

To: **Mayor and City Council**
 Through: **Nate Burkett, City Manager**
 From: **Melissa Sonnek, City Planner**
 Date: **May 24, 2021**

Review of Robert Street Renaissance Update and Zoning Codes

PLAN SUMMARY:

Between early 2015 and summer 2016, Cunningham Group worked with a Project Advisory Committee (PAC), City Council, and the general public to develop the Robert Street Renaissance Plan Update. The plan detailed a long term, grand scale redevelopment and reinvestment vision for Robert Street as a whole as well as designated redevelopment and neighborhood districts. As well as a document to “invite partnerships” for redevelopment within the city.

One of the criticisms of the plan was that it was too ambitious and had a more regional perspective for redevelopment rather than site/project specific development. (*More detail on this in the attached Cunningham memo dated 01/17/2017*).

The plan identified a few key areas of redevelopment such as the “North Gateway”, “Signal Hills”, and “Town Center”. While these key areas have since undergone significant redevelopment since the acceptance of the plan, there are still general design principles that can be incorporated to create a more attractive and appealing environment for both visitors and residents alike.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

At the February 8th work session, City Council requested staff to review the Robert Street Renaissance Plan Update and compare it with the current zoning code requirements to determine possible points of conflict or inconsistency.

When the Plan Update was taken to City Council in 2017, there was disagreement on some of the content which ultimately lead to the acceptance of the plan rather than a proper adoption and implementation of the plan. Had the plan been formally adopted, the next step would have been to develop new zoning requirements to implement plan components. Below is a list of design concept recommendations taken from the plan update (left column) and how they compare to the current zoning code (right column).

ROBERT STREET RENAISSANCE PLAN UPDATE vs ZONING CODE

City Frame Work	
Robert Street Renaissance Plan Update	Current Zoning Code

Creation of four neighborhoods along the length of the corridor to allow for more distinct names, characters, boundaries, etc.	Residential districts A, B, and C account for residential lot provisions and requirements. A – North of Butler Ave. B – South of Butler, north of Wentworth Ave. C – South of Wentworth, west of Robert St.
Consolidating and condensing retail at key locations along the Robert St. corridor	The implementation of the B5 – Gateway North and B6 – Town Center zoning districts encourage density along Robert St.

Pedestrian Oriented	
Robert Street Renaissance Plan Update	Current Zoning Code
Require parking lot exposure to sidewalks be no more than 180ft. on Robert and no more than 60ft. on other streets	No maximums around parking lot street frontage.
High quality screening/buffering along the edges of parking lots	If parking is located up to the front, side, or rear property line, there must be a wall, fence, or wall that physically limits vehicles from extending over the property line
Requires plazas or similar spaces at the ends of parking lots and in front of buildings	No requirements for public plaza space
Requires sidewalk to be a minimum of 10ft wide	Sidewalks are not required, when constructed sidewalks are 5-6ft wide and trails are 8-10ft wide. Dependent on room available and amount of road traffic.
Require a certain amount of front property line to have storefront that activates the sidewalk	No requirements around storefronts in relation to sidewalks

Window into the Community	
Robert Street Renaissance Plan Update	Current Zoning Code
Limit the size of block face along Robert St	Minimum lot width and sizes for each zoning district
Require perpendicular streets to have a public purpose	No requirements around public spaces or public amenities
Defined street type for new developments that are mixed use	No requirements around private street construction/design
Require that sites of a certain size or larger include a certain amount of public space	Park dedication fees with new platting applications (typically a fee, not dedicated land)

Transitioning Neighborhood Streets into Robert St	
Robert Street Renaissance Plan Update	Current Zoning Code
Defining a new street type that allows for multiple/mixed uses	N/A
Create a maximum block size/perimeter	Minimum lot width and sizes for each zoning district

Prohibit new developments from limiting future neighborhood connections	N/A
Anchor buildings on the corner by creating build-to lines	Specific setbacks for front yard and side yard adjacent to the street (corner lots) for each business district
Require buildings on corners to be a certain height	Maximum height/CUP requirement for buildings over 35 ft.

Building Facades and Materials	
Robert Street Renaissance Plan Update	Current Zoning Code
Design should be durable, simple, and human scaled to enhance pedestrian experience	Commercial districts B1, B2, B3, B5, and B6 (all but B4) require 40% window coverage to enhance pedestrian experience
Materials should be built with a life expectancy of 30 years proven to withstand the climate	In order to ensure upkeep of building materials, all materials must be colored only by means of a pigment integral to the material, not applied to the surface
Buildings should have a single, dominant material covering a minimum of 60% of the façade and a limited palate of accent materials	60% Primary Materials 40% Secondary No requirement on accents
Primary (60%) materials should be stone, brick, architectural metal panels for non-residential and hardiplank for residential. Secondary (40%) should be fiber cement, concrete masonry units, cast stone, and cement based stucco	Primary (60%) – Brick, stone, stucco, and glass Secondary (40%) – Textured/brushed/ decorative block, synthetic stucco, wood, and metal
All storefronts and retail windows should have awnings that are functional and integrated into the building design	Awnings are allowed, but not required

Site Development Standards	
Robert Street Renaissance Plan Update	Current Zoning Code
Parking lots on Robert St. to be a maximum of 120 ft. wide with pedestrian refuges on either side	No maximum on parking lot size or street frontage
10 ft. of landscaping between sidewalk and buildings	Sidewalk construction and integration is encouraged and dependent on available space, but not required
10 ft. of landscaping between parking lots and sidewalks	1 quality tree at the end of every 20 parking stalls
Residential uses to be setback 15 ft. from sidewalk	R1, R2, and R3 districts require a 30 ft. front yard setbacks R4 (multi-family) districts require 50 ft. front yard setbacks

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Review the above listed comparisons between the two documents and direct City Staff on if/any changes are to be made to the current zoning ordinance.

ATTACHMENTS:

Cunningham Group Memo – 01/17/2017

Robert Street Renaissance Plan Update – Accepted 06/26/2017