



**STAFF REPORT**  
**The City of Oklahoma City**  
**Planning Commission**  
**June 13, 2024**

**Item No. IV. 25.**

**Recommendation on a proposed ordinance amendment relating to Zoning and Planning Code amending Articles II, III, IV, VII, and XIII of Chapter 59 of the Oklahoma City Municipal Code, 2020 to consolidate the City's five existing design review bodies into the Downtown Design Review Commission and the Urban Design Commission; and reassigning the responsibility for design review in the Bricktown Core Development District from the Bricktown Urban Design Committee to the Downtown Design Review Commission, reassigning the responsibility for design review in the Scenic River Overlay Design Districts from the Riverfront Design Committee to the Urban Design Commission, and reassigning the responsibility for design review in the Stockyards City Development District and the Stockyards City Transitional Overlay Development District from the Stockyards City Urban Design Committee to the Urban Design Commission. Wards 2, 6, and 7.**

**I. PURPOSE**

This ordinance amendment will consolidate the Bricktown Urban Design Review Committee with the Downtown Design Review Committee and consolidate the Stockyards City Urban Design Review Committee and Riverfront Design Committee with the Urban Design Commission, in order to make the design review process more efficient.

**II. BACKGROUND**

Since 2019, the Planning Department has been working toward a comprehensive update to the City's development-related codes, including the Zoning and Planning Code (Chapter 59). The Planning Department made an informational presentation about the code update project to the River Trust on October 25, 2022. One of the goals of the Development Codes Update is to make development review processes more efficient. One area identified by Code Update consultants, stakeholders, and staff for improving efficiencies is the consolidation of existing design review bodies into fewer bodies. This would improve efficiency by reducing the number of appointed members who need to be identified and trained and reducing demands on time and workload for staff, applicants, and design review body members involved in preparing for and holding public meetings.

Oklahoma City currently has five design review bodies, not including the Historic Preservation Commission: the Bricktown Urban Design Review Committee, the Downtown Design Review Committee, the Riverfront Design Committee, the Stockyards City Design Review Committee, and the Urban Design Commission. These bodies oversee five design review districts, which include numerous sub-districts. Each design review body is scheduled to meet monthly, except for Stockyards Urban Design Review Committee, which meets quarterly. Each body is composed of between five and nine volunteer members who must meet specific professional requirements and who serve

specific membership terms that require appointment and reappointment by the Mayor with the consent of the City Council.

In the spring of 2023, Planning Department staff presented the concept of consolidating design review bodies at a training event for members of the design review committees, Planning Commission, and other boards. Based on feedback received at that training, staff proceeded with an analysis of the existing design review bodies and possible ways to consolidate them in order to provide a more efficient design review structure. This analysis revealed that for some design review bodies, regularly scheduled monthly meetings are often canceled due to a lack of agenda items or due to a lack of quorum. It also revealed that the number of projects reviewed annually varied significantly between design review bodies, with some bodies reviewing only a few projects each year and others reviewing dozens; this suggested that project review could be more evenly distributed among the bodies.

On February 27, 2024, the Oklahoma City Riverfront Redevelopment Authority recommended approval of this ordinance.

On April 4, 2024, the Riverfront Design Committee recommended approval of this ordinance.

On April 10, 2024 the Bricktown Urban Design Committee recommended approval of this ordinance.

On April 24, 2024, the Urban Design Commission recommended approval of this ordinance.

On May 8, 2024, the Stockyards City Urban Design Committee recommended approval of this ordinance.

On May 23, 2024, the ordinance was introduced at Planning Commission and set for final hearing.

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

### **III. SUMMARY OF PROPOSED ORDINANCE**

- For all Design Districts, the proposed ordinance will:
- Combine the five design review committees into two bodies, absorbing the Bricktown Urban Design Committee into the Downtown Design Review Committee and absorbing the Stockyards City Urban Design Committee and Riverfront Design Committee into the Urban Design Commission;
- Rename the Downtown Design Review Committee to Downtown Design Review Commission for consistency;
- Retain the individual districts' existing zoning designations, boundaries, review procedures, and design regulations and guidelines;

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- Reduce the number of public meetings held per year from a maximum of 52 to a maximum of 24;
- Reduce the number of commission member appointments from 37 to 18;
- Retain requirements for applicable professional qualifications for commission members, including architects and other design professionals;
- Create a position on the Downtown Design Review Commission specifically for a representative of the Bricktown Core Zoning District (tenant or property owner); and
- Includes a minimum of three positions on the Urban Design Commission for tenants and property owners in districts subject to UD review plus a minimum of two positions designated for Oklahoma City residents with a demonstrated knowledge of the Urban Design Overlay, the Scenic River Overlay Design Districts, or the Stockyards City Development District/Stockyards City Transitional Overlay District.

The existing committees currently review the following design districts:

Design Review Body	Design District(s)
Bricktown Urban Design Committee	Bricktown Core Development District
Downtown Design Review Committee	Downtown Business District (DBD), Downtown Transitional District, Limited (DTD-1), Downtown Transitional District, General (DTD-2)
Riverfront Design Committee	Scenic River Overlay Design Districts
Stockyards City Urban Design Committee	Stockyards City Development District (SYD) and Stockyards City Transitional Development Overlay District (SYT)
Urban Design Commission	Asian District, Capitol Hill, Cottage District, Lincoln Boulevard Corridor, Paseo District, Plaza District, Uptown NW 23rd Street

As proposed, the ordinance amendment would reorganize and restructure the various design review bodies and the areas they are responsible for as follows:

Design Review Body	Design District(s)
Downtown Design Review Commission	Downtown Business District (DBD), Downtown Transitional District, Limited

	(DTD-1), Downtown Transitional District, General (DTD-2) Bricktown Core Development District
Urban Design Commission	Asian District, Capitol Hill, Cottage District, Lincoln Boulevard Corridor, Paseo District, Plaza District, Uptown NW 23rd Street Stockyards City Development District (SYD) and Stockyards City Transitional Development Overlay District (SYT) Scenic River Overlay Design Districts

The existing composition of the Riverfront Design Committee includes two members of the Oklahoma City Riverfront Redevelopment Authority (OCRRA). In order to maintain and ensure OCRRA's continued involvement with consideration of projects in the Scenic River Overlay Design District (SRODD), staff will route Certificate of Approval applications within the SRODD to OCRRA's Development Committee for review and comment, and those comments will be provided to the Urban Design Commission for their consideration.

#### **IV. STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

Recommend approval of the ordinance amendment to the City Council.

*Attachments: Ordinance Amendment*