

# ZONING RESOLUTION Web Version

---

## THE CITY OF NEW YORK



THE CITY OF NEW YORK  
Bill de Blasio, Mayor

CITY PLANNING COMMISSION  
Carl Weisbrod, Chairman

## Article XI: Special Purpose Districts Chapter 8: Special Union Square District

Effective date of most recently amended section of Article XI Chapter 8: 3/22/16

---

Date of file creation: Web version of Article XI Chapter 8: 8/24/16

---

CITY PLANNING COMMISSION  
[nyc.gov/planning](http://nyc.gov/planning)

DEPARTMENT OF CITY PLANNING  
©Copyrighted by the City of New York

Zoning Disclaimer- the Web version of the Zoning Resolution of the City of New York is provided for reference and the convenience of having the Resolution in an online format. Recent amendments to the Zoning Resolution also appear on the Web prior to being incorporated into the print version of the Resolution.

(1/10/85)

## **Article XI - Special Purpose Districts**

### **Chapter 8**

#### **Special Union Square District**

(1/10/85)

#### **118-00**

##### **GENERAL PURPOSES**

The "Special Union Square District" established in this Resolution is designated to promote and protect public health, safety, general welfare and amenity. These general goals include, among others, the following specific purposes:

- (a) to promote a revitalized mixed-use area around Union Square by encouraging controlled development on vacant and under-utilized sites within the District;
- (b) to stimulate such growth while providing guidelines which will ensure urban design compatibility between new development, existing buildings and Union Square and which will preserve and enhance the special character of the Square;
- (c) to stabilize the area through residential development and thereby encourage active utilization of Union Square Park;
- (d) to enhance the retail and service nature and economic vitality of 14th Street by mandating appropriate retail and service activities;
- (e) to improve the physical appearance and amenity of the streets within the District by establishing streetscape and signage controls which are compatible to Union Square Park;
- (f) to improve access, visibility, security and pedestrian circulation in and around the 14th Street/Union Square Station; and
- (g) to promote the most desirable use of land in this area and thus conserve the value of land and buildings and thereby protect the City's tax revenues.

(1/10/85)

**118-01**  
**Definitions**

Special Union Square District  
(repeated from Section 12-10)

The "Special Union Square District" is a Special Purpose District designated by the letters "US" in which special regulations set forth in Article XI, Chapter 8 apply to all #developments# or #enlargements#. The #Special Union Square District# appears on the #zoning maps# superimposed on other districts, and its regulations supplement and modify those of the underlying districts on which it is superimposed.

(1/10/85)

**118-02**  
**General Provisions**

In harmony with the general purpose and intent of this Resolution and the general purposes of the #Special Union Square District# and in accordance with the provisions of this Chapter, certain specified #use#, #bulk# and #sign# regulations of the underlying district are made inapplicable and are superseded by the #use#, #bulk# and #sign# regulations of the #Special Union Square District# as set forth in this Chapter. In addition, special #street# wall transparency and location of entrance requirements are set forth in this Chapter. Except as modified by the express provisions of this Chapter, the underlying district regulations remain in effect.

(1/10/85)

**118-03**  
**Incorporation of Appendix A**

The District Plan of the #Special Union Square District# is set forth in Appendix A and is incorporated as an integral part of the provisions of this Chapter.

(1/10/85)

**118-10**  
**USE REGULATIONS**

(2/8/90)

**118-11**  
**Ground Floor Uses**

#Uses# on the ground floor or within five feet of #curb level# along 14th Street shall be limited to the #uses# listed below, except that entrances to above-grade or below-grade #uses# are permitted subject to the regulations set forth in Section 118-41 (Entrances on 14th Street).

These regulations shall apply to #developments#, #enlargements#, #extensions# and changes of #use#.

Antique stores

Art galleries, commercial

Artists' supply stores

Automobile rental offices

Bakeries, provided that #floor area# used for production shall be limited to 750 square feet per establishment

Banks

Barber shops

Beauty parlors

Bicycle sales, rental or repair shops

Book stores

Candy or ice cream stores

Carpet, rug, linoleum, or other floor covering stores, with no limitation on #floor area# per establishment

Cigar or tobacco stores

Clothing or clothing accessory stores, with no limitation on #floor area# per establishment

Clothing rental establishments, limited to 10,000 square feet on #floor area# per establishment

Department stores

Drug stores

Dry cleaning or clothes pressing establishments or receiving stations dealing directly with ultimate consumers, limited to 2,000 square feet of #floor area# per establishment, and provided that only solvents with a flash point of not less than 138.2 degrees Fahrenheit shall be used, and a total aggregate load capacity of machines shall not exceed 60 pounds

Dry goods or fabric stores, with no limitation of #floor area# per establishment

Eating or drinking establishments including those which provide outdoor table service, or have music for which there is no cover charge and no specified showtime

Eating or drinking establishments, with entertainment but not dancing, with a capacity of 200 persons or less

Eating or drinking establishments, with musical entertainment but not dancing, with a capacity of 200 persons or less

Eating or drinking places without restrictions on entertainment or dancing, but limited to locations in hotels

Fishing tackle or equipment, rental or sales

Florist shops

Food stores, including supermarkets, grocery stores, meat markets or delicatessen stores

Furniture stores, with no limitation on #floor area# per establishment

Furrier shops, custom

Gift shops

Hardware stores

Interior decorating establishments, provided that #floor area# used for processing, servicing or repairs shall be

limited to 750 square feet per establishment

Jewelry or art metal craft shops

Laundry establishments, hand or automatic self-service

Leather goods or luggage stores

Medical or orthopedic appliance stores

Millinery shops

Music stores

Newsstands, open or enclosed

Office or business machine stores with no limitations on  
#floor area# per establishment

Optician or optometrist establishments

Package liquor stores

Paint stores

Pet shops

Photographic developing or photographic printing  
establishments limited to 2,500 square feet per  
establishment

Photographic equipment or supply stores

Photographic studios

Picture framing shops

Record stores

Seed or garden supply stores

Sewing machine stores, selling household machines only

Shoe or hat repair shops

Shoe stores

Sporting or athletic stores

Stamp or coin stores

Telegraph offices

Television, radio, phonograph or household appliance stores  
with no limitation on #floor area# per establishment

Toy stores

Travel bureaus

Typewriter stores

Variety stores, with no limitation on #floor area# per  
establishment

Wallpaper stores

Watch or clock stores or repair shops

(3/22/16)

#### **118-12**

##### **Sign Regulations**

On #street walls# fronting on 14th Street, no #sign# may be  
located more than 25 feet above #curb level#.

#Signs# on #street walls# fronting on all other #streets# within  
the Special District shall be subject to the provisions of  
paragraph (e) of Section 32-435 (Ground floor use in high density  
Commercial Districts).

#Flashing signs# are not permitted within the Special District.

(1/10/85)

#### **118-20**

##### **BULK REGULATIONS**

(3/22/16)

#### **118-21**

##### **Floor Area Regulations**

The maximum #floor area ratio# permitted on property bounded by:

- (a) Broadway, a line midway between East 14 Street and East 13th Street, a line 100 feet west of University Place, Union Square West and Broadway, a line midway between East 17th Street and East 18th Street, a line 100 feet east of Park Avenue South and Union Square East, East 15th Street, Union Square East, East 17th Street, Union Square West and East 14th Street is 8.0; and
- (b) Broadway, a line midway between East 13th Street and East 14th Street, south prolongation of the center line of Irving Place and Irving Place, East 15th Street, Union Square East, Fourth Avenue, and East 14th Street is 10.0, except as provided in Section 118-60 (SUBWAY STATION IMPROVEMENTS WITHIN THE SPECIAL UNION SQUARE DISTRICT).

In no event, shall the commercial #floor area ratio# exceed 6.0.

(3/22/16)

## **118-22**

### **Residential Density Regulations**

The density regulations of Section 23-20 shall not apply. Instead, for every 750 square feet of #residential floor area# permitted on a #zoning lot#, there shall be no more than one #dwelling unit#.

However, the conversion of non-#residential buildings# to #residential use# shall be subject to the provisions of Article I, Chapter 5 (Residential Conversion Within Existing Buildings).

(3/22/16)

## **118-30**

### **STREET WALL, HEIGHT AND SETBACK REGULATIONS**

The location and height above #curb level# of the #street wall# of any #development# or #enlargement# shall be as shown in the District Plan (Appendix A). However, if a #development# or #enlargement# is adjacent to one or more existing #buildings# fronting on the same #street line#, the #street wall# of such #development# or #enlargement# shall be located neither closer to nor further from the #street line# than the front wall of the adjacent #building# which is closest to the same #street line#.

#Street wall# recesses are permitted below the level of the second #story# ceiling for subway stair entrances required under Section 118-50 (OFF STREET RELOCATION OF A SUBWAY STAIR WITHIN THE SPECIAL UNION SQUARE DISTRICT). Such recesses shall be no longer than 15 feet and no deeper than eight feet or the width or length of the relocated subway stair, whichever is greater.

#Street wall# recesses are also permitted below the level of the second #story# ceiling for #building# or store entrances only.

A #sky exposure plane# of 2.5 to 1 shall begin at a height above #curb level# of 125 feet on all #streets# within the Special District, except that on a #narrow street# beyond 100 feet from any #street line# opposite a #public park# or from the intersection of such #narrow street# with a #wide street#, the #sky exposure plane# shall begin at a height above #curb level# of 85 feet.

No #development# or #enlargement# shall penetrate such #sky exposure plane# except pursuant to Section 33-45 (Tower Regulations). However, Section 33-45 shall not be applicable to any portion of a #building# located within 100 feet of a #street line# opposite a #public park#.

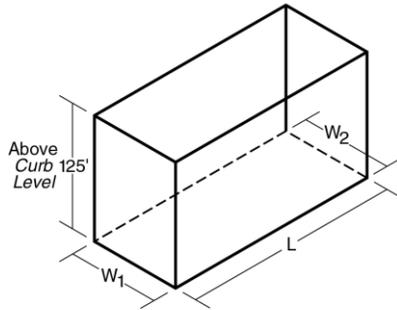
(1/10/85)

### **118-31**

#### **Modification of Street Wall Requirements**

- (a) In the #Special Union Square District#, on a #zoning lot# where there is an existing #building# to remain, and when there is to be a #development# or #enlargement#, the requirements governing height and location of #street walls# shall not apply within a volume defined by the rear wall of the existing #building# ( $W^2$ ), the #front lot line# ( $W^1$ ), the prolongations of the side walls (L) and a height of 125 feet above #curb level#.

If, after January 10, 1985, any demolition or destruction occurs within the volume defined, the requirements governing #street wall# height shall apply.



L - Sidewall and prolongation of existing building  
 W<sub>1</sub> - Front lot line  
 W<sub>2</sub> - Rear wall of existing building

EXISTING BUILDING VOLUME FOR  
 MODIFICATION OF STREET WALL REQUIREMENTS

(b) Within the #Special Union Square District#, the City Planning Commission may, upon application, authorize modifications in the required #street wall# location of a #development# or #enlargement# if the Commission finds that the existing #buildings#, or existing open areas serving existing #buildings# to remain on the #zoning lot#, would be adversely affected by the location of the #street walls# of the #development# or #enlargement# in a manner prescribed in paragraph (a).

(1/10/85)

**118-40**

**ENTRANCE AND STREET WALL TRANSPARENCY REQUIREMENTS**

All #developments# and #enlargements# that front on 14th Street, Union Square East, Union Square West and 17th Street shall be subject to the requirements set forth below.

(1/10/85)

**118-41**

**Entrances on 14th Street**

Each permitted #use# that is located on the ground floor or within five feet of #curb level# in #developments# or #enlargements# with frontage on 14th Street shall be entered directly from 14th Street. Entrances to #uses# located above or

below the ground floor in #developments# or #enlargements# fronting on 14th Street are permitted, provided that such entrances in aggregate shall not exceed 30 linear feet of #street wall# frontage on 14th Street.

(1/10/85)

#### **118-42**

##### **Entrances on Union Square East, Union Square West and 17th Street**

If a #use# occupies at least 40 percent of the #floor area# of a #development# or an #enlargement# that fronts on Union Square East, Union Square West or 17th Street between Broadway and Park Avenue South, then the principal entrance to that #use# shall be located on Union Square East, Union Square West or on 17th Street between Broadway and Park Avenue South. However, if more than one #use# meets these criteria, the principal entrance to only one of them is required to be so located.

(3/22/16)

#### **118-43**

##### **Street Wall Transparency**

When the #street wall# of any #development# or #enlargement# is located on 14th Street, Union Square East, Union Square West or 17th Street, such #street wall# shall be glazed in accordance with the provisions of Section 37-34 (Minimum Transparency Requirements).

(3/22/16)

#### **118-50**

##### **OFF-STREET RELOCATION OF A SUBWAY STAIR WITHIN THE SPECIAL UNION SQUARE DISTRICT**

Where a #development# or #enlargement# is constructed on a #zoning lot# of at least 5,000 square feet which fronts on a portion of sidewalk containing a stairway entrance or entrances into the 14th Street/Union Square Station, the #development# or #enlargement# shall be subject to the regulations of Section 37-40 (OFF-STREET RELOCATION OR RENOVATION OF A SUBWAY STAIR).

(3/22/16)

**118-60**

**SUBWAY STATION IMPROVEMENTS WITHIN THE SPECIAL UNION SQUARE DISTRICT**

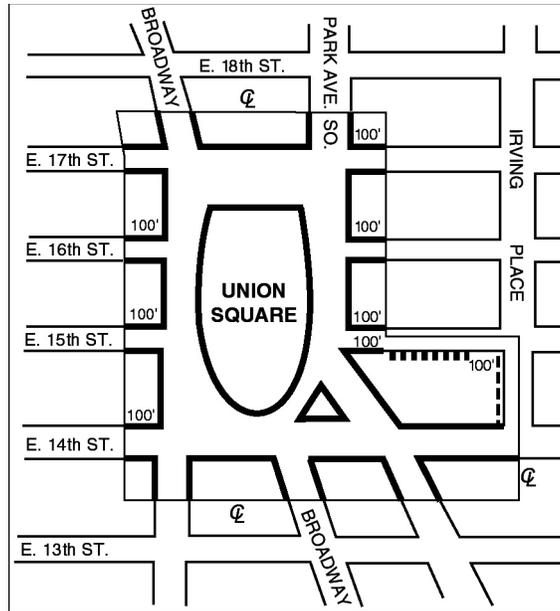
The City Planning Commission may, by special permit, grant #residential floor area# bonuses for #developments# or #enlargements# that provide major improvements on the 14th Street/Union Square Subway Station in accordance with the provisions of Section 74-634. The #zoning lot# for the #development# or #enlargement# on which such #floor area# bonus is requested shall be adjacent to the 14th Street/Union Square Subway Station or to an existing passageway to the station.

As part of the special permit, the Commission may modify the #street wall# regulations of Section 118-30 (STREET WALL HEIGHT AND SETBACK REGULATIONS) if it finds that such major improvements cannot be provided without modifications of these provisions.

(1/10/85)

**Appendix A**  
**UNION SQUARE DISTRICT PLAN**

#Street walls# shall be coincident with #street lines#.



- Mandatory Street Walls  
85'-125' Above Curb Level
- - - Permitted Street Walls  
125' Above Curb Level
- ..... Permitted Street Walls  
85' Above Curb Level
- Special Union Square District