



TO: Chairman and Members of Council Community Planning and Transportation Committee

FROM: Susan F. Connors, AICP *SFC*
Director of Planning & Community Development

RE: Draft of High Density Zoning District

DATE: October 22, 2012

Background. At the September 24, 2012 committee meeting, staff presented the High Density Discussion Series Final Report, along with a list of recommended elements for consideration in drafting a future ordinance. These elements were based on community input gathered throughout the high density discussion series. Committee discussion during the meeting focused on that list of recommended elements listed below:

1. Encourage mixed uses with high density residential development.
2. Encourage a mix of architectural styles emphasizing high quality design that contributes to the overall community character of the area.
3. Require architecturally integrated parking decks for new development.
4. Develop a comprehensive approach to managing spillover parking into neighborhoods that surround community destinations.
5. Require a design review process and develop design guidelines to regulate appearance, building materials, size and placement, etc.
6. Require a Traffic Impact Analysis for all high density projects.
7. Define areas that are appropriate for high density residential land use. Public consensus was to keep high density separate from blocks with predominantly single-family character.
8. Define a maximum residential density for specific areas such as Campus Corner, Downtown, Porter Corridor, etc. Strongest opinions were as follows:
 - Campus Corner: allow 40-50 du/ac
 - Downtown: split between 40-50 du/ac and over 100 du/ac
 - Porter Corridor: split between under 30 du/ac and 40-50 du/ac
 - Areas Outside Central Norman: opinions ranged between 30-40 du/ac to 100 du/ac
9. Define maximum building heights for specific areas such as Campus Corner, Downtown, Porter Corridor, etc. Strongest opinions were as follows:

office memorandum

- Campus Corner: allow 3 stories
- Downtown: allow 5 stories or over
- Porter Corridor: allow over 5 stories
- Areas Outside Central Norman: allow 3 stories

At the committee's request, staff has developed a draft outline of a High Density Residential (HDR) zoning district which is Attachment A to this memo. Please note that this draft is very preliminary and is intended simply to start the committee's discussion of the specific elements that should/must/could be included in a future HDR ordinance.

The committee expressed an initial preference for the creation of a single zoning category that would allow high density residential land uses in Norman. Attachment A is structured as a single zoning category.

City Council received a great deal of meaningful community input from the summer discussion series on high density. Staff is also continuing to research high density residential land use and mixed use buildings throughout the country and in Norman's peer cities in order to identify best practices as well as pitfalls to be avoided.

Adding high density residential land uses in Norman has the potential to be an economic boon to the community, broadening the range of housing options for current and future residents and improving the quality of life for Core Area residents. However in order to be effective in advancing community goals and achieving broad-based community support, a future high density ordinance must be well-vetted in public meetings in order to craft future regulations that anticipate the impact on all stakeholders. This draft is intended to begin our regulatory discussion of high density residential development and give staff further direction.

Any future ordinance will require definitions. These are not included in this draft but will be added as the ordinance moves towards completion.

Areas shaded in gray are staff commentary only. The commentary is meant to provide additional information that should be considered as the committee evaluates future policy and regulations.

ATTACHMENT A

1. General Provisions

The High Density Residential (HDR) zone is a high density multi-dwelling zone. Density will generally range up to _____ units per acre characterized by building heights of up to ___ stories, depending on location and percentage of lot coverage. Generally, the HDR zone will be located on arterial streets where housing can match the availability of public services and can support commercial areas.

2. Permitted Uses

- a. Apartments
- b. Single Room Occupancy (SRO) Units
- c. Retail Sales and Service
- d. Office
- e. Mixed Use Building

3. Density, Area, Height, Bulk and Coverage Standards.

a. Density

General. Specific density limits may need to be defined by area, e.g., Campus Corner, Downtown, Porter Avenue, Non-Core Areas, etc., which would have different maximum allowable density in order to be compatible in different community areas.

The number of dwellings per unit of land, the density, is controlled so that housing can match the availability of public services and the availability of commercial areas. The standards also allow the housing density to be matched with the carrying capacity of the land. In addition, the density standards are used as one type of control of overall building bulk. In areas with the highest level of public services, the minimum density standards ensure that the service capacity is not wasted and that the City's housing goals are met.

- Campus Corner: residential or mixed use buildings that include residential uses may have a maximum density of up to ___ dwelling units per acre
- Downtown: residential or mixed use buildings that include residential uses may have a maximum density of up to ___ dwelling units per acre
- Porter Avenue: residential or mixed use buildings that include residential uses may have a maximum density of up to ___ dwelling units per acre
- Non-Core Areas: residential or mixed use buildings that include residential may have a maximum density of up to ___ dwelling units per acre

b. Building Height Specific height regulations may need to be divided into community areas, e.g., Campus Corner, Downtown, Porter Avenue, Non-Core Area, etc., which would have different maximum allowable heights in order to be compatible in these different areas.

Purpose. Height standards serve several purposes:

- They promote a reasonable building scale and relationship of one residence to another;
- They promote options for privacy for neighboring properties; and
- They reflect the general building scale of multi-dwelling development in the City's neighborhoods.
 - i. Campus Corner: residential or mixed use buildings may have a maximum height of up to ___ stories or ___ feet
 - ii. Downtown: residential or mixed use buildings that include residential uses may have a maximum height of up to ___ stories or ___ feet.
 - iii. Porter Avenue: residential or mixed use buildings that include residential uses may have a maximum height of up to ___ stories or ___ feet
 - iv. Non-Core Areas: residential or mixed use buildings that include residential may have a maximum height of up to ___ stories or ___ feet.

c. Building Coverage.

1. Purpose. The building coverage standards, along with the height and setback standards, limit the overall bulk of structures. They assure that larger buildings will not have a footprint that overwhelms adjacent development.

2. Maximum building coverage. This may need to be defined by zone, depending on existing community character and the prevailing coverage of surrounding buildings. Building coverage could be defined as follows:

- Campus Corner: residential or mixed use buildings that include residential may cover a maximum of 90% of the lot.
- Downtown: residential or mixed use buildings that include residential may cover a maximum of 90% of the lot.
- Porter Avenue: residential or mixed use buildings that include residential may cover a maximum of 85% of the lot.

- Non-Core Areas: residential or mixed use buildings that include residential may cover a maximum of 85% of the lot.

d. Setback from a Public Right of Way or Property Line to Building Face.

City may want to consider defining both minimum and maximum building setback in order to allow flexibility in different settings but still promote a more compact urban form of development and redevelopment.

In the core area of Norman zero setbacks will be appropriate for the front setback, for some side setbacks adjacent to non-residential uses and for side or rear setbacks adjacent to alleys.

1. Purpose. Building setback regulations serve several purposes:

- They maintain light, air, and separation for fire protection, and access for fire fighting;
- They reflect the general building scale and placement of multi-dwelling development in the City's neighborhoods;
- They promote a reasonable physical relationship between residences;
- They promote options for privacy for neighboring properties;
- They may require larger front setbacks than side and rear setbacks to promote open, visually pleasing front yards;
- They provide adequate flexibility to site a building so that it may be compatible with the neighborhood, fit the topography of the site, allow for required outdoor areas, and allow for architectural diversity; and
- Setback requirements along transit streets create an environment that is inviting to pedestrians and transit users.

4. Architectural Standards

a. Purpose. There is no particular architectural style proposed for high-density multifamily residential structures. The primary focus should be on constructing a high quality residential environment which encourages a mix of architectural styles emphasizing high quality design that contributes to the overall community character of the area. The criteria presented here strive for "quality" through descriptions and examples of appropriate building materials and architectural expression. In general, the design of multifamily developments should consider compatibility with the surrounding neighborhood. Often, such projects are developed adjacent to single-family neighborhoods and measures should be taken to insure that the height and bulk of higher density projects do not negatively impact these lower density residential areas.

b. General Standards. These design guidelines are intended as a reference to assist the designer in understanding the city's goals and objectives for high quality, high density residential development. These guidelines provide design interpretations of the various mandatory regulations. The design guidelines are general and may be interpreted with some flexibility in their application to specific projects.

c. Compatibility.

1. It is desired that high density design provides features which are generally compatible with residential neighborhoods and with surrounding non-residential buildings. Features which contribute to a sense of compatibility may include:

- (a) Additional landscaping including large trees within the setbacks
- (b) Architectural treatments such as change in material at the upper floors; bays that extend a story lower to visually lower the façade; or building step backs of upper floors
- (c) Key corners of housing sites can become "gateway" treatments for the development
- (d) Placing lower scale buildings and/or lower density building types adjacent to or across the street from lower density development.

2. Architectural compatibility. New multifamily development in existing neighborhoods should incorporate architectural characteristics and maintain a compatible scale with surrounding structures, for example: window and door detailing, facade decoration, materials, color, roof style and pitch and porches.

d. Building Exterior Walls and Facades, and Materials

1. General Requirements.

2. Building Massing

(a) Scale. Because multifamily projects are usually taller than one story, their bulk can impose on surrounding uses. The scale of such projects should be considered within the context of their surroundings. Structures with greater height may require additional setbacks so as not to dominate the character of the neighborhood.

(b) Building Articulation. Long, unbroken facades and box-like forms should be avoided. Building facades should be broken up to give the appearance of a collection of smaller structures. To the extent possible, each of the units should be individually recognizable. This can be accomplished with the use of balconies, setbacks and projections which

help articulate individual dwelling units or collections of units, and by the pattern and rhythm of windows and doors.

(c) Clustering of Units. Clustering of multifamily units should be a consistent site planning element. Structures composed of a series of simple yet varied planes assure compatibility and variety in overall building form.

3. Exterior Walls and Street-Facing Facades.

4. Materials.

(a) Purpose. Buildings shall be attractive and durable and be compatible with the surrounding community. To ensure this compatibility, buildings shall be constructed of high-quality materials and require minimum maintenance.

(b) Allowable Materials. (City should decide whether to specify materials and whether these are required or recommended.) The use of exterior building materials such as brick, stone, stucco, or manufactured materials such as synthetic stone or cement board is recommended.

Wood siding may be considered for use in limited applications, but not as a primary building material.

(c) Required Masonry. (City should decide how much to specify.) At least ___% of the total exterior wall area of each building elevation, excluding gables, windows, doors and related trim, shall be as brick, stone, stucco, or synthetic stone. The balance of the building façade should be lighter materials such as stucco, water-managed EIFS, cement board or wood.

(d) Prohibited Exterior Materials. City may decide whether to prohibit use of some building materials for exterior use. Examples are:

- Rough sawn wood
- Board and batten wood
- Vinyl siding
- Barrier-type EIFS
- Tilt-up concrete panels
- Painted concrete block
- Pre-finished or painted corrugated metal siding
- Standard single or double-tee concrete systems
- Smooth-faced gray or stained concrete block
- Translucent, Plexiglas, glossy metal or backlit vinyl awnings or illumination of such awnings

- Reflective or mirrored glass at pedestrian levels

(e) Building Rehabilitation. The rehabilitation of existing buildings shall comply with the requirements for exterior building materials. Use of alternate exterior materials for the rehabilitation of existing buildings is subject to approval by the Director of Planning and Community Development.

e. Roofs, Cornice Lines, Parapets

1. General Requirements
2. Roofs
 - (a) Rooflines without variation in excess of 50 feet should be avoided.
 - (b) Flat roofs are prohibited, unless concealed through the use of parapets or other features.
 - (c) Roof forms should be designed as to denote building elements and functions such as pedestrian entrances, arcades and porches; overhanging eaves, sloped roofs and three or more roof planes are encouraged.
3. Cornice Lines
4. Parapets

f. Windows, Doors, Porches, Decks, Steps/Stoops, and Balconies

1. General Requirements
2. Windows
 - (a) Large display windows (large panes or divided lights) are strongly encouraged.
 - (b) Clear or fretted glass should be used. Colored or reflective glass is prohibited.
 - (c) A well-designed and/or decorative material base is desired at display windows.
3. Doors
4. Porches, Decks, Balconies
 - (a) Balconies, porches and patios. The incorporation of balconies, porches and patios within multifamily structures is encouraged for both practical and aesthetic value.
5. Steps and Stoops

g. Screening for Exterior Mechanical Equipment, Electrical Equipment, Service Area, and Trash

1. Screening Requirements. All mechanical equipment whether mounted on the ground or on the roof must be screened from view. Utility meters and equipment must be placed in locations which are not exposed to view from the street or they must be suitably screened. All screening devices are to be compatible with the architecture of adjacent structures.

2. Recycling and Solid Waste Disposal. Recycling and solid waste disposal areas must be fully enclosed. These enclosures should be softened with landscaping on their most visible sides wherever possible. Recommended locations include inside parking courts or at the end of parking bays. Locations should be conveniently accessible for trash collection and maintenance and should not block access drives during loading operations.

6. Open Space (Outdoor Area) & Landscape Standards

a. General Requirements for Private Space. Residents of housing projects should have safe and efficient access to usable open space, whether public or private, for recreation and social activities. The design and orientation of these areas should take advantage of available sunlight and should be sheltered from the wind, noise and traffic of adjacent streets or other incompatible uses.

b. Purpose. The required outdoor areas standards assure opportunities for outdoor relaxation or recreation. Outdoor areas can be both public and private. The standards work with the building coverage and minimum landscaped areas standards to assure that some of the land not covered by buildings is of adequate size, shape, and location to be usable for outdoor recreation or relaxation. Required outdoor areas are an important aspect in addressing the livability of a residential property by providing outdoor living opportunities, some options for outdoor privacy, and a healthy environment.

c. Size, location and configuration. Required outdoor area may be provided as individual, private outdoor areas, such as patios or balconies, or as common, shared outdoor areas, such as courtyards and play areas. There also may be a combination of individual and common areas.

d. Minimum Size Requirement. At least 48 square feet of outdoor area is required for each dwelling unit on the site.

1. Upper floor balconies. These areas need to be useable, taking care to minimize overlook to private space below.

2. Individual unit areas. Where a separate outdoor area is provided for each individual unit, it must be designed so that a 6-foot x 6-foot square will fit entirely within it. The outdoor area must be directly accessible to the

unit. Areas used for pedestrian circulation to more than one dwelling unit do not count towards meeting this minimum standard. If the area is at ground level, it may extend into the required side and rear setback, but not into the required front building setback. Covered outdoor areas are subject to paragraph below.

3. Common areas. Where outdoor areas are common, shared areas, each must be designed so that it is at least 500 square feet in area and so that a 15-foot x 15-foot square will fit entirely within it.

e. Surfacing materials. Required outdoor areas must be surfaced with lawn, pavers, decking, or sport court paving which allows the area to be used for active or passive recreational use.

f. User amenities. User amenities, such as tables, benches, trees, shrubs, planter boxes, garden plots, drinking fountains, spas, or pools, may be placed in the outdoor area. Common, shared outdoor areas may also be developed with amenities such as play areas, plazas, roof-top patios, picnic areas, and open recreational facilities.

g. Enclosure. Required outdoor areas may be covered, such as a covered patio, but they may not be fully enclosed. Covered outdoor areas are subject to the setback standards of this chapter.

7. Public Open Space Standards

a. Purpose. The creation of an attractive public realm such as sidewalks, public seating areas, plazas, areas for public art, and public transit stops provides gathering space, conversation space and breathing room in an urban environment.

1. Construction of public open space would be developed by a fee-in-lieu-of payment, which would allow the City to fund and develop public open space in addition to what is required for the project such as sidewalks, public seating areas, plazas, areas for public art, and public transit stops for a larger area such as an entire block.
2. Public sidewalks are required to be a minimum width of 16 feet in order to accommodate outdoor seating or other outdoor gathering space on the ground level of the building.

8. Landscape Standards

a. Purpose. The standards for landscaped areas are intended to enhance the overall appearance of residential developments and institutional campuses in multi-dwelling zones. The landscaping improves the residential character of the area, breaks up large expanses of paved areas and structures, provides privacy

to the residents, and provides separation from streets. Landscaping also helps cool the air temperature, intercept rainfall and reduce stormwater run-off by providing a non-paved permeable surface. Landscaping can also provide food for people and habitat for birds and other wildlife.

b. Minimum landscaped areas.

c. Landscaped building setbacks.

9. Site Development Standards

a. General Requirements

1. High density residential and mixed use buildings that include high density residential must be located on an arterial street.
2. All high density residential buildings must have direct access to sidewalks
3. Primary pedestrian circulation and access shall be at grade. Pedestrian entry routes interrupted by driveways shall be distinguished from the driveway surface by decorative paving to the building entrance.

b. Grading

c. Streets and Vehicular Access

1. Public streets adjacent to any side of a high density residential development shall have a minimum 6-foot planting strip and a 10-foot sidewalk. Planting strips can have an average minimum width of 6 feet to accommodate a meandering sidewalk where applicable.

d. Drives

e. Parking and Vehicular Access

1. All high density residential buildings shall provide off-street parking by means of an attached parking garage.
2. High density residential uses and mixed use buildings that include high density residential uses shall be required to provide 1 parking space per bedroom for residential units. For non-residential units the requirements of Section 22:431.6 of the Zoning Ordinance shall be followed.
3. **Parking Structures.** Parking structures shall be architecturally integrated into the buildings they serve, with architectural finishes that match the residential portion of the building. They shall be designed to match the overall architectural theme of the development while providing a visually engaging environment for the pedestrian.
4. **For buildings with parking accessed from the front, minimize the amount of frontage used for parking access.** No more than 25% of the site frontage facing an arterial street, internal street or pedestrian walkway should be devoted to garage openings.

f. Utilities

g. Storm Water

10. Lighting Standards

- a. As required and regulated by the Zoning Ordinance

11. Signage Standards

- a. As required and regulated by the Sign Code

12. Pedestrian Standards

a. General Requirements

1. Pedestrian walkways should be separate and distinct from parking areas and drive aisles and include landscaping/trees, lighting and decorative paving at crossings.
2. Streets, alleys should not only connect internally but also be publicly accessible and connect to adjacent streets and neighboring development.
3. Anticipate future connections to adjacent parcels to provide future connectivity.
4. Pedestrian and bike paths should be used where street connections to adjacent neighborhoods are infeasible.

b. Pedestrian Paving

c. Site Furnishings and Amenities

d. Pedestrian Connections

13. Accessory commercial uses in the HDR zone

Accessory commercial uses in multi-dwelling buildings in the HDR zone are allowed in order to provide convenient support services to the residents of the building and to encourage a reduction in auto trips. They are an incidental use to the main residential use of the site.

a. Uses allowed. Accessory commercial uses are limited to those in the Retail Sales and Service and Office use categories.

b. Structure types. Accessory commercial uses are allowed only in multi-dwelling buildings. Uses must be located entirely within the building and have no external doors. They may be located in basements.

c. Size. The total amount of uses is limited to 5 percent of the floor area of the building exclusive of parking area.

d. Signs. Accessory commercial uses may not have signs that are visible from the exterior of the structure.