City of Denton



City Hall 215 E. McKinney Street Denton, Texas www.cityofdenton.com

AGENDA INFORMATION SHEET

DEPARTMENT: Development Services

Cassey Ogden DCM:

DATE: June 25, 2025

SUBJECT

Receive a report, hold a discussion, and give Staff direction regarding the Southeast Denton Residential and Height Overlay Districts, a recommendation of the Southeast Denton Area Plan, encompassing approximately 422 acres, generally located south of East McKinney Street, west of South Woodrow Street, North of Kerley Street and Smith Street, west of Dallas Drive and South Bell Street. (PZ25-138, SED Residential and Height Overlay Districts, Julie Wyatt).

BACKGROUND

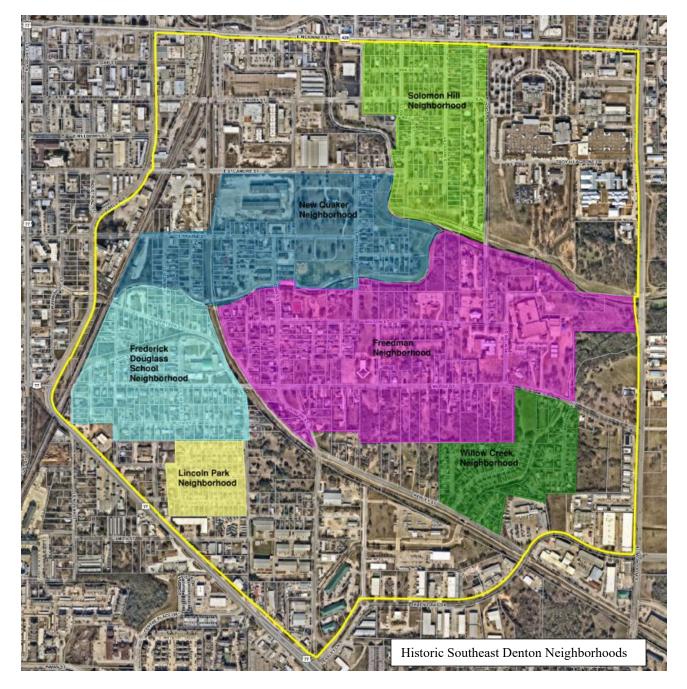
The purpose of this work session is to discuss and receive feedback from the Planning and Zoning Commission regarding potential development regulations associated with the proposed Southeast Denton Residential and Height Overlay Districts.



- Residential Overlay
- Commercial Overlay
- Proposed Southeast Denton Area Plan Boundary
- Proposed Transition Area Boundary

During the Southeast Denton Area Plan (SEDAP) (the Plan) process, residents communicated that preservation of the existing neighborhood character is very important to community. Additional residential development is welcome in the community, provided that new development respects the scale, land use, and character of the established residential neighborhoods. Thus, Goal 4 of the adopted Plan recommends the following:

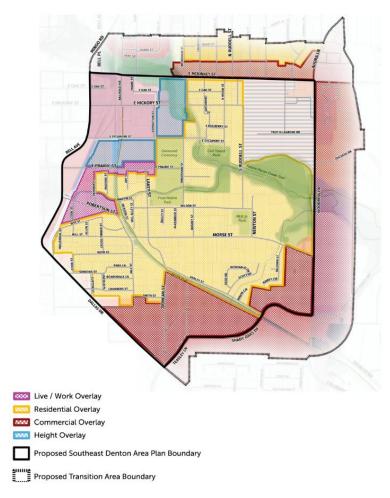
Action 4.1.1: Create a residential overlay district as shown in Figure 32 (attached as Exhibit 2 and inset map to the left) to maintain the scale and character of the neighborhoods while fostering community investment to create livable and inclusive neighborhoods for all who want to call Southeast Denton home. Overlay standards may include, but are not limited to, limiting height to two stories, allowing infill on small lots, requiring enhanced front elevations such as larger windows and covered porches.



The proposed Residential Overlay District area, as recommended within the adopted Plan, encompasses approximately 422 acres and includes the historic neighborhoods within Southeast Denton (with additional areas): Solomon Hill, New Quaker, Freedman Town, and Fred Moore School (previously Frederick Douglass School) platted and built in the 1920s-1930s; Lincoln Park built in the 1960s; and Willow Creek built in the late 1960s to 1980s (see inset map). Homes in Southeast Denton were often constructed by the families who resided in them, resulting in a variety of architectural styles reflecting individual preferences and design trends in a given decade, including vernacular, bungalow, craftsman, and ranch. Zoning is primarily Residential-4 (R4) District; however, some Residential 3 (R3), Residential 7 (R7), Mixed Use Neighborhood (MN) and Planned Development (PD) Districts can be found within the Southeast area boundary. While the majority of the lots are developed with residential uses, some vacant properties and large lots (which could be subdivided) create an opportunity for infill development and redevelopment.

• Create a **Height Overlay District** (see Exhibit 2 and inset map, right) to limit the height of new construction in areas near the Denton County Transit Authority (DCTA) Transit Station to prevent the encroachment of downtown-style development in Southeast Denton.

Unlike the Residential Overlay, this proposed Height Overlay District does not have a companion Action in the Plan, as it is straightforward and limited in scope. It is intended to create a buffer between the historic neighborhoods and properties near the DCTA. The Height Overlay will reduce the current permitted development scale and intensity, requiring more compatible heights to minimize their impacts. proposed maximum height of 40 feet will generally limit buildings to 3stories, encouraging a proportional, stair-step increase in heights from the east and south toward the west, thus protecting the neighborhoods while



permitting a gentle increase in intensity. Comprising approximately 34 acres, zoning within the boundary includes Mixed Use Neighborhood (MN) and Public Facility (PF) Districts.

Additional Public Engagement/Feedback:

In March 2025, staff held a Block Party to conduct additional surveys to confirm the community's preferences for architectural features, building scale, and building placement (see Exhibit 3). Staff believed it was important to do this additional targeted engagement to affirm the initial results received during Plan development and to verify which residential characteristics were most desired.

Based on the feedback received at the Block Party and previous comments received during Plan development, staff drafted the Residential and Height Overlay Districts regulations. Staff will present the draft regulations to the community at the 2025 Juneteenth Celebration on Saturday, June 21, 2025 and at the June 23, 2025 Southeast Denton Neighborhood Association meeting. Comments received from the community will help to validate that the draft regulations adequately and accurately reflects the community's goals. Staff will provide a summary of the feedback received from the community on the draft regulations at the June 25, 2025, Planning and Zoning Commission meeting.

Issues for Consideration:

Balancing Objectives:

Action 4.1.1 in the SEDAP reveals several objectives which must be balanced to ensure the goal to strengthen neighborhoods and housing affordability is met. These objectives include maintaining scale and character, fostering community investment, and creating livable and inclusive neighborhoods. In drafting

the overlay conditions, staff weighed each one to determine the impact on each objective. Some of the questions staff considered were:

- Is the requirement too restrictive so that it deters property owners from renovating or maintaining their property?
- Is the requirement too restrictive so that it deters investment in infill development?
- Is the requirement too permissive so that it would allow incompatible residential forms?
- Does the requirement positively or negatively impact the architectural character?
- Does the requirement create dynamic neighborhood streets?
- Are the requirements straightforward and clear?

Current DDC Regulations Applicable to All Development

In answering the questions above, staff analyzed current regulations to determine which requirements are appropriate to further the community's goals and which should be enhanced or modified. The following is an outline of the relevant DDC Sections to allow comparison of the proposal. These include the applicable zoning district dimensional standards, maximum building heights, and design standards for residential development.

| | R3 | R4 | R7 | MN |
|-------------------------------|--------------------|-------------------|-------------------|--|
| Minimum Lot Area | 10,000 square feet | 7,000 square feet | 4,000 square feet | 2,500 square feet |
| Minimum Front Yard Setback | 20 feet | 20 feet | 10 feet | 10 feet |
| Maximum Building Height | 40 feet | 40 feet | 40 feet | 65 feet. Buildings between 41 and 65 feet, adjacent to a residential zoning district or adjacent to an existing Single-Family Detached Dwelling, Townhome, or Duplex use, shall require a Specific Use Permit (SUP |

- **Design Standards** for Single-Family Detached, Duplex, Townhome, Triplex, and Fourplex Dwellings
 - o <u>Transparency/Windows</u>. Windows and doors must occupy at least 15% of the front façade.
 - o <u>Building Mass and Form</u>. Buildings shall incorporate at least three of the following design features to provide visual relief along the front of the residence:
 - Dormers
 - Gables
 - Recessed entries, a minimum of three feet deep
 - Covered front porches
 - Cupolas
 - Architectural pillars or posts; and/or
 - Bay window with a minimum 24 inches projection

Overlay Districts within DDC:

Similar to other overlay zoning districts as provided for in the DDC, staff is recommending that the Southeast Denton Residential and Height Overlay Districts be adopted within Subchapter 4 of the DDC. The two overlay districts are intended to work together to accomplish the goals set forth in the SEDAP, in addition to respecting the feedback received from the community. Once established, the regulations could then be further modified and/or expanded in the future to address the changing needs of the Southeast Denton community.

Proposal:

- For the **Residential Overlay District**, staff proposes to maintain the existing zoning and add the following dimensional and design standards:
 - o Applicability
 - Construction of a new primary or accessory structure.
 - Expansions of an existing structure that increase the gross floor area by up to and including 50 percent shall comply with maximum heights and permitted roof forms (as outlined below).
 - Expansions of an existing structure that increase the gross floor area by more than 50 percent shall comply with all overlay standards.
 - Repairs necessary to maintain existing structures are not subject to the overlay standards.
 - o <u>Dimensional Standards</u>
 - For lots smaller than 7,000 square feet, the minimum front yard setback may be reduced to 10 feet.
 - Building height:
 - The maximum height for a primary structure is limited to 30 feet measured as the vertical distance above finished grade to the highest point of the roof.
 - The maximum height for an accessory structure is limited to 20 feet measured as the vertical distance above finished grade to the highest point of the roof.
 - o <u>Entries</u>: Structures shall provide either an unenclosed front porch or stoop that extends forward from the front façade.
 - Front porch:
 - o Minimum width: 25 percent of the ground floor front façade width.
 - o Minimum depth: 4 feet. Columns shall be constructed as a decorative feature.
 - Stoop:
 - o Minimum size: 24 square feet.
 - The stoop platform shall be elevated a minimum of 7 inches above finished grade.
 - o Transparency/Windows:
 - Windows and doors shall occupy at least 25% of the front façade.
 - Decorative trim at least 3.5 inches wide is required for all windows and doors on the front façade.
 - o <u>Roof Form</u>: Roofs shall be gabled, hipped, or a combination thereof. Flat, mansard, shed, or other similar roof forms would not be permitted.
 - o <u>Building Mass and Form</u>: In addition to the items above, at least two of the following design features shall be provided along the front of the residence:
 - Dormers
 - Projection (bay, bump-out, or bow) window with a minimum 24 inches projection
 - Split garage doors where a column or post divides single-car garage doors

- Balustrade, railing, or low wall enclosing the front porch or stoop
- Multi-pane or mission-style windows
- For the **Height Overlay District**, staff proposes to maintain the existing zoning and add the following dimensional standard for all new construction and expansions over 50% of the gross floor area:
 - O The maximum building height shall be limited to 40 feet, measured consistent with the DDC Section 9.2, *Definitions*, for **Height, Building or Structure**: Height shall be measured as the vertical distance above finished grade measured to the highest point of the roof of a flat roof or to the deck line of a mansard roof, or to the midpoint of the highest gable of a pitched or hipped roof.

Staff is seeking the Planning and Zoning Commission's feedback regarding the proposed development regulations in particular the following:

- 1. Does the Commission concur with staff's recommendation to require conformance with all elements of the Residential Overlay for expansions over 50% of the existing gross floor area?
- 2. Does the Commission concur with staff's recommendation to allow for reduced front setbacks for smaller lots?
- 3. Does the Commission concur with requiring minimum sizes on porches and stoops?
- 4. Does the Commission concur with the proposed enhanced design standards (i.e. dimensional standards, entries, transparency/windows, roof form, and building mass and form) which exceed the City's typical minimum standards?
- 5. Does the Commission concur with the proposed height limitations and measurement methods in both the Residential and Height Overlay Districts?
- 6. Are there any items that have not been addressed, consistent with the SEDAP recommendations as it relates to establishing the Residential and Height Overlay Districts?

EXHIBITS

- 1. Agenda Information Sheet
- 2. SEDAP Overlay Actions and Map
- 3. Residential Survey Results

Respectfully submitted: Tina Firgens, AICP Deputy Director of Development Services/Planning Director

Prepared by: Julie Wyatt, AICP Principal Planner