Bureau of Zoning
Bureau Overview

• Zoning Ordinance Administration
  • Review all applications
  • Provide recommendations
  • Issue opinions
  • Request inspections

• Zoning Board of Appeals
  • Decides all special use, variation and appeal cases
  • All aggrieved parties can appeal to Circuit Court, no city council action
  • Meets third Friday of the month

• Chicago Plan Commission
  • Provides recommendations on all planned developments
  • Final review authority for Lakefront Protection Ordinance
  • Meets third Thursday of the month
Bureau of Zoning
Bureau Overview

• Legislative Functions
  • Committee on Zoning, Landmarks and Building Standards and full City Council
    • Zoning Map Amendments
      • Types I and 2
      • Planned Developments (and associated amendments)
      • Industrial Corridor Map Amendments
    • Zoning Ordinance text amendments
      • Signage which exceeds 100 sq ft or 24’ in height (top of sign)
    • Alley Access (6+ spaces)
    • Use of Public Way (signage, canopies, café, etc)

• Administrative Authorities
  • Administrative Adjustments
    • Notice to adjacent landowners and alderman
  • Signage (absent size or height triggers)
  • Planned Developments
    • Minor Change
    • Site Plan Approval
  • Parking Determinations
  • Advisory Opinion letters
  • Certificates of Zoning Certification

https://gisapps.cityofchicago.org/ZoningMapWeb/
ZONING DISTRICTS

- Establishes land uses and development rights
- building height, floor area, setbacks, parking, open space & dwelling units
- Example: DX-5
  - DX: Downtown Mixed-Use in this case
  - 5: bulk designation (in this case, the maximum Floor Area Ratio would be 5.0)
FLOOR AREA RATIO

• Floor Area Ratio (FAR) depends on zoning district:
  • B3-3: maximum of 3.0 FAR
  • RM4.5: maximum of 1.70 FAR
• Maximum allowed building bulk
  • Net Site Area (site area minus public way) x by Maximum FAR

RESIDENTIAL (R) DISTRICTS

• Intended to create, maintain and promote a variety of housing opportunities
• Nonresidential uses that are compatible with residential neighborhoods are also allowed:
  • Public and Civic Uses (such as religious assembly, daycare, library, parks, public safety services)
  • Commercial: very limited (cemetery, residential support services)
  • Industrial: not allowed
RESIDENTIAL (R) DISTRICTS

• RS, Residential Single-Unit: Detached houses on individual lots and limited two-flats.
• RT, Residential Two-Flat, Townhouse and Multi-Unit: add townhouses and low-density, multi-unit residential buildings.
• RM, Residential Multi-Unit: adds multi-unit residential buildings with moderate- to high-density.

BUSINESS (B) & COMMERCIAL (C) DISTRICTS

• Retail, service and commercial uses that are compatible with the character of existing neighborhoods
  • Residential allowed in all but C3 districts
  • Ground floor residential allowed by-right in B2
  • Public, Civic and Commercial uses allowed
  • Industrial uses are more permissive to C3
BUSINESS (B) DISTRICTS

• B1, Neighborhood Shopping: Broad range of small-scale retail and service uses.
• B2, Neighborhood Mixed-Use: permits ground floor residential by-right.
• B3, Community Shopping: Most permissive retail district; typical physical form is shopping centers or larger buildings.

COMMERCIAL (C) DISTRICTS

• C1, Neighborhood Commercial: auto-oriented commercial use types.
• C2, Motor Vehicle-Related Commercial: High intensity business or commercial.
• C3, Commercial, Manufacturing and Employment: Retail, service, commercial and manufacturing uses and a buffer between M-zoned and B, C or R-zoned areas; no residential.
DOWNTOWN (D) DISTRICTS

• “D” zoning districts are intended solely for application within the downtown area; defined boundary
  • Residential: Allowed in all but DS districts; ground floor residential allowed by-right only in DR
  • Public and Civic Uses
  • Commercial is generally not allowed in DR
  • DS is most permissive district for commercial and limited industrial

DOWNTOWN (D) DISTRICTS

• DC, Downtown Core: High-intensity office
• DX, Downtown Mixed-Use: Office, commercial, hospitality, public, institutional and residential
• DR, Downtown Residential: Residential and small-scale related commercial uses
• DS, Downtown Service: Commercial and service uses that support other D district uses and area neighborhoods
DOWNTOWN FLOOR AREA BONUS

• Only sites located within the downtown area are eligible for floor area bonuses
  • Bonuses are based on underlying zoning district
  • All projects seeking bonuses must be approved as Planned Developments
  • Minimum of 0.5 bonus FAR must be sought
  • Bonus fee: Cost Per Square Foot x Discount Factor x Bonus Square Feet
    • Neighborhoods Opportunity Fund 80%
    • Citywide Adopt-a-Landmark Fund 10%
    • Local Impact Fund 10%

Downtown Submarkets

NORTH $43/sq ft
WEST $29/sq ft
LOOP $31/sq ft
SOUTH $22/sq ft
MANUFACTURING (M) DISTRICTS

- Manufacturing, warehousing, wholesale and industrial uses outside the Central Area
  - Residential not permitted except for shelters
  - Public and Civic uses are restricted, allows for day care (not in M3) and open space
  - Commercial also restricted based on entertainment prohibitions and overall size/scope (office, restaurants and retail)
  - Most permissive industrial allowances

MANUFACTURING DISTRICTS

- M1, Limited Manufacturing/Business Park: Low-impact manufacturing, wholesaling, warehousing and distribution activities that occur within enclosed buildings
- M2, Light Industry: Moderate-impact manufacturing, storage and industrial uses and activities that can occur outside
- M3, Heavy Industry: High-impact manufacturing and industrial uses, including extractive and waste-related uses
PLANNED DEVELOPMENTS (PDs)

- Planned Development are intended to ensure:
  - Public review of major development proposals
  - Unified planning and development
  - Promote economically beneficial development
  - Ensure appropriate level of amenities
  - Allow flexibility in application use, bulk, and development standards
  - Encourage protection and conservation of natural resources

PLANNED DEVELOPMENTS (PDs)

- Allowed Uses:
  - Specific to the proposed development
  - Memorialized in PD statements and ordinance
  - Based on those of the preceding zoning district

- Thresholds:
  - Mandatory based on unit count, height, use, bonus, etc
  - Elective if partial thresholds are exceeded
  - Expansions of existing developments
LAKE MICHIGAN AND CHICAGO LAKEFRONT PROTECTION

• Overlay that requires Plan Commission vote
• Parcels having environmental, recreational, cultural, historical, community or aesthetic interests due to their proximity to lakefront
• Water Zone: to state line in Lake Michigan
• Public Use Zone: public open space and public ways which are adjacent to the lake
• Private Use Zone: Include all additional zoning lots included within the district

INDUSTRIAL CORRIDOR(S) CONVERSION FEE
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• Located within the North Branch and Kinzie overlay districts
• Mitigate the loss of industrial land and facilities in conversion areas by generating funds for investment in receiving corridors
• Conversion Fee: Net site area x Industrial site replacement cost ($49/sf) x Developer's share

NORTH BRANCH FLOOR AREA BONUS
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• Sites located within the North Branch overlay district (Sub area A) are eligible
• All projects seeking bonuses must be PDs
• Minimum of 0.5 bonus FAR, maximum of 3.5
• Bonus fee: Cost Per Square Foot x Discount Factor x Bonus Square Feet
• North Branch Corridor Bonus Fund 70%
• Industrial Corridor System Fund  30%

ADDITIONAL ZONING CODES

• Special Purpose Districts: Open Space, Transportation and Planned Manufacturing
• Overlay Districts: Historic, Special Character, Planning Corridors and Signage