

Infill Incentive District Citizens Study Group Stakeholder Meeting Overview

These meetings were held on September 10 & 20, 2018

This is the overview of the first of two meetings to review the feedback from the general stakeholder meetings held on August 22, 24, and 29. Previous overview comments are included in **blue** for context. During that meeting the group reviewed the feedback related to whether the IID is working, Historic Preservation provisions, and the Design Review Process. The following is an overview of that discussion:

Is the IID Working?

- The general consensus is that the revisions in 2015 addressed the concerns at the time and that the IID is working. Most who commented on this did acknowledge there were minor tweaks that could improve the ordinance. Some, however, were hesitant to make any large changes due to its success.
- Upon discussion with the group, they were in general agreement with what was stated by the larger group. It was stated that the infill incentive district is incentivizing its use over the underlying zoning and appears to be working.

Historic Preservation

- What constitutes historic resources – buildings with façade covering don't get counted as historic (what's underneath isn't respected). Should we expand what is defined as historic to include something that is listed as a non-contributing structure, but could be contributing with some minor restoration work (i.e. façade restoration)? It was stated that the onus should be on the owner to prove a non-contributor is not historically significant - many of these buildings were assessed 30 years ago and the current situation is not the same as it was then.
- It was stated that while we may want to check and clarify the process, but as of now it appears if it is a historic building we require the applicant to provide a report on its status.
- Concern about if a historic building is demolished, at what point can that property be redeveloped with the IID. If historic resource is demolished developer should not benefit from IID incentives for some period of time. Groups did not have a true consensus regarding this. Most acknowledged it as an oversight and that it should be corrected - but don't want to incentivize using the underlying zoning. Options discussed:
 - Set time period before IID may be used - i.e. 3 years, 5 years, etc.
 - Demolished after a certain date removes eligibility for utilizing IID - i.e. as of ordinance date.
- It was stated that this is something we may also want to clarify, but the intent of this provision in the IID was that anyone who wants to utilize the IID may not do anything that leads to the demolition or delisting of a contributing or eligible to be

contributing structure. There was discussion that we may want to set a specific date, such as when the 2015 ordinance was adopted.

- Should we create a process that allows for the demolition of a historic building to discourage people opting for a PAD or just utilizing the underlying zoning?
- It was stated that the current process of requiring them to utilize the underlying zoning or using a PAD seems to be working and is appropriate.
- These revisions should allow for additional building height, where appropriate, when the IID overlaps with an HPZ, however, that should be only after careful and thoughtful engagement with HPZs NAs.
- There was significant conversation about this topic and there was general agreement that this is a reasonable change that attempts to address the issue of property owners pulling projects out of the HPZ's. It was also stated that we should look at potentially including a similar provision where an NPZ overlaps with the IID, such as in the Feldman's neighborhood.

Design Review

- There was a suggestion that we have the option for a Study Session prior to a Public Hearing for major projects or if a meeting went three hours that it should lead to a continuance. It was also stated that we need to be mindful that one of the incentives of Design Review was that it would be more streamlined (addressing time it takes to get project to market is largest incentive).
- It was stated that the Design Review Committee (DRC) currently does have the option to hold a study session. Additionally, the DRC also still has the option to continue a hearing one time if they need more time to make a decision.
- Comment regarding consistency between the Design Professional's recommendation and the recommendation of the Design Review Committee. Many times the Design Review Committee will "undo" the work of the Design Professional.
- In general comments were in favor of the existing process, once there was calcification that the Design Professional and the DRC had separate reports that go to the PDS Director for decision. It was believed this has been effective in producing a good product.
- Concern about flexibility post approval of IID package. Design's tend to change as the construction documents are being developed and the code isn't very clear on what changes need to be re-reviewed and what changes are not substantive (minor vs major changes). Section 5.12.6.Q needs to be clarified.
- It was expressed that clarification on this section would be helpful. It was also expressed that perhaps an educational effort could be helpful for applicants. If they would direct their architects and engineers to track their changes as the design progresses, it would allow for easier review of those changes. Finally, the group also discussed internal process issues between the design review and the plans review.

Parking

- There was discussion about how downtown is a testing ground for density and if we want to promote transit oriented development, we need to assess how much parking is needed.
- Is there a way to tie parking reductions to supplying transit or bike share discounts or passes? Could coincide with Ward 3's efforts to build transit ridership.
- There was significant discussion about increasing the 25% automatic parking reduction in the Greater Infill Incentive Subdistrict (GIIS) portion of the IID.
- Even if we don't increase automatic parking reductions - the Individual Parking Plan (IPP) is an option for additional reductions and is not overly onerous.
- Suggestion that staff take a serious look at larger projects to potentially have the developer. They should work with suntran on this. Needs to be in proximity to high capacity transit or along the street car - look at Phoenix.
- Direction from Plan Tucson is that we need creative ways to address parking - Public Parking is maxed out - more of an underlying parking issue.

Student Housing

- There was a suggestion that we should not be incentivizing student housing and therefore we should not allow for a developer to utilize the IID for group dwellings.
- Some attendees were hesitant to add additional restrictions on student housing within the IID especially considering the Main Gate area is nearly built-out.
- It was also suggested that the Mayor and Council Special Exception already required for group dwellings when utilizing the IID is essentially a restriction.
- Student Housing - Mayor & Council Special Exception has brought more multi-family into the market, and this may not be a bad thing.
- There was an acknowledgement that there is likely still a market here - where is it going to go? Maybe relief of this in certain subdistricts.
- Is there actual analysis of this? Almost all in Main Gate will be full by the beginning of the beginning of next year. Current UA population is 50,000 to 55,000 students.
- What is the impact of projects in the Main Gate? - student housing - total investment
- Maybe stone is the place for this. Lots of commercial here, but not really happening
- Perhaps we should remove the M&C Special Exception along stone - PAD shouldn't be an option. If this happens, it needs to be buffered properly - economically it is cheaper - maybe we should incentivize this. Ultimately, this needs to be a longer effort - something to review after the sunset date is extended.

Transit Oriented Development

- We need to better incentivize development that supports transit and other public transportation options.
- Area between 4th and 6th avenues is going to fill out and the development needs to be mixed use and have ground floor commercial.

- In general the group was in agreement with this. Perhaps more Incentives for Transit Oriented Development should be added, or maybe this can be addressed through other City initiatives.

Design Guidelines and Overall Design

- City lacks thoughtful design criteria for the proposals within the IID. Should look at Pasadena's guidelines.
- Adopted design guidelines could be useful in mitigating the unease of more dense new development.
- Concern about lack of permeability of developments and public space being provided.
- Concern that if we were to have design guidelines, it would limit design options and lead to less character in the designs. Maybe it is just a best practices guide of projects that have utilized the IID.
- There should be an obvious connection between using the IID and better architectural design. Development should be strengthening our social and neighborhood fabric rather than destabilizing via incompatible development /use that encourages gentrification and the loss of diversity.
- Need more transit in this area. Impact fees or special assessment that helps funds these could help.
- There was general agreement that we could be getting a better product and design guidelines are important in giving this guidance. It was suggested this be part of the list to continue studying moving forward.

Affordable Housing

- Suggestion that a certain percentage of housing be required to be affordable. Staff clarified that as a requirement of the lender, many of the developments already are required to have 20% affordable units.
- Allow a "free" residential upzone if the additional allowed units are assured low-income for at least 'X' number of years. E.g., allow someone with R-2 to build to R-3 if the units beyond the R-2 limits are kept affordable. This might be helpful for Grant Road and overlays.
- Affordable or workforce housing is important. There is some additional property for sale - we need to study how to incentivize this further.

Northern Portion of Greater Infill Incentive Subdistrict

- There is a lot of I-1 along the interior of this corridor, why not allow work live like in the warehouse triangle area?
- As stated before, there was discussion about a study to figure out what can go here - perhaps It could be the appropriate area for future student housing once Main Gate is built out.

General Comments

- At the end of the session, the attendees were asked if they would like to include any additional comments. The following is what was stated:
- Several people stated that we should mostly leave as is. It is working and if we wanted to make any major changes, it would require a significant public process - which we really do not have time for right now with the Sunset Date coming up in January.
- It was stated that there are a bunch of areas that will eventually redevelop and we need to be ready for that - so we may want to extend the sunset date now, but make sure we take a look at those areas as they do redevelop.
- It was expressed that Main Gate is nearly built-out with student housing and that we will need to figure out a place for it to go. While it may not be through this process or in the IID, it should be planned for and addressed.
- It was stated that many people are not taking the multiple modes of transportation elements of the IID seriously and we need to see if there is a way to bolster it.