

Opposition to Proposed City Code Changes

To the Garden City Planning and Zoning Commission and City Council:Re: APFY-0001 draft
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I am writing to express my strong opposition to the proposed changes to the city code. Any amendments that increase density or alter development standards must be evaluated through a careful, transparent, and community-centered process. At this time, the proposed changes do not appear to adequately protect the best interests of existing residents, surrounding neighborhoods, or the long-term livability of Garden City. I understand the nature of creating space for multi-use, and also encourage the development of this area to include residences both owned and rentals, businesses that serve surrounding residents, not just more alcohol, and also green space for the public and nature to survive. Enjoying the river for multiple people who pass through.

Key Concerns

1. **Increased density without adequate safeguards.** Higher-density development can permanently change the character of established neighborhoods. Code changes should not be approved unless there are clear standards for compatibility, infrastructure capacity, open space, and neighborhood protection.
2. **Parking impacts have not been sufficiently addressed.** Reducing or weakening parking requirements may shift the burden onto nearby streets and residents. Any change should be based on realistic parking demand, not assumptions that may not reflect daily conditions in surrounding neighborhoods.
3. **Traffic impacts require independent study.** Before adopting changes that could increase development intensity, the city should require meaningful traffic studies that evaluate existing congestion, pedestrian and bicycle safety, emergency access, school routes, and cumulative impacts from multiple projects.
4. **Planning decisions should serve the community first.** City code should not be shaped primarily by financial interests, development pressure, or political considerations. The primary standard should be whether the changes improve public health, safety, neighborhood stability, and quality of life for current and future residents.

Neighborhood Impacts

The impacts on surrounding neighborhoods are already visible and should not be dismissed. In the Waterfront District, there is not enough parking to support the level of current and proposed activity. Luciano's restaurant is not simply walk-in dining from the Greenbelt; it generates vehicle trips for customers, food pickup, drop-off activity, and delivery drivers. As a result, people park wherever they can, including in improper or illegal spaces, which creates problems for nearby residents, pedestrians, cyclists, and other businesses. These problems extend into the 34th and 36th Street areas and along Chinden,

where existing streets and intersections cannot absorb unlimited additional pressure. The stop sign off Adams and the traffic light on Veterans are already points of concern, and they should not be expected to carry the impacts of higher-density development without careful study and mitigation. The Greenbelt also is not wide enough to safely handle the increased capacity created by this level of development as it currently exists. If widening or other improvements are needed, they should be completed before additional density is approved—not after residents are left to manage the consequences.

The city should ask the residents who live with these issues every day. Residents have experienced continuous additions of alcohol-related establishments, increased traffic, and growing parking conflicts on side streets. These are not theoretical concerns; they are daily impacts on neighborhood safety, access, noise, congestion, and quality of life. In addition, the riverfront should not be treated only as an amenity for private development or limited to narrow attached walkways. Some areas along the river should be reserved for nature and the diminishing beavers, etc, meaningful public use, including interesting and valuable parks, green space, and gathering areas that benefit the whole community.

Requested Action

I respectfully urge the city to reject or pause the proposed code changes until full traffic and parking analyses are completed, neighborhood impacts are clearly identified, and residents have a meaningful opportunity to review and respond. Garden City's planning process should prioritize thoughtful growth, transparency, and the best interests of the community—not short-term financial or political pressures. Developers as we know need to prosper from this type of development, the city needs to make money as well as the ACHD. However, transparency of how the design is happening, who is creating it, what architects are working on it, what developers are involved etc. I would prefer for P/Z to work on changes that are acceptable prior to having the community flood the city hall in opposition at a city hall meeting in the near future, then back to PZ it goes. Let's make this successful without the media attention. Let's work together to do this correctly... where do people drive, park, then what height and density fits for the vision of our city and current neighborhoods, how do people use the river and open space, and then we move to voting and a plan...

Respectfully and Sincerely,

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