



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

Lafayette L. Crump
Commissioner

Vanessa L. Koster
Deputy Commissioner

Ald. Coggs
6th Ald. District

CITY PLAN COMMISSION ZONING REPORT

File No. [231709](#)

Location: 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

**Applicant/
Owner:** City of Milwaukee – Dept. of City Development

**Current
Zoning:** Local Business (LB2) and within the Bronzeville Cultural and Entertainment District Development Incentive Zone ([DIZ](#))

**Proposed
Zoning:** 1st Amendment to Bronzeville DIZ

Proposal: This file relates to the 1st Amendment to the Development Incentive Zone (DIZ) known as the Bronzeville Cultural and Entertainment District to make technical adjustments to the performance standards.

In 2022, the Bronzeville Cultural and Entertainment District DIZ overlay was created 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 entails a use list as well as design standards to guide development that is consistent with the vision and goals for this district.

This amendment to the overlay will make the following technical updates to the overlay use list (Exhibit C) and design standards (Exhibit D):

- Change single-family and two-family residential from a Prohibited Use to a Limited Use with the new standard permitting these uses if located on an upper floor of a mixed-use building. They remain prohibited if standalone one- and two-family residential units.
- Change minimum building height from 30' to 27'. The DIZ supplemental standards remain with respect to percentage of façade width that the minimum height must be maintained, rules of measurement and rules for additions to conforming buildings.

- Provide flexibility within the building façade design standards for larger buildings with an institutional or civic type function.
- Clarify in the signage standards that non-commercial district identity signage program are allowed, and this non-commercial, coordinated district identity signage shall not be included when calculating the maximum number of signs allowed on a property. Further clarify that all compliant signs may be approved by DCD staff.

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 Cultural and Entertainment District Development Incentive Zone (DIZ) is within the Northeast Side Area Plan; approved in 2008, and amended in 2018 with the Equitable Growth through Transit Oriented Development Plan. 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 Bronzeville DIZ overlay advances recommendations for land use and design set forth in the plans.

As development continues in Bronzeville, the application of certain standards has revealed specific unintended consequences which may pose barriers to future proposals that are otherwise consistent with the intent of the overlay. This includes limitations on upper floor residential units, barriers for two-story structures at heights consistent with the surrounding context, façade standards that can limit architectural expression on major civic buildings, and signage standards that limit district identity signage.

The proposed amendment to the DIZ will make technical updates to the use list and design standards that will mitigate these issues and strengthen the effectiveness of the DIZ. The proposed amendment to the Bronzeville Cultural and Entertainment District Development Incentive Zone is consistent with the Northeast Side Area Plan.

Previous City Plan Action:

11/7/2022 - City Plan Commission recommended for approval a substitute ordinance to establish a Development Incentive Zone 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. (FN [220772](#))

8/23/2021 - City Plan Commission recommended for approval a substitute ordinance creating the Bronzeville Cultural and Entertainment District Interim Study Overlay Zone, for properties located along West North Avenue between North Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive and Interstate 43, in the 6th Aldermanic District. (FN [210585](#))

8/23/2021 - City Plan Commission recommended for approval a substitute resolution creating a study plan for the Bronzeville Cultural and Entertainment District Interim Study Overlay Zone, as established by Section 295-1005 of the Milwaukee Code of Ordinances, for properties located along West North Avenue between North Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive and Interstate 43, in the 6th Aldermanic District. (FN [210586](#))

**Previous Common
Council Action:**

2/27/2024 -Common Council approved a motion directing the Department of City Development to initiate an amendment to the Bronzeville Cultural and Entertainment District Development Incentive Zone, 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 (FN [231719](#))

11/22/2022 - Common Council approved a substitute ordinance to establish a Development Incentive Zone 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. (FN [220772](#))

9/21/2021 - Common Council approved a substitute ordinance creating the Bronzeville Cultural and Entertainment District Interim Study Overlay Zone, for properties located along West North Avenue between North Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive and Interstate 43, in the 6th Aldermanic District. (FN [210585](#))

9/21/2021Common Council approved a substitute resolution creating a study plan for the Bronzeville Cultural and Entertainment District Interim Study Overlay Zone, as established by Section 295-1005 of the Milwaukee Code of Ordinances, for properties located along West North Avenue between North Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive and Interstate 43, in the 6th Aldermanic District. (FN [210586](#))

07/27/2021– Common Council approved a substitute motion directing the Department of City Development to initiate a zoning map amendment to create a Bronzeville Cultural and Entertainment District Interim Study Overlay Zone for properties located along West North Avenue between North Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Drive and Interstate 43, in the 6th Aldermanic District (FN [210553](#))

Recommendation:

Since these technical updates further clarify the intent and standards of the overlay zone, staff suggests that the City Plan Commission recommends approval of the subject file.