



Colorado Springs Temple Appeals

CITY COUNCIL

FORMAL MEETING – February 10, 2026



COLORADO SPRINGS TEMPLE APPEAL

QUICK FACTS

Address:

2396 Vento Way

Location:

Describe intersection and key roads

Zoning and Overlays

Current: MX-N/AF-O (Mixed-Use
Neighborhood Scale with United States Air
Force Academy Overlay)

Site Area

18.61 acres

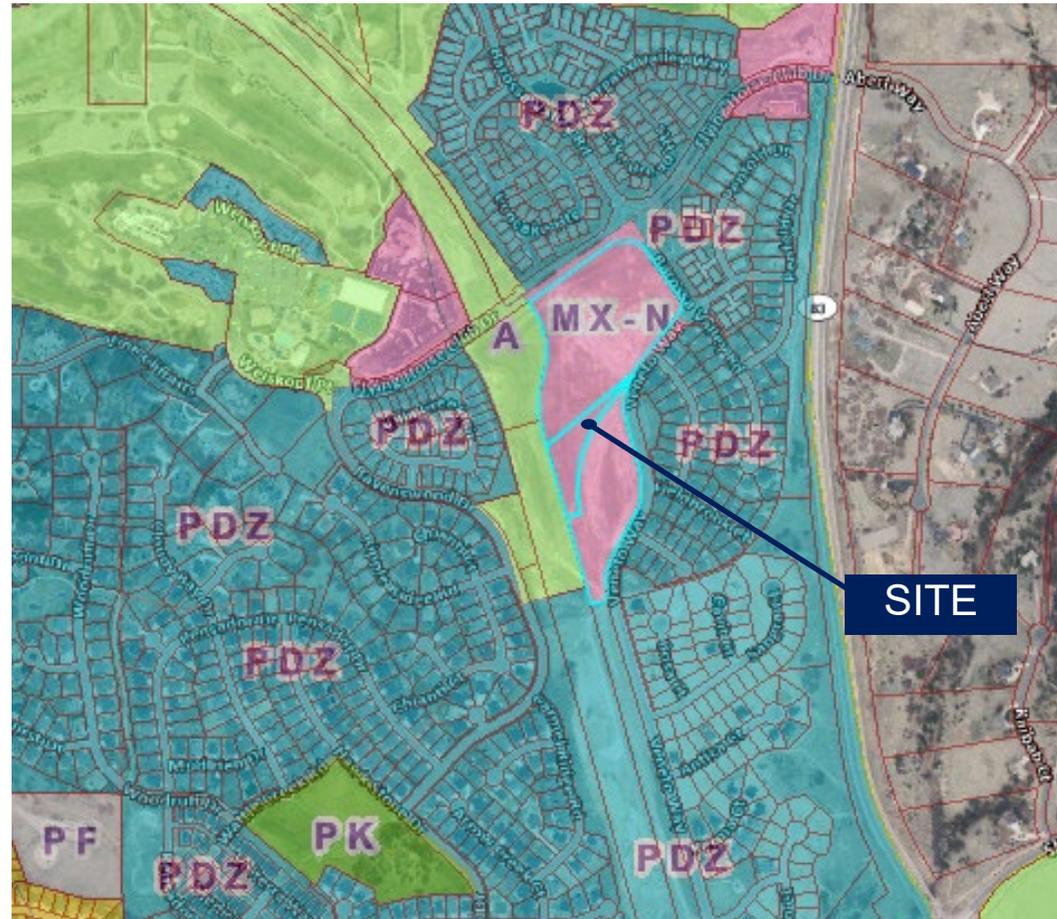
Proposed Land Use

Religious Institution

APPLICATIONS

Appeal of City Planning Commission Decision
(APPL-25-0008)

VICINITY MAP



COLORADO SPRINGS TEMPLE APPEAL

PROJECT SUMMARY

File #(s): APPL-25-0010 (Kuhn); APPL-25-0011 (Temple)

Project Proposal:

Two appeals of the City Planning Commission decision

- APPL-25-0010 – Appeal challenges the Commission’s decision to deny the appeal and the lack of clarity regarding conditions imposed on the development plan
- APPL-25-0011 - Appeal challenges the conditions imposed on the development plan due to ambiguity.

The Development Plan was approved administratively by staff on November 6, 2025, which grant approval for a religious institution consisting of:

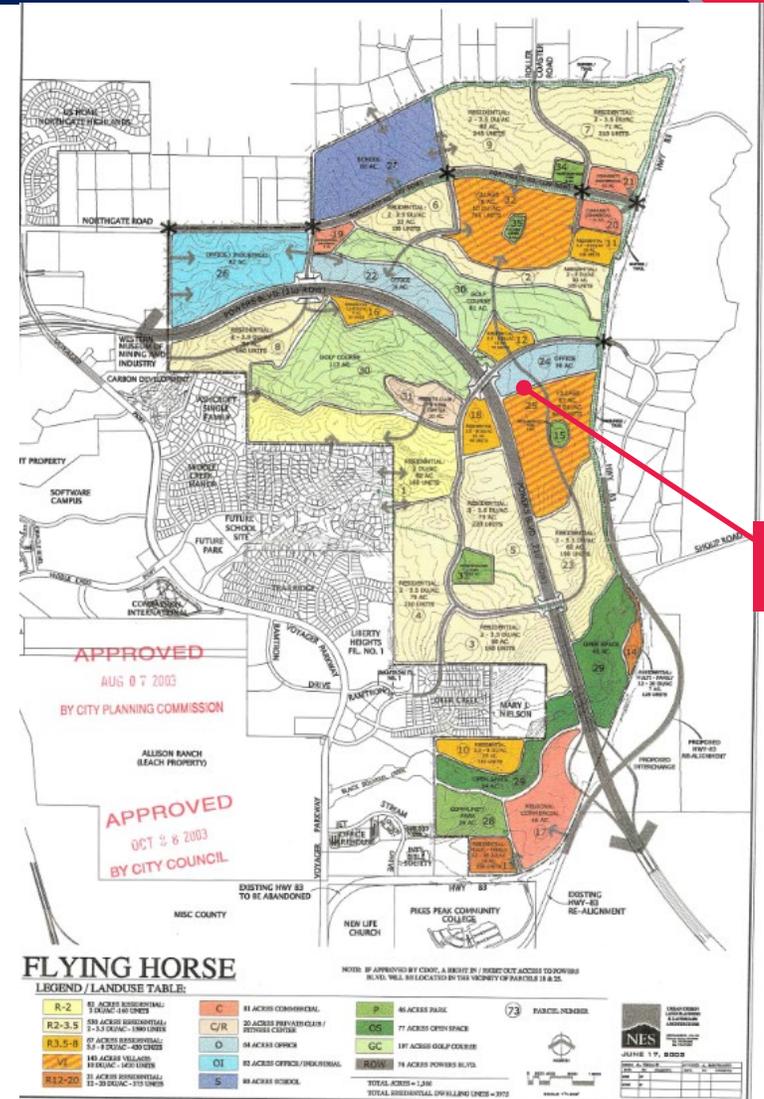
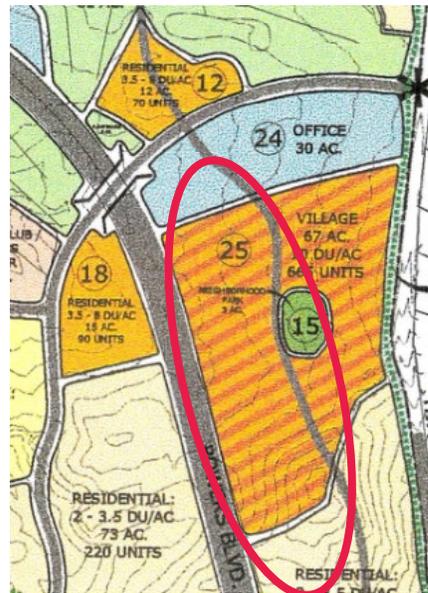
- Temple
- Meeting House
- Maintenance Building
- Pavilion

SITE PLAN



COLORADO SPRINGS TEMPLE APPEAL

- City Council approved the Flying Horse Master Plan on October 28, 2003.
- The subject property was located within “Office” and “Residential (10 du/ac)” land use types within the master plan.



SUBJECT SITE

STAKEHOLDER INVOLVEMENT

PUBLIC NOTICE

Public Notice Occurrences (Posters / Postcards)	Poster/Postcard for initial application submittal and both neighborhood meetings; postcards for appeal to CPC; postcards/poster for appeal to Council
Postcard Mailing Radius	1,000 feet
Number of Postcards Mailed	351 Postcards
Number of Comments Received	Approximately 82 Comments Received (during initial review and prior to CPC hearing)

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

- Public Engagement during development plan review:
 - Two neighborhood meetings were conducted for this project at two locations. May 15, 2025, and August 21, 2025.
 - Public comments were received throughout the process of the development plan application: 27 in opposition and 5 in favor
 - Comments in opposition raised concerns related to traffic, lighting, steeple height, landscaping, and overall compatibility
 - Applicant had provided responses to public comments.

TIMELINE OF REVIEW

Initial Submittal Date

The initial submittal of this project was made on May 7, 2025

Administrative Decision

The Development Plan was approved on November 6, 2025

Appeal (CPC)

A complete Appeal request was received by Planning on November 10, 2025, of the administrative approval. The appeal was heard by Planning Commission on December 10, 2025.

Appeal (Council)

Two complete Appeal requests were received by the City Clerk's office (December 11, 2025, and December 22, 2025) of City Planning Commission determination.

AGENCY REVIEW

Traffic Engineering

Traffic Engineering reviewed the development plan, and all comments were addressed during the review of this project.

Stormwater Enterprise (SWENT)

SWENT reviewed the development plan, and all comments were addressed during the review of this project.

Engineering Development Review (EDR)

EDR reviewed the development plan, and all comments were addressed during the review of this project.

Colorado Springs Utilities (CSU)

CSU reviewed the development plan, and all comments were addressed during the review of this project.

Planning Landscape

Landscape Reviewer reviewed the development plan, and all comments were addressed during the review of this project.

Overlay District(s)

The project is located within the United States Air Force Academy Overlay. USAFA reviewed the development plan, and all comments were addressed during the review of this project.

Colorado Springs Fire Department (CSFS)

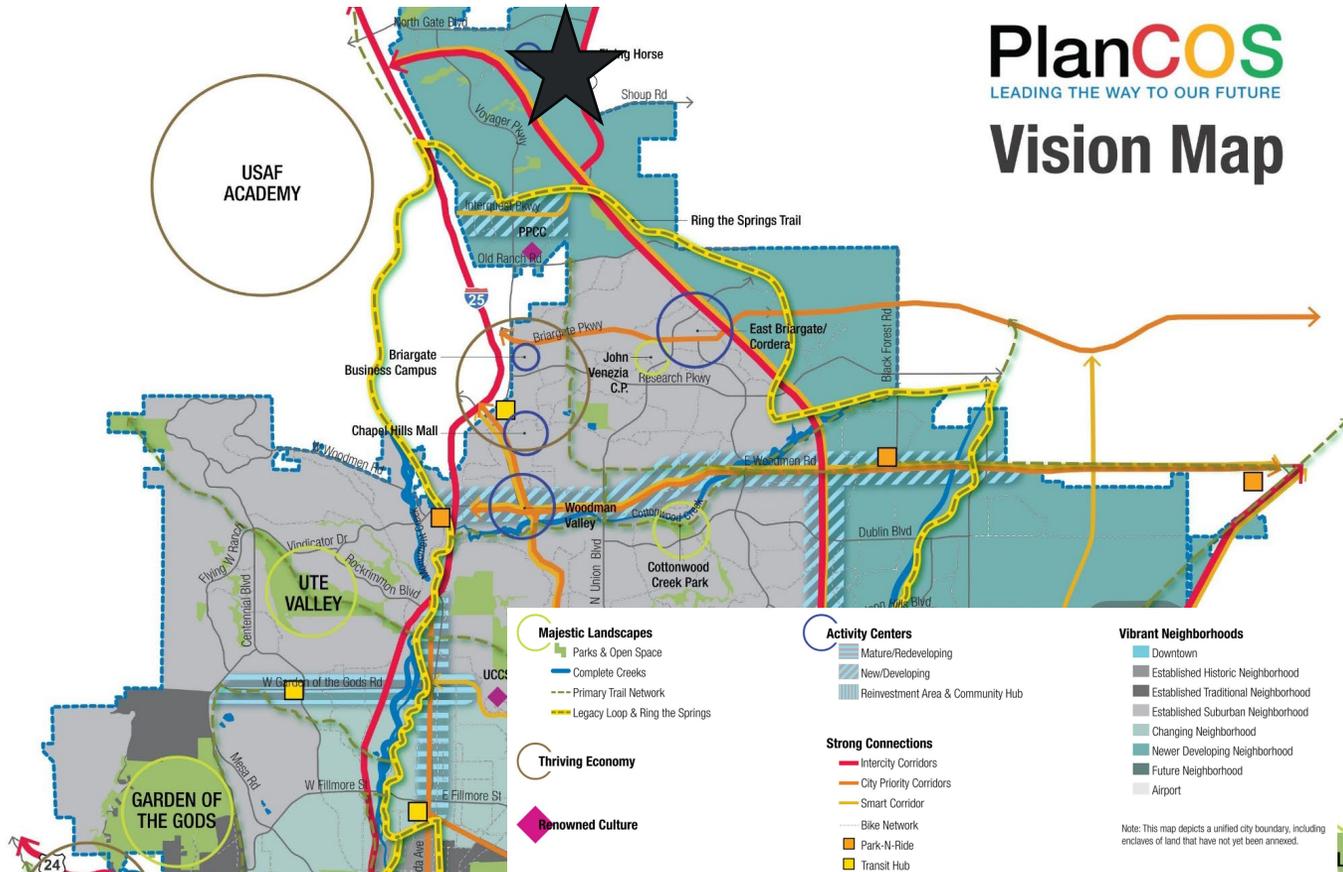
CSFS reviewed the development plan, and all comments were addressed during the review of this project.

Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT)

CDOT reviewed the development plan, and all comments were addressed during the review of this project.

PlanCOS COMPLIANCE

PlanCOS MAP IMAGE



PlanCOS Compliance

This project aligns with the applicable visions, Big Ideas, and strategies of PlanCOS.

- The project site lies within the “Newer Developing Neighborhood”.
- The Flying Horse development is considered a neighborhood center typology in which the *“goal of this place typology is to provide a focal point for community life and services at a neighborhood scale.”*
- These smaller-scale centers *“provide benefits and amenities for residents and other uses from a local area.”*

CITY PLANNING COMMISSION DECISION

- City Planning Commission voted 7-1 to deny the appeal of the administrative approval for the Colorado Springs Temple Development Plan, and added the following conditions to the development plan:
 - The facade material of the steeple shall be a non-reflective matte finish; and
 - The top tier not be illuminated with the exception of that required from FAA regulations.
- City Planning Commission did not provide further guidance as to what was meant by the “top tier”, nor is this defined in the UDC
- In accordance with UDC Section 7.1.105 (Authority to Interpret),
 - *“City Council has the authority to interpret this UDC as it relates to land use decisions”*
 - City Planning request that City Council through deliberations of these appeals determined and interpret what elements of the temples proposed ‘steeple’ constitute the ‘tower’ and ‘spire’ for the purpose of applying Planning Commission’s condition of approval applied to the development plan through the prior appeal denial

COLORADO SPRINGS TEMPLE APPEAL

APPL-25-0010 (Kuhn)

- Appellant challenges the decision made by City Planning Commission at its regular meeting on December 10, 2025, to deny the appeal of the administrative approval and imposed two conditions of approval.
 - Façade material of the steeple shall be a non-reflective matte finish; and
 - The top tier not be illuminated with the exception of that required from FAA regulations.
- The issue of the appeal continues to be the proposed 140 ½ foot spire and illumination of it which has been compounded by the Commissioners failing to define what is mean by the “top tier” of the spire.
- The Appellant notes that *“the resulting ambiguity renders the condition unclear and unenforceable.”*
- The Appellant states that neither administrative approval nor the Planning Commission’s modification to the development plan addresses lighting of the architectural elements.

COLORADO SPRINGS TEMPLE APPEAL

APPL-25-0010 (Church)

- The Appellant filed an appeal to *“preserve the right with respect to the conditions imposed by the Planning Commission.”*
- The Appellant specifically appeals the two conditions on the project that were imposed by the Planning Commission.
 - (1) That the steeple uses materials with a “non-reflective matte finish,” and*
 - (2) That the “top tier” of the steeple not be illuminated, except for lighting required by FAA.*
- The Appellant indicates that they already planned on use of non-reflective, matte finish on the steeple.
- The condition requiring the “top tier” of the steeple must not be illuminated is ambiguous and could be interpreted in way that the restricts the Church’s practice of religion.

Height Exemption (Section 7.4.203.B)

Per the UDC Section 7.4.203.B: Height Exceptions:

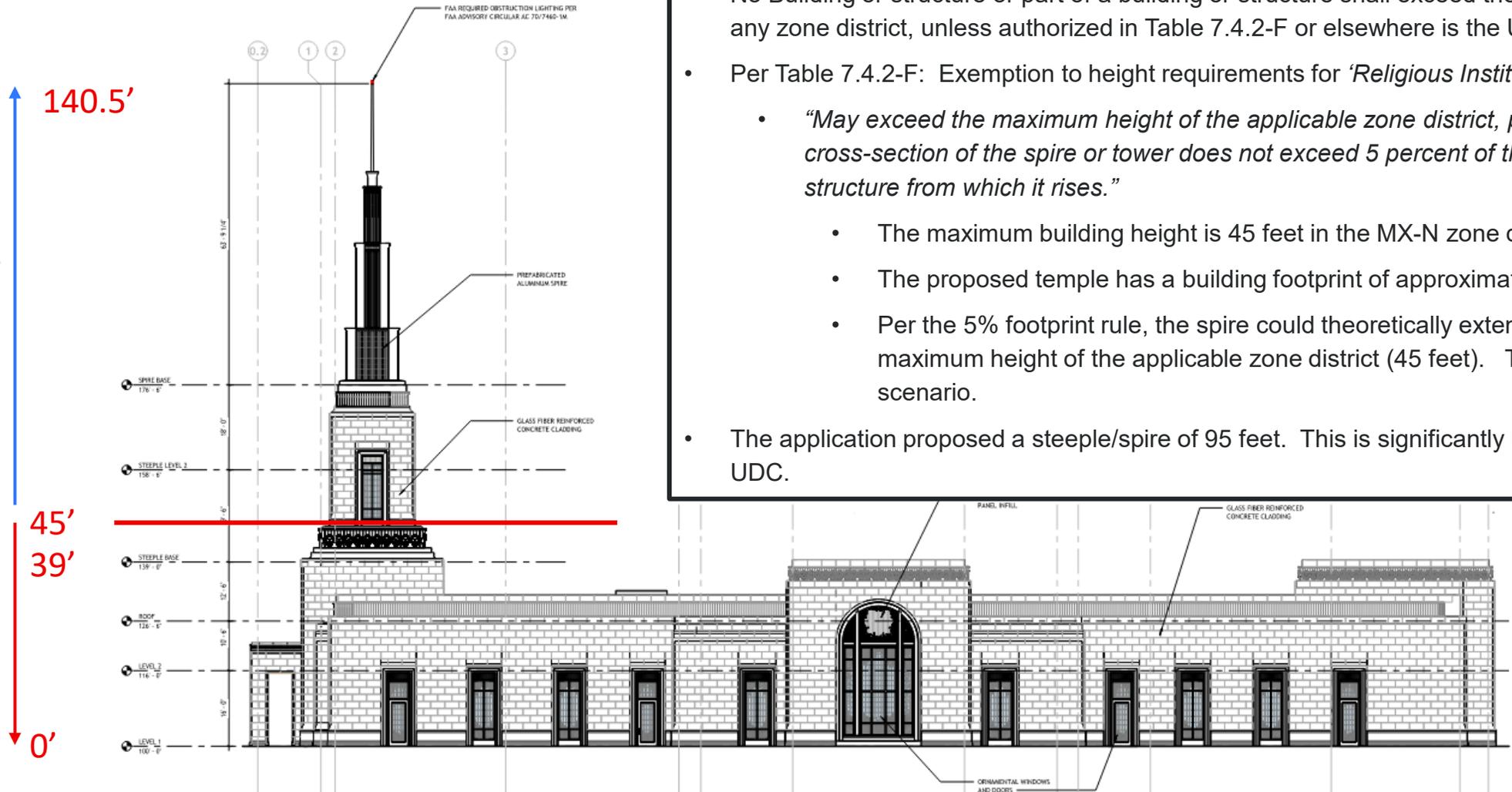
1. *No building or structure or part of a building or structure shall exceed the maximum building height within any zone district as shown in Tables 7.4.2-A through D, unless authorized in Table 7.4.2-F below or elsewhere in this UDC.*
2. *Building features that extend beyond the maximum building height pursuant to Table 7.4.2-F shall be designed or screened to minimize visibility from the R-E, R-1 9, R-1 6, R-2, and R-Flex Low zone districts, and from any portion of a PDZ district developed or designated for attached or detached single-family or two-family dwelling structures. Screening may not extend taller than the permitted exception to the maximum building height.*

Table 7.4.2-F – Authorized Exemptions to Height Requirements

Structure, Feature, or Use	Maximum Height and Conditions
Religious institution spires and towers and satellite dishes	May exceed the maximum height of the applicable zone district, provided the largest horizontal cross-section of the spire or tower does not exceed 5 percent of the footprint of the primary structure from which it rises.

COLORADO SPRINGS TEMPLE APPEAL

- Maximum Building Height in MX-N (Mixed-Use Neighborhood Scale) = 45 feet
- No Building or structure or part of a building or structure shall exceed the maximum building height within any zone district, unless authorized in Table 7.4.2-F or elsewhere in the UDC.
- Per Table 7.4.2-F: Exemption to height requirements for *'Religious Institution spires and towers...'*
 - *"May exceed the maximum height of the applicable zone district, provided the largest horizontal cross-section of the spire or tower does not exceed 5 percent of the footprint of the primary structure from which it rises."*
 - The maximum building height is 45 feet in the MX-N zone district.
 - The proposed temple has a building footprint of approximately 33,500 square feet.
 - Per the 5% footprint rule, the spire could theoretically extend up to 1,668 feet, from the maximum height of the applicable zone district (45 feet). This is not a practical design scenario.
- The application proposed a steeple/spire of 95 feet. This is significantly less than what is allowed by the UDC.



1 EXTERIOR ELEVATION - SOUTH
3/32" = 1'-0"

Height Exemption (Section 7.4.203.B)

Per the UDC Section 7.4.203.B: Height Exceptions:

1. *No building or structure or part of a building or structure shall exceed the maximum building height within any zone district as shown in Tables 7.4.2-A through D, unless authorized in Table 7.4.2-F below or elsewhere in this UDC.*
2. ***Building features that extend beyond the maximum building height pursuant to Table 7.4.2-F shall be designed or screened to minimize visibility from the R-E, R-1 9, R-1 6, R-2, and R-Flex Low zone districts, and from any portion of a PDZ district developed or designated for attached or detached single-family or two-family dwelling structures. Screening may not extend taller than the permitted exception to the maximum building height.***

Table 7.4.2-F – Authorized Exemptions to Height Requirements

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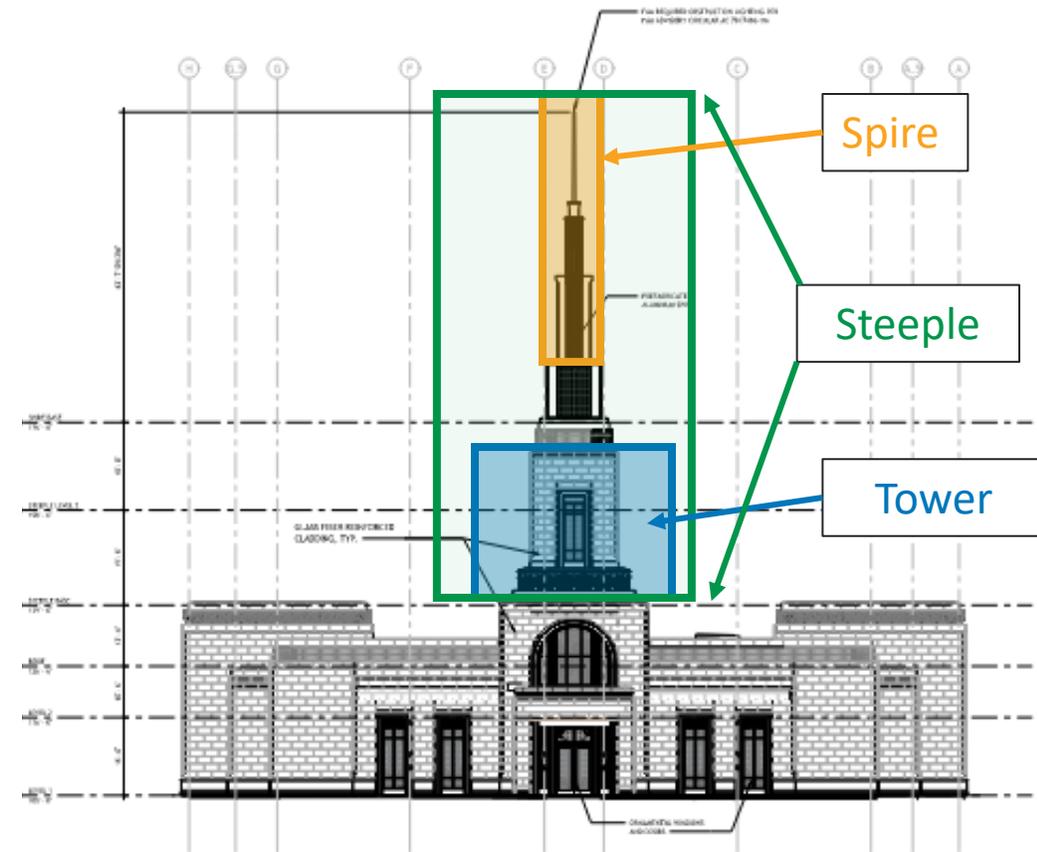
COLORADO SPRINGS TEMPLE APPEAL

- *“Building features that extend beyond the maximum building height pursuant to Table 7.4.2-F shall be designed or screened to minimize visibility...”*
 - The steeple/spire has been designed with a stepped back profile to reduce its visual prominence as it rises.
 - Landscaping complies with City standards per the UDC and will continue to provide screening as it matures.
 - Photometric plan and lighting details were provided with the development plan.
 - Site and building lights have been designed to prevent light trespass beyond the property line
 - Light elements have been designed to not be visible to the observer on any property in a residential zone district
 - The proposed lighting is fully shielded and aimed with specific angles per UDC.



COLORADO SPRINGS TEMPLE APPEAL

- UDC does not define “Spire”; nor does it reference “Steeple”
- UDC only defines “Tower” as it related to Wireless Communication Facility Definition (stand alone tower)
- In accordance with UDC Section 7.6.101 (Technical Terms) under Article 7.6 (Definitions and Rules of Construction),
 - *“Words and phrases shall be construed according to the common and approved usage of language, but technical words and phrases that may have acquired a peculiar and appropriate meaning in law shall be construed and understood according to such meaning...”*
- The most common sources for “common” and “approved usage of language” include Merriam-Webster Dictionary, Oxford English Dictionary, American Heritage Dictionary, APA’s Planner’s Dictionary, etc”.
- Merriam-Webster Dictionary defines Tower, Steeple and Spire as such:
 - **Tower:** *A building or structure typically higher than its diameter and high relative to its surroundings; a tall, narrow structure that may be part of a larger building. Architecturally, on a church or religious institution, a tower often houses bells and serves as a base for a steeple or spire*
 - **Steeple:** *A tall structure usually having a small spire at the top and surmounting a church tower, broadly, the whole church tower. This means the steeple is the entire vertical structure above the main roof, often including the tower and spire.*
 - **Spire:** *A tapering roof or analogous pyramidal construction surmounting a tower the pointed top of a steeple. The spire is the slender, pointed element that crowns the steeple.*



1 EXTERIOR ELEVATION - WEST
1/16" = 1'-0"

APPLICATION REVIEW CRITERIA

UDC Section 7.5.515: Development Plan

Criteria for Approval

- a. *The decision-making criteria in Section 7.5.409 (General Criteria for Approval) apply unless modified by this Subsection 4;*
- b. *The application complies with all applicable Use-specific standards in Part 7.3.3 related to the proposed use(s);*
- c. *The details of the site design, building location, orientation, and exterior building materials are compatible and harmonious with the surrounding neighborhood, buildings, and uses, including not-yet-developed uses identified in approved Development Plans;*
- d. *Significant off-site impacts reasonably anticipated as a result of the project are mitigated or offset to the extent proportional and practicable;*
- e. *The Development Plan substantially complies with any City-adopted plans that are applicable to the site, such as Land Use Plans, approved master plans for a specific development, neighborhood plans, corridor plans, facilities plans, urban renewal plans, or design manuals;*
- f. *The project meets dimensional standards applicable to the zone district, or any applicable requirement in an FBZ or PDZ district;*
- g. *The project grading, drainage, flood protection, stormwater quality, and stormwater mitigation comply with the City's Engineering Criteria, the drainage report prepared for the project on file with the Stormwater Enterprise Manager, and other federal, state, and City regulations;*

APPLICATION REVIEW CRITERIA

UDC Section 7.5.515: Development Plan

Criteria for Approval

- h. The project complies with all the development standards of Article 7.4 (Development Standards and Incentives), including access and connectivity requirements in Part 7.4.4 (Access and Connectivity), the landscaping and green space requirements in Part 7.4.9 (Landscaping and Green Space), and the parking and loading requirements in Part 7.4.10 (Parking and Loading);*
- i. The project complies with all applicable requirements of any Overlay District in which the property is located, as listed in Part 7.2.6 (Overlay Districts);*
- j. The project preserves, protects, integrates, or mitigates impacts to any identified sensitive or hazardous natural features associated with the site; j. j. The project connects to or extends adequate public utilities to the site. As required by Colorado Springs Utilities, the project will extend the utilities to connect to surrounding properties; and*
- k. If necessary to address increased impacts on existing roadways and intersections, the project includes roadway and intersection improvements to provide for safe and efficient movement of multi-modal traffic, pedestrians, and emergency vehicles in*

APPLICATION REVIEW CRITERIA

7.5.415.A.4 – Appeal (UDC)

Criteria for Approval

Per City Code Section (UDC) 7.5.415.A (Appeals), an affected party aggrieved by a decision on an application may appeal this decision. The review criteria for a decision on an appeal is set forth in City Code Section (UDC) 7.5.415.A.2, as follows (following directly pulled from UDC):

2. Notice of Appeal

a. The notice of appeal shall state:

- (1) The specific provision(s) of this UDC that is the basis of the appeal; and
- (2) Which of the following criteria for reversal or modification of the decision is applicable to the appeal:
 - (a) The decision is contrary to the express language of this UDC; or
 - (b) The decision is erroneous; or
 - (c) The decision is clearly contrary to law; and

(3) Describe how the criteria for the relevant application have or have not been met.

b. A recommendation to City Council to approve an application shall not be the basis for an appeal.

c. As a preliminary matter, the body hearing the appeal may choose to vote on the sufficiency of the appeal to determine if the appeal has met the requirements of this Subsection. Upon a finding of insufficiency by a majority of the body hearing the appeal, the appeal shall be rejected, and no hearing held.

CITY COUNCIL OPTIONAL MOTIONS

Optional Motions

APPL-25-0010 – Colorado Springs Temple Appeal (Kuhn)

Motion to Deny

- Deny the appeal and affirm the City Planning Commission decision on the development plan for the Colorado Springs Temple, based upon the findings that the review criteria for deciding the application are met, as decided by the Planning Commission, and that the appellant failed to show the need for reversal or modification of the decision per the criteria in City Code Section 7.5.415.

Motion to Reverse

- Approve the Appeal and reverse the City Planning Commission decision on the development plan for the Colorado Springs Temple, based upon the findings that the appellant met the appeal criteria found in City Code Section 7.5.415, and that the application does not comply with the review criteria for granting the development plan set forth in City Code Section 7.5.415.

Modify the Decision

- Approve the Appeal and modify the City Planning Commission decision on the development plan for the Colorado Springs Temple, based upon the findings that the appellant met the appeal criteria found in City Code Section 7.5.415, and that the application does not comply with the review criteria for granting the development plan set forth in City Code Section 7.5.415, and the decision shall be modified by [*as determined by City Council*].

Motion to Remand

- Remand the matter back to the City Planning Commission for further consideration of the development plan for the Colorado Springs Temple based on the applicable review criteria for deciding on a development plan set forth in City Code Section 7.5.515 with the considerations and discussion given by this City Council.

CITY COUNCIL OPTIONAL MOTIONS

Optional Motions

APPL-25-0011 – Colorado Springs Temple Appeal (Temple)

Motion to Deny

- Deny the appeal and affirm the City Planning Commission decision on the development plan for the Colorado Springs Temple, based upon the findings that the review criteria for deciding the application are met, as decided by the Planning Commission, and that the appellant failed to show the need for reversal or modification of the decision per the criteria in City Code Section 7.5.415.

Motion to Reverse

- Approve the Appeal and reverse the City Planning Commission decision on the development plan for the Colorado Springs Temple, based upon the findings that the appellant met the appeal criteria found in City Code Section 7.5.415, and that the application does not comply with the review criteria for granting the development plan set forth in City Code Section 7.5.415.

Modify the Decision

- Approve the Appeal and modify the City Planning Commission decision on the development plan for the Colorado Springs Temple, based upon the findings that the appellant met the appeal criteria found in City Code Section 7.5.415, and that the application does not comply with the review criteria for granting the development plan set forth in City Code Section 7.5.415, and the decision shall be modified by [*as determined by City Council*].

Motion to Remand

- Remand the matter back to the City Planning Commission for further consideration of the development plan for the Colorado Springs Temple based on the applicable review criteria for deciding on a development plan set forth in City Code Section 7.5.515 with the considerations and discussion given by this City Council.



QUESTIONS?

