

## PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION MEMORANDUM

**FROM:** Planning & Zoning Department    **DATE:** May 20, 2021  
**SUBJECT:** Discuss Transit Oriented Development zoning district standards.  
**PRESENTER:** Clayton Comstock, Planning Director

### **GENERAL DESCRIPTION:**

Staff is seeking input and direction from the Planning and Zoning Commission regarding potential zoning ordinance text amendments related to the TOD (Transit Oriented Development) zoning district standards.

The [Transit Oriented Development district](#) was added to the zoning ordinance in 2009 and last updated in March 2013. The purpose of the district is to support the development of the Iron Horse and Smithfield rail station areas into pedestrian-oriented, mixed-use urban development environments, with convenient access to shopping, employment, housing, and neighborhood retail services. The TOD design standards encourage an efficient, compact urban design and land use pattern that promotes pedestrian activity, reduces reliance on private automobiles, and allows property owners flexibility in land use, while prescribing a high level of detail in building design and form.

Since adoption of the TOD district and design standards, numerous projects have been completed in both station areas. The code also includes a special development plan (SDP) process that allows for consideration of modifications to the standards to address specific market opportunities or challenges in applying the code standards to the specific context of the project. Between 2010 and 2020, there were 30 SDP applications submitted for 19 different projects. The review and construction of development projects and the SDP applications allowed the Development Review Committee (DRC) to analyze how the standards are implemented and evaluate their effectiveness in achieving desired results.

Below are the key areas identified by the DRC where improvements could be made in the code standards to address common development challenges in the TOD station areas and respond to market shifts over the course of the past 12 years since the TOD code has been in place. Additional details and discussion will be provided at the work session.

- Building heights
- Mixed use definition and criteria
- Setbacks
- Street cross sections
- Definitions
- Private landscape standards
- Streetscape elements
- Structured parking requirement

Over the course of the next Commission meetings, staff will be seeking input on the portions of the TOD code that may need to be updated or revised. This review and analysis will include a review of the special development plans that have been approved to-date.

Staff recommends that Commissioners visit project sites that have developed under the TOD code and/or Special Development Plan (SDP) approvals to help in this analysis. These projects include the following.

- **Briar Pointe.** Located on the north side of Main Street adjacent to Dick Faram Park. TOD waivers included:
  - Front-entry garages
  - Customized street right-of-way
- **Smithfield Villas.** Located on the east side of Davis Boulevard between Northeast Parkway and Odell Street. This development is 100% complete and did not require any Special Development Plan approvals. The development met all TOD Code standards.
- **Individual residences.** Four (4) individual residences have been constructed in the TOD and have met the TOD standards, including window area and setback. These include:
  - 7800, 7802 and 7804 Arthur Drive. Note: The homeowners on these lots escrowed funds to defer sidewalk construction to a future date.
  - 8321 Odell Street
- **Iron Horse Commons.** Located on the east and west sides of Iron Horse Boulevard north of Browning Drive. [OCH Lifestyle Homes](#) and [CB Jeni Lifestyle Homes](#) each have model homes open in this community. TOD waivers included:
  - *Mixed use criteria* to allow primary residential use.
  - *Minimum lot width for single family*
    - Minimum 40 feet required for detached units; 27 detached single family lots approved less than 40 feet in width.
    - Minimum 25 feet required for attached units (townhomes); 22-foot width approved.
  - *Front façade window coverage.* The TOD code requires 30% of all street-facing facades have window/door openings. City Council approved 20% for side street facing facades.
  - *Open space distribution.* The Iron Horse Regulating Plan required a large centralized open space or park in the area. The approved application allowed the open spaces to be distributed throughout the development rather than be centralized.

- **Urban Trails.** Located on the northeast and northwest corners of Mid-Cities Boulevard and Holiday Lane. [OCH Lifestyle Homes](#) and [Cadence Homes](#) are the builders in this community and have an online presence. Cadence Homes has a model on site as well. TOD waivers for this community included:
  - *Change in TOD Character Zone.* The Smithfield Regulating Plan called for “Arterial Mixed Use,” which required primarily commercial uses.
  - *Townhome lot width.* The minimum width of a townhome lot or other attached single-family lot permitted by the TOD code is 25 feet. The applicant proposed 83 attached single-family lots with a lot width of 22 feet dispersed throughout the development. These lots support a 22-foot wide townhome product (59 lots) and a 19-foot wide duplex unit product (24 lots).
  - *Build-to-Zone.* Both the TOD Residential and Arterial Mixed Use subzones require front build-to-zones with a minimum setback of 10 feet. The applicant propose a front setback of seven (7) feet.
  - *Customized streets.* Many of the streets in Urban Trails were custom-designed to the neighborhood. Sidewalks were approved to be 5 feet rather than the minimum 6-foot required by TOD code.
  - *Ceiling heights.* The minimum ceiling heights were approved to be reduced by one foot.
- **Cavalli at Iron Horse.** Currently under construction, this multi-family / mixed use development can be evaluated on its form and scale at the southeast corner of Iron Horse Boulevard and Browning Drive. This development is a good example of an appropriately-scaled “street wall” of buildings along a street. Please review this development from the public streets of Iron Horse Boulevard, Browning Drive, and Hilltop Drive only, as it is still an active construction site.

If model homes are present and open to the public, consider visiting during model home business hours to review the TOD code requirements that affect the unit interiors. These include:

- Unit area
- Lot/unit widths
- Ceiling height
- Raised finished floor (do you step up into the unit from the sidewalk/street?)
- Window area

Click on the link to review the [Transit Oriented Development District Code](#). Also attached are the regulating plans for both the Iron Horse and Smithfield TOD areas.