



Legislation Text

File #: 09-0502, **Version:** 2

Resolution to Approve Downtown Plan Amendments (CPC Recommendation: Approval - 7 Yeas and 0 Nays)

Approval of this resolution will adopt the Downtown Plan, as amended, as a subplan of the City Master Plan and incorporate the Future Land Use Map and Zoning Plan for the downtown into the City Master Plan. City Council considered an earlier version of this plan on April 20, 2009, when it voted to return the plan to Planning Commission for consideration of additional amendments. The attached plan incorporates two text amendments and several map amendments in response to City Council's action.

Background

In October 2007, City Council passed Resolutions R-07-494 and R-07-495, which approved the downtown zoning and urban design recommendations developed by two citizen advisory committees as part of the A2D2 initiative. The resolutions requested that City Planning Commission develop amendments to the Downtown Plan to support the implementation of these recommendations.

The original Downtown Plan was adopted by the Planning Commission and City Council as an element of the master plan in 1988. The plan was updated in 1992 as part of the Central Area Plan process. The amended plan has been edited from the original to provide a framework of objectives and action strategies that retains much of the same wording as the original. Changes to the narrative were made to incorporate recommendations from the Downtown Development Strategies Implementation Plan (Calthorpe Report), the A2D2 advisory committee reports, and the Non-Motorized Transportation Plan, as well as input from the public and Washtenaw County agencies.

Proposed Plan

Highlights of the Downtown Plan amendments include:

- The existing condition section has been updated and new sections on transportation and infrastructure systems have been added.
- Guiding values for infrastructure capacity and sustainability have been added.
- Recommendations for sustainable public infrastructure systems have been added.
- A future land use map has been added.
- A section on non-motorized recommendations has been added, incorporating the recommendations of the Non-Motorized Transportation Plan.
- The parking principles recommended by the A2D2 parking and transportation advisory committee have been incorporated into the Parking section.
- The recommendations of the A2D2 development review advisory committee have been

incorporated into the Development Review section.

- The recommendations of the A2D2 zoning and urban design advisory committees, such as additional premium options, zoning changes and design guidelines, have been incorporated throughout the document, where appropriate.
- Changes recommended by the Washtenaw County agencies as part of the outside review have been incorporated throughout the document, where appropriate.
- The section on Streetscape improvements has been edited to remove the references for pedestrian, shared and vehicular streets, since this classification system is no longer used in developing streetscape plans.
- A “Zoning Plan” has been added to provide specific guidance on implementation of the plan’s recommendations in the form of zoning regulations.

Amendments to February 2009 Plan

At its meeting of April 20, 2009, City Council voted to return the Downtown Plan adopted by Planning Commission in February 2009. Council members noted that the plan did not align with changes Council made to the downtown zoning amendments at first reading on April 6, 2009. City Council requested that Planning Commission consider amendments to the Downtown Plan to support the changes.

The following changes to the Downtown Plan were adopted by Planning Commission on May 19, 2009 and are incorporated into the attached draft.

1. *Core Areas* (page 28). Action Strategy (4) was revised to read: “Incorporate recommended land use and urban design objectives, including the consideration of height limits, into overlay zoning districts for the review and approval of projects in the Core Areas.”
2. *Recommended Zoning Plan* (page 53). Section 2) *Downtown Interface District, Scale* was revised to read: “Properties in the Downtown Interface district should have a minimum height of two stories and a maximum height of up to 6 stories. Placement standards should require a small amount of open space to be maintained and limit the building coverage to 70-80% of the lot. Additional building massing and setback requirements for Downtown Interface properties should be set by the character overlay districts.”
3. *Downtown Planning Zones: Future Land Use Map* (Figure 9 on page 30). The map was revised to expand the Interface area one parcel east on East Kingsley and to include a proposed South University Interface area. The Planning Commission considered the Council’s proposal to change the Core area designation outside of the South University DDA boundary to an Interface designation, but determined the Interface area should be limited to the two parcels that directly abut residential properties on Forest Court. The attached map illustrates this change.
4. *Future Base and Overlay Zoning Plan* (Figure 14 on page 55). The map was revised to include the proposed East Kingsley D2 zoning, the proposed East Huron 1 and East Huron 2 character areas, and the proposed South University area D2 zoning.

Review and Comment

The amended Downtown Plan was first distributed for outside public comment in May 2008. Comments were compiled by the Washtenaw County Department of Planning & Environment and transmitted to the Planning Commission in July 2008. The Planning Commission held duly noticed public hearings on August 5, 2008, February 19, 2009 and May 19, 2009. The Planning Commission adopted the amended plan at its meeting of February 19, 2009 and adopted additional amendments on May 19, 2009.

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Reviewed By: Mark Lloyd, Planning and Development Services Manager and Jayne Miller, Community Services Administrator

Approved By: Roger W. Fraser, City Administrator

Whereas, The Downtown Plan was last updated in February 1992;

Whereas, In October 2007, City Council passed Resolutions R-07-494 and R-07-495, which requested that the City Planning Commission initiate amendments to the Downtown Plan to support the implementation of the Ann Arbor Discovering Downtown (A2D2) zoning and urban design advisory committee recommendations;

Whereas, The Master Plan Review Committee of the Planning Commission worked with staff to develop draft amendments to the Downtown Plan from January through April 2008;

Whereas, The City Planning Commission in June 2008 distributed for review the draft Downtown Plan amendments, consistent with the State Planning Enabling Act (PA 33 of 2008);

Whereas, Duly-noticed public hearings were held by the City Planning Commission on August 5, 2008, February 19, 2009 and May 19, 2009; and

Whereas, The City Planning Commission adopted the Downtown Plan, as amended, on February 19, 2009 and adopted further amendments to the Downtown Plan on May 19, 2009;

RESOLVED, That City Council adopt the Downtown Plan, as amended, as a subplan of the City Master Plan;

RESOLVED, That the Future Land Use Map and Zoning Plan for the downtown be incorporated into the City Master Plan; and

RESOLVED, That city council directs staff to revise the proposed downtown zoning map to be consistent with the approved downtown plan, and that the map along with the proposed downtown zoning ordinances that are scheduled for 2nd reading on July 6th be brought back to council for an additional 1st reading on that date.

As amended by Ann Arbor City Council on June 15, 2009