



Zoning Committee

REQUEST

Current Zoning: UC (Uptown Core)
Proposed Zoning: UC(EX) (Uptown Core, Exception)

LOCATION

Approximately 25.30 acres located east of West Morehead Street, north of South Mint Street, and west of South Graham Street.
(Council District 2 - Graham)

PETITIONER

Panthers Stadium, LLC

ZONING COMMITTEE ACTION/ STATEMENT OF CONSISTENCY

The Zoning Committee voted 7-0 to recommend APPROVAL of this petition and adopt the consistency statement as follows:

To Approve:

This petition is found to be **consistent** with the *2040 Policy Map* (2022) based on the information from the staff analysis and the public hearing, and because:

- The *2040 Policy Map* (2022) calls for the Regional Activity Center Place Type.

Therefore, we find this petition to be reasonable and in the public interest, based on the information from the staff analysis and the public hearing, and because:

- Developments such as stadiums and their associated facilities result in unique zoning scenarios that challenge typical ordinance regulations and prompt innovative solutions to contend with regulatory limitations. Exception (EX) conditional rezonings are a mechanism by which quantitative and some qualitative zoning and streetscape standards may be modified in exchange for the commitment to public benefits in at least two out of three categories: city improvements, public amenities, and sustainability measures. EX petitions should be reserved for situations where extenuating circumstances make meeting ordinance standards an undue burden.
- A stadium and its associated facilities have atypical site and building designs that do not adhere to the base standards of the UC zoning district. Consequently, this proposal requests EX provisions to modify standards such as blank wall areas and transparency levels.

- This petition would allow the site to be redeveloped and updated under a UDO zoning district to better utilize the property and enhance public use of a site that serves as an economic hub and community focal point.
- The petition commits to several public benefits in exchange for requested EX provisions. Publicly accessible open space that amounts to at least 25% or greater above ordinance requirements will be reserved across the site and adequately amenitized to function as public plazas and festival spaces. The petitioner also commits to provide two pedestrian pathways, one between Morehead Street and Mint Street and one that is a continuation of a shared-use path from the practice facilities site which will extend from the existing tunnel under the railroad underpass to connect to Graham Street. These are vital connections that will enhance pedestrian functionality across the subject site while also providing mobility options to surrounding areas. Alternative pedestrian improvement public benefits may be provided if the petitioner is unable to construct the first priority pathways for reasons outside of their control.
- This site is located directly along the proposed LYNX Silver Line. Development of areas along what will be a major transit corridor will help to support the transit infrastructure while also providing a mechanism for the public to easily access a site that is in the densest part of the City.
- The petition could facilitate the following *2040 Comprehensive Plan* Goals:
 - 1: 10 Minute Neighborhoods
 - 4: Trail & Transit Oriented Development

Motion/Second: Stuart / Sealey
 Yeas: Neeley, Sealey, Winiker, Blumenthal, McDonald, Shaw, Stuart
 Nays: None
 Absent: None
 Recused: None

ZONING COMMITTEE DISCUSSION

Staff provided a summary of the petition and noted that it is consistent with the *2040 Policy Map*.

Commissioner Winiker noted the mobility plans in the area and mentioned community support for the Uptown CycleLink project. The Commissioner highlighted projects where Charlotte Department of Transportation has dealt with challenging topography and asked CDOT staff to explain the various shared-use path options based on the rezoning site’s easements and natural element constraints. CDOT staff responded that they have been working with the petitioner team to clarify the details of the most viable, preferable design of the path.

The commission voted to suspend the rules to ask the petitioner team about their intentions with the pedestrian path from the Railroad underpass to Graham Street. The petitioner team explained their considerations with the pathway and emphasized a desire to make it as accessible as possible. It was also clarified what variables are being considered in terms of third parties, topography, safety, pedestrian traffic, and vehicular traffic among other considerations. The path is critical for the petitioner but also the community at large and the petitioner commented that they are mindful of community concerns about this path.

Chairperson Blumenthal added that there is considerable focus on this path because it plays such a vital role in mobility not only for eventgoers to the stadium but for the community at large on any given day. Chairperson Blumenthal noted appreciation of the level of detail in the petition and inclusion of public art in the conditions of the plan.

Commissioner Sealey commented that this is an opportunity for CDOT to look at improvements to Graham Street and in particular look to address current safety issues and lack of pedestrian infrastructure.

There was no further discussion of this petition.

PLANNER

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