



January 14, 2021

Members of City Council -

LMSA supports the proposed amendments to the UDC as they are in line with national best practices in downtown redevelopment and strategies documented in the 2012 Downtown Development Plan. While we support holistically the adoption of Design Standards in order to preserve the unique character of the downtown district; taking into consideration the economic downturn and feedback received, at this time, we recommend focusing on the standards that encourage new construction so it is easier to build and more effective do business downtown, as well as still providing continuity of design for the district.

We believe these standards include:

For new construction, remove the building height limit and allow for a 30 feet minimum

Ensure parking requirements for all new construction, both commercial and residential are the same (i.e. no parking requirement)

For new construction, allow developers to build lot line to lot line, with an 80/20 minimum to maximize land use in the district

For new construction, support the installation of 70% storefront window transparency

After feedback from businesses and property owners, Main Street understands the timing is not right for full adoption of the design standards. In the midst of the pandemic and economic crises, businesses, developers, and downtown advocates haven't had the bandwidth to fully understand how these changes will impact them. There is a perception that these standards will place a burden on entrepreneurs.

To assist in the improvement of economic conditions, Laramie Main Street believes the focus at this time should be on making it easier to do business downtown. By updating design standards for new construction, we support budding entrepreneurs, developers, and investors in growing the diversity of businesses within the district. A strong mix of both new and existing businesses benefits us all by driving additional traffic downtown, increasing property values, and generating new sales.

Once Laramie gets back on its feet, LMSA will work with the Planning Dept. to bring back the remaining standards that will assist the commercial district in maintaining its economic and cultural vibrancy. We believe by preserving downtown's built environment, including authentic building materials, transparency and historic storefront styles, we are creating a more resilient local economy for years to come.

Sincerely,

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