

## Springfield proposes overlay zone to encourage development around MGM casino

Written by Administrator

Monday, 21 December 2020 06:14 -

---

SPRINGFIELD — City planners are proposing an overlay zone along Main Street in the downtown-South End area intended to encourage development surrounding the MGM casino and MassMutual Center.

The Planning Board, after a hearing this week, voted to recommend approval of the district, known as the “Main Street and Convention Center Overlay District.”

Timothy Sheehan, the city’s chief development officer, said Friday the district would provide regulations “to guide the future redevelopment of the area in a manner that is complimentary and compatible” with the casino, convention center, historic properties and existing residential and commercial buildings.

The district would be generally bounded by Main Street, State Street, Harrison Avenue, Dwight Street, Willow Street and Union Street. It will need a City Council hearing and approval. The City Council is expected to begin its review in January.

The district would be coupled with a master plan for that area in early 2021. The city will use the zoning regulations and master plan to help regulate, guide and assist development, Sheehan said.

Preferred developments in the the proposed district, described as “encouraged uses,” include: housing; restaurants, taverns and entertainment venues; and ground-floor retail supporting the other venues. Encouraged uses would be eligible for expedited review and approval.

The city is also working with MGM Springfield to encourage development near the \$960 million casino, Sheehan said.

Ongoing work on the master plan includes an in-depth analysis of properties deemed critical to the redevelopment of the area, Sheehan said. It will include economic development incentives, he said.

## Springfield proposes overlay zone to encourage development around MGM casino

Written by Administrator

Monday, 21 December 2020 06:14 -

---

The overlay district is one tool to bring about new developments, Sheehan said.

Other highlights of the proposed zoning overlay district:

- It prohibits new surface parking lots on Main Street that are not related to projects.
- It generally prohibits demolition of buildings in the district except in cases such as emergency or court-ordered demolition. It encourages renovation and reuse of older or blighted historic properties.
- It stipulates that new or renovated structures should be oriented toward major streets through location of main entrances and storefronts.
- Signage will be assessed by the Planning Department regarding “how it responds to and enhances the overall retail and entertainment district character.”

### Related Content:

**Read more** <https://www.masslive.com/news/2020/12/springfield-proposes-overlay-zone-to-encourage-development-around-mgm-casino.html>