

Edison Street Project Description and Narrative

We, as representatives of J Fisher Companies, submit this Design Review application in request that the Planning Commission grant a reduction to the required minimum building height outlined in the newly adopted standards of the D-1 Zone. We feel that our request is justified by the recent ordinance that changed the requirement from a 100 ft maximum building height to a 100 ft minimum building height. At the time when the code amendment was approved, we were in the process of revising our 112' building at this location to be within the code requirements by reducing the overall height.

Several years ago, our group had progressed through the Salt Lake City building permit process and completed a building permit for the project. However, when the opportunity arose to purchase the adjacent property to the north, we began a complete redesign of the building to incorporate the newly acquired property into the project. This required us to abandon the approved plans and re-engage an architect to design a new project that seamlessly incorporates both properties. The additional land allowed us to complete the redevelopment efforts along 200 East and provided the opportunity for building frontage on Edison Street. Additionally, we were able to design a mid-block walkway between 200 East and Edison to serve as an amenity to our tenants and pedestrians in the area. The walkway, which will be open for the public's use, is designed to be 20 feet wide and will have outdoor seating, planters, overhead lighting, and artistic elements along the path. A preliminary design of the walkway is included in the material submitted with this application.

Our project is proposed as a Type IIIA multi-family structure, five floors of residential over two floors of podium parking structure. Schematic-level design shows 197 market-rate units including 40 studio units, 101 1BR units, and 56 2BR units. The building has 8,600 sq. ft. of indoor leasing and amenity space as well as outdoor amenity space in two courtyards on top of the podium. Drawings currently show 242 parking spaces within the podium. The exterior of the building is designed primarily with brick and cementitious panel, with glass and metal accents.

Our request is that the Planning Commission assigns our project a **minimum height of 83 feet measured from average grade to the top of the roof**. We believe this is justifiable for the following reasons:

- **Context:** The project was designed during the code amendment that established the minimum building height requirement at what was previously the maximum building height.
- **Building Code:** Building height greatly affects the type of construction allowed by building code. Code requires an 100 ft tall building to be constructed with concrete and steel. While it is financially feasible to build using these materials on a 200 ft tall building, it is much more difficult to make it work at lower heights and unit counts.
- **Surrounding Heights:** The project immediately to the northeast side of our property (the Randi) was recently approved as a corner project build under 100 feet tall. The other existing buildings to the north are 1-3 story buildings. The building immediately to the west of our project along Edison Street was recently remodeled and added onto, which made the building 3 stories tall. The State of Utah is in the process of building a new liquor store on the property south of ours, which will likely be 2 stories tall. An exceptionally tall building located in the middle of the block may be out of context with the rest of the area.
- **Pedestrian Connection:** The D-1 Zone as well as the General Plan emphasize the importance of mid-block connections both for vehicles and pedestrian circulation. While our block has Edison Street running north-south through the block, there is currently no formalized east-west path. Our revised project includes a well-designed and functional mid-block, east-west connection.

This will be an important amenity not only to our tenants, but to the surrounding properties who have quicker and safer access to Edison Street and the downtown area. We anticipate keeping this walkway activated as it connects to our amenity space, a restaurant along 200 East, and three food stalls that can be used by local small-scale vendors.

- **Design:** We have been working with the city on this project for several years and have come back for minor revisions like this because we care about the quality of our finished product. Our project will reflect on both our team and the city, so we are working to ensure a high-quality project that will complement the downtown and future projects.

Purpose of D-1 District

The Purpose Statement for the D-1 Zone says the following (our response in blue):

“...provide for commercial and economic development within Salt Lake City’s most urban and intense areas. A broad range of uses, including very high density housing, are intended to foster a twenty four (24) hour activity environment consistent with the area’s function as the business, office, retail, entertainment, cultural and tourist center of the region.”

Our project is made up of residential units with retail uses on the ground floor, along with a speakeasy restaurant below grade. The midblock walkway will provide pedestrians with improved access to the downtown core in a way that is only found near City Creek Center. The building includes space along the walkway that will be available to food vendors, which will activate the walkway year-round. Additionally, our parking structure will serve the needs of our residents in addition to commercial users visiting the area. Such a project supports this portion of the zone’s Purpose Statement.

“Development is intended to be very intense with high lot coverage and large buildings that are placed close together while being oriented toward the pedestrian...”

Our project proposes very high lot coverage and spans a significant portion of the block. This redesign allows us to provide a more pedestrian oriented streetscape through the midblock walkway as well as the retail space along 200 East and Edison. It was important for us during the design of the building to address Edison Street in a way that will continue to activate and energize that unique street.

“The standards are intended to achieve established objectives for urban design, pedestrian amenities and land use control.”

As previously stated, our project is design-sensitive within and without the building. The pedestrian experience is central to the project design including high-quality screening for structured parking, the pedestrian paseo, and retail uses through much of the ground floor of the building.

Demonstration of compliance with standards for Design Review (our response in *italics*)

- A. Any new development shall comply with the intent of the purpose statement of the zoning district and specific design regulations found within the zoning district in which the project is located as well as the city’s adopted “urban design element” and adopted master plan policies and design guidelines governing the specific area of the proposed development.
As discussed in the previous section, our development plan is consistent with the stated purpose of the D-1 zoning district.
- B. Development shall be primarily oriented to the sidewalk, not an interior courtyard or parking lot.

Our proposed building is oriented toward 200 East and Edison Street and designed as close to the street as permitted by the zone. Primary public entrances face directly onto the street sidewalk and the public right-of-way. Parking is completely enclosed within the building or below ground.

- C. Building facades shall include detailing and glass in sufficient quantities to facilitate pedestrian interest and interaction.

We are using a variety of materials for our building intended to enhance design and create visual interests for tenants and pedestrians at street level. The building has a large amount of glass to contribute eyes on the street on the upper levels, and visual interaction between individuals within and without the building on the ground floor/retail level. The active retail spaces on the ground floor are designed to maximize fenestration adjacent to the public sidewalk.

- D. Large building masses shall be divided into heights and sizes that relate to human scale.

The street-level and street-facing façade of our proposed buildings is designed specifically to pedestrian. The first-floor height is designed to accommodate retail uses that will contribute to the urban environment and facilitate interaction between the private space in the building and the public right of way. We anticipate small outdoor dining areas that will further enhance this interaction. Articulation and balconies on the upper levels is used to break up the façade and create visual interest for those not immediately in front of the building.

- E. Building facades that exceed a combined contiguous building length of two hundred feet (200') shall include changes in vertical plane, material changes, and massing changes.

We feel that this standard is met through the breaks in the vertical plane and changes in massing shown in Street Views and renderings included in our packet. The building was designed so that the materiality and design of the building changes at the height of the pedestrian environment (about 30' or the first 2-3 levels).

- F. If provided, privately-owned public spaces shall include at least three (3) of the six (6) of the following elements:

1. Sitting space of at least one sitting space for each two hundred fifty (25) square feet shall be included in the plaza. Seating shall be a minimum of sixteen inches (16") in height and thirty inches (30") in width. Ledge benches shall have a minimum depth of thirty inches (30").
2. A mixture of areas that provide seasonal shade
3. Trees in proportion to the space at a minimum of one tree per eight hundred (800) square feet, at least two-inch (2") caliper when planted
4. Water features or public art
5. Outdoor dining areas
6. Other amenities not listed above that provide a public benefit.

The intended east-west pedestrian connection will be a privately-owned public space on the north side of our building. It will include seating, vegetation, and different applications of public art. Preliminary design of the walkway is attached, though it has not yet been finalized.

- G. Building height shall be modified to relate to human scale and minimize negative impacts. In downtown, the building height shall contribute to a distinctive city skyline.

- Human Scale: In order to reduce the sense of apparent height for pedestrians, the building material and scale shifts at the third story of height.

- Negative Impacts: Much of the block immediately around our site has already been or is in the process of being redeveloped. Many of the remaining buildings are unlikely to be removed. Building a building above 100 ft in the middle of the block may be considered out of character for the block.
- Cornices and Rooflines: The shape and articulation of our proposed rooflines are consistent with those found in both new projects being built near this property as well as many of the existing rooflines from older buildings in the downtown area.

- H. Parking and on-site circulation shall be provided with an emphasis on making safe pedestrian connections to the sidewalk, transit facilities, or midblock walkway.
The parking structure for the building is accessed off 200 East and is designed to allow for adequate parking and circulation. It will be partially underground and above-ground portions of the structure will be screened with high-quality material. Pedestrian connections are provided via the proposed east-west paseo and direct-access to public sidewalks from the building.
- I. Waste and recycling containers, mechanical equipment, storage areas, and loading docks shall be fully screened from public view and shall incorporate building materials and detailing compatible with the building being served. Service uses shall be set back from the front line of building or located within the structure.
All service areas will be setback from the Street along Edison and will be located to allow our neighboring property to utilize them as well.
- J. Signage shall emphasize the pedestrian/mass transit orientation.
We are not proposing signage with this application. Any signage on the property will be obtained through proper permits and will meet applicable requirements of the zone.
- K. Lighting shall support pedestrian comfort and safety, neighborhood image, and dark sky goals.
We are not proposing any lighting as part of this application, but we intend to follow any applicable guidelines and requirements that the City has in place.
- L. Streetscape improvements shall be provided as follows:
1. One street tree chosen from the street tree list consistent with the city's urban forestry guidelines and with the approval of the city's urban forester shall be placed for each thirty feet (30') of property frontage on a street.
 2. Hardscape shall be utilized to differentiate privately-owned public spaces from public spaces. Hardscape for public sidewalks shall follow applicable design standards.
Our site plan and improvements have not yet been formally reviewed by City staff. We will be submitting for building permit review within the next month or two and intend to comply with all city-issued comments that come during that review. This application relates to the required height of the building and nothing else.