

DATE: August 22, 2023

TO: Honorable Mayor & City Council

FROM: Planning & Zoning Commission

VIA: Eric Hill, AICP, Assistant Director of Planning acting as Secretary of the Planning & Zoning Commission MB
Christina D. Day, AICP, Director of Planning CD

SUBJECT: Results of Planning & Zoning Commission Meeting of August 21, 2023

AGENDA ITEM NO.1A - DISCUSSION AND ACTION
STREET DESIGN STANDARDS
APPLICANT: CITY OF PLANO

Discussion and consideration of a request to adopt the Street Design Standards, which are presented as an update to the current Thoroughfare Standards Rules and Regulations. Tabled on July 17, 2023. Project #DI2023-006.

APPROVED: 7-0-1

Speaker Card(s) Received:	Support: <u>0</u>	Oppose: <u>7</u>	Neutral: <u>1</u>
Petition Signatures Received:	Support: <u>0</u>	Oppose: <u>0</u>	Neutral: <u>0</u>
Other Responses:	Support: <u>0</u>	Oppose: <u>8</u>	Neutral: <u>19</u>

All responses for Items 1A-E are reported together due to the interrelated nature of the topic.

RESULTS:

The Commission recommends approval of the item as submitted.
Commissioner Lisle recused himself due to a conflict of interest.

To view the hearing, please click on the provided link:
<https://planotx.new.swagit.com/videos/269726?ts=887>

JA/kob

cc: Eric Hill, Assistant Director of Planning
Christina Sebastian, Land Records Planning Manager
Mike Bell, Comprehensive Planning Manager
Caleb Thornhill, Director of Engineering
Brian Shewski, Transportation Manager

AGENDA ITEM NO. 1A

DISCUSSION AND ACTION: Street Design Standards

APPLICANT: City of Plano

DESCRIPTION: Discussion and consideration of a request to adopt the Street Design Standards, which are presented as an update to the current Thoroughfare Standards Rules and Regulations. Tabled on July 17, 2023. Project #DI2023-006.

BACKGROUND:

The purpose of this item is to consider a recommendation to City Council (Council) regarding adoption of a Street Design Standards ordinance as an update to the city's current [Thoroughfare Standards Rules and Regulations](#) (Thoroughfare Standards). Last updated in 2009, the Thoroughfare Standards establishes the minimum standards for the design and construction of thoroughfares, streets, sidewalks, and other street design elements within the city. Beginning in Fall 2021, a team of engineering consultants and city staff from various departments, including Planning, Engineering, Special Projects, Parks and Recreation, Plano Fire-Rescue, and Public Works, undertook a comprehensive evaluation and review of the current Thoroughfare Standards and the latest best practices in transportation design. As a result of this collaborative effort, a comprehensive set of updated guidelines and regulations governing street design has been consolidated into a new manual, now known as the Street Design Standards. This new manual provides a cohesive and user-friendly resource for developers, designers, and city staff involved in the street planning and development processes.

In addition to modernizing technical standards, major updates incorporated into the Street Design Standards include context-sensitive street design, multimodal design guidance, customized standards for streets in Downtown Plano, neighborhood traffic management, and detailed traffic study requirements. Additionally, a major focus of this effort was to improve user-friendliness, which included stream-lining relationships between various city development regulations (such as the Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision Ordinance), and clarifying steps and requirements for developers and city staff. Associated updates to the Zoning Ordinance, Subdivision Ordinance, and Comprehensive Plan are to be considered as part of Agenda Items 1B, 1C, and 1D. The repeal of the current Thoroughfare Standards Rules and Regulations, as well as two other transportation-related planning documents, are included as part of Agenda Item 1E. A separate amendment to the Code of Ordinances will also be presented to Council to remove other obsolete street standards as part of this comprehensive update.

Due to the quantity and complexity of the changes involved, staff began presenting an overview of major changes to the Planning & Zoning Commission (Commission) beginning October 3, 2022, and culminating in a call for public hearing on March 1, 2023:

Date	Topic	Staff Report Link	Presentation Video Link
October 3, 2022	BG/UMU Setbacks and the Thoroughfare Standards Update	Staff Report	Presentation Video
October 17, 2022	Relationship of Standards to Subdivision Ordinance & Zoning Ordinance	Staff Report	Presentation Video
November 21, 2022	Street Framework	Staff Report	Presentation Video
December 5, 2022	Multimodal Facilities Design Requirements	Staff Report	Presentation Video
January 3, 2023	Neighborhood Traffic Management	Staff Report	Presentation Video
January 17, 2023	Traffic Impact Analysis	Staff Report	Presentation Video
February 20, 2023	Special Street Design Requirements/ Downtown Streets	Staff Report	Presentation Video
March 1, 2023	Call for Public Hearing	Staff Report	Presentation Video

Additional history on the item is covered in the Public Outreach Strategies section of this report, which follows.

Street Design Standards – Overview

The following sections of this report provide a section-by-section overview of the proposed updates, highlighting key changes, and explaining how the updated Street Design Standards relate to updates in associated city ordinances.

Section 1 – Introduction

Section 1 establishes a clear and comprehensive framework for the entire document. This section defines the purpose and scope of the standards, provides an overview of the subsequent sections, identifies how to handle contradictions with national standards and superseding law, and introduces processes for interpretation, amendments, enforcement, exceptions, deviations, and additions. These updates ensure that the Street Design Standards are user-friendly, legally sound, and adaptable to the unique needs and goals of the city.

Section 2 – Street Framework

Section 2 introduces national best practices for context-sensitive street design to the Street Design Standards, allowing streets to be structured to complement adjacent land uses and influence the desired character of the public realm. Similar to the current Thoroughfare Standards, the revised street typology establishes the functional classification (Type A – Expressways through Type G – Local/Residential Streets), minimum right-of-way width, median width, and number of lanes for each street type. With the update, it now also includes design variation for four land use contexts: Neighborhood, Commercial, Corner, and Mixed-Use. This approach recognizes that different land uses have distinct characteristics, activities, and transportation demands, requiring adjustments in the design elements and features of the thoroughfares serving them. The four land use context types included in the Street Design Standards correlate to the proposed updates to the Thoroughfare Plan Map. Refer to Agenda Item No. 1B for more information.

(Please note, standards for street types in the mixed-use context are based on existing streets standards found in the Urban Mixed-Use (UMU), Neighborhood Business Design (NBD), and Residential Community Design (RCD) zoning districts. The addition of Section 3 consolidates these within the Street Design Standards and allows removal of all street design-related standards for UMU, NBD, and RCD streets from the Zoning Ordinance as part of Agenda Item No. 1C.)

Staff presented an overview of this section topic to the Commission on November 21, 2022.

Section 3 – Special Streets and Accessways

Section 3 addresses the design requirements and standards for alleys, mews, paseos, and shared streets, which primarily serve local access for vehicles, pedestrians, or service/delivery purposes, and are not part of the standard street framework. This section also introduces cross-sections for these street types, similar to the cross-sections outlined in Section 2.

Staff presented an overview of this section topic to the Commission for discussion and direction on February 20, 2023.

Section 4 – Downtown Streets

Section 4 establishes a set of customized design standards for streets in Downtown Plano that correspond to the Downtown Streets Plan, proposed as an inset of the Thoroughfare Plan Map in the Comprehensive Plan (see Agenda Item 1B). Rather than follow the citywide street system (Type A-G), where cross-sections are consistent for the entire length of a roadway, the cross-sections for Downtown Streets include variation from segment to segment based on available right-of-way and design priorities (traffic capacity, on-street parking, bicycle facilities, sidewalk width, etc.). For example, E. 15th Street is proposed as a Gateway Corridor, varying from five lanes in a 100-foot right-of-way near U.S. Highway 75 to two lanes in a 68-foot right-of-way between the DART rail and K Avenue. Each segment is customized based on the most commonly available existing right-of-way to minimize development impacts. Two sets of local streets (Residential Local and Mixed-Use Local) are also included which vary based on design context. On most streets, significant additional right-of-way will not be needed to accommodate the planned street sections; however, where right-of-way is currently constrained, additional right-of-way or easements would be needed to establish a consistent street design.

These customized standards address both short-term challenges and long-term goals to enhance the charm and character of Downtown Plano. In the short term, this section aims to resolve issues related to the lack of a customized right-of-way plan for streets in the Downtown area. By providing specific design requirements and guidelines for Downtown streets, the standards will help streamline the development and redevelopment process, aligning practical realities with design standards. The standards also consider long-term goals to enhance the functionality, aesthetics, and overall experience of Downtown Plano with street-specific cross sections that include wider sidewalks, traffic calming measures, on-street parking, street trees, and the integration of shared-use paths and bike facilities. These objectives align with the Character Defining Elements of the [Downtown Corridors \(DT\)](#) Future Land Use category, emphasizing the importance of accommodating all modes of travel, enhancing bicycle and pedestrian connections, and creating visually appealing gateways.

Staff presented an overview of this section topic to the Commission for discussion and direction on February 20, 2023. More information about the Downtown Streets section is provided in Agenda Item No. 1B.

Section 5 – Street Design

The purpose of Section 5 is to provide comprehensive guidelines and requirements for street design, focusing on various aspects related to roadway geometry. Roadway geometry refers to the physical characteristics and layout of the pavement and curb areas that govern the movement of traffic within the right-of-way (ROW). This section also includes requirements associated with minimum horizontal and vertical radius, entrance streets, and maximum street lengths.

This section primarily builds upon the existing requirements of the current Thoroughfare Standards, but incorporates updates based on best practices and the context-based design approach established in Section 2. Certain street design standards have been modified to consider design variation based on the land use context. Recommended modifications include the consideration of target speeds for roadways, which should not only vary based on street type (functional classification) but also take into account the land use context. Slower target speeds are recommended for Neighborhood, Mixed-Use, and Corner contexts, as these areas typically prioritize pedestrian safety and a more moderate traffic flow. In contrast, higher target speeds may be appropriate in Commercial areas where traffic volumes and movement efficiency are typically higher. Additionally, context-based design criteria are recommended for design vehicles, maximum block lengths, and on-street parking options.

Section 6 – Intersections

Section 6 provides comprehensive guidelines and requirements for intersections and the relevant features for safe and efficient movements of all users. Updates include changes to stop signage requirements at T-intersections, allowable pavement grades, requirements for vertical deflection, directional pedestrian ramps for handicap accessibility, and clarified intersection curb radii for each type of street by land use context.

Section 7 – Median, Left-Turns, and Right-Turns

Section 7 outlines the requirements associated with medians, left turns (with medians and without medians), and right turns. Updates include requiring left-turn lanes at median openings on all Type B streets and on Type C and Type D streets where warranted by a traffic study, specifications for turn lane requirements based on speed with single and dual turn lanes, specifications for median widths between turn lanes, and prohibiting driveways in the taper of a right-turn lane.

Section 8 – Driveways

Section 8 outlines requirements and standards to address the procedure allowing access to streets and driveway design requirements within roadway right-of-way. Updates include new driveway spacing based on speeds, clarifying spacing requirements between driveways and the nearest median turn lane, adding requirements for angled driveways in relation to cross streets, updating driveway storage based on number of parking spaces, requirements for gated developments, and information regarding when existing sites are required to comply with new driveway standards.

Section 9 – Multimodal Facilities

Section 9 covers the creation and implementation of multimodal transportation facilities, providing access and mobility for users of all ages and abilities. Multimodal users include but are not limited to, pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit riders. Pedestrian and bicycle facilities include sidewalks, barrier-free ramps, and bikeways. This section also discusses design guidelines for midblock pedestrian crossings as well as the basics of transit design. The transit design guidance was updated to incorporate Dallas Area Rapid Transit (DART) best practices and standards, including requirements for bus lanes and design standards for elements within the Curbside/Flex Zone that was established in Section 2 and discussed at length in Section 14 – Curb Management.

Staff presented an overview of this section topic to the Commission for discussion and direction on December 5, 2022.

Section 10 – Public Right-of-Way Visibility

Section 10 outlines the importance and implementation of adequate visibility at intersecting and collision points within the city. Visibility and sight distance are vital parameters central to the safety of intersections, driveways, and other potential conflict places of interest. This section discusses guidelines and requirements for providing a safe environment at major and minor crossings for pedestrians, bicyclists, transit vehicles, and motorists. Minor updates incorporated best practices for calculating sight triangles.

Section 11 – Street Lighting

Section 11 is new to the Street Design Standards but incorporates existing street lighting standards used by the city. It outlines minimum design requirements for street lighting and photometric analysis.

Section 12 – Traffic Studies

Section 12 outlines the detailed procedures for traffic studies, including Traffic Impact Analyses (TIAs). Plano currently regulates the TIA process through Article 25 of the Zoning Ordinance, with TIAs only required for certain development projects during the site plan review process. Section 12 moves technical portions of the TIA content in Article 25 of the Zoning Ordinance to the Street Design Standards. To better meet current needs, Section 12 introduces a tiered approach to traffic study requirements based on the number of peak hours or total daily trips generated by the development. A Traffic Generation Report will be required for all zoning change requests, including Planned Developments and Specific Use Permits, and major development plans, including Concept Plans, Development Plans, Preliminary Site Plans, and Site Plans.

Staff presented an overview of this section topic to the Commission for discussion and direction on January 17, 2023.

Section 13 – Neighborhood Traffic Management

Section 13 provides an updated process for neighborhoods to petition for the installation of traffic calming devices and outlines the request, design, outreach, and approval process for traffic calming devices. The process to petition for traffic management is clearer and more streamlined with a focus on user-friendliness for both citizens and staff.

The section also includes an updated toolkit for traffic calming devices that include visually narrowing techniques (i.e., pavement markings, such as marked parking spaces, and physical elements, such as street trees), horizontal deflection techniques (i.e., bulb-outs, chicanes, etc.), and vertical deflection (i.e., speed cushions, speed humps, etc.).

Staff presented an overview of this section topic to the Commission for discussion and direction on January 3, 2023.

Section 14 – Curb Management

This section provides options and tools for short-term curbside access from rideshare, transit, public realm activation, and deliveries based on national best practices for curb management. Curb management is used to address multiple potential uses within the Curbside/Flex Zone established in Section 2. A curbside/flex zone is now a defined criterion within a street ROW. This zone serves multiple users along a street, such as on-street bicycles, transit stops, commercial deliveries, on-street parking, and passenger loading.

Related Updates to the Comprehensive Plan, Zoning Ordinance, and Subdivision Ordinance

The Street Design Standards will be used in conjunction with the Comprehensive Plan, Subdivision Ordinance, and Zoning Ordinance to regulate the design and location of streets for both city street construction projects and private development. Refer to the [staff report](#) and [presentation](#) from the October 17, 2022, Commission meeting for more information about the relationship between these documents. Updates are necessary to these documents to harmonize changes related to context-sensitive street design and the customization of downtown street standards.

Comprehensive Plan (Agenda Item 1B) – Associated changes to the Thoroughfare Plan Map are needed to implement context-sensitive street design. This includes the addition of four land use context zones (Neighborhood, Commercial, Corner, and Mixed-Use) to the Thoroughfare Plan Map and a new Downtown Streets Plan. As the cross-sections for the various street types will differ by land use context, the dimensioned cross-sections will be relocated from the Comprehensive Plan to Section 2 of the Street Design Standards. In its place, descriptive text and images of the context zones and functional classifications will be inserted into the Comprehensive Plan. Refer to Agenda Item No. 1B for more detailed information on these changes.

Zoning Ordinance (Agenda Item 1C) – Street design standards for mixed-use developments and small infill projects are currently dispersed among various sections of the Zoning Ordinance, including the Downtown Business/Government (BG), Residential Community Design District (RCD), and Urban Mixed-Use District (UMU). These will be relocated into the Street Design Standards, centralizing all street design requirements across the city into a single document, thereby reducing conflicts and promoting a user-friendly design review process.

Implementation of the Downtown Streets Plan also allows more practical setbacks in the BG district. Unlike most other zoning districts in the city, front yard setbacks in the BG district are not measured from the property line (outside edge of right-of-way). Instead, they are measured from the street curb and can vary based on land use, street type, and the presence or absence of on-street parking. This is often confusing for property owners and can be difficult to administer. The right-of-way planning aspects of the Downtown Streets Plan and Section 4 of the Street Design Standards allow the setbacks in BG to be measured similarly to other districts. Proposed updates to the BG district

include the addition of a shy zone setback measured from the outside edge of the planned right-of-way with associated graphics for clarity and user-friendliness.

Refer to Agenda Item No. 1C for more detailed information on these changes.

Subdivision Ordinance (Agenda Item 1D) – Implementation of the Street Design Standards is enforced through the Subdivision Ordinance for private development. Updates to the Subdivision Ordinance are needed to incorporate references to new street types and context-sensitive design principles. Proposed changes are mostly limited to Section 5.4 (Streets and Thoroughfares) of Article V (Requirements for Public Improvements, Reservation and Design). Minor edits are proposed for Articles I (General Provisions) and II (Definitions), mostly to align with the administration of the Street Design Standards. Refer to Agenda Item 1D for more detailed information on these changes.

Repeal of Obsolete Transportation Planning Documents (Agenda Item 1E) – In 2022, the Commission conducted a review of longstanding policy documents, with 32 documents deemed obsolete and ultimately repealed. Another set of documents were earmarked for repeal as part of other ongoing Planning Department projects. Those earmarked for repeal as part of the Thoroughfare Standards update include the Private Street Subdivision Guidelines (1994) and Traffic Island Guidelines (1989). Additionally, the adoption of the new Street Design Standards will require the repeal of the current Thoroughfare Standards ordinance. Refer to Agenda Item 1E for more detail on these documents.

Conformance to the Comprehensive Plan

The Comprehensive Plan provides policy guidance for the creation of safe, efficient, and visually appealing streets that enhance the overall quality of life for its residents. This item aligns with policy or accomplishes a number of Comprehensive Plan actions as noted below. This guidance includes:

- Built Environment Vision Statement – Plano is a vibrant city with attractive and walkable neighborhoods, distinct mixed-use urban centers with active nightlife, strong commercial corridors, and a multimodal transportation system that includes a variety of transit options.
- Roadway System Policy – Plano will develop a safe and efficient roadway system.
- Roadway System Policy: Action 4 (RS4) – Review and update roadway standards to efficiently and safely accommodate all modes of transportation.
- Roadway System Policy: Action 8 (RS8) – Review and update the Traffic Impact Assessment (TIA) threshold and standards to better evaluate the impacts of new and redevelopment projects on existing neighborhoods, the surrounding community, and the roadway system.
- Bicycle & Other Micromobility Policy – Plano will enhance and maintain a micromobility system to provide recreation and feasible options for travel to destinations, which is safe and accessible to all users.
- Pedestrian Environment Policy – Plano will pursue a safe, universally accessible, and well-connected pedestrian system that enhances walkability, improves the navigation of major thoroughfares, and provides connections to nearby destinations desired by the community.
- Pedestrian Environment Policy: Action 3 (PE3) – Improve safety in highly-trafficked pedestrian areas by evaluating and implementing effective traffic calming methodologies to reduce traffic speeds and improve pedestrian safety, such as median islands, landscaping, crosswalks, and on-street parking.

- Public Transit Policy – Plano will provide access to a convenient transit network focused on increasing and improving travel options and direct connections to major local destinations.
- Neighborhood Conservation Policy – Plano will conserve and enhance established residential neighborhoods through city programs, initiatives, and regulations that support neighborhood identity; ensure safe, walkable communities; and preserve the suburban form that contributes to the overall character and livability of the neighborhoods.
- Neighborhood Conservation Policy: Action 1 (NC1) – Establish programs and initiatives that enable homeowners to maintain and enhance their properties and neighborhoods.

Public Outreach Strategies

Due to the quantity and complexity of the changes involved, staff coordinated a varied approach to public outreach in order to allow the public as much opportunity to review the document as possible. These included the following strategies:

- Project Website – A [website](#) was provided with an overview of the project, major changes coming to the design standards, links to previous staff reports and Commission meetings, drafts of all sections and a summary of changes, helpful resources, and links for members of the public/readers of the document to provide their feedback. A special project page was also created specifically for aspects of the update related to [Downtown Streets](#). The website was continually updated as new drafts became available and with pertinent project updates.
- Social Media – The Communications Department released multiple forms of social media communication regarding the updates, including the following:
 - Four Facebook posts
 - One Twitter post
 - Three Nextdoor posts
 - Two Reddit posts
 - Two LinkedIn posts


In addition, newsletters were released to at least 33,000 subscribers on March 28, May 23, June 3, and July 11 of 2023 to notify them that the sections were available to review and that the city was seeking comment.

A [Plano City News video](#) was also released on the City's YouTube channel that reported on the Street Design Standards Update.

- Commission Presentations – As stated previously in this report, staff presented eight times to the Commission between October 3, 2022, and March 1, 2023. Links to the staff reports and presentations were included on the project website.
- Email Correspondence – The project website and social media posts generated some general public feedback via email. Staff responded to each email that was received and directed to appropriate departments as applicable.




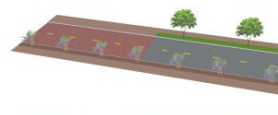












Staff also took a more specialized approach to public outreach for the Downtown Streets:


- Downtown Streets Public Open House – On March 29, 2023, staff held a public open house at the Courtyard Theater to introduce the Downtown Streets design standards as part of the Thoroughfare Standards Update. All proposed cross-sections were presented in 3D formats to help illustrate the proposed changes. An example board is provided below, with all meeting materials available at the [project website](#):



Gateway Corridors

15th Street (US 75 to Municipal*)

15th Street US 75 to G Ave <small>Existing 100-110 ft. ROW</small>	15th Street G to H Ave <small>Existing 60-65 ft. ROW</small>	15th Street H Ave to DART Rail <small>Existing 60-80 ft. ROW</small>	15th Street K to Municipal Ave <small>Existing 55-90 ft. ROW</small>
			
			
<small>facing east</small>	<small>facing west</small>	<small>facing west</small>	<small>facing east</small>
Proposed 100 ft. ROW	Proposed 65 ft. ROW	Proposed 75 ft. ROW	Proposed 65 ft. ROW
			
			
<small>No major changes Keep 10 ft. sidepath on north side</small>	<small>2 lanes + two-way center turn lane 10 ft. shared use path on north side Parallel parking on south side 7 ft. sidewalk on south side</small>	<small>2 lanes + two-way center turn lane 10 ft. shared use path on north side Angled parking on south side 7 ft. sidewalk on south side</small>	<small>2 lanes + two-way center turn lane Angled parking on south side where feasible 7 ft. sidewalks</small>



*Note, no changes are recommended for 15th Street between DART and K Avenue

www.PlanoCompPlan.org/Downtown-Streets

- Historic Downtown Plano Association Meetings –
 - On March 14, 2023, staff presented an overview of the project to the Historic Downtown Plano Association meeting. The presentation primarily focused on the downtown streets inset and updated downtown standards. Staff also encouraged the members to provide feedback and to review the sections on the project website.
 - May 8, 2023 – Staff met with representatives of HPDA and other downtown stakeholders to review the draft standards.
 - June 1, 2023 – Staff met with representatives of HDPDA and other downtown stakeholders to present updated details to the proposed changes to the Downtown Streets design standards, including information on traffic considerations provided by the Engineering Department.

- Meetings/Correspondence with Downtown Property Owners and Business Owners – Staff communicated directly with over 90 stakeholders via public meetings, special interest meetings, small group meetings, individual meetings, phone calls, and email correspondence. In many cases, communication was conducted over multiple meetings with repeat individuals.

Summary of Public Feedback

Many of the public comments received on the overall Street Designs Standards document were specific to traffic hotspots and concerns or other traffic issues that are outside the scope of the Street Design Standards. As anticipated, most of the public feedback received was specific to the Downtown Streets aspects of the project. More information about that feedback is presented in Agenda Item No. 1B.

Implementation

This comprehensive overhaul of the city's Street Design Standards was a two-year endeavor requiring extensive collaboration among various city departments. Despite the diligence of the effort, updates to city design documents of this complexity will inevitably include unintended clerical errors, oversights, omissions, or conflicts. As a best practice, staff intends to monitor the implementation of the Street Design Standards and return to the Commission next year in order to assess potential updates, as necessary.

RECOMMENDATION:

Recommended for approval as submitted.