

## **D#101 APPLICABILITY FOR MODIFICATIONS IN DESIGN DISTRICTS**

### **General Description**

This docket item is intended to include exterior modifications of a building as one of the activities that will be required to comply with the Urban Design Regulations. Currently, there is no requirement that modifications to buildings comply with design standards.

### **Impact Analysis**

#### Effect on rate of growth, development, and conversion of land as envisioned in the Plan

Not applicable. There are no anticipated effects on the rate of growth, development, and the conversion of land created by the proposed changes.

#### Effect on the City's capacity to provide adequate public facilities

Not applicable. There are no anticipated effects on the City's capacity to provide adequate public facilities created by the proposed changes.

#### Effect on the rate of population and employment growth

Not applicable. There are no anticipated effects on the rate of population and employment growth created by the proposed changes.

#### Whether Plan objectives are being met as specified or remain valid and desirable

The first goal of the Community Design Element of the Comprehensive is to "raise the aesthetic quality of the City". This docket item seeks to improve the aesthetic quality of buildings in Design Districts if they are modified.

#### Effect on general land values or housing costs

Not applicable. There are no anticipated effects on general land values or housing costs created by the proposed changes.

#### Whether capital improvements or expenditures are being made or completed as expected

Not applicable.

#### Consistency with GMA, the Plan, and Countywide Planning Policies

The proposed changes have no bearing on growth management. It is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and Countywide Planning Policies.

#### Effect on critical areas and natural resource lands

The effects of this proposal are anticipated to have no impact on critical areas and natural resource lands.

### **Background**

Most of the City's commercial, mixed-use, and multi-family zones are in one of four Design Districts as part of the Urban Design Regulations. The following are the four Design Districts and the applicable zones:

- District A:
  - Center Downtown (CD)
  - Residential Multi Family Urban (RMU)
- District B:
  - Residential Multi Family Traditional (RMT)
  - Residential Multi Family (RMF)
- District C:
  - Urban Center North 1 (UC-N1)
  - Urban Center North 2 (UC-N2)
  - Commercial Office Residential (COR)
- District D:
  - Center Village (CV)
  - Commercial Arterial (CA)

There are many elements of design that are required of new development in these zones. The following are areas of design that must be complied with:

- Building Location and Orientation
- Building Entries
- Transition to Surrounding Development
- Service Element Location and Design
- Gateways
- Surface Parking
- Structured Parking Garages
- Vehicular Access
- Pedestrian Circulation
- Pedestrian Amenities
- Recreation and Common Open Space
- Building Character and Massing
- Ground Level Details
- Building Roof Lines
- Building Materials
- Lighting

The first goal of the Community Design Element of the Comprehensive is to “raise the aesthetic quality of the City” and one of the goals of the City Center Community Plan is to “improve the overall visual character of the City Center”. These goals illustrate that the City is intent about improving the way buildings look. To this end, the City has adopted requirements for improved design for residential, commercial, and mixed-use buildings. However, compliance with these regulations is generally only required for new buildings or when an existing non-conforming building is substantially altered (when the building is altered and the amount of the improvements is estimated at greater than 50% of the assessed value of the structure). There are many commercial buildings throughout the City that would be more aesthetically pleasing if they conformed to the Design District requirements. A way to facilitate more improvement of

the aesthetics of buildings in Design District is to require exterior modifications to comply with requirements for the applicable area of design.

**Recommendation**

Staff recommends amending the Applicability and Conflicts section of the Urban Design Regulations (4-3-100) to include a new item to read:

The following development activities shall be required to comply with the provisions of this Section:

1. All subdivisions including short plats;
2. All new structures;
3. Conversion of vacant land (e.g. to parking or storage lots);
4. Conversion of a residential use to a nonresidential use;
5. Alterations, enlargements, and/or restorations of nonconforming structures pursuant to RMC 4-10-050
6. Exterior modifications such as façade changes, windows, awnings, signage etc. shall comply with the design requirements for the new portion of the structure, sign, or site improvement.