

Planning Commission Amendments to UNO Revision, August 2019

*Explanation and back-up material for PC
amendments and one potential amendment*

September 17, 2019

PC Amendments to UNO Ordinance

Planning Commission passed the staff proposal with some amendments.

- **Amendments origin:**

- The draft amendments sent to the full commission are the product of the Central Austin Neighborhood Planning Advisory Committee (CANPAC) and city staff. The Planning Commission largely agreed with the staff proposal, but made some changes where the proposal was inconsistent with Council's 5/2 LDC guidance or other city goals.* This document contains background material on the amendments passed by PC (4, 5 and the parking proposal unnumbered in Council backup), as well as a potential amendment that would revive a CANPAC proposal for electric vehicle charging stations.

- **Amendments per Council backup:**

1. Local uses (staff proposal)
 2. Parking structure conversion (staff proposal)
 3. Height bonus for affordable housing (staff proposal)
 4. Height bonus for affordable housing (Planning Commission amendment, passed 11-1)
 5. Inner West Campus subdistrict expansion (Planning Commission amendment, passed 7-5)
 6. Sunlight setbacks (stakeholder proposal adopted at Codes and Ordinances)
- (unnumbered in backup) Parking requirements (staff proposal amended by PC, passed 9-3)
7. Sign size (staff proposal)
 8. Sign placement (staff proposal)
 9. Sign permitted (staff proposal)

** All editorial comments are my attempt to capture Planning Commission discussion on the prevailing vote side, and are not official positions of the Planning Commission, which only approved the amendments themselves. Offered as a service for clarity.*

Amdt 4: Affordable bonus for San Gabriel & 24th st. (11-1)

Allows all multi-family properties in the UNO Imagine Austin Activity Center to reach their full base zoning height via an affordable bonus.

- **PC Amendment purpose:**

- Amend Section 25-2-756 (Height) to make a 20' height bonus (Council backup erroneously states as 25' bonus) available for 40' and 45' base height multi-family properties in Outer West Campus subdistrict (along 24th and San Gabriel).

- **Current code:**

- Residential use (multi-family or group) properties only with at least 50' of base height are allowed an affordable housing bonus of 15'.

- **Staff draft revision:**

- Residential buildings in Inner West Campus subdistrict is eligible for a 125' bonus.
- Residential buildings in Outer West Campus subdistrict or Guadalupe subdistrict are eligible for a 25' bonus only if zoned for at least 50' base height.

- **Impact of Staff revision:**

- 40' and 45' properties on San Gabriel & 24th have no affordable bonus available for “compatibility reasons” but all are across street from commercial / multi-family properties.

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Removes stricter-than-Council LDC guidance compatibility for properties along San Gabriel & 24th st; generates affordable housing.

- **Justification for amendment – Council LDC guidance**

- Commissioners cited principle that UNO shouldn't have less-urban regulation than rest of city.
- City Council's 5/2 Land Development Code guidance on compatibility was: "the code revision should reduce the impact of compatibility standards on development within activity centers and activity corridors to a greater extent than Draft 3." (page 11)
- CodeNEXT Draft 3 limited compatibility restrictions to 100 ft. from residential zoning.
- All of UNO is an Imagine Austin Activity Center, so under Council LDC guidance, no properties within 100 ft. of single-family/residential should have compatibility-driven height restrictions.
- The lots in question have a base zoning of MF-4 (60 ft. height) but are lowered to 40 ft. and 45 ft. base height in overlay. Lots could reach non-compatibility height under PC amendment.
- Staff indicated compatibility with single family lots south of 24th and west of San Gabriel was reason for those property's lowered base heights and non-availability of bonuses, but those single-family lots are all over 175 ft away.

- **Justification for amendment – affordable housing goals**

- By not increasing the base zoning, this bonus would allow ~2 additional floors, making it an attractive bonus that will generate affordable housing units or fee-in-lieu funds.

Amdt 4: Affordable bonus for San Gabriel & 24th st. (11-1)

Proposed bonus allows additional floors to accommodate natural building heights with an attractive bonus.

- Proposed height allows good bonus performance:**

- A 20' bonus allows 40' and 45' properties to reach 60'/65', a good natural height for 4 stories of residential over an activated ground floor.
- Allows an additional ~2 stories making bonus attractive and encouraging redevelopment and affordable unit production.
- Source: Planning Commission Non-Residential Zone Working Group Study of Building Heights

BUILDING HEIGHT FACTORS

| PROGRAM | STRUCTURE | MULTIFAMILY | | | OFFICE | | PARKING | | |
|---------------------|------------|-------------|-----------|------------|------------|------------|---------------|----------------|---------|
| | | WOOD | STEEL | CONCRETE | STEEL | CONCRETE | C.I.P. (FLAT) | C.I.P. (BEAMS) | PRECAST |
| Ceiling Height | | 9' | 9' | 9' | 10' | 10' | - | - | - |
| Floor Assembly | structure | 1'-8" | 1'-9" | 8" | 2' | 2'-6" | 8" | 1'-8" | 2' |
| | MEP | - | - | 12" | 3' | 2'-6" | - | - | - |
| Floor-to-Floor | typ. level | 10'-8" | 10'-9" | 10'-8" | 15' | 15' | 9'-6" | 10'-9" | 10'-8" |
| | top level | - | - | - | - | - | 12' | 12' | - |
| Roof Depth | | 3'-0" | 3'-0" | 2'-6" | 3' | 2'-6" | - | - | - |
| Ground Floor Retail | | 13' < 15' | 13' < 15' | 15' < 18'+ | 15' < 18'+ | 15' < 18'+ | - | - | - |

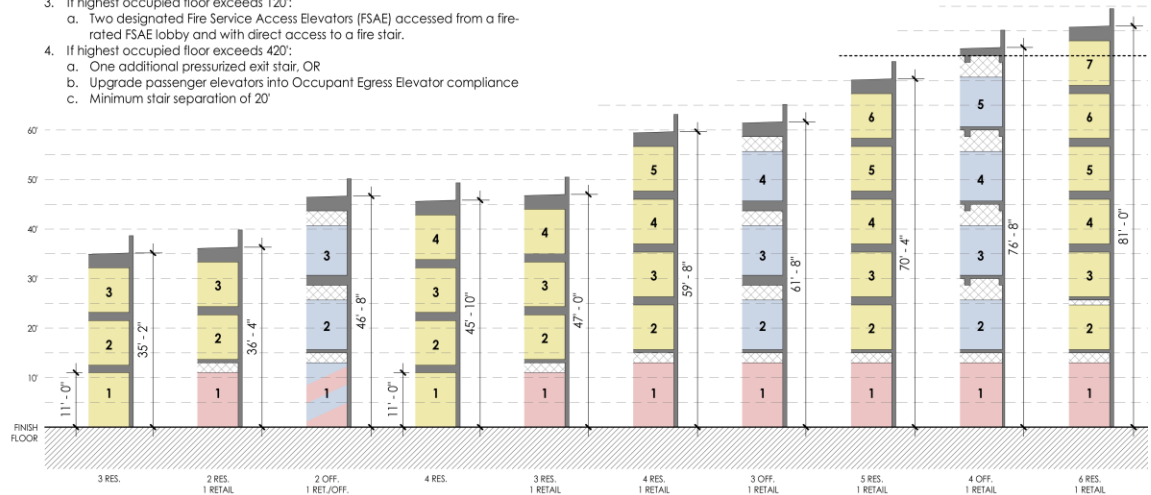
- OFFICE
- MULTI-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL
- RESTAURANT / RETAIL
- MECHANICAL SPACE
- HIGH-RISE THRESHOLDS

HIGH RISE NOTES

- High rise measurements are from highest occupied floor level to the lowest level of fire department access (wheels to heels). Zones accommodating these "breaks" should add approx. 15' to the threshold to account for the top story.
- If highest occupied floor exceeds 75':
 - Mandatory sprinkler system and enhanced emergency systems
 - Fire Pump Room and Fire Command Center at ground floor
 - Emergency power system (generator)
 - Stair vestibules (CoA Amendment) to fit wheelchair
 - Smokeproof (pressurized) enclosures at all interior exit stairs
 - Stairway communication systems
 - Variety of increased fire resistance requirements
- If highest occupied floor exceeds 120':
 - Two designated Fire Service Access Elevators (FSAE) accessed from a fire-rated FSAE lobby and with direct access to a fire stair.
- If highest occupied floor exceeds 420':
 - One additional pressurized exit stair, OR
 - Upgrade passenger elevators into Occupant Egress Elevator compliance
 - Minimum stair separation of 20'

GENERAL NOTES

- Building heights are measured to the Level 1 "finished floor" in this diagram. **Actual building height is to average finished grade. Zone heights should account for a reasonable amount of topography.**
- Building heights are measured to the highest point of roof deck per current LDC requirements. Zone heights would need to be adjusted if measuring to top of parapet.
- All buildings shown with parapets and "flat roofs". Pitched roofs are measured to the average height of highest gable.



Architecture. Interior Design. Planning.

Amdt 4: Affordable bonus for San Gabriel & 24th st. (11-1)

Proposed amendment text. *(Not included in draft ordinance.)*

PART 3. Section 25-2-756 (Height) is amended as follows:

(A) Except as provided in Subsection (B), maximum heights for structures are prescribed by Appendix C (*University Neighborhood Overlay District Boundaries, Subdistrict Boundaries, ~~and~~ Height Limits, and Additional Height and Affordability*).

(B) This subsection applies in the outer west campus subdistrict, guadalupe subdistrict, and inner west campus subdistrict.

~~[In this subsection, historic property means property zoned historic or listed in the City's historic building survey on October 6, 2008.]~~

(1) Except as provided in Paragraph (3), a structure with a multi-family residential use or group residential use may exceed by 25 feet in the outer west campus subdistrict or the guadalupe subdistrict the maximum height prescribed by Appendix C (*University Neighborhood Overlay District Boundaries, Subdistrict Boundaries, ~~And~~ Height Limits, and Additional Height and Affordability*) if the structure is located in an area with a maximum height of at least 50 feet, or may exceed by 20 feet the height prescribed if located in an area with a maximum height below 50 feet; or

PC amendment in double-underlined text.

Amdt 5: Expansion of Inner West Campus District (7-5)

Expansion brings sub-district across Rio Grande, unlocking several properties for affordable bonus redevelopment. *(Not in draft ordinance.)*

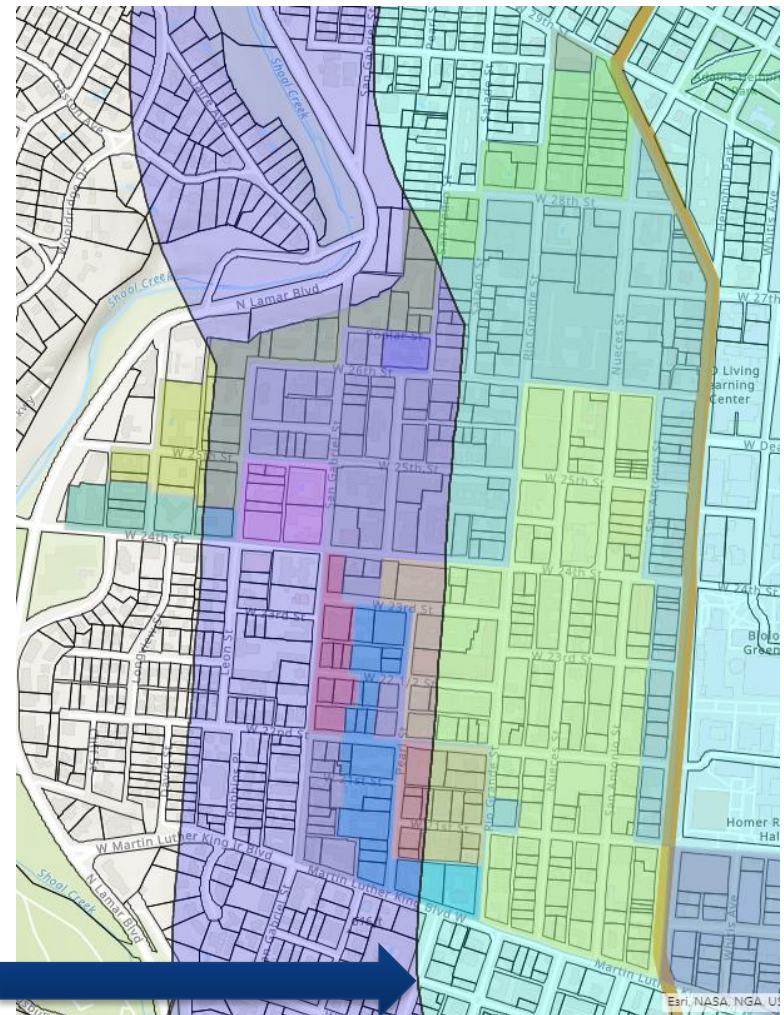
- **Expansion was requested by property owner**
 - Owner of lot at 2404 Rio Grande (boxed property second-from-bottom below) requested extension of Inner West Campus subdistrict across Rio Grande to his property.
 - Would increase base height (under proposed UNO amendment) of area from 75-90 ft. to 175 ft., and bonus height from additional 25 ft. to 125 ft.
- **Area has great potential for additional affordable housing.**
 - Area has had only one site redevelop under UNO.
 - Four boxed sites are attractive for redevelopment.
 - Large Inner West Campus bonus bonus would yield potentially dozens of affordable units.
- **No compelling reason not to.**
 - Presence of nearby fraternity houses cited as reason not to build more units under affordable bonus.



Amdt: Parking Minimums (9-3)

Eliminates parking minimums for entire Activity Center; consistent with Council's LDC guidance. *(Already incorporated in draft ordinance.)*

- **Justification for amendment – Council LDC guidance**
 - Commissioners cited principle that UNO – all of which is an activity center – shouldn't have less-urban regulation than rest of city.
 - City Council's 5/2 Land Development Code guidance on parking was "Minimum parking requirements should be generally eliminated in areas that are within the ¼ mile of activity centers, activity corridors, and transit priority network, except that some parking requirements may be maintained for areas where elimination of parking requirements would be particularly disruptive." (page 14)
 - Staff draft kept parking minimums for areas outside of Inner West Campus (yellow area), which includes large areas both of the West Campus activity center and within ¼ mile of Guadalupe corridor.



¼ mi. from Guad / Orange Line

Potential Amendment: Restore EV Charging Req.

Staff/CANPAC proposal prescribed EV charging stations for 10% of required parking. *(Removed from draft ordinance.)*

- **Original staff / CANPAC proposal:**

- Allowed a 25% parking reduction in Outer West Campus sub-district if a development:

“Provides electrical automobile charging stations for 10 percent of the required off-street parking spaces and sets aside 300 square feet for charging 8 electric bicycles or micromobility devices”

- **Planning Commission / revised ordinance:**

- In removing UNO-wide parking minimums, this parking reduction incentive was entirely removed.

- **Option to restore staff / CANPAC proposal:**

- Require electric automobile charging stations for 10 percent of all new, non-accessible parking spaces constructed.
- Exception for accessible parking would be to not disincentivize accessible parking by increasing cost.

- **Implements Austin Community Climate Plan strategy:**

- Strategy 5, Vehicles and Fuel Efficiencies (VFE)-1: “Support programs and efforts that expand electric / alternative fuel infrastructure and consider incentives for the purchase of electric / alternative fuel vehicles by individuals and fleet owners. Pursue code options to increase “charger ready” parking.