Golden Triangle Zoning and Design Guidelines Update

GOLDEN TRIANGLE NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN – REGULATORY IMPLEMENTATION

Planning Board Information Item #2 (April 15, 2020) – ONLINE

PRELIMINARY PROPOSAL: Subject to change based on further comments and testing
Goals for the Presentation

1. Project Overview
2. Preliminary Preferred Zoning Framework and DSG Update
3. Next Steps
Project Overview
Project Purpose

Update the Golden Triangle Zoning and Design Guidelines to:

1. Implement the recommendations of the Neighborhood Plan
2. Apply more current zoning/design approaches and procedures

PRELIMINARY PROPOSAL: Subject to change based on further comments and testing
Area of Applicability

- Update the Downtown – Golden Triangle (D-GT) zone district that is based on zoning from 1994
- Update the B-8-G Design Guidelines that were adopted in 2002 and apply to the D-GT zone district
Project Schedule

- 3 months – Existing Context and Problem Identification
- 6 months – Regulatory Tools and Alternatives
- 3-4 months – Preferred Zoning/DSG Strategy
- 3-4 months – Drafting and Public Review
- 2-3 months – Adoption Process
- **Approximately 18 months total**
## Golden Triangle Neighborhood Plan (2014)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A</th>
<th>Land Use</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Encourage a range of uses and development types</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Highlight certain streets/areas with different uses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Promote a broad range of housing opportunities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Evaluate minimum parking requirements</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>B</th>
<th>Building Form/Type</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Allow a diverse range of building forms/shapes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Continue to allow current building height</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Ensure building mass is compatible with adjacent buildings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Encourage protection/reuse of existing buildings</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>C</th>
<th>Street Level Experience</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Promote a high-quality pedestrian experience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>Ensure building design considers pedestrian scale and comfort</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>Encourage provision of privately-owned public gathering spaces</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>Improve activity and visual characteristics of parking</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*PRELIMINARY PROPOSAL: Subject to change based on further comments and testing*
### Evaluation Matrix of Potential Zoning Tools

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ZONE DISTRICTS AND BUILDING FORMS</th>
<th>Evaluation Criteria</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Use a single zone district for the entire neighborhood</td>
<td>Consistency: 1, 5  Effectiveness: 1, 5, 6, 7, 10  Variety: yes  Flexibility: Not used in DTC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utilize different building forms to address various lot sizes, building sizes, and massing requirements</td>
<td>Consistency: 1, 5, 6, 7, 10  Effectiveness: yes  Variety: yes  Flexibility: Not used in DTC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Include a Point Tower option</td>
<td>Consistency: 1, 5, 7, 10  Effectiveness: AS, CPY  Variety: yes  Flexibility: Not used in DTC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Set height limit similar to existing for typical buildings (~175-200 feet)</td>
<td>Consistency: 1, 5, 6, 7, 10  Effectiveness: yes  Variety: yes  Flexibility: Not used in DTC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Set height limit for Point Tower taller than existing to make it an equivalent option</td>
<td>Consistency: 1, 5, 7, 10  Effectiveness: AS, CPY  Variety: yes  Flexibility: Not used in DTC</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MASSESING TOOLS</th>
<th>Evaluation Criteria</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Use FAR to limit overall bulk allowed within a slightly taller building envelope</td>
<td>Consistency: 5, 7, 9, 10  Effectiveness: CPY, D-C  Variety: yes  Flexibility: Not used in DTC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use an Upper Story Setback to break down the scale of taller buildings at the street level</td>
<td>Consistency: 5, 7, 9, 10  Effectiveness: AS, CPY  Variety: yes  Flexibility: Not used in DTC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use Mass Reduction to shape taller buildings</td>
<td>Consistency: 5, 7, 9, 10  Effectiveness: CPY, R10a  Variety: yes  Flexibility: Not used in DTC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limit Point Tower floor plate sizes and require minimum spacing</td>
<td>Consistency: 5, 7, 9, 10  Effectiveness: AS, CPY  Variety: yes  Flexibility: Not used in DTC</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**PRELIMINARY PROPOSAL:** Subject to change based on further comments and testing

### Evaluation Criteria

1. **Consistency** – is it consistent with the Neighborhood Plan?
2. **Effectiveness** – does it address more than one plan objective?
3. **Variety** – does it encourage variety in use/form and support an eclectic neighborhood?
4. **Flexibility** – is it flexible to adapt to different site and market conditions?
5. **Predictability** – does it result in predictable outcomes? (not the same as repetition)
Evaluation Matrix of Potential Zoning Tools

- Zoning tools fall into a few distinct categories including:
  - Zone Districts and Building Forms
  - Massing Tools
  - Street Level and Design Quality Tools
  - Parking
  - Development Capacity and Incentives

- Tools that met 4 of 5 criteria were included as appropriate options
- Tools meeting less than 4 criteria were not selected for further study

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ZONING/DESIGN TOOL</th>
<th>Consistency</th>
<th>Effectiveness</th>
<th>Variety</th>
<th>Flexibility</th>
<th>Profitability</th>
<th>Used in DSG</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ZONE DISTRICTS AND BUILDING FORMS</td>
<td>1, 5</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>1, 5, 6, 7, 10</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use a single zone district for the entire neighborhood</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utilize different building forms to address various lot sizes, building sizes, and massing requirements</td>
<td>1, 5, 6, 7, 10</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Include a Point Tower option</td>
<td>1, 5, 7, 10</td>
<td>AS, CPV</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Set height limit similar to existing for typical buildings (~175-200 feet)</td>
<td>1, 5, 6, 7, 10</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Set height limit for Point Tower taller than existing to make it an equivalent option</td>
<td>1, 5, 7, 10</td>
<td>AS, CPV</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not Selected for Further Study</td>
<td>1, 2</td>
<td>D-C</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use multiple zone districts to distinguish different areas within the neighborhood</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use a single building envelope similar to the existing zoning for all future projects</td>
<td>1, 6</td>
<td>D-C</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use height limits for Point Tower similar to existing (~175-200 feet)</td>
<td>1, 6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MASSING TOOLS</th>
<th>Consistency</th>
<th>Effectiveness</th>
<th>Variety</th>
<th>Flexibility</th>
<th>Profitability</th>
<th>Used in DSG</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Use FAR to limit overall bulk allowed within a slightly taller building envelope</td>
<td>5, 7, 9, 10</td>
<td>CPV, D-C</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use an Upper Story Setback to break down the scale of taller buildings at the street level</td>
<td>5, 7, 9, 10</td>
<td>AS, CPV</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use Mass Reduction to shape taller buildings</td>
<td>5, 7, 9, 10</td>
<td>CPV, RMa</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limit Point Tower floor plate sizes and require minimum spacing</td>
<td>5, 7, 9, 10</td>
<td>AS, CPV</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not Selected for Further Study</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use height limits as the only tool to limit overall bulk and scale (i.e., no FAR or other massing limitations)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allow Point towers to be close together (i.e., no minimum spacing)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Interim Report 2 – Zoning Framework and Alternatives

- Released to the public in January
- Summary of existing zoning tools that can be used to address Neighborhood Plan objectives
- Outcomes from recent outreach, activities, surveys, etc.
- Evaluation of alternative zoning tools and approaches
- All project documents and meeting materials are available for review at: www.denvergov.org/goldentriangle
Preliminary Preferred Zoning Framework and DSG Update
Current Zoning – “One Size Fits All”

Current Zoning – “One Size Fits All”
• Same height limit
• Same mass and scale rules
• Same design and street level activity standards

PRELIMINARY PROPOSAL: Subject to change based on further comments and testing
Enabling a Range of Building Types – Proposed Changes

Preliminary Proposal: Subject to change based on further comments and testing.
Enabling a Range of Building Types – Proposed Changes

PRELIMINARY PROPOSAL: Subject to change based on further comments and testing
Enabling a Range of Building Types – Proposed Changes

PRELIMINARY PROPOSAL: Subject to change based on further comments and testing
Enabling a Range of Building Types – Proposed Changes

**Preliminary Proposal:** Subject to change based on further comments and testing.
Enabling a Range of Building Types – Proposed Changes

PRELIMINARY PROPOSAL: Subject to change based on further comments and testing
# Enabling a Range of Building Types – Summary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Existing</th>
<th>General</th>
<th>Point Tower</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Lot Size</strong></td>
<td>na</td>
<td>Narrow (75 ft or less)</td>
<td>Wide (more than 150 ft)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Allowed Height</strong></td>
<td>175 feet*</td>
<td>200 feet</td>
<td>300 feet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mass/Scale Standards</strong></td>
<td>na</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Design and Active Use</strong></td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Highest</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* As measured from elevation of Broadway (results in ~200 feet limit near Speer)
Is a Taller Height Limit Appropriate?

- ~75% favorable ranking
- Allow buildings taller than the current height limit (175 feet) if they meet certain size restrictions
- Most agree that taller/larger projects should do something special
  - Be slender to preserve sunlight and views
  - Provide additional neighborhood benefits like affordable housing or open space
  - Help protect an existing building that adds character to the neighborhood

Preliminary Proposal: Subject to change based on further comments and testing
Is a Taller Height Limit Appropriate?

- Five tables “built” 10-12 projects each
- Larger building types (Types B and C) provided support for community priorities
  - Enhance Street Level Activity
  - Public Gathering Space
  - Range of Housing Options
  - Protect an Existing Building
  - Wild Card
- Use the same building type or benefit as many times as desired
Is a Taller Height Limit Appropriate?

- **58% of all projects were Type B or C**
  - Minimum of two Point Towers (Type C) were used per table

- **4 of 5 tables used a mix of all three Types** (one table used Type A and C only)

- Neighborhood priorities were utilized in the following order:
  1. Enhance Street Level Activity
  2. Public Gathering Space
  3. Protect an Existing Building
  4. Range of Housing Options
  5. Wild Card (Public Art was cited most often)
PRELIMINARY PROPOSAL: Subject to change based on further comments and testing

Is a Taller Height Limit Appropriate?
View from Cheesman Pavilion
Sketchup Model of Golden Triangle
View from Cheesman Pavilion
View from Cheesman Pavilion
FAR as a Zoning Tool (Massing and Entitlement)

- Use higher FAR maximums to encourage use of smaller lots or Point Tower form
- Allows variety of outcomes without “loss” of entitlement
- Design review can more easily influence massing without affecting overall floor area
What about Mass Reduction?

- Useful to create a backstop for at least some shaping
- Need to be cautious of being too restrictive with reductions
Shaping Larger Buildings for Pedestrian Comfort

**Mass Reduction**

**Upper Story Setback**

**Point Tower Limitations**

**Tower Floor Plate Size**
Establishes a maximum area for the tower

**Tower Dimension**
Establishes a maximum linear dimension for the tower

**Tower Separation**
Establishes a minimum separation distance between towers

PRELIMINARY PROPOSAL: Subject to change based on further comments and testing
Activating the Street Level

PRELIMINARY PROPOSAL: Subject to change based on further comments and testing
# Design Tools to Distinguish Different Lot Sizes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>General</th>
<th>POINT TOWER</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Lot Size</strong></td>
<td>75 ft or less</td>
<td>75-150 ft</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Height</strong></td>
<td>200’</td>
<td>200’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Maximum FAR</strong></td>
<td>11.0</td>
<td>10.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mass Reduction</strong></td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Yes (above 8 stories)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Upper Story Setback</strong></td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Yes (portion of frontage)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Parking Wrapped by Active Uses</strong></td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Yes (only if &gt; 5 stories)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Non-Residential Use Requirement</strong></td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Street Level Open Space Requirement</strong></td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Supporting Neighborhood Priorities

- Utilize similar system as currently exists
- Build up to a Base Maximum (by-right), without any special conditions
Supporting Neighborhood Priorities

- Utilize similar system as currently exists
- Build up to a Base Maximum (by-right), without any special conditions
- Can qualify for additional building area, or incentives, by supporting various neighborhood priorities up to an Overall Maximum

PRELIMINARY PROPOSAL: Subject to change based on further comments and testing
**Base and Overall Maximums – Summary**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lot Size</th>
<th>Existing</th>
<th>GENERAL</th>
<th>POINT TOWER</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Overall FAR Maximum</strong></td>
<td>7.0*</td>
<td>11.0</td>
<td>12.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Base FAR Maximum</strong></td>
<td>4.0*</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Does not include floor area dedicated to parking*
Proposed Incentive Options

Goal is to focus on most important neighborhood priorities not addressed directly by other zoning tools

• Housing Affordability
• Promoting Neighborhood Character
  • Landmark Designated
  • Character Buildings
• Public Art
Promoting Neighborhood Character

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Landmark</th>
<th>Character</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Design Review</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes, if property owner has applied for “Protected” status</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exterior Modifications</td>
<td>Minor</td>
<td>More flexible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Designation</td>
<td>Property owner or community</td>
<td>Property owner only</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bonuses/Incentives</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **Landmark** designation is primary path and receives greater incentives
- **Character Buildings** are a new category that allows greater flexibility for exterior modifications and adaptive reuse

PRELIMINARY PROPOSAL: Subject to change based on further comments and testing
Promoting Neighborhood Character

- Protected Character Building is *voluntarily* registered with City
- Design review by CPD staff, not LPC
- Preliminary criteria for defining a Protected Character Building
  - No age restriction
  - Exhibit distinctive architectural details and materials
  - Exhibit distinctive massing and/or roof form
  - Relationship with the streetscape context
  - Minimum level of quality/integrity

PRELIMINARY PROPOSAL: Subject to change based on further comments and testing
Design Standards and Guidelines

- D-GT is next step in more consistent and comprehensive approach to design review in Downtown
Coordinating & Merging Individual DSG’s
Downtown DSG – Near Term

PRELIMINARY PROPOSAL: Subject to change based on further comments and testing
Downtown DSG – Long Term

PRELIMINARY PROPOSAL: Subject to change based on further comments and testing.
Downtown DSG Chapter Breakdown

Chapter 1 | Site Organization
Chapter 2 | Building Mass & Scale
Chapter 3 | Façade Design & Site Details
Chapter 4 | Streetscape Design

**Chapter 5** | Neighborhood Specific Design (D-AS-12+/20+, D-CPV-T/R/C, and D-GT)

Chapter 6 | Building Signs
Next Steps
On-going Discussions with Advisory Committee

- **Point Tower separation distance**
  - Does 120 feet (or more) overly impact development opportunities on nearby lots?

- **Keeping Base FAR at 4.0**
  - Is this too restrictive now that we are including parking in FAR calculation?

- **Desire for more use-based incentives** (i.e., Live/Work, public parking, etc.)
  - Wanted by the community, but are difficult to monitor over time

- **Housing affordability incentives**
  - Concern about getting ahead of potential citywide approach and/or state changes
Online Open House

Available on website (www.denvergov.org/goldentriangle) until April 20

1. Review the presentation video and slides for an overview of the preliminary preferred alternative
2. Review the topic boards for more details on the proposed zoning tools
3. Provide your feedback via the online survey before April 20
4. Tell your friends, family, and colleagues!
Next Steps

- Preferred Strategy Interim Report #3 (end of May)
- Internal Drafting of Zoning Code / DSG (June-August)
- Public Review of New D-GT Zoning and DSG (late summer)
Thank you!