Form-based Codes: An alternative approach to zoning

Trinity River Committee
March 19, 2007
Purpose

• Outline the differences between traditional use-based zoning and form-based zoning
Trinity Corridor
How do we get from...

here...

...to here?
How do we reach the community’s Trinity vision?

• Make desirable developments easiest to accomplish under zoning regulations
• Focus on the types of buildings and the character of the place
• Regulate use in the context of appropriate building types
• Build pedestrian connections through walkable open space and streets
Additional Considerations

- Edges and compatible transitions
- Non-conforming uses
- Environmental quality
- Affordability
- Levees
- Views
- Neighborhood-specific issues
Existing Zoning Regulations

- Examples of existing MU-3 Zoning
- Existing zoning regulations do not provide enough predictability to guarantee vision
Existing Zoning Regulations
What does Zoning Regulate?

• Three primary areas:
  – Use/Density – What is allowed where?
  – Performance – How do we operate uses?
  – Form – “Yard, Lot, Space” requirements
Types of Zoning Tools

Traditional Use-based Zoning

- Use/Density
- Performance
- Form
Types of Zoning Tools

Form-based Zoning

- Form
- Performance
- Use/Density
Form-Based Approach

• Focus on encouraging mixed use, pedestrian friendly neighborhoods
• Less emphasis on regulating what happens inside buildings
• Greater emphasis on the street experience and on regulating what happens outside buildings
Existing Walkable Developments
Emphasis on Street Experience

• Strong focus on making places walkable and attractive for pedestrians
• Emphasis on the relationship of buildings to street
Emphasis on Street Experience

• Zoning district boundaries along rear lot lines rather than street center lines
Emphasis on Street Experience

The Public-Private Realm

The grey area around the public right of way line
Flexible

- Balance design creativity with predictability
- Provide range of options
Adaptable

- Adaptive Reuse
- Over a 20 to 30 year build out
Emphasis on Parking

- Quantity, location and treatment of parking has a profound influence on the pedestrian experience.
Not just for high density

Source: City of Fort Worth – Trinity Uptown District
Form-based Codes

• User-friendly
  – Clear
  – Concise
  – Easy to administer and understand

• Document will look dramatically different than our typical zoning regulations with an emphasis on illustrations to detail regulations
### Existing Toolbox

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section Reference</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>§ 51A-6.125</td>
<td>Height regulations for shafts and chimneys</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>§ 51A-6.204</td>
<td>Development Code: Ordinance No. 19405, as amended</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>§ 51A-4.205</td>
<td>Dallas Development Code: Ordinance No. 19405, as amended</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### District Regulations

- **Regulations:** The regulations outlined in this section apply to specific districts in the city of Dallas.
- **Use:** The use of the land specified in this section is governed by the regulations described.

#### Landscape Regulations

- **Sign Regulations:** The use of signs is governed by the regulations described in this section.
- **Lodging Uses:** Lodging uses are defined and regulated in this section.

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**City of Dallas**

TRC – March 19, 2007

207
Streamlined and Integrated
Visually Descriptive

- Everybody knows what they will be getting up front
- Is this what the plan said?

Source: City of Knoxville, South Waterfront, Form Based Development Code
Components of Form-based Codes

• Regulating Plan
• Building Standards
• Streetscape Standards
• Possible Architectural Standards
Regulating Plan

- Similar to a conceptual plan
- Two approaches to regulation
  - Street frontage
  - Districts
- Typical areas of regulation
  - Build-to lines
  - Parking setbacks
  - Identify district boundaries and location of street types
Regulating Plan

Source: City of Farmers Branch, Station Area Form Based Code
Regulating Plan

Source: Columbia Pike Form Based Code
Regulating Plan
Regulating Plan

Source: City of Knoxville, South Waterfront, Form Based Development Code
Building Standards

- Building Height
- Siting
- Elements
- Use
Building Standards

• Building Height
  – Minimum height
  – Maximum height
  – Story height if appropriate
  – Additional setback requirements

Source: Arlington, Virginia – Columbia Pike Form Based Code
Building Standards

• Siting
  – Percent of building at the build line
  – Entrances
  – Buildable area
  – Other setback requirements

Source: City of Knoxville, South Waterfront, Form Based Development Code
Building Standards

- Elements
  - Window requirements
  - Allowable elements such as balconies or awnings

Source: Columbia Pike Form Based Code
Building Standards

• Uses
  – Generalized allowed uses
  – Location of uses
  – Vertical mix of uses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Use</th>
<th>Ground Floor</th>
<th>Upper Floor(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Service, Retail, or</td>
<td>Residential or Service*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Recreation, Education &amp;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Public Assembly*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*See Table 4.1 for specific uses.

Source: City of Benicia, Draft Downtown Form Based Code
# Building Standards

## Land Use Type

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Land Use Type</th>
<th>Permit Required</th>
<th>Specific Use Regulations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Recreation, Education &amp; Public Assembly</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commercial recreation facility: Indoor</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&lt; 1500 sf</td>
<td>MUP</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt; 1500 sf</td>
<td>UP</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health/fitness facility</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&lt; 1500 sf</td>
<td>MUP</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt; 1500 sf</td>
<td>UP</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library, museum</td>
<td>P</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meeting facility, public or private</td>
<td>MUP</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Park, playground</td>
<td>MUP</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School, public or private</td>
<td>MUP</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Studio: art, dance, martial arts, music, etc.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&lt; 1500 sf</td>
<td>P</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theater, cinema, or performing arts</td>
<td>P</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&lt; 5000 sf</td>
<td>P</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt; 5000 sf</td>
<td>UP</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Key

- **P** Permitted Use
- **MUP** Minor Use Permit Required - staff review only
- **UP** Use Permit Required
- **NA** Not an allowed use

## End Notes

1. A definition of each listed use type is in the Glossary.
2. Allowed only on upper floors or behind ground floor use.

*Source: City of Benicia, Draft Downtown Form Based Code*
# Building Standards

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Land Use Type¹</th>
<th>Permit Required</th>
<th>Specific Regulations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Residential</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home occupation</td>
<td>P²</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&lt; 300 sf and 2 or fewer employees</td>
<td>P²</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt; 300 sf and 3 or fewer employees</td>
<td>P³</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt; 300 sf and 3 or more employees</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixed use project residential component</td>
<td>P²</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dwelling: Multi-Family-Rowhouse</td>
<td>P²</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dwelling: Multi-Family-Duplex</td>
<td>P²</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dwelling: Multi-Family-Triplex</td>
<td>P²</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dwelling: Multi-Family-Fourplex</td>
<td>P²</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ancillary Building</td>
<td>P</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residential Care, 7 or more clients</td>
<td>P²</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residential Care, 6 or fewer clients</td>
<td>P²</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Retail</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Artisan Shop</td>
<td>P</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bar, tavern, night club, except with any of the following features</td>
<td>P</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operating between 9 pm and 7 am</td>
<td>UP</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General retail, except with any of the following features:</td>
<td>P</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alcoholic beverage sales</td>
<td>UP</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Floor area over 8000 sf</td>
<td>MUP</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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*Source: City of Benicia, Draft Downtown Form Based Code*
Dealing with Nonconforming Uses

• Project’s ambitious goal
  – Back alley to front yard
  – Highly attractive environmental corridor
  – Significant economic value creation

• City has serious obligations to balance interests
  – Taxpayers
  – Current residents
  – Developers/investors
  – Existing landowners and established businesses

• Form-based zoning/mixed uses/vibrant urban environment
  – Connectivity
  – Pedestrian friendly
  – View corridor/permeability
  – Attractive urban form and streetscape
Dealing with Nonconforming Uses

• Approaches:
  – Rely on market dynamics (grandfathering)
  – Enable neighborhood pressure (BDA)
  – Council may establish specific timeline
  – Phased compliance with the Code with various trigger points
  – Appeal/review process usually considers:
    • Reasonable time to relocate
    • Fixed cost amortization
    • Location within Corridor
    • Environmental issues

• Process can be helped by:
  – Visionary land investors
  – Compatible uses which migrate into acceptable forms
  – Identifying possible alternate sites for uses that clearly don’t fit
Dealing with Nonconforming Uses

• The goal:
  – Realize the vision in a reasonable timeframe
  – Treat all citizens and businesses fairly
  – Create and protect attractive edges to reflect the massive public involvement
  – Bottom line: Great new value is being created. It can be equitably shared among the many stakeholders
Streetscape Standards

- Pedestrian amenities
- Landscaping
- Building Setbacks

Source: City of Knoxville, South Waterfront, Form Based Development Code
Streetscape Standards

- Pedestrian amenities
- Landscaping
- Dedicated parking lanes

Source: City of Peoria – Land Development Code
Architectural Standards

• Not in all codes
• More detailed requirements for building design

Source: Arlington, Virginia – Columbia Pike Form Base Code
Architectural Standards

Source: City of Ventura, California – Downtown Specific Plan

Building walls (exterior)

Advisory statements and illustrations
Architectural Standards

STANDARDS FOR BUILDING WALLS (Where Clearly Visible from the Street)

Materials: The following materials are permitted.

- Brick and tile masonry
- Stucco (cementitious finish)
- Native stone (or synthetic equivalent)
- Pre-cast masonry (for trim and cornice elements only)
- Gypsum Reinforced Fiber Concrete (GFRC—for trim elements only)
- Metal (for beams, lintels, trim elements and ornamentation only)
- Split-faced block (only for piers, foundation walls and chimneys)
- Wood lap siding
- Hardie-Plank™ equivalent or better siding

Configurations and Techniques: The following configurations and techniques are permitted.

Walls

- Wall openings shall not span vertically more than one STORY.
- Wall openings shall correspond to interior space and shall not span across building structure such as the floor structural and mechanical thickness.
- Wall materials shall be consistent horizontally (i.e. joints between different materials must be horizontal and continue around corners) except for chimneys and piers.
- Material changes shall be made within a constructional logic—as where an addition (of a different material) is built onto the original building.

Source: Arlington, Virginia – Columbia Pike Form Based Code
Where have form-based concepts been used?

- Arlington, VA
- Syracuse, NY
- Peoria, IL
- Memphis, TN
- Louisville, KY
- Fort Meyers Beach, FL
- Gainsville, FL
- Sarasota, FL
- Austin, TX
- Farmers Branch, TX
- Fort Worth, TX
- McKinney, TX
- Petaluma, CA
- Azuza, CA
- Atlanta, GA
- Columbus, OH
- Seattle, WA
- Knoxville, TN
- Ventura, CA
- Benicia, CA
Considerations for Code Development in the Corridor

• Develop an understanding of existing conditions
• Trinity River Corridor Comprehensive Land Use Plan provides guidance for regulations
• Study building patterns, local examples and best practices to define appropriate building and streetscape regulations
Next Steps

• Council briefing on form-based zoning
• UDAC briefing on the Trinity River Corridor Comprehensive Land Use Plan
• CPC Ad Hoc Committee and UDAC meetings on zoning recommendations