



Department of City Development
City Plan Commission
Redevelopment Authority of the City of Milwaukee
Neighborhood Improvement Development Corporation

Lafayette L. Crump
Commissioner

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Deputy Commissioner

6th Ald. District
Ald. Coggs

CITY PLAN COMMISSION
ZONING REPORT

Ordinance File No. [220772](#)

Proposed
Zoning:

Establishment of a Development Incentive Zone (DIZ) Overlay known as the Bronzeville Cultural and Entertainment District

Proposal:

This file establishes a Development Incentive Zone (DIZ) known as the Bronzeville Cultural and Entertainment District on land located generally on the north and south sides of West North Avenue, at and west of North Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Drive and east of Interstate 43, in the 6th Aldermanic District. The overlay is approximately five blocks and it includes all parcels adjacent to W. North Avenue.

There have been a series of planning efforts, strategic land acquisitions, real estate developments, and community initiatives designed to re-establish the Bronzeville Cultural and Entertainment District over the past 15 years. An Interim Study Overlay Zone was created in September 2021 for the Bronzeville Cultural and Entertainment District based on input from the Bronzeville Advisory Committee and other Bronzeville stakeholders working on the ongoing development of the district. During the time period when the interim study overlay zone was in place, City staff and neighborhood stakeholders collaborated on the creation of this permanent Development Incentive Zone (DIZ) overlay.

The DIZ overlay seeks to encourage development that will support the growth of Bronzeville as a cultural and entertainment destination that highlights African-American arts and culture. To do so, the DIZ overlay establishes a use list as well as design standards to guide development that is consistent with the vision and goals for this district..

The use list reflects the overlay's goals of supporting the vibrancy of the corridor by requiring activating uses along the street, and encouraging a mix of uses in the area that may include retail, restaurants, cultural, entertainment, and other complementary uses. The DIZ use list denotes uses that are prohibited, permitted, limited, and conditional. Limited uses have criteria that must be met in order to become permitted, otherwise they become conditional. Conditional uses are permitted only if the City Plan Commission holds a public hearing and determines that the use meets the goals and principles of the DIZ as well as the conditions of approval of a special use permit as specified in Section 295-311-2-d

of the zoning code. Uses that are prohibited would require approval of a deviation from the design standards, which entails hearings before the City Plan Commission as well as the Zoning, Neighborhoods and Development Committee, and Common Council approval.

Design standards focus on ways to reinforce and support activity along the street. Overarching design principles promote the character of the cultural, arts and entertainment district, preserve historic architectural features, reduce parking lots in front of establishments, and encourage sustainable elements. Other site elements that are encouraged in the overlay standards include accessible transportation systems, outdoor amenity spaces for residential uses, and including greenery on the street edge.

Overlay Approvals:

City Plan Commission will review development plans including site work, new construction, and alterations or additions to existing buildings and determine compliance with the DIZ standards. Conditional use approval will require a public hearing before the City Plan Commission. Deviations from the DIZ standards will require approval by the City Plan Commission and Common Council as outlined in Section 295-311-9 of the zoning code. Signage will be reviewed and approved by DCD staff provided the signs meet the DIZ standards. If signage is determined to not meet the DIZ standards, City Plan Commission approval will be required. The overlay standards do not apply to sites zoned Planned Development (PD), which is a custom, site-specific zoning that requires Common Council approval.

**Outreach and
Community
Engagement:**

Outreach and engagement included three meetings with the Plan Advisory Group. The Plan Advisory Group was composed of local business owners (or their representatives), representatives from the arts community, the chair of the Bronzeville Advisory Committee, a representative from the City's Commercial Corridor team, and the Alderwoman. Outreach and engagement also included two public meetings (one virtual and one in-person), a booth at the Bronzeville Cultural and Arts Festival, two presentations to the Bronzeville Advisory Committee, one-on-one discussions with various stakeholders throughout, and online engagement website (engagemke.com/Bronzeville) with information and two surveys covering topics from the public meetings.

Adjacent Land Use:

Most properties within the overlay boundary are zoned as Local Business (LB2). Surrounding properties consist of Single and Two Family Residential (RS3, RT4), Multi-Family (RM4, RM5) and other commercial zoning (CS, LB2).

**Consistency with
Area Plan:**

The Bronzeville Overlay is located within the Northeast Comprehensive Area Plan, which was approved in 2008 and amended with the Equitable Growth through Transit Oriented Development Plan for King Drive in 2018. Both plans, along with the 2005 Bronzeville Redevelopment Plan and the 2013 Bronzeville Design Charette, identified the importance of developing the Bronzeville district as a cultural and entertainment destination that highlights African American arts and culture. The proposed overlay furthers the recommendations for land use and

design set forth in the plans and therefore, is in conformance with the Northeast Comprehensive Area Plan and the Equitable Growth through Transit Oriented Development Plan for King Drive.

**Previous City
Plan Commission**

Action:

8/23/2021 - The City Plan Commission recommended approval of two files that established the Bronzeville Cultural and Entertainment District Interim Study (IS) Overlay Zone and approved the associated study plan. (FN [210585](#) and [210586](#))

**Previous Common
Council Action:**

9/21/2021 - The Common Council approved two files that established the Bronzeville Cultural and Entertainment District Interim Study (IS) Overlay Zone and approved the associated study plan. (FN [210585](#) and [210586](#))

Staff

Recommendation:

Since the proposed DIZ use list and design standards reflect the goals and vision of the Bronzeville Cultural and Entertainment District and are consistent with the comprehensive plan, staff suggests that the City Plan Commission recommends approval of the subject file.