

**Community Planning and Economic Development Planning Division Report
Zoning Code Text Amendment**

Date: November 14, 2011

Initiator of Amendment: Council Member Gordon

Date of Introduction at City Council: October 7, 2011

Ward: 2 Neighborhood Organizations: West Bank Community Coalition, Prospect Park East River Road Improvement Association

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Intent of the Ordinance: The intent of the amendment is to classify additional Pedestrian Oriented Overlay Districts as transit station areas.

Appropriate Section(s) of the Zoning Code:

Chapter 551: Overlay Districts

Background: On July 1, 2011, the City Council adopted an amendment to the Future Land Use map of the City's comprehensive plan designating additional transit station areas along the Central Corridor light rail line. These additional stations included: Stadium Village, East Bank, West Bank and Target Field. The Metropolitan Council approved the amendment on August 16, 2011. The precise locations of the Stadium Village and West Bank stations were not known when the comprehensive plan was adopted in 2009, causing the Transit Station Area land use features to be left off of the future land use map at that time.

This zoning code text amendment responds to the recent comprehensive plan amendment by adding the West Bank and Stadium Village stations to the list of existing Pedestrian Oriented (PO) Overlay Districts that are specifically designated as transit station areas. The East Bank station and the Target Field station, similar to other downtown stations, are not currently located within a PO Overlay District. If this overlay district is mapped around additional stations in the future, those station areas could be added to the list of transit station areas in the PO Overlay District standards at that time.

Purpose for the Amendment:

What is the reason for the amendment?

What problem is the Amendment designed to solve?

What public purpose will be served by the amendment?

What problems might the amendment create?

This amendment responds to the fact that the locations of the West Bank and Stadium Village light rail transit stations have been finalized. This zoning code amendment was anticipated as a follow-up step to the recent adoption of a comprehensive plan amendment that added transit station areas as land use

features in these two locations. The proposed amendment adds to the list of existing station areas in section 551.175 of the zoning code, which includes additional standards and incentives for selected areas around rail stations. The amendment also updates the name of the Prospect Park/29th Avenue LRT Station and clarifies that the additional density bonus authorized in transit station areas is applicable in areas that are mapped with both the PO Overlay District and the Industrial Living (IL) Overlay District. While a large PO Overlay District covers both the Prospect Park/29th Avenue station area and the Stadium Village station area, section 551.165 clarifies that the dividing line between the two districts, for the purposes of the zoning ordinance, is Huron Boulevard.

Consistent with adopted policies for transit station areas, the zoning ordinance includes additional standards and regulations near LRT stations, including a list of prohibited uses, enhanced density bonuses, and a minimum floor area ratio (FAR). These standards help the city and the region capitalize on the investment in rail transit by ensuring that development near stations occurs in a manner that is transit-supportive.

No problems are expected to occur as a result of the proposed amendment. The PO Overlay Districts are currently in place around the stations in question. The specific subset of transit station area regulations being added to these Central Corridor stations have been successfully administered around Hiawatha line stations and in the Prospect Park/29th Avenue area.

Timeliness:

Is the amendment timely?

Is the amendment consistent with practices in surrounding areas?

Are there consequences in denying this amendment?

This amendment is timely given the finalization of the Central Corridor station locations and the adoption of the comprehensive plan amendment identifying West Bank and Stadium Village districts as transit station areas in July 2011. These stations are currently under construction and passenger service is expected to begin in 2014.

Most peer cities with light rail systems have zoning standards aimed at ensuring that station area development capitalizes on the public investment in passenger rail.

If the amendment is denied, the station areas in question would continue to include the protections and incentives found in the City's PO Overlay Districts, but they would not include the provisions that are specifically tailored toward LRT station areas.

Comprehensive Plan:

How will this amendment implement the Comprehensive Plan?

The following policies from *The Minneapolis Plan for Sustainable Growth* are most relevant to the proposed amendment:

Policy 1.13: Support high density development near transit stations in ways that encourage transit use and contribute to interesting and vibrant places

Relevant implementation steps:

1.13.3 Discourage uses that diminish the transit and pedestrian character of areas around transit stations, such as automobile services, surface parking lots, and drive-through facilities.

1.13.5 Concentrate highest densities and mixed use development adjacent to the transit station and along connecting corridors served by bus.

By adding the West Bank and Stadium Village areas to the list of transit station area PO Overlay Districts, new development will be eligible to obtain higher densities by incorporating a mix of uses, enclosing off-street parking, and providing affordable housing. Further, self service storage and commercial parking lots will become prohibited in these two PO Overlay Districts, in addition to the uses already prohibited in such overlay districts outside of LRT station areas.

Recommendation of the Community Planning and Economic Development Planning Division:

The Community Planning and Economic Development Planning Division recommends that the City Planning Commission and City Council adopt the above findings and **approve** the zoning code text amendment, amending chapter 551.