

DRAFT

**To:** City Council of Austin  
**From:** Urban Renewal Board  
**Date:** August 16, 2021  
**Subject:** Response to Planning Commission's action on the Urban Renewal Plan and Neighborhood Conservation Combining Districts

The Urban Renewal Board (URB) engaged in a multiyear effort to update the Urban Renewal Plan (URP) and the East 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> Street Neighborhood Conservation Combining Districts (NCCDs). The goal of this effort was to update the zoning regulations to support the URP and to provide consistency and clarity regarding entitlements. The Board's recommendations were formed with the assistance of consultants, staff, and community input. The following response to Planning Commission's (PC) amendments to the URP and NCCDs is to provide more background on the URB's recommendations.

The URB crafted and recommended the following vision statement for the URP:

*Champion sustainable revitalization reflecting diversity, achieving equity, and preserving East Austin's cultural history.*

While the URB agrees with PC that development should be community informed, compatible, and mixed use and previously considered the inclusion of this language in the vision statement, the URB does not believe this language should be the vision statement. This will be supported by establishing strategic goals or other elements of the URP.

On 11th Street, Council Resolution 20200423-039 directed modifications to the NCCD to both put in place the zoning to support the URP to maximize the value of the Urban Renewal Agency's properties while continuing to promote the vision set but the community and succinctly and clearly communicate property owners' entitlements. The URB considered and accepted the recommendation from staff and consultants that site development standards such as height, setbacks and impervious cover will effectively control the size of development and floor-to-area ratio (FAR) standards are not needed.

On 12th Street, Council Resolution 20210127-054 directed modifications to the NCCD to both update the zoning regulations to ensure consistency with anticipated modifications to the URP and include any additional amendments necessary to succinctly and clearly communicate property owners' entitlements. The URB does not believe a reduction to currently existing height and FAR entitlements recommended by PC aligns with this direction.

The URB refined the list of allowed land uses in the URP and NCCDs to support and active street and uses that serve the community. With respect to hotel-motel uses on 11th Street, the URB accepted the recommendation from staff and consultants that the corridor has developed sufficiently to permit hotel-motel use generally, which will make it consistent with what currently is permitted on 12th Street. Hotel-motel use is currently permitted on 12th Street, and the URB believes that making this use conditional on both corridors does not align with the direction provided under the two Council Resolutions.

The URB intended through the "save & except" provision to ensure that all existing single-family houses remain legal and are not subject to non-conforming regulations. The URB supports the PC action to ensure that if existing single-family homes are damaged or destroyed the property owner can rebuild as

single-family and that homeowners have the right in perpetuity to use and improve their properties with no limits on value of improvement, repair, rebuild or sale as associated with a single-family use currently.

The URB would respectfully ask City Council to support the Urban Renewal Plan and Neighborhood Conservation Combining Districts as presented by the URB.