

ITEM#: 8
DATE: 09-02-26

COMMISSION ACTION FORM

SUBJECT: APPLICANT REQUEST FOR TEXT AMENDMENT TO MODIFY THE NEIGHBORHOOD COMMERCIAL (NC) STANDARDS IN SECTION 29.801(3) AND THE PARKING STANDARDS IN SECTION 29.406(2).

BACKGROUND:

In May, City Council reviewed a request from Luke Jensen of RES Development to amend the Neighborhood Commercial (NC) zoning standards to facilitate an infill apartment project planned for 708 Burnett Avenue. The developer's narrative describes an interest in advancing the Downtown Guiding Vision with new downtown housing. City Council agreed to consider changes to the NC zoning as proposed by the applicant. See attached initial request and a concept rendering of the CityLight project.

RES has submitted a text amendment that specifically asks for a change to the NC standards governing maximum allowed Height, Floor Area Ratio (FAR) and the Parking Requirement for apartment uses located in the Core Land Use designation of Ames Plan 2040. The request is being made ahead of a potential multi-residential building project being proposed for a parcel of land in the NC zone just north of 6th street on Burnett Avenue on the north edge of the downtown area, ½ block south of Old Town. (See Attachment C- A copy of the request letter and project concept)

NC zoning is unique hybrid zoning district accommodating existing commercial and residential properties located within or adjacent to residential areas. These areas have a legacy of commercial uses and residential uses. NC properties are scattered across the City, see attached, with one significant concentration of properties on the north edge of Downtown between 6th Street and 7th Street, from Duff Avenue to Clark Avenue. This area acts as a transition between the Downtown commercial area to the south and the historic residential district to the north. (See Attachment A- Proposed Text Amendment)

Because of the wide variety of uses and locations in the city, NC zoning includes many features to address compatibility of new uses and to accommodate older buildings and uses. The zoning district includes standards requiring Special Use Permits for sites over 20,000 square feet, development standards for height and building size, minimal to no setbacks, parking location restrictions, and a full set of design guidelines regarding building design. The addendum included with the report provides more specific analysis of these requirements in consideration of the proposed text amendment.

PROPOSED CHANGES:

When considering the proposed changes, the applicant is aware that the planned CityLight project will require a Special Use Permit to evaluate the project's conformance to the design requirements and guidelines. Staff has assumed the Special Use Permit process applies to the applicant's project in the context of the proposed changes. A

Special Use Permit requires a Zoning Board of Adjustment approval and includes additional qualitative compatibility criteria that do not apply to administrative site plan review.

Additionally, staff has approached the proposal as being able to be distinguished in the Downtown area from applying citywide by the Plan 2040 Land Use Designation of Core. The Core Land Use include the Downtown and Lincoln Way area along with the NC area that encompasses the land from Grand Avenue to Duff Avenue and south from 7th Street to Lincoln Way. The Commission could consider this request in citywide context, but staff recommends focusing on the Core area adjacent to Downtown.

Maximum Height

The request proposes to extend the maximum height allowed in the NC zone from the current 35' to a new maximum height of 45 feet. This would extend the maximum allowed height by 10' additional feet. The intent of this change is to allow for four story buildings where three stories is effectively allowed by the current 35-foot height limit. For comparison three-stories is the height limit in low density residential zones where commercial areas have maximum height limits that generally equate to 5-8 stories.

Floor Area Ratio (FAR)

Floor Area Ratio is an overall building bulk regulation where the floor area of a building is divided by the land area of the site. A 1.0 Ratio means the land area equals the building area, a ratio greater than 1.0 means the building area exceeds the land area. Within Ames, a parking structure is exempt from this calculation.

The current Maximum Floor Area Ratio (FAR) is .70 FAR. The request proposes to eliminate the maximum FAR and have no maximum. This would allow FAR of any number. The FAR is designed to limit the total floor space of a building compared to the size of the land it sits on and a 70% ratio approximates a 2-3 story building with surface parking. Smaller lots commonly have larger value FARs and larger lots have lower value FARs. Based upon the developer's CityLight project the FAR would be over 1.0.

Parking Ratio

The proposals change the parking ratio requirement for apartments within area of Ames located in the Core land use designation from the current 1 parking stall per bedroom to 1 parking stall per dwelling unit when proposed with 2-bedrooms or less. This change would be made in Section 29.406(2). This change would only apply to properties within the Core land use designation area. The Core land use is the area that encompasses the land from Grand Avenue to Duff Avenue and south from 7th Street to Lincoln Way.

The applicants request for a text amendment only references the Core Land Use designation in regards to the proposed change to the Parking Ratio standards for apartments.

OPTIONS:

The City Council initially considered creating a new zoning district for the area between 6th and 7th, but determined that at this time only a handful of changes were desired to be considered for the CityLight project as requested. At that time, it was thought the changes would likely apply citywide, but staff is proposing to restrict their applicability to the Core designation.

The Commission can recommend all or some of the changes requested from the applicant if it determines that the requested changes would likely meet the intent of the zoning standards and guidelines even with the case-by-case review of a site. The Commission could also recommend additional text amendments for requirements to accompany the requested changes as well.

PUBLIC NOTICE:

At the time of initiating the text amendment City Council did not identify a specific notice or outreach requirement. As a result no specific notice requirements applies at the P&Z level of review. Staff emailed a representative of the Old Town Board about the proposal and updated the webpage for Development activity before the P&Z meeting.

The applicant did meet with the Board of Old Town earlier in the spring about the project and it was represented to Council as general support for the concept. However, there has also been input about how the details of the proposal will be compatible with the neighborhood at four stories without stepped back upper floors, the style and character of design as looking potentially too non-residential, and how reduced parking could affect street parking in the area.

ALTERNATIVES:

1. Recommend that City Council approve amending the NC Development Standards in Section 29.801(3) and the Parking Ratio Standards in Table 29.406(2) for apartments in the Core Land Use designation in Ames Plan 2040 as proposed in Attachment A.
2. Recommend that City Council approve amending NC Development Standards in Section 29.801(3) and the Parking Ratio Standards in Table 29.406(2) for uses in the Core Land Use Area as designated in Ames Plan 2040 with different standards than what the applicant has proposed in their Text Amendment request.
3. Recommend that City Council deny amending the NC Development Standards in Section 29.801(3) and the Parking Ratio Standards in Table 29.406(2) if it believes that the proposed text amendment is not appropriate and does not meet the goals of Ames Plan 2040 or the Ames Municipal Code.
4. Defer action on this item and request more information from staff.

PLANNING AND HOUSING DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION:

The Downtown Guiding Vision referenced by the applicant was a collaboration between the City and Downtown Ames on identifying priorities for the Downtown Area. It is not a formally adopted plan of the City, but it is generally compatible with policies of Ames Plan 2040. The Vision document identified a goal of adding housing to Downtown, it include opportunity areas north of 6th street that are outside of the traditional Downtown boundary of 6th Street.

After review of the intent and design standards in the Neighborhood Commercial (NC) Zone, staff finds that the requested text amendment does not fit all areas of NC zoned areas throughout the City and it would inappropriately allow for structures out of scale with the surroundings on many of the isolated NC zoned sites.

However, the NC zoned area north of downtown between 6th and 7th Streets is different than the other smaller NC zoned areas elsewhere in the community. The character of the area within the zone and in the surrounding areas can be seen to be appropriate to allow the text amendment changes as proposed provided that the area in the NC Zone area subject to the text amendment only be in the Core Land Use designation area as identified in Ames Plan 2040. Allowing for larger massed buildings with greater height and parking flexibility is more appropriate in this block of NC zoned area as opposed to other areas across the City that are zoned NC.

The parking reduction request follows a recent trends of reducing parking for smaller apartment sizes in walkable areas. Downtown has no parking required for small projects less than 18 units, where 1 is required per dwelling for larger projects. 1 space is also permissible in Campustown and the O-WUPED area. Staff believes the Core area is similar to the Downtown and development in this area can have access to on-street parking within the Downtown area with overnight parking passes if needed to address parking capacity issues.

Staff believes that conceptually the compatibility of these changes is true in the Core area and that the Special Use Permit process will be critical to address the varying location and site sizes in this area. For example, staff believes the south half of this area closer to 6th Street has a much higher degree of connection to Downtown and its commercial district than the north side that fronts 7th Street. The 7th Street frontage should be treated as a more limited residential area transitioning to the North while the remaining area is likely to have more opportunities for intensification and redevelopment.

The proposed change do not guarantee that the CityLight project will be approved as shown. The Special Use Permit process will have to evaluate the design features, height, and mass against all of the design guidelines and standards.

Therefore, the Planning and Housing Department recommends Alternative #1. Which is to recommend approval of the Text Amendment only within the NC Zoned land in the Core Land Use designation of Ames Plan 2040.

Addendum

NEIGHBORHOOD COMMERCIAL DESIGN STANDARDS ANALYSIS

The NC zone has a purpose statement and associated design standards that govern things such as architectural design. Within this sphere the presence and feel of development is guided by these standards. The NC zone is intended and expected in or near residential neighborhoods. The intent is to accommodate neighborhood style businesses and small to mid-sized mixed use or apartment buildings.

Uniquely the NC zoning does not require traditional setbacks because of the varied types of existing buildings. Normally, apartment development would require a 25-foot front yard setback and 10-12 feet of side yard setbacks in medium density residential zoning. Within NC, it allows for zero setback in some situations if it meets the design standards and guidelines. The proposed changes for height and mass increases do need to be considered within this context of setback reductions and design requirements.

This proposed text amendment can be seen to help accommodate additional housing in this area as a result of increasing the allowed building mass and height.

The specific design standards in NC call for architectural designs these include but are not limited to:

Exterior Materials

- Clay Brick
- Stone
- Precast Panels

Mass & Orientation

- Modulation
- Variation in Textures
- Windows
- Front setback reduction with Front Entrance facing Street

Roof Form Variation

- Gabled roofs
- Varying roofline design for flat roofs

The proposed text amendment will not change any of the design standards in the NC zone.

Relation of Text Amendment to FAR & Height in the NC Standards

Making changes to the Height and FAR standards can be seen to alter the way a development within the NC zoned areas is anticipated to look and feel. The FAR limit specifically is designed to control the mass of a building relative to the size of the lot it is located on.

Eliminating FAR would allow for larger massed buildings on a given lot. This compatibility factor with the NC zone standards is complex across the community as the NC zone contains existing development and sits adjacent to various areas of varying development styles. Additionally, this change is compounded by allowing a 10' increase in height limit from 35' currently to 45'. Right now a building could typically not exceed 3-stories in the NC zone. At 45' it is possible a 4-story building could be constructed.

For example, from Clark Avenue to Duff Avenue between 6th and 7th Streets the NC zone is positioned between the Old Town Historic District to the north and the Downtown Service Center (DSC) zone to the south. A mix of building types are located within the NC zone here which include Fareway, small to medium sized businesses and offices, small apartments and churches. To the south is the Downtown Service Center (DSC) zone which could contain taller buildings that cover an entire lot such as large mixed use or office buildings. The DSC standards could accommodate buildings up to 100 feet.

In general the area has some larger scale buildings such as churches, the post office and the Sheldon Munn. North and east of Burnett there are two older high rise buildings which exceed 4 -stories.

In other areas of the community the NC zone is on smaller clusters of land and located within or adjacent to mostly single-family residential homes and lower density residential zoned area surrounding the NC zone. Allowing for greater mass of new buildings could impact the intended look and feel of the NC zone in the context of an existing low density residential neighborhood.

In many respects, most areas across the City zoned NC were not intended to accommodate larger massed buildings of the height and unlimited FAR such proposed in this text amendment request. Staff finds that the proposed changes don't generally fit many NC zoned areas across the city. **However, the area between 6th and 7th streets is a larger block of zoned land and different than the smaller clusters found across the City.**

Core Land Use Designation

Between Grand and Duff as well as 6th and 7th Streets the NC zone is located within Core Land Use designation of Ames Plan 2040 which provides support for higher densities of mixed development. The DSC zoned area to the south of 6th street encompassing downtown is also within the Core Land Use area. This is unique to other areas of the City where NC zoning is located as this area is the only area Core Land Use designation underlies the NC zone. (Core Land Use Excerpt Attached in this report as Attachment C).

The Core Land Use designation has a goal of supporting development that expands a variety of new uses, living environments into underutilized surrounding areas while reinforcing adjacent neighborhoods. It also endeavors to provide opportunities for

business, innovation and small business while maintaining status as significant centers of public life. Additionally, the Core areas expect Mixed Use Districts near downtown, accommodating a variety of uses including medium and high density residential and being pedestrian oriented often with enhanced streetscapes. No new zoning has been written to implement the Core designation and we currently rely on the NC zoning and DSC zoning to implement its concepts.

The existing and nearby buildings within the NC zone and to the south in the DSC zone can be found to be compatible in various circumstances and the construction of a 45' larger massed building in this area, subject to review of a Special Use Permit could be harmonious and in character with the surroundings. This also reflects the uniqueness of the NC zone and its locations across the City.

Parking Standards Amendment

The proposal to allow for 1 parking stall per unit when a project proposes 2 bedrooms or less per unit, for apartments in the Core Land Use area reflects this areas nature adjacent to downtown and adjacent to city owned properties with public parking located nearby as reflecting the character of the emerging development pattern in the immediate area. There are existing public parking areas in the neighborhood to the south and east with some capacity to accommodate vehicles related to any future development in this area.

In areas outside the Core Land Use designation parking ratios for apartments will remain the same as they are now. By comparison this would mean the following hypothetical examples:

- A 30-unit multi-family residential project of 2 bedrooms per unit (60 bedrooms) would require 60 parking stalls on site to meet parking standards. In the Core Land Use in NC a multi-family project would only require 30 stalls on site to meet the standard under the proposed amendment. This effectively would half the number of required stalls on site.
- If that same project contained only 1 bedroom units, the current standard and standard outside the Core Land Use would require 1.5 stalls per unit. This would require 45 stalls on site. Under the new standards this would require 30 stalls on site in the Core Land Use area.

Staff believes that in the Core Land Use Area adjacent to downtown the reduction in parking requirement for apartments is acceptable as it meets the intent of the Core Land Use areas promoting walkability and unique livable environments.

Special Use Permits

Special Use Permits are required for development of NC zoned sites when the site size exceeds 20,000 square feet in area. This means if a lot size is 19,000 square

feet, then a Special Use Permit is not required as part of the approval process. A Special Use Permit requires that a specific project be found to be harmonious and compatible with the surrounding environment and neighborhood. The proposed project mentioned earlier this report on Burnette is on a site exceeding 20,000 square feet and will require approval of a Site Plan with a Special Use Permit at the Zoning Board of Adjustment. It is possible moderately sized project in the NC zone just under 20,000 square feet would never need a Special Use Permit as part of Site Development review. Staff believes this makes the restriction of allowing the text amendment to apply to the Core Land Use Area designation in the NC zone near Downtown the most appropriate.

Attachment A Proposed Zoning Code Amendments

Sec. 29.801. “NC” NEIGHBORHOOD COMMERCIAL ZONING STANDARDS.

- (1) **Purpose.** The Neighborhood Commercial (NC) zone is intended for small areas in or near residential neighborhoods. The zone encourages the provision of small-scale retail and service use for nearby residents. Uses are restricted in size to promote a local orientation and to limit adverse impacts on nearby residential areas. Development is intended to be pedestrian-oriented and compatible with the scale of surrounding residential areas. Parking areas are strictly regulated, to promote compatibility with the character of surrounding residential development and the intended pedestrian orientation of the uses.
- (2) **Permitted Uses.** The uses permitted in the NC Zone are set forth in Table 29.801(2) below:

**Table 29.801(2)
Neighborhood Commercial (NC) Zone Uses**

USE CATEGORY	STATUS	APPROVAL REQUIRED	APPROVAL AUTHORITY
RESIDENTIAL USES			
Group Living	N		
Household Living	Y	SDP Minor	Staff
HOUSEHOLD LIVING ACCESSORY USES			
Home Occupation	Y	--	--
Home Share	Y	ZP	ZEO
Hosted Home Share	Y	ZP	ZEO
SHORT-TERM LODGING			
Bed & Breakfast Establishment	Y, subject to §29.1302	SP	ZBA
Vacation Lodging	Y	ZP	ZEO
OFFICE USES	Y	SDP Minor	Staff
TRADE USES			
Retail Sales and Services – General	Y	SDP Minor	Staff
Retail Trade – Automotive, etc.	N		

USE CATEGORY	STATUS	APPROVAL REQUIRED	APPROVAL AUTHORITY
Entertainment, Restaurant and Recreation Trade	Y	SDP Minor	Staff
Wholesale Trade	N		
INDUSTRIAL USES			
Industrial Service	N		
INSTITUTIONAL USES			
Colleges and Universities	N		
Community Facilities	Y	SDP Minor	Staff
Social Services Providers	Y	SDP Minor	Staff
Medical Centers	N		
Parks and Open Areas	N		
Religious Institutions	Y	SDP Minor	Staff
Schools	N		
TRANSPORTATION, COMMUNICATIONS AND UTILITY USES			
Passenger Terminals	N		
Basic Utilities	Y	SDP Minor	Staff
Commercial Parking	Y, only as an accessory use for remote parking pursuant to §29.406(18)	SDP Minor	Staff
Personal Wireless Communication Facilities	Y	SP	ZBA
Radio and TV Broadcast Facilities	N		
Rail Line and Utility Corridors	N		
Railroad Yards	N		
MISCELLANEOUS USES			
Commercial Outdoor Recreation	N		
Child Day Care Facilities	Y	SDP Minor	Staff
Detention Facilities	N		
Major Event Entertainment	N		
Vehicle Service Facilities	N, except convenience stores in combination with gasoline service and car wash, by Special Use Permit	SP	ZBA

Y = Yes: permitted as indicated by required approval.

N = No: prohibited

SP = Special Use Permit: See Section 29.1503

ZP = Building/Zoning Per it required; See Section 29.1501

SDP Minor = Site Development Plan Minor. See Section 29.1502(3)

SDP Major = Site Development Plan Major: See Section 29.1502(4)

ZBA = Zoning Board of Adjustment

ZEO = Zoning Enforcement Officer

(Ord. No. 4374; 11-27-18, Ord. No. 4398; 11-12-19; Ord. No. 4427, 12-22-20; Ord. No. 4488, 02-14-23)

(3) **Zone Development Standards.** The zone development standards for the NC Zone are set forth in Table 29.801(3) below:

Table 29.801(3)
Neighborhood Commercial (NC) Zone Development Standards

DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS	NC ZONE
Maximum FAR	0.70 For Areas Outside Core Land Use No Limit For Commercial and Multi-Family Uses Inside Core Land Use
Maximum Site Development Size	20,000 sf. Greater than 20,000 sf requires a Special Use Permit according to Sec. 29.1503
Minimum Lot Frontage	50 ft.
Minimum Building Setbacks:	
Primary Facade with a primary public pedestrian entrance	0 ft.
Primary or Secondary Facade with no primary public pedestrian entrance	10 ft., may be reduced to 5 ft., where there is enhanced design interest with features such as storefront windows, building relief, high quality textured building materials, e.g. stone, brick, and architectural projections
Side and Rear Interior Lot Line	0
Side and Rear Lot Line Abutting a Residentially Zoned Lot	5ft. side (for RM & RH zones) & 10 ft. side for RL, UCRM & RLP zones, or a historic district; 15 ft. rear
Maximum Building Setbacks: Front Lot Line	60 ft.
Landscaping in Setbacks Abutting a Residentially Zoned Lot	High Screen. See Sec. 29.403
Maximum Building Coverage	40%
Minimum Landscaped Area	15%
Maximum Height	35 ft. Areas Outside Core Land Use 45ft. Areas Inside Core Land Use
Parking Allowed Between Buildings and Streets	No, for the primary and secondary façade. May be allowed between additional secondary facades and the street, when the site is bounded by three or more streets.
Drive-Through Facilities Permitted	No
Outdoor Display Permitted	Plants and produce only. See Sec. 29.405
Outdoor Storage Permitted	No
Trucks and Equipment Permitted	No

(Ord. No. 4374;11-27-18)

(4) **Architectural Standards.** The following standards apply to all new development. Additions are excluded from strict compliance based upon existing building and site conditions.

(a) Exterior Building Materials.

(i) More than 50% of the total exterior wall surface area shall be high quality and highly durable, such as stone, clay brick and/or pre-cast panels with the appearance to the pedestrian of stone or brick. Measurement of the exterior wall area:

(a) Does not include windows, doors or their trim; and

(b) Includes gable ends of roofs or ends of dormers if they are on the same visual plane as an exterior wall surface.

(ii) Prohibited materials are:

(a) Pre-cast panels with surface appearance other than brick or stone;

(b) Smooth-faced concrete block; and

(c) Painted masonry.

(b) Facade Treatment.

(i) To diminish the building mass in order to be similar in scale to nearby residential structures and to provide architectural interest and variety, each façade that faces a street shall be subdivided and

proportioned with at least two of the following elements so that the façade has an interrupted length at least every 40 feet:

- (a) Modulation (i.e., change in wall plane or step-backs off-set by at least two feet feet);
- (b) Change in material or texture, including masonry brick pattern;
- (c) Patterns of columns, or pilasters with at least a six-inch depth, or equivalent elements that subdivide the wall;
- (d) Fenestration, such as storefront windows or doors,
- (e) Projecting structures such as arcades, arbors, or awnings, with a minimum depth of six-feet.

(ii) Architectural features, such as columns, arcades, arbors, and awnings, may protrude into setbacks.

(c) **Roof Design.**

(i) In order to be compatible with the scale of surrounding residential uses, and give emphasis to architectural elements that will help divide the mass of a large building into smaller identifiable pieces. All buildings shall incorporate one or more of the following groups of roof forms:

- (a) Roof elements commonly found on unattached or attached single-family dwellings, such as pitched roofs equal to or steeper than 6:12, gables, dormers, or cupolas with a durable, high-quality surface, such as architectural shingles, standing seam, metal or tile;
- (b) Variations in roof forms and also variation in height of roof elements; and/or
- (c) Roof forms that correspond to and bring attention to elements and functions such as entrances, arcades, porches, building corners and/or focal points.

(ii) Flat roofs are permitted for commercial buildings, but only if concealed by parapets, sloped roof forms or other architecturally integrated features and also include variation in height of these roof elements. Flat roofs shall not be permitted for any structure with a residential use.

(Ord. No. 4374;11-27-18)

(5) **Pedestrian Circulation.**

(a) Site design shall include a pedestrian pathway system on the perimeter and within the site to support neighborhood access from surrounding areas and transit stops on its periphery;

(b) An on-site sidewalk shall connect the street to a primary pedestrian entrance of the primary structure on the site. On corner lots, on-site sidewalks shall connect both streets to a primary pedestrian entrance of the building; and

(c) Where two or more buildings are on the same lot or on adjacent lots, on-site sidewalks shall connect at least one pedestrian entrance of each building.

(Ord. No. 4374;11-27-18)

(6) **Signage Standards.** The sign standards for the NC Zone are set forth below:

(a) No signs are permitted in the Neighborhood Commercial (NC) zoning district except those signs that conform to the standards and restrictions stated in this section.

(b) The only types of signs permitted in the Neighborhood Commercial (NC) zoning district are wall signs and monument signs.

(c) **Size restrictions.**

(i) A wall sign is a sign that is displayed by being affixed to the outside of an exterior wall of a building in which at least one business is located. Wall signs shall be affixed to only those walls that face a street. A wall sign shall be no larger than sixteen square feet, except that a wall sign may be up to thirty-two square feet in size if it is on a lot that abuts an arterial street, and the wall sign faces the arterial street.

(ii) Exception. Single tenant commercial buildings exceeding 20,000 square feet may increase the size of a wall sign, while not exceeding a maximum of two facades with signage. The maximum size for the wall signs on each façade shall be no greater than:

(a) One wall sign not to exceed thirty-two square feet, and

(b) One wall sign not to exceed seventy square feet.

(iii) Monument signs shall be no larger than sixteen square feet, excluding the base; and no more than one such sign is permitted for each principal building on a lot. A monument sign is not permitted on a lot that is not the site of a principal building. If the principal building is on a lot that abuts an arterial street, the monument sign may be as large as thirty-two square feet, excluding the base.

(d) Height restrictions. The maximum permissible height for a monument sign is eight feet, including the sign base; that is, the top of a monument sign shall be no more than eight feet above the grade of the site

on which it is erected. However, the height of a monument sign, including the base, may be up to twelve feet if the sign is erected on a lot that abuts on an arterial street.

(e) **Materials.** Monument signs must incorporate materials of the same type, quality and color as the principal materials of the building.

(f) **Lighting restrictions.** The lighting of both wall signs and monument signs shall use external direct or indirect lighting sources, without the use of up lighting or internal illumination directed outward.

(Ord. No. 4374;11-27-18)

(7) **Lighting.** Outdoor lighting shall comply with Section 29.411 and also comply with the following:

(a) Types of outdoor lighting prohibited:

(i) Bare lamps;

(ii) Neon, fiber optics rope, L.E.D. or other types of strip style lighting;

(iii) Illuminated translucent materials;

(iv) Illuminated striping or banding; and

(b) Pole mounted lights exceeding 25 feet in height.

(c) General floodlighting of buildings is not permitted. Lighting may be used to highlight specific architectural features, such as building entrances, provided that the light output shall be directed totally to that specific architectural feature.

(Ord. No. 4374;11-27-18)

(8) **Parking Requirements.**

(a) All parking is required to be provided on-site as required in Table 29.406(2). However, if on-street parking is available on the street immediately adjacent to the site, those on-street stalls may be counted towards the required parking at 1:1 ratio for commercial uses only. For parking to be available it must be designated for on-street parking by the City.

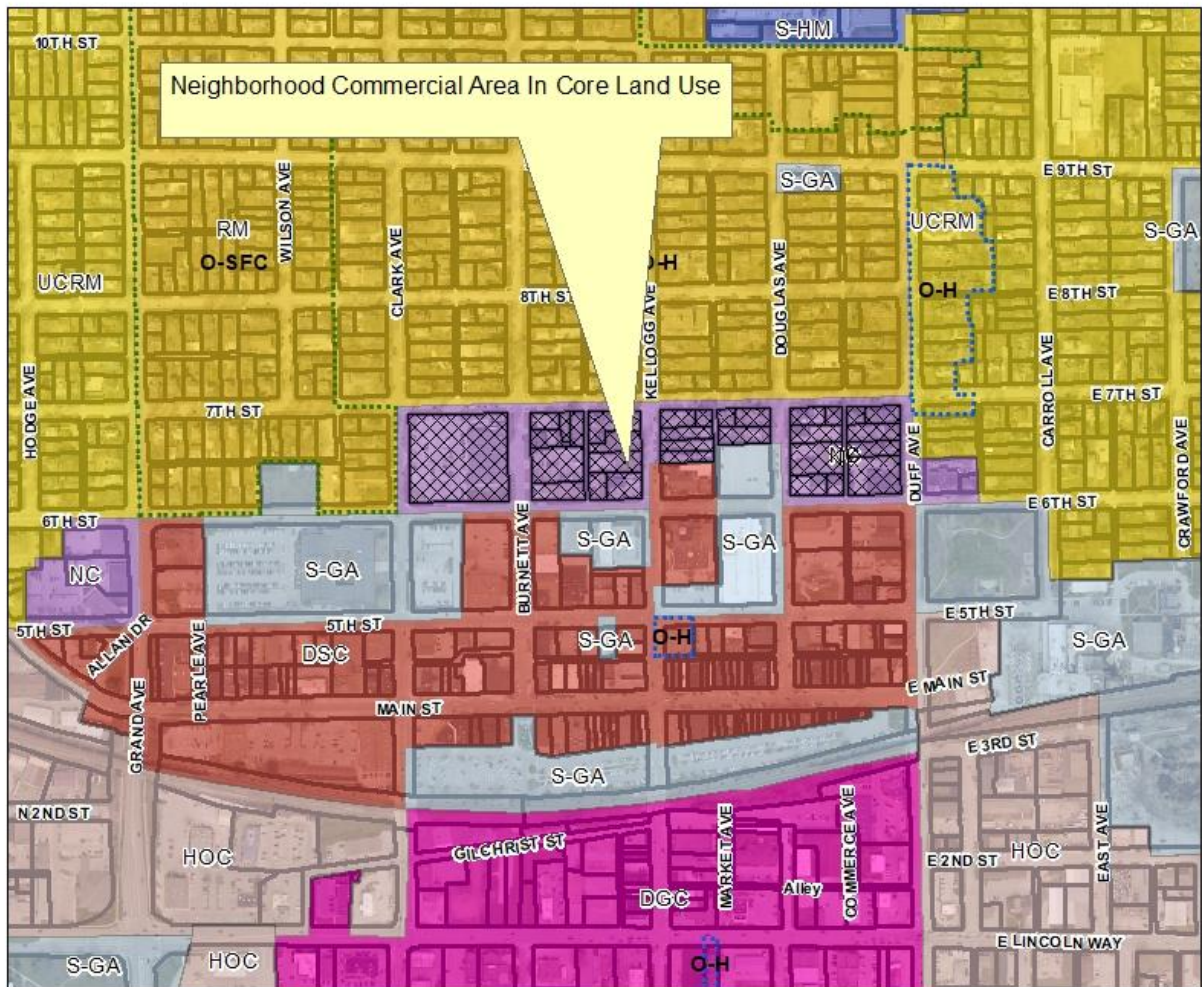
(b) Provide bicycle parking at locations that do not obstruct the flow of pedestrians and are located adjacent to customer entrances.

(Ord. No. 4374;11-27-18)

Table 29.406(2)
Minimum Off-Street Parking Requirements Excerpt

PRINCIPAL LAND USE	ALL ZONES EXCEPT DOWNTOWN AND CAMPUS TOWN SERVICE CENTER ZONES	DOWNTOWN AND CAMPUS TOWN SERVICE CENTER ZONES
Apartment Dwellings	1.5 space/RU; for one-bedroom units 1 space/bedroom for units of 2 bedrooms or more 1.25 space/bedroom for units of 2 bedrooms or more in University Impacted (O-UIE and O-UIW) 1 space/residential unit for an Independent Senior Living Facility Townhome 5 Units or less (See §29.410(3)) 1 Space/RU in NC Zone in Core Land Use Area- Only if 2 bedrooms or less	DSC Developments with up to 18 units: 0-2 bedrooms units: NONE 3+ bedroom units: 1 space/RU Developments with more than 18 units: 1 space/RU CSC – All Developments 1 space/RU

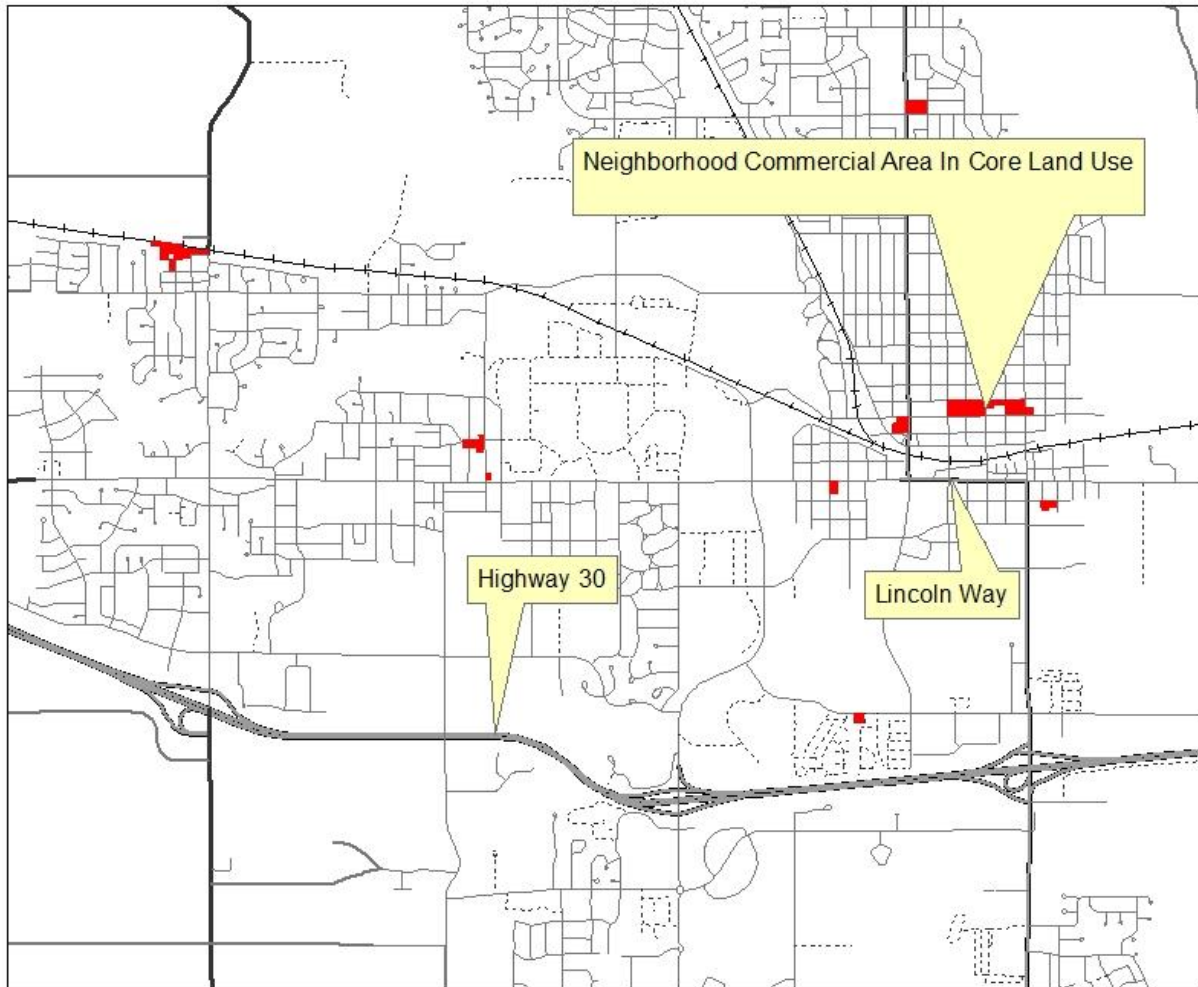
Attachment B- Zoning Map



Zoning Map NC Zone Shaded Properties Affected

- Legend**
- Overlay District**
- Overlay Zones**
- Single Family Conservation Overlay "O-SFC" (sec 29.1.10.1)
 - Historic Preservation Overlay "O-H", Historic Preservation Overlay "O-H" (sec 29.1.10.2)
- Zoning District**
- Residential**
- Residential Medium Density Zone "RM" (sec 29.7.02)
 - Urban Core Residential Medium Density Zone "UCRM" (sec 29.7.02)
- Commercial**
- Neighborhood Commercial Zone "NC" (sec 29.8.01)
 - Highway-Oriented Commercial Zone "HOC" (sec 29.8.04)
 - Downtown Service Center "DSC" (sec 29.8.08)
 - Downtown Gateway Commercial Area
- Special Purpose**
- Hospital-Medical District "S-HM" (sec 29.10.01)
 - Government/Airport District "S-GA" (sec 29.10.02)
- WATERS**
- 48676E344203N.sld
- ROB**
- Red: Band 1
 - Green: Band 2
 - Blue: Band 3
- STREET LABELS - ALL @ 3000' FT**
- Thruway
 - US Road
 - City Road
 - County Secondary
 - County Hwy
 - State Hwy
 - US Hwy
 - US Interstate Hwy

Attachment B Cont.- City Wide NC Zone Locations



NC Zoned Sites City Wide
(In Red)

Legend

- Zoning District selection
- Private
- - - - - ISU Road
- City Road
- County Secondary
- County Hwy
- State Hwy
- US Hwy
- US Interstate Hwy

Attachment C- Core Land Use Excerpt & Map

LAND USE: CATEGORIES

Core

- » Principal mixed-use central districts and identifiable image centers for Ames: Downtown and Campustown.
- » Variety of uses, with a focus on street-oriented "main street" retail, food and beverage establishments, civic and public facilities, offices, services, medium and high-density residential.
- » Pedestrian orientation, with well-developed sidewalk environments, often with enhanced streetscapes.

- » Parking provided on-street or in public lots or structures, rather than by individual businesses.
- » Major transit centers.
- » Often includes locations that host special events, festivals, or other civic activities for the district or larger community.

APPLICABLE EXISTING ZONING CATEGORIES

- » DSC Downtown Service Center
- » S-GA Government
- » CSC Campustown Service Center
- » DGC Downtown Gateway Commercial

GOALS

- » Maintain status as significant centers of public life and community.
- » Continue to provide opportunities for business innovation and small business.
- » Expand with a variety of new uses, including living environments, into underutilized surrounding areas, while reinforcing adjacent neighborhoods.



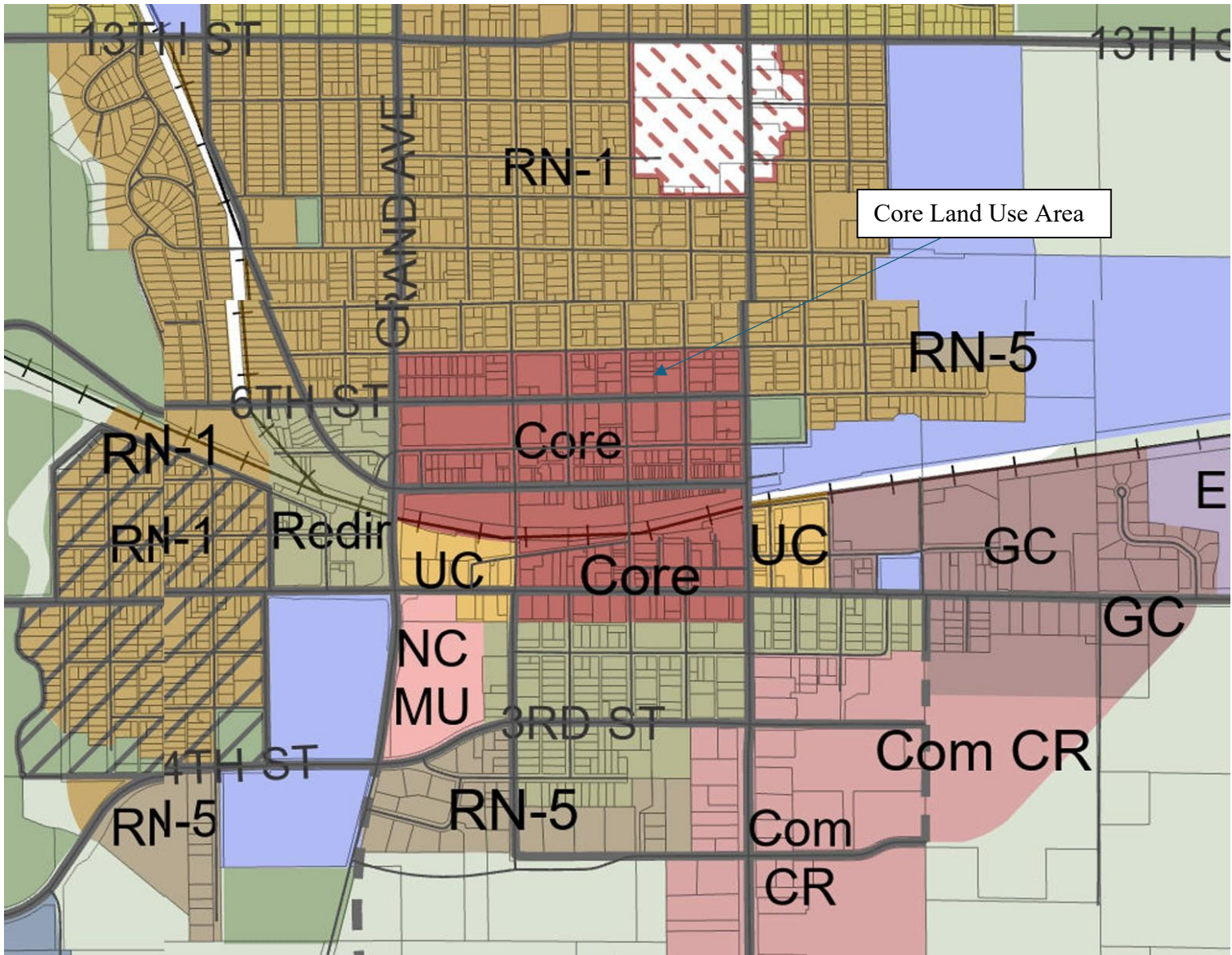
DEVELOPMENT GUIDELINES

- » Continued investment and updating of the public environment as community destinations.
- » Recognize areas as employment and activity areas, including support for nightlife.
- » Reinforce design standards and goals with enhanced building materials, large windows, pedestrian orientation, and design articulation.
- » Improvement of routes and facilities for alternative transportation, including bicycle infrastructure and parking; and comfortable and direct connections to the city shared use path system.
- » Support for continued urban commercial and mixed-use development.
- » Support high intensity floor area ratios and minimum development intensity standards.
- » Avoid prominent surface parking lots and plan for structured parking with new development and redevelopment.

PUBLIC ACTIONS

- » Support marketing and management programs for maintenance, event programming, and district promotion.
- » Update specific district development plans and design guidelines.
- » Evaluate street sections to retain customer convenience including on-street parking availability to serve the broader community. Emphasize use by pedestrians and plan for bicyclists and users of micro-mobility modes.
- » Allow high intensity infill development options that meet street level design objectives.
- » Support Historic District design character for Downtown.
- » Consider district expansion opportunities south of Main Street in Downtown and in carefully designated areas adjacent to Campustown. Establish a sharp edge to this redevelopment activity.
- » Evaluate commercial options in light of changing online retail environment.
- » Review existing ordinances and right-of-way use to maximize potential for outdoor dining as appropriate.

Attachment C Cont.- Land Use Map- Core Land Use Area



Attachment D- Applicants Text Amendment Request Letter and Project Rendering

Hall, Renee

From: Diekmann, Kelly
Sent: Friday, April 10, 2026 2:11 PM
To: Hall, Renee
Subject: Non-Agenda Luke Jensen Burnett Site Referral

Renee, please include in the Non-Agenda Packet this week.

On Wed, Apr 8, 2026 at 2:49 PM Luke Jensen <luke@resgi.com> wrote:

Mayor and Council,

I'm reaching out regarding the Downtown Ames vision plan presented and CC (maybe) adopted last year. I'm interested in bringing forward a high-density, urban multifamily project that supports the goal of creating a true "18-hour downtown." Increasing downtown residents to support retail, restaurants, and activity makes total sense. We need more people living downtown to build on the current energy.

I have identified a development site at 608 Burnett which is currently a .5 acre parking lot. My plan includes roughly 38 modern rental units comprising studios, 1 beds and 2 bed units. There would be some amenity space for residents along with both structured and surface parking. The property would be geared towards urban dwellers who appreciate and value the location and proximity to the urban core area along with employment and entrepreneurial opportunities. Additionally, the draw is strong towards cultural and civic opportunities in the area.

The property is located in the Neighborhood Commercial zoning district. This zoning needs some modernization to meet the goals of the Downtown Ames vision plan. Specifically, we need to look at the following (I think can be achieved in a text amendment):

- Building height/stories-I need to go taller to create some density given the scarcity of the available land. I am proposing a 4 story building with a flat roof. Roughly 42'-45' tall.
- Parking: parking ratios are outdated and far too automobile dependent. As the parking requirements stand today I am ~20 spaces short of meeting the standard. I'm trying to supply adequate parking of 1 space per unit. Many of the residents will choose this area as there are far more multimodal transportation opportunities being in the urban core.

- Updated and competitive Development Toolkit
 - Urban Revitalization Tax Abatement
 - At today's land and construction costs and market rents, a project that meets the City's urban design expectations does not financially pencil without meaningful economic tools in place.
 - I am proposing a 10 year 75% tax abatement program. This would get some immediate revenue to the city and not wait 7-10 years like some of the other communities programs.

I believe Ames is ready to see downtown momentum and I believe we need one project to "go" to give courage and confidence in market support and viability.

I'm ready to move a high quality project forward. I request the council and staff support on zoning modifications as well as tax incentives and support for the Iowa Workforce Housing Tax Credit Application.

Lastly, timing-I have a 120 day due diligence timeline from March 1st. I need to move quickly and decisively to get confidence in the project's viability. The Workforce Housing Tax Credit application due date is June 10, 2026.

Thanks,
Luke

Kelly Diekmann
Planning and Housing Director

main
kelly.diekmann@cityofames.org
www.CityofAmes.org

Project Rendering

