### CHICAGO ZONING CHANGES TIMELINE

**Late 19th Century**

**Private and Public Nuisance Lawsuits**
Allowed residents (private nuisance) or the local government (public nuisance) to file lawsuits against incompatible land uses to help protect the health and safety of residents.

**Early 20th Century**

**Restrictive Covenants and Frontage Consent Ordinances**
Restrictive covenants and frontage consent ordinances were often deliberately used to exclude African Americans and other racial minorities from neighborhoods. The Courts later ruled restrictive covenants as unconstitutional and set limitations on frontage consent ordinances.

**1919**

**Glackin Law**
Passed by the Illinois General Assembly. Authorized municipalities to develop piecemeal zoning ordinances for neighborhoods if 40% of that neighborhood’s property owners endorsed the district plan.

**1923**

**First Zoning Ordinance**
Creation of Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) to provide relief in extenuating circumstances and avoid litigation that would derail comprehensive zoning regulation. Established four districts: residential, apartment, manufacturing, and commercial.

**1922**

**Rewrite of Zoning Ordinance**
Comprehensive revision of the zoning ordinance. The main goal was to have more control over the intensity of development in the city by reducing buildings’ height and bulk. The rewrite created three different types for residential districts, two business districts, and a new industrial classification.

**1937**

**Lakefront Protection Ordinance**
The City adopted the Lake Michigan and Chicago Lakefront Protection Ordinance, which supported the creation of miles of parks and beaches along Lake Michigan, as well as the limiting of high-rises along the lake front.

**1942**

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**1953**

**Off-Street Parking Requirements**
The city increased the off street parking requirements related to residential developments, offices, large retail stores, places of assembly, and industrial areas.

**1957**

**Planned Developments, FAR, and other Zoning Ordinance Revisions**
City Council adopted the new zoning ordinance. To accommodate the projected growth and allow for development, the new ordinance gave space to innovative techniques and approaches for land use control such as Planned Developments and Floor Area Ratios (FAR).

**1960s**

**Special Districts & Planned Manufacturing Districts**
The City started to adopt Special Districts to help control density and preserve neighborhood character. Established first in parts of Norwood Park to protect ranch homes that were being converted to more modern homes, these districts were often used to protect historically significant communities in wealthier north side neighborhoods from development. Restrictions in these districts primarily focused on building heights, dimensions of yards, etc. By the end of the decade the city had 23 special districts.

**1970s**

**Downzoning**
Residents started to pressure their aldermen, the Plan Commission, and the Mayor to sponsor and pass amendments downzoning portions of the North Side neighborhoods and the Lakefront. The downzoning process led to an amendment downzoning the east part of Lincoln Park to help preserve the neighborhood character and block density.

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**1980s**

**Rewrite of Zoning Ordinance**
Responding to the development boom of the 1990s, the 2004 Zoning Rewrite was designed to preserve the character of neighborhoods and help promote pedestrian-friendly environments. Among other significant changes, it established new height limits and new regulations on FAR and density to help protect neighborhoods from intense development.

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**2000s**

**Affordable Requirements Ordinance (ARO)**
The City first established the ARO in 2003 to increase the provision of affordable housing units in Chicago. The ARO has since been updated twice, with changes to increase the percentage of affordable units provided, address patterns of segregation in the city, and decrease displacement of long time residents in areas experiencing rapid development.

**2019**

**River Design Guidelines**
The Chicago River Guidelines were created in 2005 and were updated in 2019. The purpose of these guidelines is to outline the requirements for development in and adjacent to the setback area along the rivers within the city limits.

**2022**

**Connected Communities Ordinance**
Encourages more homes and businesses near transit by expanding existing TOD incentives, improves safety for pedestrians, and increases housing opportunities, affordability, and accessibility near transit.

**2021**

**Air Quality Zoning Ordinance**
Passed in 2021, the ordinance sets additional regulations on certain facilities that create air pollution. Depending on the size and scope of the development, the new ordinance requires proposals to go through additional review processes, allows for review from other city departments, and includes more opportunities for public engagement in the process.

**2023-2021**

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### Legislation and Litigation

- Zoning Ordinance Rewrite
- Additional Ordinances
- Other Methods