

Process and Approach

Process

After the City adopted *Bring It On Bloomington!* in 2016, the City immediately began implementing the programs, projects, and policies listed in the plan.

One of the main recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan was to update the City's zoning ordinance to better align with the vision established in *Bring it on Bloomington!*

The zoning code update process began in 2016 with a kick off meeting with those who know the code the best and are responsible for administering it, the staff of the Community Development Department.

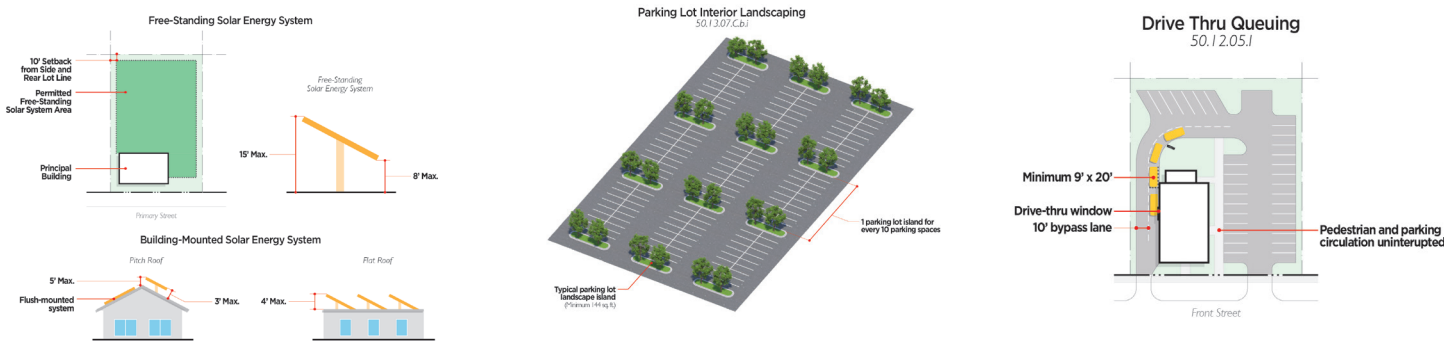
After the kick off meeting, the community was engaged through a series of workshops. One workshop

was focused on residential areas, and the other commercial and industrial areas.

Then, the diagnostic report was developed. This document identified the areas of focus for the update, and established the approach as detailed below.

Next, the new ordinance was drafted, including the standards that establish zoning districts, the standards that regulate topics like parking, landscaping, and bee-keeping, and the standards that set up the process by which the code is enforced.

Now, we are in the process of gathering public input on the proposed revisions. The community now has an opportunity to voice any concerns with the update before it goes to City Council for adoption.



Approach

Alignment with the Comprehensive Plan

The Comprehensive Plan is the community's vision and official policy guide that should serve as a basis for zoning entitlements and amendments. Over 6,000 residents participated in the creation of the Plan.

Preserving Priority Places

Over the past years, suburban style infill development has abraded the historic downtown core and other areas of the community. The zoning ordinance can provide the effective mechanisms to support historic preservation.

A Modern Zoning Code

The code should be improved to serve the end user. Its organization should lend itself to online users and should include graphics and modern definitions. The ordinance should accommodate sustainable technologies and eliminate obsolete uses, like "telegraph message centers."

Finding the Right Zoning Approach/District Structure

Bloomington has approximately 30 zoning districts, including six form-based code districts, two overlay districts, and an unused Traditional Neighborhood District. Too many districts can be confusing and at times may undermine the intended vision in the Comprehensive Plan. The

right approach has been analyzed and districts have been eliminated or restructured when necessary to become more effective.

Addressing Areas of Transition

The new zoning ordinance should remove barriers to support investment and redevelopment of neighborhood uses. For example, near the downtown, several blocks could be more intensely developed to support downtown commerce.

Clear Structure and Regulations

Bloomington's ordinance follows a traditional structure with form and content from decades past. Revisions overtime lead to inconsistencies and unclear procedures. The new ordinance is

simplified, eliminating vague and obsolete definitions, overlapping regulations, and imprecise standards.

Graphic Approach

Houseal Lavigne Associates is nationally recognized for their graphic approach to engagement and document design. Clear graphics demonstrate the intended outcome for development and illustrate ambiguous concepts.

Competitive Standards

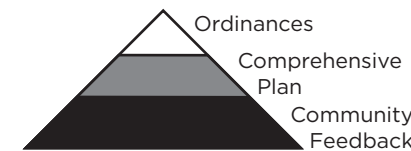
The zoning ordinance offers a way to make good development easy. A properly drafted zoning ordinance can remove unnecessary obstacles to investment. An ordinance should be user friendly and accessible.



Zoning Ordinance Update

Community Feedback

On August 24, 2015 Bloomington adopted its Comprehensive Plan, a twenty-year vision for the Community. Over 6,000 residents participated in the creation of the award-winning Plan. Zoning and ordinances are tools necessary for implementing the Community's vision. The proposed ordinance is rooted in the goals and objectives of the Comprehensive Plan.



Outreach Events

- Developers Outreach Meeting. October 26, 2016
- Realtor's Association Meeting. November 2016
- Downtown Task Force Presentation. June 27, 2017
- Cultural Commission Meeting. January 2018
- Planning Commission Meetings. October 2016-present (9 meetings)
- Online publication of draft chapters June 2018
- Downtown Picnic August 2018
- Public Q&A Sessions October 10, 2018



Frequently Asked Questions

Why update the ordinance?

The existing ordinance is outdated and difficult to use. Updating the code allows the city to clarify regulations and procedures, modernize the ordinance, and align the ordinance with the goals of the Comprehensive Plan.

What is the process?

In 2016, the City engaged the consulting services to analyze the existing ordinance and draft a new code. We held outreach meetings with developers and residents, provided recommendations based on the Comp. Plan, best practices, GIS analysis, and state/national statutes. The Planning Commission provided feedback to us on the proposed chapters. The draft sections are online for public review. We have presented the proposed language to City Council. The Planning Commission will hold a public hearing and City Council will have final approval.

Is this a form-based code?

No, past experiences showed that form-based codes are not well received in Bloomington. The proposed code is a hybrid, containing limited design standards specific to the downtown area.

What happens to nonconforming properties?

The intent of rewriting the ordinance is to eliminate inconsistencies and nonconforming properties. Over 3000 properties will become conforming if the mini-mum lot sizes are reduced. Other nonconforming uses or structures will be allowed to continue to exist but if destroyed would be rebuilt in conformance with the ordinance.

Does the new code address sustainable technologies?

The proposed code includes regulations for urban gar-dens, urban farms, hydroponics, aquaponics, bee-keeping and apiaries, residential chicken keeping, and personal and commercial solar and wind. Some of these uses may be unique and require additional regulations in residential areas.

Are there any Zoning Map Amendments?

Yes, adopting the new ordinance will eliminate some districts and create others. A map amendment is necessary.

Where can I see the draft sections?

<http://www.cityblm.org/government/departments/planning-zoning/proposed-zoning-amendments>

Where should I send questions or comments?

Zo_update@cityblm.org



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Bloomington, IL 61701
(309) 434-2226
zo_update@cityblm.org
<http://www.cityblm.org>

188 W Randolph St.
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Significant Changes

Eliminating ineffective districts

Creating new districts

Consolidating redundant districts

Bloomington has approximately 30 zoning districts, many of which are redundant or in-effective. The proposed zoning ordinance eliminates the B-3 Central Business District, which is over mapped, allows too many uses, permits incompatible uses, and does not provide an adequate transition to the adjacent residential district. The ordinance replaces the B-3 district with the D-1, Downtown Central Business District, D-2 Downtown Transition District, and D-3 Warehouse and Arts District. The new ordinance pro-poses combining similar and redundant districts such as the B-1, Highway Business District and C-3 Regional Shopping District, or C-2 Neighborhood Commercial District and the B-2, General Business Service District. The resulting districts are B-1 General Commercial District and B-2, Local Commercial District. The W-1 Warehouse District is not used throughout the community and can be eliminated. The properties would be zoned M-1, Restricted Manufacturing. The proposed ordinance also eliminates the Traditional Neighborhood District zoning regulations which have never been used by developers in Bloomington.

Reducing nonconforming residential lots

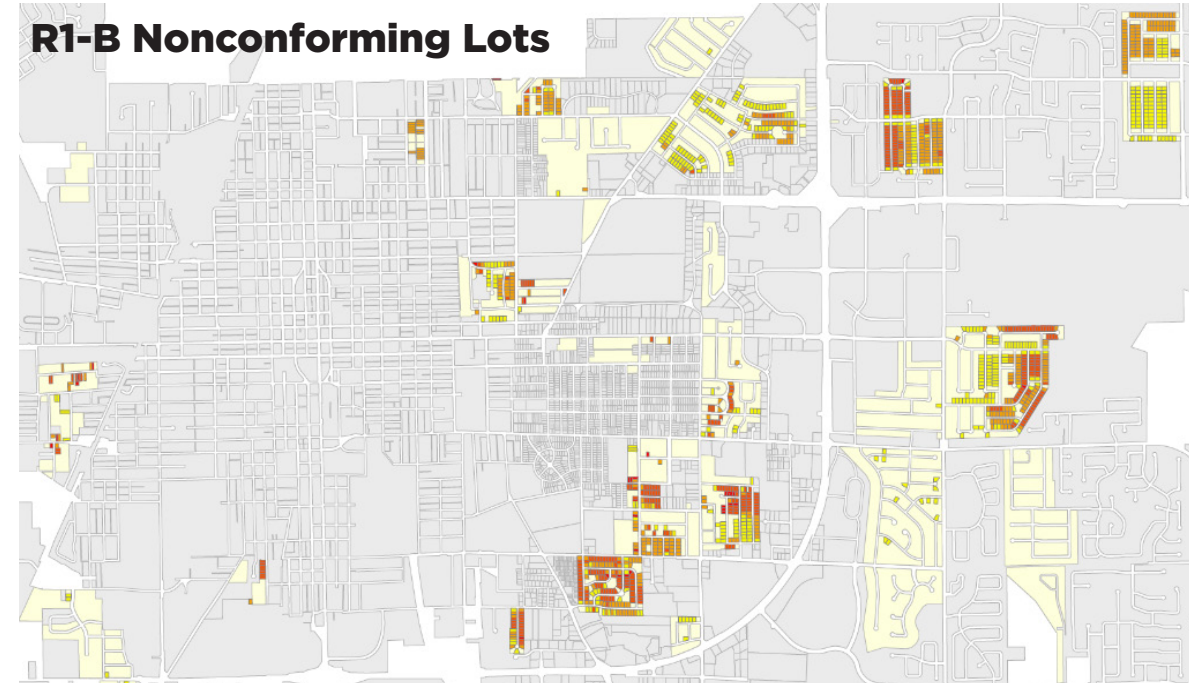
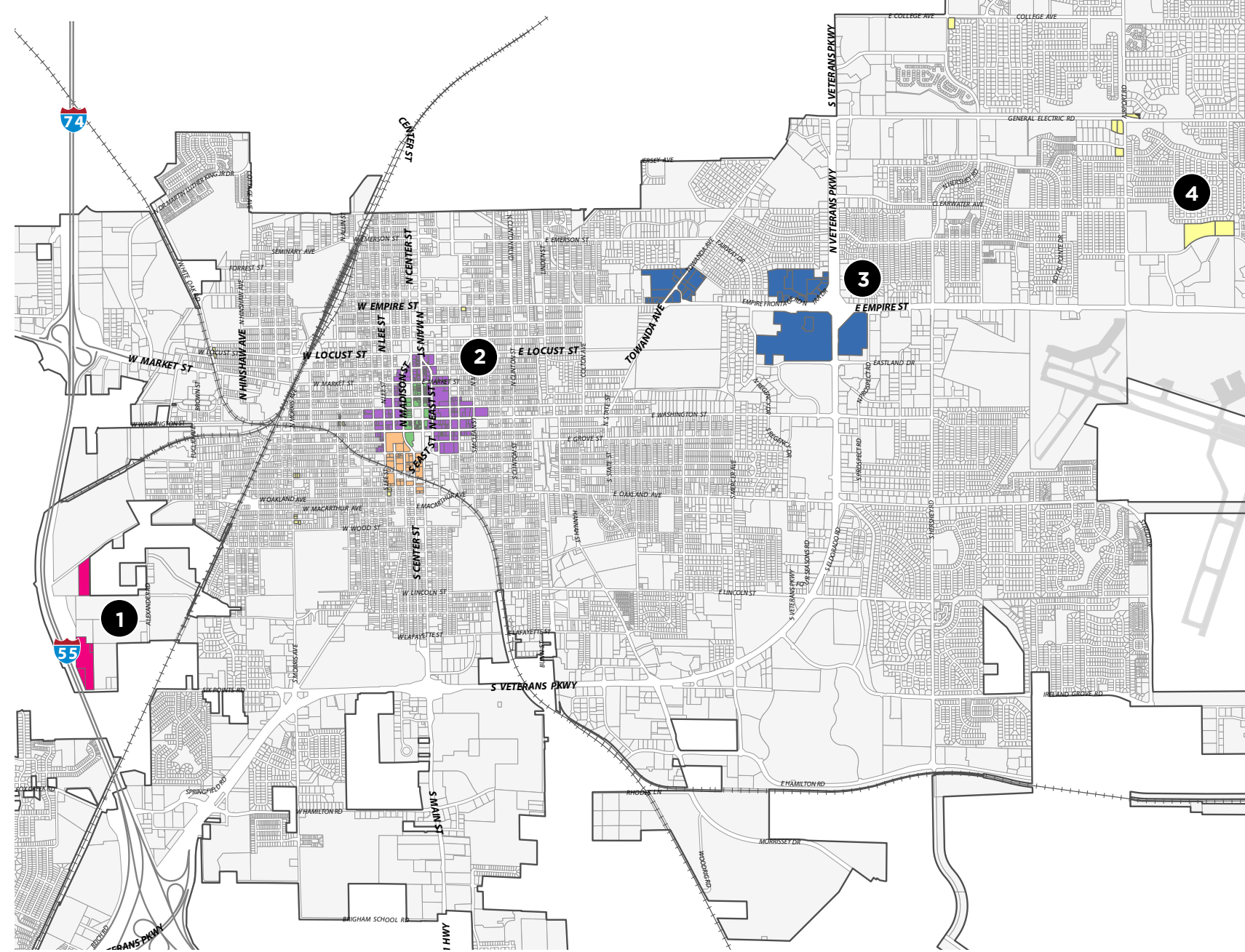
GIS analysis shows that reducing the minimum required lot size could bring almost 3000 nonconforming residential properties into conformance with the ordinance. The pro-proposed change includes reducing R-1C minimum lot sizes from 6,600 to 5,400 square feet and R-1B lot sizes from 10,000 to 7,000 square feet. This proposed change can decrease and eliminate financial barriers and aligns with goals N-1.1e and H-2.2m of the Comprehensive Plan.

1. These properties are currently zoned W1, it is proposed that they be consolidated with *M1, Restricted Manufacturing*.

2. Bloomington's Downtown is currently under one zoning district. The revised code proposes to divide these districts into *D-1, Downtown Central Business district*, shown here as green, *D-2, Downtown Transition district*, shown here as purple, and the *D-3 Downtown Warehouse and Arts district*, shown here in orange.

3. The existing C-3 zoning district is proposed to be consolidated with the B-1, General Commercial District.

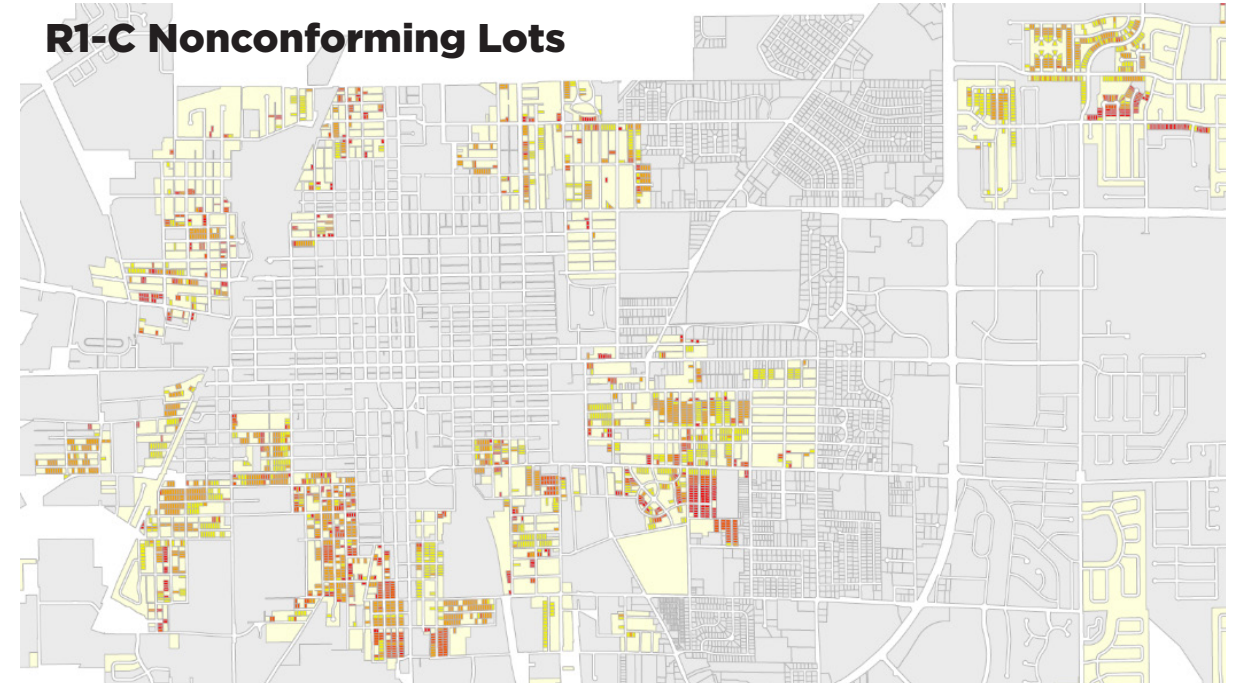
4. The existing C-2 zoning district is proposed to be consolidated with the B-2, Local Commercial District.



These maps show properties that do not meet the minimum lot requirements of the current ordinance.

The proposed ordinance reduces the minimum lot requirements making the yellow and orange properties lawful.

R1-B District
 Current Total NC: 1358
 Positively impacted by changes: 1323
 Remaining NC: 33
 Reducing 97% NC lots



R1-C District
 Current Total NC: 2698
 Positively impacted by changes: 1884
 Remaining NC: 814
 Reducing 70% NC lots