

## Lincoln Park Design Guidelines Project Reference Guide

**Purpose:** To provide an overview on the background, history and current process involved with developing new residential design guidelines for the Lincoln Park neighborhood.

### Lincoln Park Neighborhood Plan

Following a series of meetings, discussions and worksessions with neighborhood residents about the future of the community, in 2007, the Mayor and Council adopted the [Lincoln Park Neighborhood Plan](#). The Plan identified the preservation and enhancement of residences as a fundamental aspect to maintaining the character of the neighborhood. As a result, the plan recommended establishing a Lincoln Park historic and/or conservation district.

### Lincoln Park Neighborhood Conservation District Plan

Concurrent with adoption of the 2007 neighborhood plan, the [Lincoln Park Neighborhood Conservation District \(LPNCD\) Plan](#) was established as a preservation strategy for the community. Building off the neighborhood plan, the LPNCD plan identified characteristics such as site design, setbacks, driveways, walkways and the way a structure is sited on a lot as common elements of the neighborhood's residential character. To preserve these elements, this plan established development standards for the community to preserve the existing residential character. Specifically, these standards covered requirements for lots, streets, new home construction and additions to existing homes.

### Lincoln Park Neighborhood Conservation District Overlay Zone

To formally implement these new residential standards, the LPNCD was added to the City's Zoning Ordinance ("Ordinance") in the form of an overlay zone during the 2009 comprehensive update of the city's Ordinance and Zoning Map. An overlay zone provides zoning requirements for a specified area in addition to an area's base zoning. The "base" or primary zoning for the Lincoln Park neighborhood is R-60 (Single-Family Detached, Residential), which provides development requirements primarily for homes such as setbacks, height and building coverage among other additional standards. R-60 zoning has been applicable to most of the Lincoln Park neighborhood since at least the 1950's.

### Rockville 2040 Plan

With several years passing, residents were able provide feedback on the LPNCD during the creation of the Rockville 2040 Comprehensive Plan ("Plan"), adopted in 2021. During the development of the Plan, Lincoln Park residents voiced concerns about how some new homes and additions have impacted the neighborhood. They expressed interest in reviewing existing development regulations in the LPNCD to identify changes or improvements needed. The Plan further provides recommendations on amending the LPNCD boundary to align the land uses recommendations of the Plan with the zoning for the neighborhood. (See more in the [Planning Area 6 – Lincoln Park](#) section of the Plan).

### Lincoln Park Design Guidelines

In response to the recommendations of the Plan, the city began working with Lincoln Park residents, the LPCA, representatives from the Lincoln Park Historical Foundation, and others on a project in 2021 to develop draft residential design standards and guidelines for residences within the Lincoln Park neighborhood. The city also hired a design consultant to assist in examining the current regulations of

the LPNCD and developing new design guidelines which seek to refine and enhance the development standards currently in the LPNCD. This would include modifying the new construction and one-story addition standards in the LPNCD plan and overlay zone and providing newly developed design guidelines for new and modified single-family detached homes. The proposed guidelines contain clearer language, graphics, and standards that have been tailored to Lincoln Park through outreach over the past few years.

The city has pursued outreach with Lincoln Park residents on the development of such design guidelines, which has included a walking tour, meetings with the Lincoln Park Civic Association, resident interviews, four public meetings, a survey, and engagement with an outreach advisory committee. Through collaborative efforts with the community and the consultant, two drafts of design guidelines have been developed which the community has provided feedback on. Staff is currently working on completion of a final draft. Once completed, the final draft will be made available to the public for review and comment before moving forward for possible adoption.

#### Adoption of the Design Guidelines

Because of the existence of the LPNCD Overlay District, adoption of the design guidelines is a complex process. First, Lincoln Park is the only neighborhood in the City which has been established as a neighborhood conservation district. Additionally, the Ordinance does not provide a process to amend a conservation district. As a result, multiple amendments to the Zoning Ordinance are necessary to amend the standards in the LPNCD plan and overlay zone, as well as implement the proposed design guidelines.

#### Step 1 – Creation of a Process to Amend Conservation Districts (ZTA)

The first major process in moving the project forward towards adoption is a Zoning Text Amendment (ZTA) which creates a process to amend the LPNCD. This amendment does not include adoption of the proposed design guidelines, but only establishes a process to amend the current LPNCD. Specifically, the ZTA would allow an adopted neighborhood conservation district plan to be amended under the procedures (outlined in step 2, below) established by state law for preparing and adopting a master plan. After receiving a briefing for this ZTA on January 8, 2024, the Mayor and Council authorized that such ZTA be filed, which starts the public review process of such amendment. The Planning Commission also received a briefing on the ZTA on February 7, 2024 and provided a recommendation of approval of the ZTA at its March 13, 2024 meeting. The upcoming tentative meetings for the ZTA are provided below.

**May 20-** Mayor and Council Public Hearing

**June 3-** Mayor and Council Discussion and Instruction to Staff

**June 10-** Mayor and Council Possible Adoption

#### Step 2 – Amending the Lincoln Park Conservation District Plan

Amending the LPNCD plan would include eliminating the current residential standards found in the plan and replacing them with new standards found in the proposed design guidelines. The LPNCD plan will be amended through the master plan approval process which typically includes:

1. Preparation of the draft master plan, in consultation with the community.
2. Transmitting the draft plan to the State Department of Planning for review.

3. Review and recommendation by the Planning Commission to the Mayor and Council on the draft plan.
4. Mayor and Council review and adoption of the plan.

If adopted, the amended LPNCD plan would also be incorporated as an amendment to the city's Comprehensive Plan.

Step 3 – Amending the Lincoln Park Conservation District Overlay Zone (ZTA)

A subsequent ZTA is necessary to bring the neighborhood conservation district overlay zone into conformance with the amended neighborhood conservation district plan, including formally implementing the proposed Lincoln Park Design Guidelines. Steps 2 and 3 mentioned above are anticipated to proceed concurrently. The tentative schedule of meetings for the amended LPNCD plan and this ZTA are provided below.

**June 10-** Mayor and Council Introduction & Authorization to File ZTA

**June 26-** Planning Commission Briefing on amended LPNCD plan and ZTA

**July 10-** Planning Commission Recommendation on amended LPNCD plan

**July 29-** Mayor and Council Public Hearing on amended LPNCD plan

**August 5-** Mayor and Council Discussion & Instruction to Staff on amended LPNCD plan

**September 9-** Planning Commission Recommendation on ZTA

**September 30-** Mayor and Council Public Hearing on ZTA

**October 7-** Mayor and Council Discussion & Instruction to Staff on ZTA

**October 21-** Mayor and Council Adoption of LPNCD plan and ZTA