

ORDINANCE NO. ORD-15-07

First Reading: May 18, 2015  
Public Hearing: June 15, 2015 &  
July 20, 2015

Approved: July 20, 2015  
Published: July 30, 2015  
Effective: August 9, 2015

DOWNTOWN CHARACTER OVERLAY ZONING DISTRICTS  
BUILDING MASSING STANDARDS  
(CHAPTER 55 ZONING)

AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND SECTIONS 5:10.20 and 5:10.20.A OF TITLE V OF THE  
CODE OF THE CITY OF ANN ARBOR

The City of Ann Arbor ordains:

Section 1 That Section 5:10.20(1) of Chapter 55 of Title V of the Code of the City of  
Ann Arbor is amended as follows:

5:10.20. - Downtown character overlay zoning districts.

- (1) Intent. The purpose of these overlay zoning districts is to supplement the regulations for zoning districts in the downtown to reflect the diversity of historical and built environments within the downtown. These character overlay zoning districts account for differences in the existing street pattern, density, massing and design features that exist throughout the downtown, in addition to the intent of the city for the future development of each area.
  - (a) South University. The South University character district lies along the southeastern edge of the University of Michigan Central Campus, which separates it from the other mixed use districts of downtown. This is an area characterized by a mix of building types and sizes, with retail uses at the street level and relatively narrow lot widths. The intent for this district is to maintain a variety in scale, with design that reflects the small-scale widths and heights of buildings in the area at the streetwall and locates taller portions toward the interior of the lot. The south university D2 character district lies just outside the DDA boundaries, adjacent to nearby residential neighborhoods. The intent for this district is to maintain a variety of small-scale commercial and retail enterprises mixed with some residential uses, minimizing the impact on nearby residential streets.
  - (b) State Street. The State Street character district frames the northwest corner of the University of Michigan central campus and defines the edge of the commercial core. This area is characterized by a mixture of entertainment and retail uses with strong connections to the campus. The intent for this district is preservation of the integrity of the historic district properties and the overall historic character of the area, with design that includes features of the traditional commercial storefronts at the sidewalk's edge.
  - (c) Liberty/Division. The Liberty/Division character district is located in the core of downtown, yet retains a small-scale residential character. A significant portion of

this district coincides with the East William Historic District, and for this reason, preservation of the integrity of these resources is a high priority, as is the retention of the overall sense of scale. While increased building mass can be accommodated in this district, it is the intent to maintain the traditional scale and rhythm of residential buildings.

~~(d)~~ East Huron 1 and 2. The East Huron character districts center along the eastern portion of the Huron Street civic corridor. These areas differ from most of downtown in that the uses are primarily institutional and are seen "in the round" with open space surrounding them. The intent for these districts are to continue the tradition of free-standing buildings with open space in front, incorporating design that includes signature building elements that give landmark qualities to properties. (e) ~~Midtown. The Midtown character district is framed on all sides by other downtown character districts and contains the Fifth Avenue civic corridor. At present, this district lacks a strong sense of identity and is a place where creation of a new context should occur. The intent for this district is higher density development with a strongly defined street edge and active open spaces.~~ East Huron 1. The East Huron 1 character district is located on the north side of East Huron Street including North Fifth Avenue and South State Street, on a major transportation corridor through downtown and the address of many civic buildings, institutions and well-known landmarks of the downtown skyline. Most of its properties have free-standing buildings surrounded by open space, or have front courtyards or plazas, several of which are open to the public. There is a significant contrast between the massing and scale of the structures within this character district and the residential scale of the structures within this character district and the residential scale of the adjacent historic neighborhoods which surround the district on the north, east and west sides. East Huron 1 lies between the Old Fourth Ward, Division Street and Ann Street historic districts and a business loop. This context is its defining feature and, therefore, calls for a higher degree of sensitivity in design and massing to strike a balance between the downtown core and adjacent historic residential neighborhoods.

~~(d)~~(e) East Huron 2. The East Huron 2 character district is located on the south side of East Huron Street between South Division and North State streets, on a major transportation corridor through downtown. From east to west, this block's character moves from campus-like settings with iconic, free-standing buildings surrounded by lawns seen "in the round" to historic, utilitarian commercial buildings at the sidewalk edge, matching the character district's placement between the University of Michigan Central Campus and downtown's civic core. North of this character district lies its sister character area, East Huron 1. To the south, East Huron 2 parallels an area of downtown's core that retains a small-scale residential character.

~~(e)~~(f) Main Street. The Main Street character district is the traditional heart of downtown, with a regional entertainment and business focus. The center of the district contains the Main Street historic district, and preservation of these resources is a high priority. The intent for this district is design that maintains the

traditional rhythm of existing storefronts along the street edge and varying parapet lines.

~~(f)~~(g) Midtown. The Midtown character district is framed on all sides by other downtown character districts and contains the Fifth Avenue civic corridor. At present, this district lacks a strong sense of identity and is a place where creation of a new context should occur. The intent for this district is higher density development with a strongly defined street edge and active open spaces.

~~(g)~~(h) Kerrytown. The Kerrytown character district frames the north end of downtown and is characterized by a mix of small-scale commercial buildings and houses that have been adapted to different uses. The eastern part of the district is part of the Old Fourth Ward historic district, while the southeast corner of the district is located in the Fourth/Ann historic district. The intent for this district is retaining traditional existing building patterns, with lower-scale building modules and residential shapes.

~~(h)~~(i) First Street. The First Street character district runs north-south along the Ann Arbor Railroad and Allen Creek floodplain. This area is characterized by oddly-shaped blocks and a mixture of commercial storefronts, industrial buildings and single-family homes. Many of these buildings are located in the Old West Side historic district, which makes up much of the character area. The intent for this district is for infill development that preserves historic buildings' assets, supports downtown activities, and provides non-motorized connections through preservation of a system of public and common open spaces. New development along the Allen Creek floodplain should be sited to provide greenspace on site and be located in such a way that it will connect with greenspace of abutting properties.

Section 2. That Section 5:10.20(3) of Chapter 55 of Title V of the Code of the City of Ann Arbor is amended as follows:

(3) Building massing standards.

- (a) Buildings and additions constructed after the effective date of this section (December 26, 2009) on lots zoned D1 or D2 in the downtown character overlay zoning districts shall comply with the building massing standards in Table 5:10.20A, as applicable.
- (b) The following definitions shall apply in the application of building massing standards:
  - 1. Base: The portion of a building located between the street grade and the streetwall height (see Figure 1).

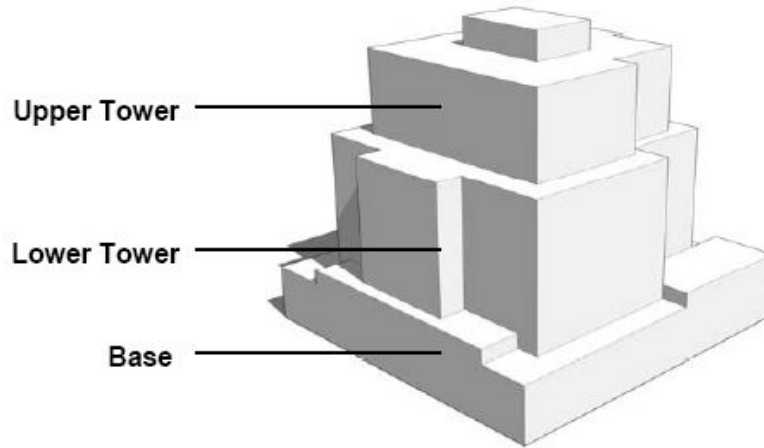


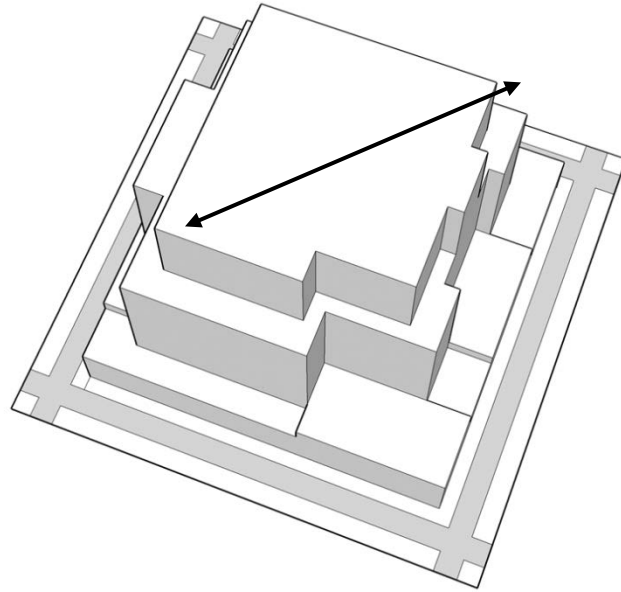
Figure 1 - Base, Lower Tower and Upper Tower

2. Massing articulation: The way in which a building wall surface is broken down into vertical modules, sub-parts or major elements, which are distinguished by changes in materials, texture or surface plane (see Figure 2).



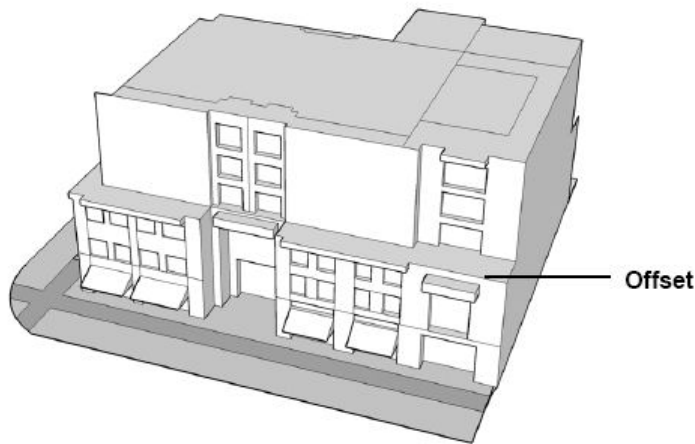
Figure 2 - Massing Articulation

3. Maximum Diagonal: The longest horizontal dimension of a building or tower, as measured from corner to corner of a story (see Figure 3).



**Figure 3 – Maximum Diagonal**

3.4. Offset: The distance that the exterior wall of a tower or upper stories of a building is set back from the streetwall or the exterior wall of the base (see Figure 34). For purposes of this definition, unenclosed balconies are not considered to be part of the exterior wall of a tower.



**Figure 3-4 - Offset**

4.5. Streetwall: The exterior face of a building that fronts a public street between the street grade and the streetwall height (see Figure 45).



Figure 4-5 - Streetwall and Streetwall Height

5.6. Streetwall height: The height of the streetwall portion of the building, as measured in stories above the street grade (see Figure 45).

6.7. Tower: Any portion of the building that rises above the base. Towers often include a lower tower section and an upper tower section (see Figure 1).

Section 3: That Section 5:10.20.A of Chapter 55 of Title V of the Code of the City of Ann Arbor is amended as follows:

Table 5:10.20A - Downtown Character Overlay Zoning Districts Building Massing Standards (Additional Regulations for the D1 and D2 Districts)								
Overlay Zoning District	Streetwall Height		Offset at Top of Street-wall	Max. Building Height	Max. Building Height	Massing Articulation	Maximum Tower Diagonal	Side and Rear Setbacks
	Max. Height	Min. Height		D1 District	D2 District			
			Required Average			Maximum Building Module Length (Horizontal Dimension)		Minimum Distance

Ordinance No. ORD-15-07 Cont.

South University	3 stories	2 stories	5 feet	150 feet	60 feet	45 feet		For D1, a minimum 30 foot setback from a lot line abutting any R zoning district. For D2, a minimum 40 foot setback. This setback shall be measured from the rear and side exterior walls of the building to any R zoning district boundary on the same block as the building.
State Street	3 stories	2 stories	5 feet	180 feet	Not applicable	None		Not applicable
Liberty/Division	3 stories	2 stories	5 feet	180 feet	60 feet	40 feet (in D2 only)		5 foot setback from a side or rear lot line abutting any R zoning district
East Huron 1	3 stories	2 stories	None	<del>150 feet</del> <u>3 stories, except 120 feet in any area extending 150 feet from the East</u>	Not applicable	None	<u>130 feet</u>	<del>Rear or side exterior wall of the tower shall be located no further than 150 feet from the East Huron property line. Rear or side exterior wall of the base and the tower shall be located no closer than 30 feet to a lot line abutting a residential zoning</del>

				<u>Huron Street property line</u>				<p><u>district. For D1 and D2, the following setbacks shall be measured from any exterior walls of the building:</u></p> <p><u>A minimum of 30 feet to any R zoning district boundary</u></p> <p><u>A minimum of 10 feet to any O zoning district boundary</u></p> <p>In no case shall the required setback reduce the width or depth of a lot suitable for building to less than 25 feet.</p>
East Huron 2	4 stories	2 stories	5 feet	180 feet	Not applicable	None		Not applicable
Midtown	4 stories	2 stories	5 feet	180 feet	Not applicable	None		Not applicable
Main Street	4 stories	2 stories	5 feet	180 feet	60 feet, except 120 feet in any area extending 150 feet from	None		<p>For D1, none</p> <p>For D2, a minimum 30 foot setback shall be measured from the exterior walls of the building to any R zoning district boundary</p>



					the East William Street property line			on the same block as the building
Kerrytown	3 stories	2 stories	5 feet	Not applicable	60 feet	40 feet		10 foot setback from a side lot line abutting any R zoning district  20 foot setback from a rear lot line abutting any R zoning district
First Street	3 stories	2 stories	5 feet	Not applicable	60 feet	66 feet		15 foot setback from a side lot line abutting any R zoning district  20 foot setback from a rear lot line abutting any R zoning district  10 foot offset from a side lot line abutting any R zoning district

Section 4. That this ordinance shall take effect and be in force on the tenth day following legal publication.

**CERTIFICATION**

I hereby certify that the foregoing ordinance was adopted by the Council of the City of Ann Arbor, Michigan, at its regular session of July 20, 2015.

---

Jacqueline Beaudry, City Clerk

Ordinance No. ORD-15-07 Cont.

---

Christopher Taylor, Mayor

I hereby certify that the foregoing ordinance received legal publication in the Washtenaw Legal News on July 30, 2015.

---

Jacqueline Beaudry, City Clerk