

An Introduction to The New Thorntown UDO

January 2026

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What is a UDO?

What is a UDO?

UDO stands for Unified Development Ordinance.

- “Unified” because it brings together the various development ordinances such as Subdivisions, Flood Hazard Areas, Construction and Site Development, and Zoning
- Collects all regulations related to the development of property in a jurisdiction into a single place, making it easier for property owners to see what is required of them
- This UDO replaces provisions from at least 5 different chapters of the Thorntown Code of Ordinances



Structure of Thorntown's UDO

Structure of the UDO

Chapter 1: Introductory Provisions

Chapter 2: Zoning Districts and Overlay Districts

Chapter 3: Site Development Standards

Chapter 4: Standards for Specific Uses

**Chapter 5: Zoning Ordinance Provisions –
Administration and Procedures**

Chapter 6: Subdivision Types

Chapter 7: Subdivision Design Standards

**Chapter 8: Subdivision Ordinance Provisions –
Administration and Procedures**

Chapter 9: Non-conformances

Chapter 10: Definitions

Structure of the UDO

Structure Standards - High Density Residential District (HR)				
		Single-family Residential	Two-family and Multi-family Residential	Non-residential
Maximum height of structure	Primary structure	35 feet	35 feet	35 feet
	Accessory structure	25 feet ¹	20 feet ¹	20 feet ¹
Minimum living area per unit		800 sqft	600 sqft	NA
Lot Standards - High Density Residential District (HR)				
Minimum lot width		40 feet	40 feet	75 feet
Minimum lot area		4,000 sqft	2,000 sqft/unit	6,000 sqft
Minimum front yard setback		20 feet	20 feet	20 feet
Minimum side yard setback	Primary structure	5 feet	5 feet	5 feet
	Accessory structure	5 feet	5 feet	5 feet
Minimum rear yard setback	Primary structure	10 feet	10 feet	20 feet
	Accessory structure	5 feet	5 feet	10 feet
Maximum impervious surface coverage		60%	60%	60%
Utility Standards - High Density Residential District (HR)				
Municipal water and sewer required		yes	yes	yes
Additional Site Development Standards				
The following site development standards may also apply to development in this district. See Chapter 3: Site Development Standards.				
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Accessory Structure Standards• Buffer Yard Separation and Planting Standards• Driveway and Access Management Standards• Lighting Standards• Parking and Loading Standards		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sign Standards• Storage Standards• Structure Standards• Trash Receptacle and Dumpster Standards		
1 – Accessory structures cannot exceed the height of the primary structure.				

1. Accessory Dwelling Unit.

- Accessory Dwelling Unit Purpose. It is the purpose of this section to regulate an accessory residential structure on a parcel where a primary residential structure exists to provide housing options for family members, students, aging residents, in-home health care providers, the disabled, and others; promote a variety of housing opportunities in the community; and allow homeowners to benefit from added income and an increased sense of security.
- Accessory Dwelling Unit General Standards.
 - Approval of an accessory dwelling does NOT permit the accessory dwelling to be used as a short-term rental. If an accessory dwelling is used as a short-term rental, the short-term rental use shall comply with all applicable standards of this UDO and be approved as required by this UDO.
 - If an accessory structure (attached or detached) includes a bathroom, kitchen facilities, and/or living area for sleeping, it shall be considered an accessory dwelling unit and shall comply with all applicable standards unless a "Use Affidavit" stating the structure will not be used as a dwelling is filed with the Administrator and recorded with the County Recorder.

Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) Structure Standards	
Minimum Area	• 400 sq ft
Maximum Area	• 800 sq ft or 50% of the primary dwelling unit living area footprint (whichever is less)
Living Area Components	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The ADU shall be an independent and complete dwelling unit with all amenities needed for safe and habitable living, including permanent provisions for sleeping, eating, cooking, sanitation, and ingress/egress (self-sufficient) • Shall not contain more than 1 bedroom
Maximum Height	• Governed by the zoning district but cannot exceed the height of the primary dwelling
Architecture and Building Materials	• Architectural style, form, materials, and colors shall match or be compatible with the style and form of the primary dwelling
Maximum Quantity	• 1 ADU per parcel
Permitted Structure Types	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Detached or attached to the primary dwelling unit • Lawfully built structure that meets all building code requirements, including all requirements for a single-family dwelling
Prohibited Structure Types	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A recreational vehicle, travel trailer, motor vehicle, parts of a motor vehicle, or similar structure • Any structure not intended for permanent human occupancy • Any structure that does not meet all building code requirements for a dwelling or does not meet the use standards for an accessory dwelling unit (including layout and components)

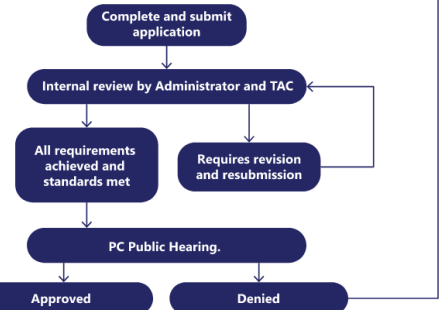
Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) Site Standards	
Address	• Addresses for properties with an approved accessory dwelling unit shall be assigned and approved by the addressing entity
Access	• ADU shall utilize the same driveway that serves the primary residential dwelling

PROCESS AND PROCEDURES FOR MINOR RESIDENTIAL SUBDIVISIONS (3 lots or less and no new right-of-way or public improvements)

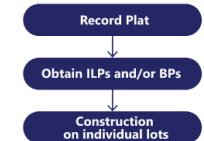
1 PRE-APPLICATION

Meet with Administrator to discuss proposal and learn about the requirements and process.

2 PRIMARY & SECONDARY PLAT

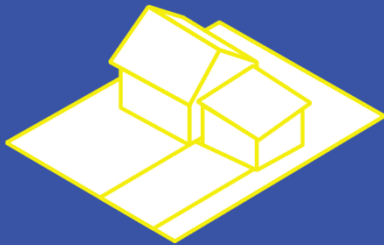


3 CONSTRUCTION & DEVELOPMENT PROCESS



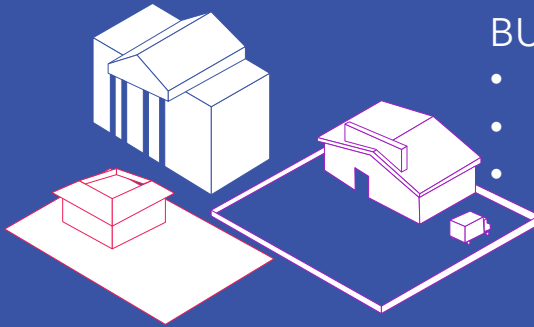
Changes from the current ordinances

Current Zoning Districts



RESIDENTIAL

- Allows residential uses ONLY
- Standards for lot size, required setbacks, minimum dwelling size, and maximum lot coverage



BUSINESS

- Allows non-residential uses ONLY
- Has NO standards
- Treats civic/institutional, commercial, and industrial uses identically

Proposed Zoning Districts



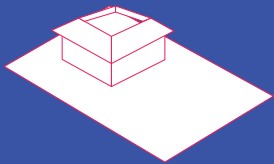
RESIDENTIAL

- Allows a broader range of low-density residential uses
- Also allows some institutional and commercial uses



HIGH DENSITY RESIDENTIAL

- Allows tiny homes, mobile home parks, and apartments
- Also allows some institutional uses



BUSINESS

- Allows low-density commercial and office uses
- Also allows some institutional and commercial uses



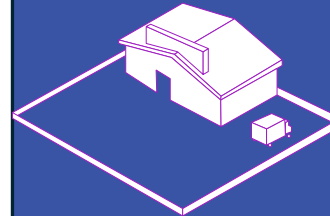
DOWNTOWN BUSINESS

- Intended for the core business district on Main
- Allows for mixed uses (residential upstairs)



PUBLIC & COMMUNITY

- Intended for public institutions and commercial uses associated with recreation, education, and worship



LIGHT INDUSTRIAL

- Intended for light manufacturing, warehousing, and auto-oriented uses

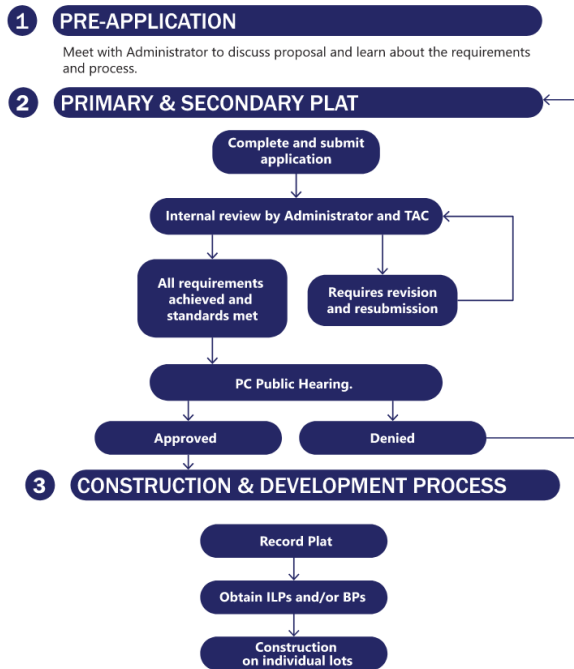
New Standards

Structure Standards - Residential District (R)				
		Single-family	Two-family and Multiple-family	Non-residential
Maximum height of structure	Primary structure	35 feet	35 feet	35 feet
	Accessory structure	25 feet ¹	25 feet ¹	20 feet ¹
Minimum living area per unit		900 sqft	900 sqft/unit	NA
Lot Standards - Residential District (R)				
Minimum lot width		50 feet	75 feet	75 feet
Minimum lot area		6,000 sqft/unit	3,000 sqft/unit	6,000 sqft
Minimum front yard setback		20 feet	20 feet	20 feet
Minimum side yard setback	Primary structure	5 feet	5 feet	5 feet
	Accessory structure	5 feet	5 feet	5 feet
Minimum rear yard setback	Primary structure	10 feet	10 feet	20 feet
	Accessory structure	5 feet	5 feet	10 feet
Maximum impervious surface coverage		50%	50%	65%
Utility Standards - Residential District (R)				
Municipal water and sewer required		yes	yes	yes
Additional Site Development Standards				
The following site development standards may also apply to development in this district. See Chapter 3: Site Development Standards.				
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Accessory Structure Standards• Buffer Yard Separation and Planting Standards• Driveway and Access Management Standards• Lighting Standards• Parking and Loading Standards		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sign Standards• Storage Standards• Structure Standards• Trash Receptacle and Dumpster Standards		
1 – Accessory structures cannot exceed the height of the primary structure				

- Reductions to minimum living area and rear yard setbacks
- Increase in maximum lot coverage
- All new standards for accessory structures, signs, parking, driveways, lighting, and others

Zoning and Subdivision Procedures

PROCESS AND PROCEDURES FOR MINOR RESIDENTIAL SUBDIVISIONS (3 lots or less and no new right-of-way or public improvements)



- Modernized and streamlined the various application processes
- Flowcharts and clearer language so applicants can follow along easier
- Clarifies who has decision-making authority and in what situations

Transitioning to the new UDO

Transition Policies

What happens to permitted projects under construction, applications that have been filed but not decided, and other in process cases?

- Applications are processed pursuant to the rules and procedures in place at the time of their **filing**
- ILPs and BPs that have already been issued will be unaffected by the change and can be renewed with the provisions in place when they were first granted
- Any approved primary plats will be unaffected by the change, and the standards in place at the time of the primary plat approval will apply to the secondary plat(s)
- Conditions and commitments granted as part of PC, TC, and/or BZA decisions or as part of approval for ILP or BLP will remain in effect

Non-conformances

A non-conformance occurs when property is developed in a way that does not meet the standards contained in the UDO. One way this happens is when the zoning ordinance changes and introduces standards that existing lots, structures, and uses do not meet.

- Legal non-conformances may continue indefinitely, but they are not to expand or be altered in ways that increase their nonconformity.
- This shall not prevent repairs to non-conforming structures or work to bring a condemned building back into a usable state
- Non-conforming residential structures damaged or destroyed can be rebuilt as long as their footprint is the same; but for non-residential structures, if more than 50% of the assessed value is destroyed, it must be rebuilt according to the new standards
- Non-conformances resulting from variances and special exceptions are excluded from these rules

Next Steps

1. 1/12 - Zone Map Workshop (follows this presentation)
2. **1/26 - Public Hearing:** Plan Commission to consider giving a favorable recommendation for the adoption of the ordinance to Town Council
3. 2/2 - Town Council Meeting: Town Council to consider the adoption of the ordinance

Additional Reading

Read the draft chapters online at
<https://townofthorntown.com/thorntown-udo-2026>

You can contact the Planning Administrator with any questions or comments ahead of the public hearing at 463-201-8455 or planning@thorntown.in.gov

Questions?