

Scope of Services: Progress Assessment

Part 1. Overview:

This **Scope of Services: Progress Assessment** precedes the first full draft of the Town Center Code prepared by the consultants, Utile, for the Planning Board and is based on my evaluation of current graphics, metrics, and descriptions presented over the last seven months including at a series of Public Engagements, Stakeholder meetings, and Task Force sessions. This is not a final assessment but intended to assist understanding of the first draft code content and to provide talking points during the Planning Board’s final review.

By design, the Town Center project began by shaping a community-authored “**vision**,” and will conclude with adopting a calibrated code to ensure that outcome. Planning for **predictability** for the Town Center’s future over decades is the goal, and making a compliant building application “**as-of-right**” is welcomed by those who agree to build that goal.

Utile wrote in their Proposal:

*“Given the project’s scope and condensed time frame, our team proposes a targeted process where the **visioning work builds into the later coding tasks**, better aligning the Town Center vision with the proposed zoning and regulatory tools. This way, the visioning stage of this project will serve as the early testing exercise to define the zoning regulations to be detailed.”*

The following spreadsheets outline two sections within the Request for Qualifications **Section 6: Scope of Services Task 3.1 Proposal** from Utile – **1. Draft Zoning Scenarios: Completing the Vision** & **2. Draft Form-Based Code: Writing the Code**. Proposal sub-tasks are listed with bullets in Blue type.

1. Draft Zoning Scenarios: *Completing the Vision*

TASK 3.1	UTILE’S PROPOSAL SUB-TASKS & REVIEW COMMENTS
<p>Sub-Tasks:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analyze development thresholds linked to infrastructure improvements and their impact on the scale of potential development. Consider how parking and landscape arrangements improve pedestrian conditions for enhanced walkability and safety Consider frontage and access of new development, both in terms of enhancing aesthetics within the Town Center and how this ties functionally with traffic and vehicle circulation Create up to four (4) landscape and architectural buildout scenarios in simple, 3D conceptual views for each site or sub-area identified. Each set of scenarios will include one “base case” scenario that illustrates the future buildout potential possible under current zoning and up to three future development buildouts based on alternative approaches to the new form-based code for the Town Center.

Scope of Services: Progress Assessment

1. Draft Zoning Scenarios: *Completing the Vision*

TASK 3.1	UTILE'S PROPOSAL SUB-TASKS & REVIEW COMMENTS
	<p>Comments:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To my knowledge, the above sub-tasks have not been fully addressed. 2. Apart from Depot Square, the scale of new development with or without infrastructure thresholds are absent from work to date. 3. Locations of sidewalks and landscaping for businesses and to promote safety and walkability, have not been addressed. 4. Traffic and vehicle circulation, managed/shared parking, service roads as related to new developments have not been proposed to date. 5. Existing streets remain unchanged, and new streets/alleys are not proposed as part of general Town Center improvements in circulation and connectivity. 6. Public Realm Standards are inadequately limited to four street profiles with little to no difference between "existing" and "vision" configurations. 7. Future buildouts are portrayed as isolated redevelopment scenarios with no comprehensive view of how multiple parcels help visualize and distinguish between difficult-to-develop parcels (including narrow lots, split lots, and preservation areas) and developable parcels (including parcel consolidation opportunities). 8. Without district scale exploratory scenarios that point a direction to a larger Town Center experience, the visioning is incomplete.

Scope of Services: Progress Assessment

Part 2. Overview:

1. **Section 6: Task 3.1 (Draft Form-Based Code)** to date is a work in progress. Though not completed, the Code architecture is evident at this point and the text/metrics as well as other fine details can be evaluated for comment.
2. The Code components are divided into nine (9) parts as listed below in the left column. These components are consistent with the Hamilton RFQ Scope of Services. The right column has several Proposal Sub-Tasks from Utile and Review Comments subject to further discussions by the Planning Board.

2. Draft Form-Based Code: *Writing the Code*

CODE COMPONENTS	UTILE’S PROPOSAL SUB-TASKS & REVIEW COMMENTS
<p>a. Overview</p>	<p><u>Sub-Task:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Definitions, principles, and intent; and explanation of the regulations and process in clear, user-friendly language. <p>Intent:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. This component typically includes the General Provisions of the Code, Purpose and Intent, and Application of Regulations, including Transitional Provisions and explains the Code’s organizational features. <p>Comments:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. This component has not been presented.
<p>b. Regulating Plan</p>	<p><u>Sub-Task:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A schematic representation of the district site plan illustrating the location of buildings, streets, blocks, and public spaces such as greens, squares, parks, and other special features. • Aspects of Building Form Standards such as “build-to-lines” or “required building lines” and building type or form designations. <p>Intent:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The “Regulating Plan,” is akin to a zoning map and assigns the newly created zoning districts to specific physical locations, typically by color-coding the areas and/or streets

Scope of Services: Progress Assessment

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	<p>where each of the districts apply.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Regulating Plans reveal how the Town Center Code is organized, showing what, where and how the design parameters are allocated typically using one of three organizational features – 1) District, 2) Building Type, and 3) Streets/Frontage. 3. Civic space types as part of a district site plan are essentially open space or other public areas that may include parks, greens, squares, plazas, pocket parks, playgrounds, and playing fields. 4. Regulating Plans typically delineate building lines, parking setbacks, buildable areas, and street type distributions on a comprehensive scale. <p>Comments:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A Town Center Regulating Plan has not been prepared to date. 2. The organizational feature is undetermined; however, Street / Frontage Type is likely given work proposed. There are approximately eight (8) standard Frontage Types from which to choose within a particular district or street, however, none are not listed currently. 3. Overall district site plans with the location of buildings, streets, blocks, and public spaces such as civic areas, existing and proposed, or other special features as a unit are not available.
<p>c. Site/Lot Standards</p>	<p><u>Sub-Task:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • These standards control the placement of buildings within parcels. They may consist of defining lot setbacks, parking location and setbacks, lot coverage, separation between buildings, and green space ratios, among other metrics. • Site standards such as landscaping, stormwater, parking, and sign controls. <p>Intent:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Site/Lot Standards control the placement of building(s) and parking areas within parcels and typically are shown separately from Building Form Standards for clarity.

Scope of Services: Progress Assessment

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	<p>Comments:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. District level diagrams showing Site/Lot Standards delineating setbacks or build-to lines, lot coverage, separation between buildings, and green space ratios to get an understanding of overall character are incomplete. 2. Parking extents, numbers of spaces, and impervious coverage are undefined. 3. Landscaping, stormwater, and signage have not been explicitly addressed to date. 4. Maximum parking lot requirements, sizes of spaces, travel lanes and shared parking for areas of mixed-use development are not provided.
<p>d. Building Form Standards</p>	<p><u>Sub-Task:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Standards to control building form may consist of building types, building height, and transparency.
	<p>Intent:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Building Form Standards typically define and shape the public realm, using building placement and form, lot sizes, parking, as well as allowed land uses, encroachments, frontage and building types. 2. Building Form Standards provide the foundation for establishing or preserving the character of a district. Some of the typical regulations for building placement standards include the build-to line, minimum setback, and minimum and maximum widths of lots (the latter to create the desired development scale). 3. As the “walls” of public spaces, building façades are regulated for maximum and minimum height to ensure the correct for the desired vision of the area. Some of the typical regulations for building form standards include maximum and minimum height, width, and depth of buildings, as well as the maximum and minimum heights of ground-floor and upper floor levels. 4. Some common building types include “detached single-unit house,” “townhouse,” “duplex,” “courtyard apartment,” and “mixed-use building.” Building Types typically include bulk

Scope of Services: Progress Assessment

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	<p>regulations (such as minimum lot width, maximum building height, building setbacks, etc.) that are usually defined by some design and architectural parameters (such as roof type, location of parking, minimum transparency requirements, building materials, etc.). It is not clear whether Building Types will be used.</p> <p>5. Frontage refers to the way that the building engages the public realm—typically the building's front side. Form-based codes often specify which types of frontages are allowed in each zone such as, "common yard," "porch and fence," "terrace or light court," "forecourt" (where a portion of the façade is close to the frontage line and the central portion is set back), "stoop," "shop front and awning," "gallery," and "arcade."</p> <p>Comments:</p> <p>1. Building Standards are incomplete. Frontage Types, Use Types (categories or locations), and Street Activation (Transparency, Entrances, Façade Articulation, and allowed Building Elements) are undefined.</p>
<p>e. Public Realm Standards</p>	<p><u>Sub-Task:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide key design attributes for a vital public realm and safe, multi-modal streets, including private vehicles, transit, cyclists, and pedestrians. <p>Intent:</p> <p>1. Multi-modal Streets may include alleys, lanes, roads, streets, commercial/main streets, avenues, and boulevards. Each thoroughfare type could be assigned regulations such as the number and width of lanes designated for both vehicle and bicycle travel, the width of space allotted for pedestrians, the number and width of areas designated for on-street parking, and the type and spacing of trees and streetlights.</p> <p>2. Civic space is essentially open space or other public areas, and typical regulations include the minimum and maximum acreage of land required, requirements for the placement of civic spaces, and the overall intended look and feel of the space.</p>

Scope of Services: Progress Assessment

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	<p>Comments:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Three streets are illustrated in profile comparing “Existing” with “Vision” with little difference between the two. No changes are anticipated for existing travel lanes, parking, or sidewalks. 2. There are no proposed streets in Town Center to supplement existing for improved connectivity, traffic mitigation, parking and walkability. 3. Landscaping, street trees, street lighting, and signs are not proposed at this point.
<p>f. Parking Location & Management Standards</p>	<p><u>Sub-Task:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flexible standards that provide for and incentivize mixed-uses and a smaller footprint through shared parking, emphasizing parking efficiency oversupply. <p>Comments:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Beyond Depot Square there are no areas proposed for to accommodate parking lots/spaces, required vehicle and bicycle parking, shared parking areas, or recommended driveway widths and curbs. 2. There is designated parking on individual parcels. However, site lighting and outdoor display and storage have not been addressed.
<p>g. Other Standards</p>	<p><u>Sub-Task:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Other standards, as needed, may address block characteristics, building type, and architecture. <p>Comment:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. No other standards are evident at this time.
<p>h. Administrative Mechanisms</p>	<p><u>Sub-Task:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The proposed operation of the development review and approval process, including how to deal with nonconformities under the new provisions.

Scope of Services: Progress Assessment

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	<p>Intent:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Administrative Mechanisms include procedures for submitting, reviewing, and approving proposed development projects, along with a variety of optional sub-procedures, such as historic preservation review and the consideration of nonconformities. Essential rules guiding overall code administration are also included, such as rules for the interpretation of code requirements or resolving perceived conflicts between the form-based code and other municipal code provisions. <p>Comment:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Work in this Section including Application and General Requirements, Review Bodies, Signage Permits, Administrative Appeal, Special Exceptions, Alternative Compliance, and Nonconformities has not been presented.
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Glossary / Terms / Definitions 	<p>Comment:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> No information on this Section has been presented.