

CITY OF NORTH SALT LAKE
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
CITY HALL-10 EAST CENTER STREET, NORTH SALT LAKE
SEPTEMBER 23, 2025

FINAL

Commission Chair Larson called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

PRESENT: Commission Chair BreAnna Larson
Commissioner Ryan Holbrook
Commissioner Ron Jorgensen
Commissioner Jonathan Marsh
Commissioner Irene Stone
Commission Vice Chair William Ward

EXCUSED: Commissioner Brandon Tucker

STAFF PRESENT: Mackenzie Johnson, Planner; Ali Avery, Long Range Planner.

OTHERS PRESENT: Dee Lalliss, Barry Bryson, Lisa Thompson, residents; Mark Morris, VODA; Andrew Nguyen, Elliot Storm, Michael McCormick, Addasyn Breeze, nonresidents/students.

1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

The Planning Commission acknowledged that several students from local universities were in attendance as part of a school assignment.

2. PUBLIC COMMENT

Dee Lalliss, resident, commented on the progress of the mural across from City Hall and spoke on the desire for public art in the City.

3. WORK SESSION: TOWN CENTER URBAN DESIGN STANDARDS PROJECT BY
VODA LANDSCAPE + PLANNING

Ali Avery reported that in 2024 the City was awarded funding from Wasatch Front Regional Council for the development of Town Center Urban Design Standards. She said that following the requests for proposals, the City entered into a contract with VODA Landscape + Planning in

August 2025. She introduced Mark Morris, with VODA, as the lead for the project. She explained that the intent was to adopt design standards, as code for a new Town Center zoning district. She clarified that after the adoption of the code, City staff would initiate a rezoning process for all the properties in the Town Center.

Ms. Avery continued that the process would be informed by some of the work that was previously done on the Town Center Form-Based Code review and in addition to the work that has been done on the Town Center Master Plan, Town Center Market Study, and Town Center Branding & Wayfinding Study.

Mark Morris, VODA, introduced his company which provided landscape architecture and urban design services. He noted that VODA had provided wayfinding and branding work for the City in 2019. He spoke on codifying community goals related to design standards and development guidelines. He said these standards would be concise and simple for staff, the Planning Commission, applicants to utilize. Mr. Morris reviewed the ways this could be implemented, including the use of graphics in the code and use of existing information from the drafted Form-Based Code and Town Center Market Study. He explained that these guidelines should be in place as redevelopment occurred.

Mark Morris spoke on the Town Center Master Plan recommendations and analysis which was performed in 2016. He said the Master Plan was a larger study than what the design guidelines would include but had been useful in codifying the design elements.

Commissioner Holbrook asked if the goal was to have fewer P Districts. Mackenzie Johnson replied affirmatively and noted that this would standardize P District to an extent. She said there would be less need for negotiated terms as these items would be standard practice and objective. She noted that this would allow for continuity in the development of the Town Center.

Ali Avery commented that it would set expectations from the City for developers and eliminate the need for the P District in the Town Center.

Mark Morris explained that end goal of urban design guidelines was predictability for staff, applicants, and the Commission.

Mackenzie Johnson noted that the urban design standards would provide clear guidelines for providing better building form and architecture. She gave examples of architectural requirements such as window glazing or window frontage on the main floor.

Chair Larson commented that this would make approvals or denials feel less personal and allow them to meet the design code. Mark Morris added that the goal was to make the design process as neutral as possible and not based on personal opinion.

Commissioner Jorgensen asked if there was a stated objective to add continuity to the P District. Mark Morris replied that generally these standards were not architectural standards. He gave the example of Park City which had architectural and design standards to meet a certain aesthetic. He said the design standards would be focused on the form of the development as opposed to a certain style of architecture. He spoke on leaving the standards broad enough so an applicant could choose a style and as long as it met the requirements it would be approved.

Mark Morris reported on Midvale's Main Street small area plan which was adopted in 2018. He noted that the plan addressed historic structures mixed with vacant lots and underutilized buildings. He said the urban design standards for Midvale included infill and ensuring development fit in with the general form of a historic Main Street. He shared examples of urban design standards in Midvale related to building height, massing, permeability, setbacks, and architectural detail requirements.

Mark Morris spoke on codifying community goals for the Town Center related to redevelopment with a timeframe of 25-30 years. He said the goal of the urban design guideline draft was to make sure the guidelines were concise and allowed flexibility for property owners. He reviewed the draft structure of the urban design standards:

- 1) Subdistricts
- 2) Setbacks
- 3) Building heights
- 4) Façade articulation
- 5) Ground floor activation
- 6) Other requirements

Mark Morris focused on Subdistricts which were a defined area to which the same set of requirements were applied in the urban design guidelines. He shared a map with six subdistricts including Core, Arts & Park, Center & Orchard, Boulevard, North 89, and Edge. He mentioned a focus on context (what was allowed and where), scale, and transportation networks.

Commissioner Marsh commented that the map needed to be updated to include the recently annexed area.

Mr. Morris then looked at Setbacks which would provide a more consistent urban form and define a pedestrian oriented urban environment. He said this would bring buildings and entrances to the sidewalk and increase the viability of the Town Center. He spoke on street walls, access points (along the street), mixed uses, and parking location (rear).

Mark Morris reviewed Building Height which was regulated by subdistrict to ensure context sensitivity. He said heights were established by understanding economic viability and construction constraints along with neighborhood context. He presented images related to ground floor height, upper floor height, overall building maximum height, corners and upper floor setbacks.

Commissioner Jorgensen mentioned the economic study and asked about feasibility related to building height. Mark Morris replied that the Town Center was a key area in a commercial corridor which meant the land would be expensive. He explained that expensive land required building heights for feasibility. He said working on appropriate building heights included an epicenter where height was appropriate and then stepping down as you approach single family neighbors. Mr. Morris also noted that you would sacrifice land to surface parking unless you allowed for building height and structured parking.

Commissioner Jorgensen questioned if there would be uniformity in the building heights allowed in the subdistricts. Mark Morris said most of the design guidelines would have parameters with minimum and maximum building heights. He explained that in a Town Center it would be encouraged two or three stories as a minimum in some of the subdistricts. He also mentioned creating buildings that were reusable when uses changed and how ground floor height was key to allowing commercial businesses in the space.

Mark Morris reported on Façade Articulation with variation in architectural facades to give character and interest in the Town Center. He shared examples of varied facades and said the regulation of facades should encourage vertical and horizontal articulation as well as addressing windows and doors.

Mark Morris reviewed Ground Floor Activation and how active ground floor uses were vital to a town center. He said ideally these ground floor uses should be public facing or accessible and gave examples of active uses such as services, restaurants, and retail. He continued that one of the takeaways from the market study was that there could not be a requirement solely for retail on the entire ground floor over the entire town center as there was not market demand for that much retail. He suggested services and other uses including some residential to achieve an even more active sense of place. Mr. Morris recommended the key was to focus the requirement for ground floor retail/services to create a critical mass or sense that a certain area was the epicenter

of the Town Center. He noted access points, ground floor uses, and upper floor use. He mentioned reviewing each subdistrict with ideas to maximize ground floor activation that was market based and feasible from a development standpoint.

Commissioner Jorgensen mentioned the review and subsequent adoption of code amendments related to special use standards and the land use table. He asked if this would need to be replicated for the zoning district or any potential constraints on different types of uses. Mark Morris replied that use would be secondary to form in development. He said generally there would be tables with acceptable uses for the ground floor and upper stories.

Mackenzie Johnson said that the recently approved land use table was for the General Commercial (CG), Commercial Shopping (CS), General Industrial (MG), and Manufacturing Distribution (MD) zones. She clarified that the specific use standards in Chapter 19 regulated all zones in the City. She continued that the current permitted uses in the Highway Commercial (CH) zone were broad and vague (general office, retail) and the prohibited uses were more specific (automotive repair, etc.). She said this would help guide permitted uses and that the specific use standards would also be preserved.

Ali Avery said the key takeaway from the urban design standards was that the form would regulate the function. She elaborated further that the form of the building would not be conducive to certain uses and gave the example of an auto dealer who would not have adequate area for vehicle display.

Mackenzie Johnson commented that the list of prohibited uses would also be retained (such as wholesale manufacturing, warehouses, etc.). Mark Morris said that there would be multiple options for use to accommodate a changing market along with guidelines that were flexible.

Commissioner Jorgensen spoke on concerns with compatibility and safety and how this would be covered by the list of prohibited uses. Mark Morris replied that prohibited uses could be as specific as the City would like them to be. He spoke on allowing more flexibility related to uses and that form would eliminate some uses.

Commissioner Holbrook asked if there was a downside to adding the Town Center zoning to the land use table. Mackenzie Johnson responded that the Town Center could be added to the table but as it would be developed separately. She mentioned the vagueness of the current land uses allowed in the Highway Commercial (CH) zone. She expected that these issues would be covered through discussion and determining the Town Center Design Standards. She also mentioned that any land use which was not mentioned could be addressed through a code amendment.

Ali Avery commented on letting go of control and allowing the market to dictate the uses. She said the City could control safety and building appearance (form) while creating an experience in the Town Center area rather than dictating uses (function).

Mark Morris spoke on creating spaces to allow for activation day and night through a mix of uses such as work, office, restaurants, retail, and residential options. He then continued his review of the design standards and other requirements including landscape, pedestrian zone improvements (street furnishings), and lighting.

Commissioner Jorgensen asked about dovetailing this plan with the Active Transportation Plan. Mark Morris said that they would review the Active Transportation Plan to accommodate benches for bus routes or bike racks where appropriate.

Commissioner Holbrook mentioned the Form-Based Code and some of the requirements from that review including ensuring that utilities would be placed underground or disguised. Mackenzie Johnson commented that this could include art wraps or strategic placement of utility boxes.

Commissioner Marsh shared that Holladay City had school children art murals on their utility boxes. Mark Morris said these standards were for planning approval and that the development would still be reviewed by engineering and other processes.

Commissioner Marsh spoke on the differentiation in design elements for retail versus services and asked about the other urban design elements. Mark Morris responded that the ground floor height was vital and that while retail and service did not have a large range of varying requirements that there needed to be a balance. He shared options to accommodate flexible uses including double height ground floors with an interior mezzanine to allow for two stories or just leaving the space open to allow for build to suit.

Mark Morris concluded future items to review including ensuring the code was user friendly by developing a prototype which could be used to apply the code and review how standards (articulation, setbacks, etc.) were be applied based on the site. He shared that there would also be a worksheet for applicants that addressed each parameter.

4. REPORT ON CITY COUNCIL ACTIONS ON ITEMS RECOMMENDED BY PLANNING COMMISSION

Mackenzie Johnson reported that during the September 2nd meeting the City Council approved the amendment to include 100 West Center Street to the City's Self Storage and Storage Shed

Overlay Zone Map. She noted there would be a public hearing in October to also include the Storage City property to this overlay zone map. She mentioned a discussion on City owned park strip improvements that was held during the September 16th Council meeting.

5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The Planning Commission meeting minutes of August 26, 2025 were reviewed and approved.

Commissioner Jorgensen moved to approve the meeting minutes from the August 26, 2025 Planning Commission meeting as drafted. Commissioner Marsh seconded the motion. The motion was approved by Commissioners Holbrook, Jorgensen, Larson, Marsh, Stone, and Ward. Commissioner Tucker was excused.

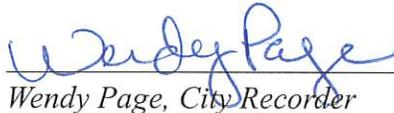
6. ADJOURN

Commission Chair Larson adjourned the meeting at 7:25 p.m.

The foregoing was approved by the Planning Commission of the City of North Salt Lake on Tuesday, October 14, 2025 by unanimous vote of all members present.



BreAnna Larson, Chair



Wendy Page, City Recorder

