



WILLMAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING  
THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 12, 2026 @ 3:00 PM  
FIRE HALL  
515 2ND ST SW - WILLMAR, MN 56201

### AGENDA

1. Call Meeting to Order
2. Roll Call
3. Pledge of Allegiance
4. Proposed Additions or Deletions to Agenda
5. Regular Business
  - A. "Plan WITH WILLMAR" Zoning Code Update
6. Adjourn



### City Council Action Request

<b>Council Meeting Date:</b>	February 12, 2026	<b>Agenda Item Number:</b>	5.A.
<b>Agenda Section:</b>	Regular Business	<b>Originating Department:</b>	Planning and Development
<b>Resolution:</b>	No	<b>Prepared By:</b>	Christopher Corbett, Planning and Development Director
<b>Ordinance:</b>	No	<b>Presented By:</b>	Christopher Corbett, Planning and Development Director
<b>Item:</b>	"Plan WITH WILLMAR" Zoning Code Update		

**RECOMMENDED ACTION:**

**OVERVIEW:**

The Planning and Development department has been actively implementing strategies from the WITH Willmar Comprehensive Plan. One of the major initiatives identified is the Zoning Code Update, and we are excited to officially launch this effort during a Joint Work Session hosted by the City Council.

This meeting will introduce the Zoning Code Update process and include interactive exercises to help us begin thinking about zoning in a fresh and engaging way.

Steering Committee Members

- Chad Komplien – Komplien Construction
- Commissioner Buzzeo – Planning Commission
- Commissioner S. Gardner – County Commissioner / KCED
- Matt Runke – Bonnema Runke Stern
- Rebecca Trongaard – Wallin Residential Properties Inc.
- Kayla Klien – Habitat for Humanity
- Sheri Wegner – KCED
- Taylor Marcus – Marcus Construction

We will also be joined by our consultant, Stephanie Falkers of Transportation Collaborative (TC<sup>2</sup>).

Website: <https://www.transportationcollaborative.com/>

WITH Willmar Comprehensive Plan:

<https://cms5.revize.com/revize/cityofwillmar/dlh.WITH%20WILLMAR%20Comprehenhis%20Plan%20DRAFT.pdf>

**BUDGETARY/FISCAL ISSUES:**

\$0.00

**ALTERNATIVES TO CONSIDER:**

Participate and Appoint a Council member as a liaison to the Zoning Code Update Steering Committee

**ATTACHMENTS:**

1. PWW\_Kick Off Meeting-2.12.26



 Willmar Zoning Code Update

# KICK-OFF MEETING

**Date:** February 12, 2026



# **TC2 Consultant Team**

**Stephanie Falkers, AICP**

**Maya Sheikh**



# ZONING 101

*What is zoning and how is it used?*



# Official Controls: Zoning Ordinance

*MN State Statutes 462.357*



Cities are given zoning authority from the **Municipal Planning Act**

Authority is given to regulate regulations that promote the public health, safety, morals, and general welfare.

The Land Use Plan/Comprehensive Plan shall lay out the guidelines for the adoption of official controls

A public hearing must be held for the adoption of amendments

Respond to State development goals and objectives

# What is Zoning?



Tool for implementing the Comprehensive Plan



Allows communities to plan for the use and development of land, with involvement from the public through public meetings



Regulates the kinds of uses allowed on a property, preventing incompatible uses



Establishes standards for development that shape the character of the community



# Why is Zoning Important?

Support and incentivize economic investment

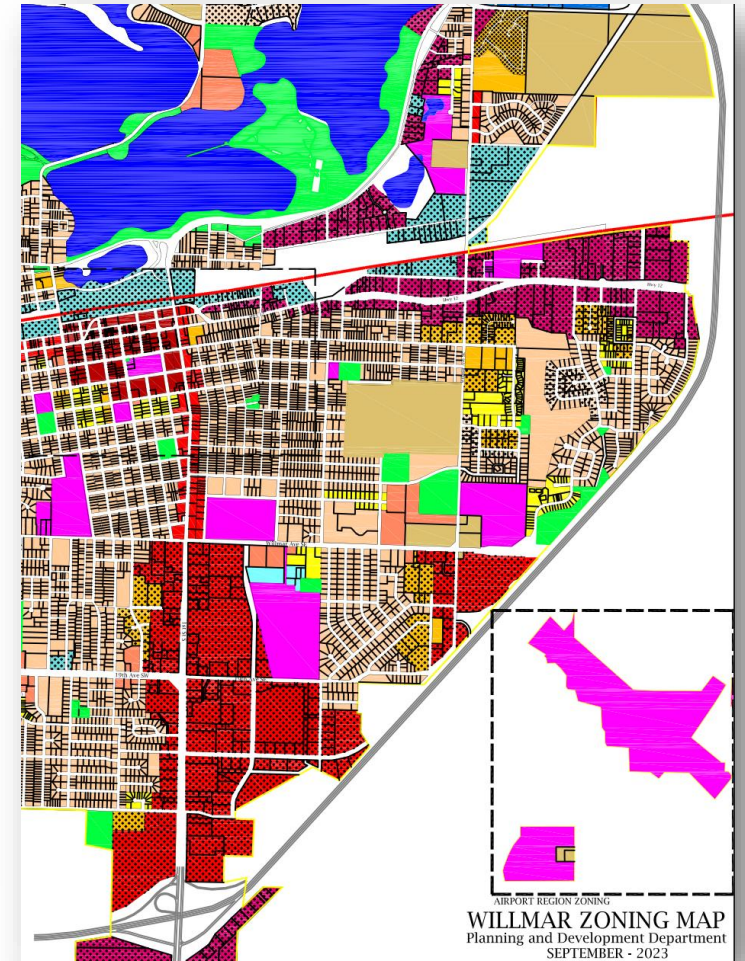
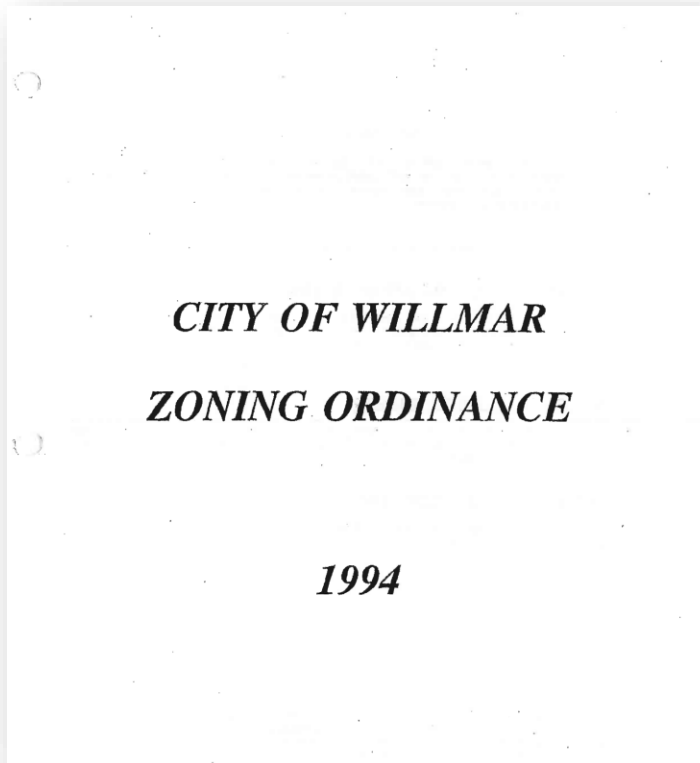
Preserve history and support a vibrant social and civic environment

Ensure adequate public infrastructure and access to community spaces

Preserve unique and important natural resources and support resilient responses



# How zoning works



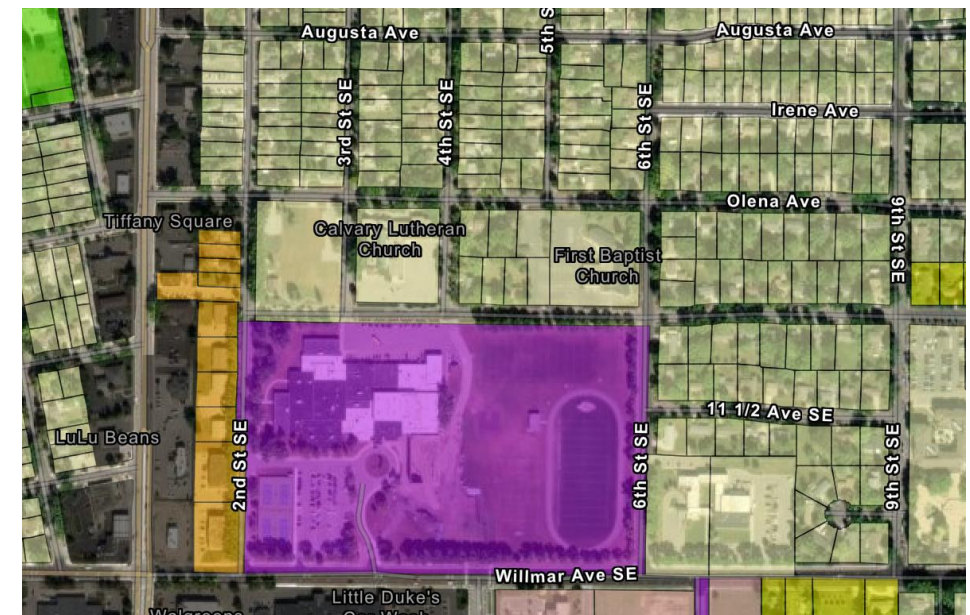
# Zoning regulates the uses allowed in each zone

The text defines the allowed uses

TABLE 4-17: USES BY RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT

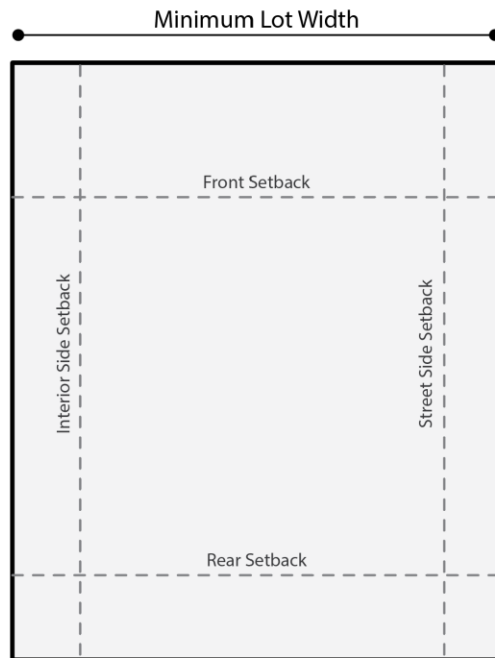
Use Types "P" = Permitted "C" = Conditionally Permitted "I" = Interim Permitted	Base Zoning Districts								Additional Requirements
	R-1	R-1S	R-2	RT-1	RT-2	R-3	R-4	MH	
<b>Agricultural Uses</b>									
Agriculture	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	
Community Garden	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	
<b>Residential Uses</b>									
<b>Dwelling Types</b>									
- Single Family Dwelling, Detached (one unit)	P	P	P	P	P	P			
- Single Family Dwelling, Attached (two units)			P			P			
- Two-Family Dwelling (duplex)			P		P				
- Single Family Dwelling, Attached (three to eight units per acre)						P	P		
- Multiple Family Dwelling (three to eight units per acre)						P	P		
- Multi-Family (nine or more units per acre)							P		
Residential Care Facility (six or fewer persons)	P	P	P	P	P				
Residential Care Facility (16 or fewer persons)						P	P		
Manufactured Home Park		C				C	C	P	
<b>Public &amp; Institutional Uses</b>									
Active Park Facilities (public)	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	
Active Park Facilities (private)	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	P	
Assisted Living Facilities						C	C		
Cemetery	C	C	C	C	C	C	C		

The map shows where the zones are

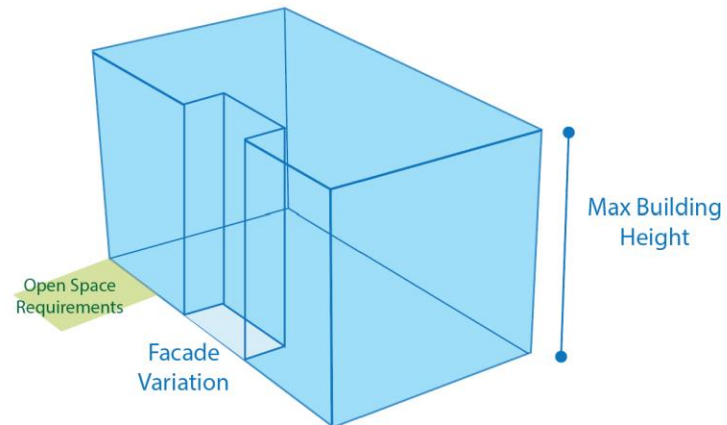


# Zoning shapes the built form through dimensional standards

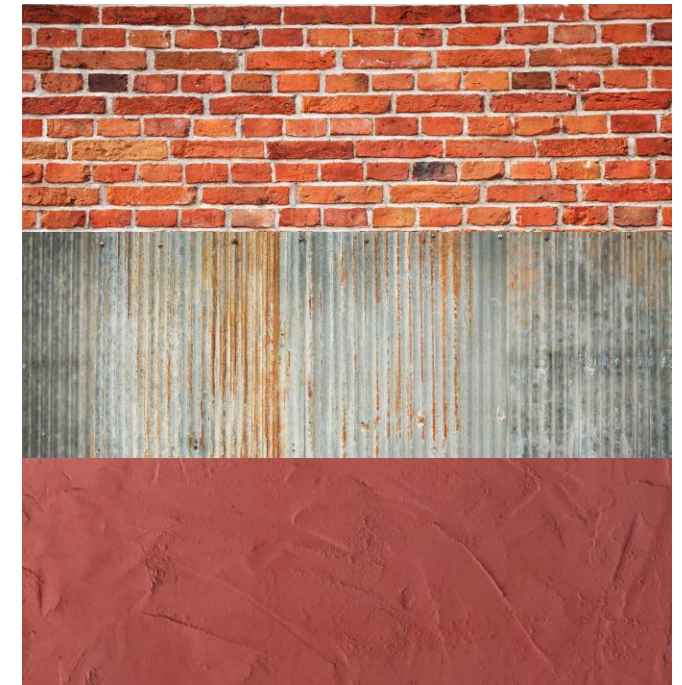
## Lot sizes + setbacks



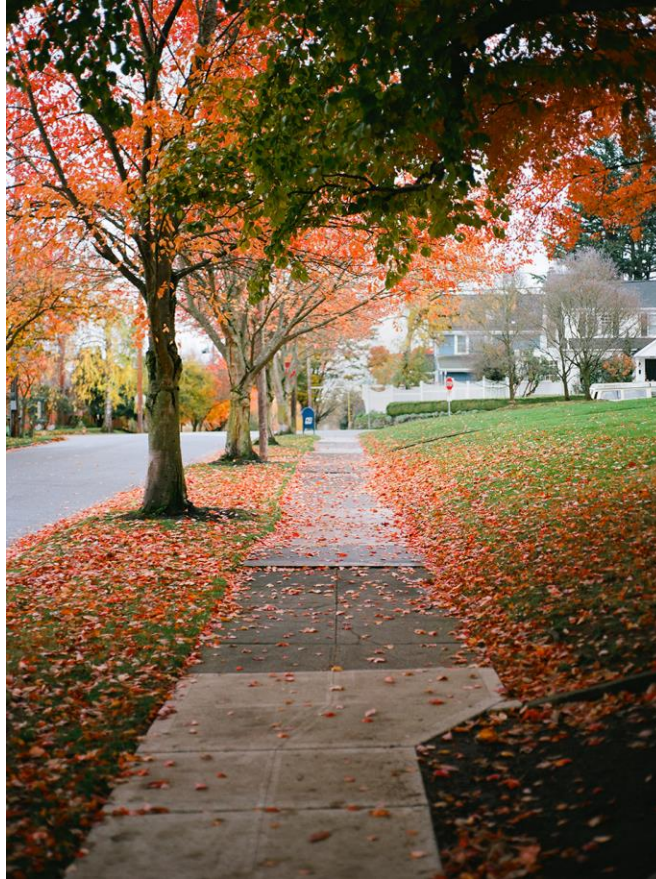
## Building standards



## Allowed materials



# Zoning regulates site elements, including landscaping and parking



# Plan **WITH** Willmar Update

*Why update the code?*

*Process goals and intent*



# Plan WITH Willmar Update



Outdated  
code  
(1994)



WITH  
Willmar  
adoption



Best  
practices



# Update Goals and Intent



Reflect community priorities



Support Willmar character



Simplify the code and improve usability



Modernize the code to reflect current practice



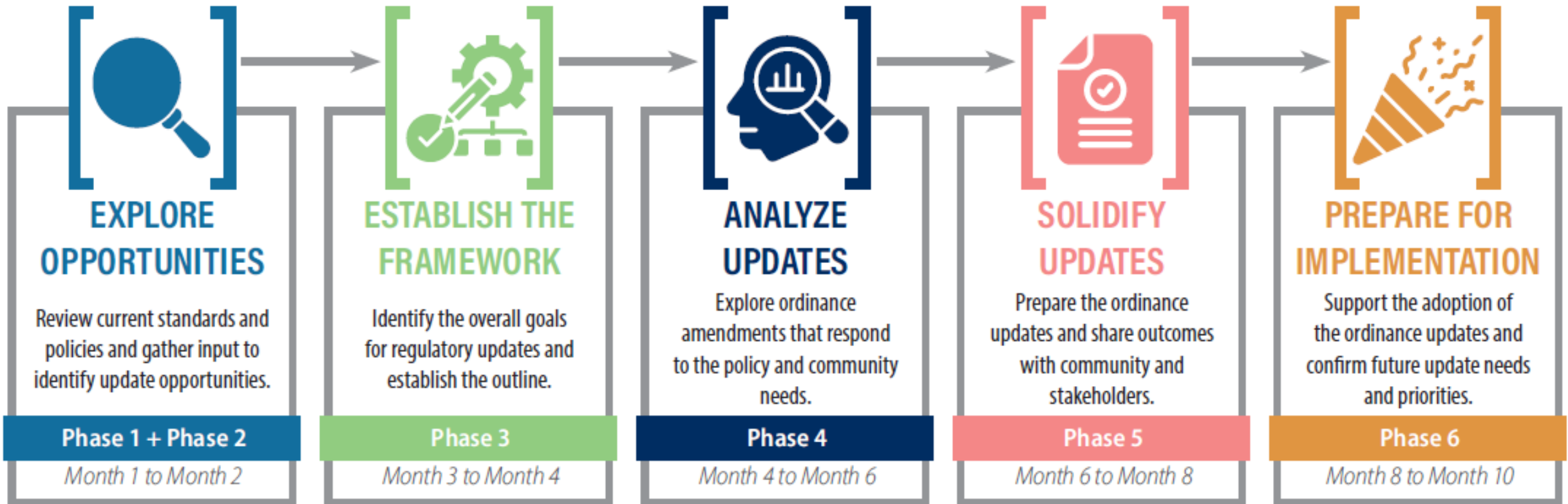
Promote education and involvement



Respond to corridor & neighborhood context



# Planning Process



# **Existing Code Assessment**

*Current code review*

*Recent zoning administration*

*WITH Willmar Comprehensive Plan  
Opportunities*



# Current Code

## Chapter 14 – Land Development

**13** Divisions

**299** Sections

**5** Residential Districts

**5** Commercial Districts

**3** Industrial Districts

**4** Other Districts



# Division 1: Title and Application

## What does it include?

- Intent and purpose of code
- Relationship to Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Map
- Violations and Penalties

## Potential Updates

- **Modernization** of language and best practices as needed

## Scale of Change

LOW



# Division 2: Rules and Definitions

## What does it include?

- Rules of language construction
- Definitions of commonly used terms

## Potential Updates

- **Modernization** of language and best practices as needed
- **Updates** as needed to reflect new sections, common phrases, etc. and to remove unused definitions

## Scale of Change

MEDIUM



# Division 3: General Provisions

## What does it include?

- Dimensional standards (including lots, setbacks, and building height)
- Provisions for:
  - Accessory Buildings/Structures
  - Dwelling Units
  - Home Occupations
  - RVs
  - Mobile Home Parks
  - PUDs
  - Fences
  - And more...

## Potential Updates

- **Modernization** of language and best practices as needed
- **Updates** as needed to reflect new sections, common phrases, etc.
- **Reformatting** and **restructuring** as needed to align regulations across divisions
- **Modifications** to provisions to reflect community goals and Willmar's character

## Scale of Change

HIGH



# Division 4: Off-Street Parking and Loading

## What does it include?

- Off-street parking regulations
- Off-street loading regulations

## Potential Updates

- **Modernization** of language and best practices as needed
- **Updates** as needed to reflect new sections, districts, etc.
- **Reformatting** and **restructuring** as needed to align regulations across divisions
- **Modifications** to provisions to reflect community goals and Willmar's character

## Scale of Change

MEDIUM



# Division 5: Signs

## What does it include?

- Sign related definitions
- General provisions
- Prohibited, Special, and Illegal Sign types
- Regulatory and administrative provisions

## Potential Updates

- **Modernization** of language and best practices as needed
- **Updates** as needed to reflect new sections, districts, etc.
- **Reformatting** and **restructuring** as needed to align regulations across divisions
- **Modifications** to provisions to reflect community goals and Willmar's character

## Scale of Change

MEDIUM



# Division 6: Zoning Districts and District Regulations

## What does it include?

- Permitted uses, Permitted uses with plan review, Conditional uses, and Permitted accessory uses by district
- Dimensional standards
- Prohibited, Special, and Illegal Sign types
- Regulatory and administrative provisions

## Potential Updates

- **Modernization** of language and best practices as needed
- **Updates** as needed to reflect new sections, districts, etc.
- **Reformatting** and **restructuring** as needed to align regulations across divisions
- **Modifications** to provisions to reflect community goals and Willmar's character

## Scale of Change

HIGH

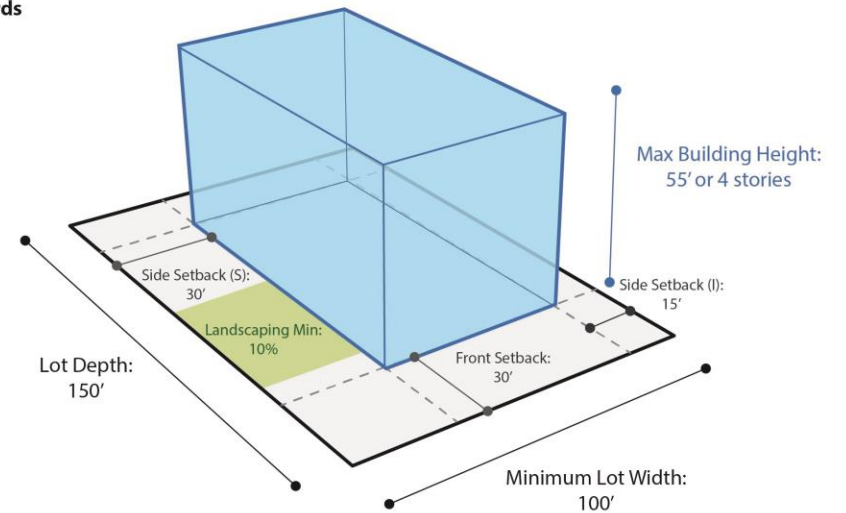


# Division 6: Zoning Districts and District Regulations

## 268 USES ACROSS ALL DISTRICTS

		Residential					Business			
		R1	R2	R3	R4	R5	LB	GB	GB-2	CB
		One-Family Residential	One- and Two-Family Residential	Low Density Multiple Family Residential	Medium Density Multiple Family Residential	High Density Multiple Family Residential	Limited Business	General Business	General Business District 2	Central Business
Residential	One-family detached dwellings	P	P	P						
	Two-family (duplex) detached dwellings, including twin-homes		P	P	P		C	PR	C	
	Three- and four-plex multi-dwellings, and townhouses up to 4 units			P	P		C	PR	C	
	Multi-dwellings up to 12 units/building, including apartments and townhouses				PR	P	C	PR	C	
	Multi-dwellings of 13-24 units/building				C	PR	C	PR	C	
	Multi-dwellings of 25-48 units/building					C	C	PR	C	
	Multiple-family dwelling units as a secondary use in a business structure					C	PR	P	PR	
	Licensed residential facilities with 6 or fewer residents	PR	PR	PR	PR	PR				
	Licensed residential facilities with 7-16 residents			C	C	PR				
	Room and board for up to 4 persons	PR	PR	PR	PR					
	Nursing, rest, or retirement homes		C	C	C	C				
	Planned unit developments		C	C	C	C	C	C		
	Manufactured homes			PR	PR					
	Mobile home parks				C					

### I2: General Industry Dimensional Standards



# Division 7: Nonconforming Structure/Uses

## What does it include?

- General rules for nonconforming uses
  - Abandonment
  - Damage or Destruction
  - Enlargement or Addition
  - Relocation of Structure
  - Variances

## Potential Updates

- **Modernization** of language and best practices as needed
- **Updates** as needed to reflect new sections, districts, etc.

## Scale of Change

LOW



# Division 8: Performance Standards

## What does it include?

- Performance standards for
  - Explosives
  - Radiation and Electrical Emissions
  - Lighting and Glare
  - Smoke
  - Dust
  - Odor
  - Noise
  - Drainage

## Potential Updates

- **Modernization** of language and best practices as needed
- **Updates** as needed to reflect new sections, districts, etc.

## Scale of Change



# Division 9: Affordable Housing

## What does it include?

- Definitions
- Housing Plan requirement

## Potential Updates

- **Modernization** of language and best practices as needed
- **Updates** as needed to reflect new sections, districts, etc.

## Scale of Change



# Division 10: Administrative Officer

## What does it include?

- Duties of the Zoning Administrator
- Board of Appeals
- Appeals procedures
- Variance procedures
- Conditional Use Permits
- Plan Reviews
- Amendments
- Public Hearings

## Potential Updates

- **Modernization** of language and best practices as needed
- **Updates** as needed to reflect new sections, process changes, etc.
- **Reformatting** and **restructuring** as needed to align regulations across divisions

## Scale of Change

MEDIUM



# Division 11: Wireless Communication Towers & Antennas

## What does it include?

- Definitions
- Siting standards
- Allowed zoning districts
- General requirements
- Submittal requirements
- Inspections and Violations

## Potential Updates

- **Modernization** of language and best practices as needed
- **Updates** as needed to reflect new sections, districts, etc.

## Scale of Change



# Division 12: Wind Energy Conservation Systems (WECS)

## What does it include?

- Definitions
- Application procedures
- Regulations by district
- Dimensional standards
- Requirements and standards

## Potential Updates

- **Modernization** of language and best practices as needed
- **Updates** as needed to reflect new sections, districts, etc.

## Scale of Change

LOW



# Division 13: Renaissance Zone Overlay District

## What does it include?

- General provisions
- Administration
- Allowed uses
- Parking requirements
- Fees

## Potential Updates

- **Modification** to align with community goals and Comprehensive Plan guidance
- **Updates** as needed to reflect new sections, districts, etc.

## Scale of Change

LOW



# WITH Willmar Opportunities



Update the code to align with the Comprehensive Plan



Establish Overlay Districts



Create zoning and design standards for to promote mixed-use development



Develop streetscape guidelines



Support housing diversity in residential districts



# BREAK



# Discussion and Workshop

*What do you want to see, explore, and address through the update process?*



# Focus Areas



**Residential:** *The places we call home*



**Commercial:** *The places we work, shop, and recreate*



**Downtown:** *The heart of the community*



**Gateway Corridors:** *The areas that welcome you to Willmar*





# Residential: *The places we call home*

Large Lot Single-family



Single-family



Duplexes





# Residential: *The places we call home*

## Townhomes



## Small-scale Apartments



## Medium-scale Apartments





# Residential: *The places we call home*

Large-scale  
Apartments



ADUs or Granny Flats



Neighborhood Scale  
Commercial





# Commercial: *The places we work, shop, and recreate*

Standalone Retail and Service



Strip Commercial Uses



Mix of commercial and residential in the same building





# Commercial: *The places we work, shop, and recreate*

Mix of commercial and residential in the same block

Sidewalk cafes

Development located at the sidewalk





# Commercial: *The places we work, shop, and recreate*

## Big box development



## Clustered Commercial Development



## Offices





# Commercial: *The places we work, shop, and recreate*

Drive Thrus



Multi Tenant Buildings





# Downtown: *The heart of the community*

Small-scale  
Commercial



Large-scale  
Commercial



Vertical Mixed-  
Use



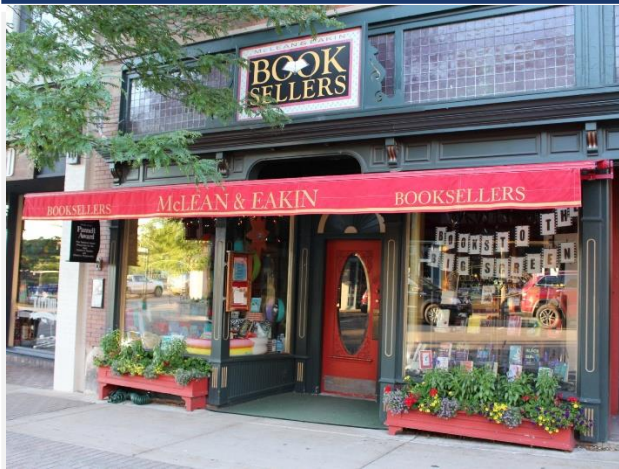
Arts & Culture  
Based Uses





# Downtown: *The heart of the community*

Retail Uses



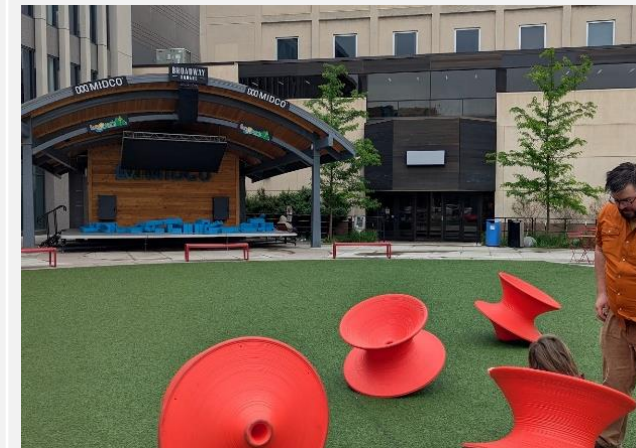
Service Uses



Restaurants



Outdoor Gathering Spaces





# Downtown: *The heart of the community*

## Apartments

## Medical Uses

## Offices





# Downtown: *The heart of the community*

## Pocket Parks



## Community Gathering Spaces





# Gateway Corridors: *The areas that welcome you to Willmar*

**Regional Commercial Uses**



**Convenience Stores/  
Small Groceries**



**Office and Professional Buildings**





# Gateway Corridors: *The areas that welcome you to Willmar*

## Hotels



## Breweries/Taprooms



## Warehouses





# Gateway Corridors: *The areas that welcome you to Willmar*

## Freight, Truck & Storage Yards



## Production & Processing



## Green Space



# Discussion Prompts

- How would you define the character of the focus area?
- What do we like about character? What should be maintained?
- What changes do you want to see?



# Community Engagement

*Who is engaged in this process?*

*How will feedback be gathered and used?*



# Community Engagement

Promote process and gather stakeholder + community feedback

Tool	IAP2 Spectrum					Key Groups
	Inform	Consult	Involve	Collaborate	Empower	
Council workshops	●	●	●	●	●	City Council, Commissions, Staff
Community survey	●	●	○	○	○	Community, Stakeholders
Focus groups	●	●	●	●	○	Community, Stakeholders, Community leaders
Neighborhood meetings	●	●	●	●	○	Neighborhoods
Pop-up events	●	●	○	○	○	Community, Stakeholders
Open House	●	●	●	○	○	Community, Stakeholders, Council and Commissions
Promotional activities	●	○	○	○	○	All
Project videos	●	○	○	○	○	Community, Stakeholders
Online engagement	●	○	○	○	○	All
School engagement	●	●	○	○	○	Students



# Engagement Tools



Community Survey



Open House/ Workshop



Pop-up Event



Focus Groups/Neighborhood Meetings



# On-going Engagement

1. Project website
2. Newsletters
3. Email & Social Media
4. Interactive Map



# Engagement Phases



## 1. Existing Policy & Code Assessment

- Kick-off meeting
- Website + Newsletter

## 2. Existing Development and Policy Context

- Survey
- Focus Groups
- Website

## 3. Establish the Framework

- Website + Newsletter



# Engagement Phases



## 4. Explore Code Updates

- Pop-ups
- Focus Groups
- Website

## 5. Solidify Code Rewrites

- Open House
- Website + Newsletter

## 6. Prepare for Implementation

- Adoption
- Website



# Community Survey



## Educational

- Sharing information to help the community learn about the code

## What do you want to see

- What are the different uses and development types that the community supports

## Scenarios

- Gather thoughts on specific code opportunities



