

Neighborhood Empowerment Zone # Downtown

Development Guidelines

Based on the Downtown Strategic Action Plan Update, 2019

OVERVIEW

The City Council of the City of Amarillo has determined that the designation of the Downtown Neighborhood Empowerment Zone is a useful tool to incentivize residential investment in the downtown area. The downtown area has seen a historic impairment to residential development creating economic and social liabilities to the sound growth and revitalization of downtown Amarillo. The Zone has significant other commercial incentive programs, and as such, the City has determined that incentives under this Neighborhood Empowerment Zone program shall be directed solely at single-family and multi-family residential projects.

Because of limitations of the program within a Tax Increment Reinvestment Zone, incentives for residential projects will be limited to fee waivers only, with no tax abatement or sales tax rebate possibilities.

DEVELOPMENT PATTERNS IN THE DOWNTOWN AREA

Residential

Downtown generally has two distinct character districts – the Central Business District (CBD) and the downtown neighborhoods that are largely single-family, which include the Plemons-Eakle National Register Historic District, south of SW 10th Avenue. Now transitioning from single-family to more mixed use in nature, and with architectural styles and construction dates ranging from late Victorian to Craftsmen era, this area has distinct characteristics that are worthy of preserving. The preservation of the homes and character of these neighborhoods are important to the city and to downtown.

The Central Business District or urban core is largely devoid of residential uses and residential development has primarily been small 6-15 unit adaptive re-use projects in older buildings. There are no large-scale apartments or condominium projects. The Center City TIRZ #1 identified an ambitious goal of 2,100 new residential units within the TIRZ zone over 30 years and currently there are about 300 units.

DESIRABLE PROJECT TYPES

- Rehabilitation of existing single-family homes south of SW 10th Avenue.
- New construction for-sale housing including single family, attached and detached townhomes, condominiums throughout downtown.
- New and rehabilitated multi-family rental units in and near the CBD.

DESIGN GUIDELINES

The following design guidelines shall be met when applicable to the project scope.

- The project must meet the approved Downtown Amarillo Urban Design Standards and receive Downtown Design Certificate of Appropriateness approval when applicable. (There is no fee associated with this review).
- No chain link fencing within the front yard setback. Fencing within the front yard setback shall provide at least 50% transparency.
- No metal façade buildings
 - a. Architectural metal materials may be used in conjunction with other façade materials if it complements the architectural character of the project and surrounding area.
- Architectural design should be compatible with characteristics of the neighborhood.
- Buildings shall have architecturally defined and covered front entrances.
- Garages shall not extend beyond the building face.
- For residential projects, all vehicular access and parking shall be located adjacent to a side lot line. No driveways or parking shall end at a section of the home that is not a garage.
- Roof pitch and design shall be consistent with the rest of the block.