensity primary colors, metallic colors, and black may be utilized as trim and detail colors but shall not be used as primary wall colors.*

This approach is fairly standard in smaller cities that do not have an established “theme” but want to have some control over building exteriors to ensure a quality visual experience and portray durability. The language about building colors is general, but does reduce the use of bright colors that may not be consistent with the overall downtown aesthetic. To add more objectivity to this approach, the city could consider defining an acceptable range of color intensities (chroma) using a standardized scale. The city could also define the allowable percentage of building façade that can be painted in a bright, high-intensity color (for example, no more than 15 percent).

Sandy, Oregon uses a slightly more prescriptive approach by identifying a specific color palate that must be used and by prohibiting specific colors within that palate. An excerpt from Sandy's code is below.

Chapter 17.90.110 Downtown Design Standards

4. Colors. Building exteriors shall comply with the following standards:

- a. Permitted colors include warm earth tones (tans, browns, reds, grays and greens) conforming to the Color Palette provided in **Appendix C**.*
- b. High-intensity primary colors, metallic colors and black, may be utilized as trim and detail colors only, not to exceed one (1) percent of the surface area of any elevation. Such color shall not be used as primary wall colors.*
- c. Day-glow colors, highly reflective colors, and similar colors are not permitted.*

Appendix C

Building Color Palette

Per Chapter 17.90, the City of Sandy requires the exterior of commercial and industrial buildings to be painted warm earth tone colors (tans, browns, reds, grays, and greens) conforming to the approved color palette. The City has adopted Miller Paint Company's Historic Colour Collection as the approved Building Color Palette, except for those colors listed below.

The following colors listed on the Miller Historic Colour Collection are not permitted:

Clementine, Lady Banksia, Goldenrod, York Bisque, Lyman Camellia, Emily, Robin's Egg, Glacier Bay, Biloxi Blue, Bowen Blue, Coral Springs, Veranda Blue, Blue Winged Teal, Phillips Green, Brattle Spruce, Winter Balsam, or Sayward Pine

Proposed paint colors are required to match colors on the approved palette but do not need to be Miller brand. The Director will review all proposed exterior paint colors to ensure compliance with the approved palette.

To view the Miller Paint Historic Colour Collection: <http://historic.getservd.net/>

Either of the above approaches could be useful in Stanfield to implement a consistent downtown aesthetic as the area develops. These options will be further discussed and brought before the Planning Commission for input as this code assistance project progresses.

Parking Requirements

Chapter 3.3 of the Stanfield code contains parking requirements for all development. In a downtown area, the amount of parking and the way it is located and designed is particularly important; parking should be convenient for users but not detract from the main street, pedestrian experience. Generally, downtown businesses can provide less parking than other, more auto-oriented parts of town. As such, some parking requirement reductions could be made that would reflect the unique needs of the Downtown District. Options are discussed below.

- Allow a 10-20 percent (or greater, if appropriate) reduction in the minimum parking requirements for new developments within the Downtown District. This is a common

approach in many small cities and is a simple way to acknowledge the need for less parking downtown. Some cities take this approach further and exempt all downtown commercial development from the parking requirements. This can be a successful approach for small downtowns when ample on-street and other alternative parking is available.

- Revise some parking requirements for specific uses to be more aligned with Model Code recommendations. A comparison of Stanfield’s parking standards to those in the Model Code identifies a number of uses that could be reduced:
 - Multifamily - reduce to 1 space per unit
 - Bulk retail - remove the 1 space per 2 employees additional requirement
 - Remove furniture and appliance sales from general retail and include with bulk retail instead
 - Offices - change all office types to 1 space per 500 square feet of floor area
 - Industrial - reduce to 1 space per 1,000 square feet of floor area
 - Warehousing - reduce to 0.5 spaces per 1,000 square feet of floor area
 - Hospitals - change to 1 space per 300 square feet of floor area
 - Schools - remove the “public assembly” language and match with Model Code for all school types (except colleges)

Review Process

Development and Site Design Review procedures are outlined in Chapter 4.2 of Stanfield’s code and are generally appropriate in terms of level of review for different types of projects. There are several areas where revisions are recommended, either to adjust the level of review or to correct language.

- Consider allowing multifamily development downtown to be reviewed as a Type II Site Design Review instead of Type III. A more streamlined process may appeal to developers and eliminate possible barriers to new multifamily.
- Consider deleting 4.2.400.B.3, which requires Type III review for development with more than one building. This threshold seems unnecessary and can be incorporated into the size thresholds in B.2.
- Consider deleting 4.2.400.B.4, which requires Type III review for developments with more than 4 off-street parking spaces. This threshold is somewhat arbitrary and may result in unnecessary levels of review for certain projects. Much of this would also likely be captured in the size thresholds in B.2.
- Section 4.2.200.A lists applicability thresholds for review types and states that Site Design Review is conducted by the City Manager without a public hearing. This should be revised to indicate that there are two types of Site Design Review, Type II and Type III. A Type III Site Design Review would include a public hearing before the Planning Commission, as is noted later in this chapter.
- Section 4.2.400.B makes several references to “except when Development Review is allowed under Section 4.2.300.” That reference is incorrect and should be Section 4.2.200 instead.

Conclusions

Overall, Stanfield's downtown code provides a good foundation for promoting a pedestrian-friendly main street environment. When new development does occur, the code will help to ensure that buildings are oriented to the sidewalk, have a storefront character, and provide a strong interface between building interiors and the pedestrian realm (windows, doors, shelters and other amenities). The revisions recommended in this memo will strengthen the existing code, remove some inconsistencies/errors, and provide some needed updates. In addition to code amendments, subsequent tasks in this code assistance project will recommend the use of new graphics to help illustrate code concepts, particularly new design standards that may be implemented downtown.