

**STAFF REPORT**  
**Planning Commission**  
**Urban Development Committee**  
**July 14, 2016**

**Item III: Discussion and recommendation on a proposed ordinance amendment to Chapter 59 of the Oklahoma City Municipal Code, 2010, establishing the Traditional Neighborhood Overlay District. All Wards.**

**I. BACKGROUND**

Oklahoma City's zoning code includes special purpose districts, such as Historic Preservation and Urban Design, that protect the character of unique areas as our city changes and grows. These zoning districts require proposed developments to undergo an enhanced level of discretionary design review by Planning staff or mayor-appointed committees and commissions. Most neighborhoods in Oklahoma City fall under standard residential zoning districts (such as R-1, R-2, R-3, R-4), which do not include any design-related criteria addressing the character of existing neighborhoods.

As older neighborhoods are experiencing revitalization, residents and staff have noted that new infill development and modifications to existing structures are deviating from the established style, scale or character of the neighborhoods. The City is proposing to create a new zoning overlay district, called the Traditional Neighborhood Overlay District that can be applied to properties or neighborhoods that wish to protect the unique history, architecture and character of development in an area, but do not warrant or desire designation as a Historic Preservation district. New development within the Traditional Neighborhood Overlay District would be subject to review by Planning staff or the Urban Design Commission, depending on the scope of the work.

Planning staff developed a draft ordinance establishing this new tool borrowing concepts from the Oklahoma City Urban Renewal Authority Northeast Residential Design Standards developed by OCURA, the Alliance for the Economic Development of Oklahoma City, and Lord Aeck Sargent, Consultants, which is currently being applied by OCURA to redevelopment in existing neighborhoods. The Planning Department established a steering committee, composed of representatives of neighborhoods including those in the Strong Neighborhoods Initiative program, Gatewood neighborhood, Miller neighborhood, Capitol-Medical Zone historic districts, representatives from Neighborhood Alliance and the Alliance for the Economic Development of Oklahoma City, and representatives from the Historic Preservation Commission, Urban Design Commission, and the Planning Commission, to review the proposed new overlay.

The committee met from February 4, 2016 to May 5, 2016, and the resulting ordinance has been routed for review by various design review bodies, including the Historic Preservation

**STAFF REPORT**  
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**July 14, 2016**

Commission and Urban Design Commission. Planning staff presented the concept at several neighborhood and public meetings between March 10, 2016 and May 23, 2016.

The concept for establishing the Traditional Neighborhood Overlay District was presented to the Planning Commission during a Study Session on September 9, 2015. On April 27, 2016, staff presented the concept for establishing the Traditional Neighborhood Overlay District to the Urban Design Commission at their regular meeting. The concept was presented to the Historic Preservation Commission at their regularly scheduled meeting on May 4, 2016. On May 25, 2016, the Urban Design Commission recommended approval of the ordinance establishing the Traditional Neighborhood Overlay District.

On June 9, 2016 the proposed ordinance was presented and discussed at a Planning Commission Study Session.

**II. SUMMARY OF PROPOSED ORDINANCE**

The proposed ordinance is limited to the creation of the overlay as a tool, without application to any particular neighborhood or property. Once adopted, interested neighborhoods or property owners may request to rezone into the overlay.

Design review will be limited to administrative review of work that requires a building permit, with items that cannot be administratively approved being reviewed by the Urban Design Commission.

Design Guidelines for the proposed Overlay include the following sections:

- Existing Buildings – addresses changes to existing structures that require a permit, including:
  - Additions and dormers
  - Adding new or enclosing existing porches
  - Adding new or enclosing existing openings
  - Accessory structures, including garages, fencing, and carports
  
- New Construction – guidelines for new construction based upon character, massing, and scale, that is compatible with the surrounding structures, including:
  - Height
  - Number of floors
  - Setback
  
- Demolition- criteria follow those recently established for other design review

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districts

- Incorporates existing definition of “character” from the Municipal Code: “the attributes, qualities and features that make up and distinguish a particular place or development and give such place a sense of definition, purpose, and uniqueness.”

As proposed, the overlay is a new zoning tool without application to any particular location. Once adopted as part of the Municipal Code, property owners could request to rezone into the overlay for their property, neighborhood or other area. This request would follow established procedures for rezoning.

The proposed ordinance is included as an attachment to this report.

**III. STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

Set for Introduction on August 25, 2016.

*Attachments: Draft Ordinance Amendment*