

# CITY COUNCIL RESEARCH DIVISION

## LEGISLATIVE SUMMARY

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**Bill Type and Number:** Ordinance 2019-239

**Introducer/Sponsor(s):** Council President at the request of the Renew Arlington CRA Board and by Council Member Morgan

**Date of Introduction:** April 9, 2019

**Committee(s) of Reference:** LUZ

**Date of Analysis:** April 11, 2019

**Type of Action:** Ordinance Code amendment

**Bill Summary:** The bill amends Ordinance Code Chapter 656 - Zoning Code - to create a new Subpart S - Renew Arlington Zoning Overlay - within Part 3 - Schedule of District Regulations. The amendments include the following major items:

- Special Design Standards for High Intensity Uses (defined as those that are likely to create objectionable or excessive noise, lights, vibrations, fumes, odors, dust or physical activities): standards include items such as minimum lot areas, additional buffering requirements, prohibitions on certain types of non-sign related lighting, building finish materials, and the location of window signage.
- Limitations on Administrative Deviations: requests for relief from the Overlay that would usually be addressed by an Administrative Deviation (AD) shall be processed as a Zoning Variance rather than an Administrative Deviation (AD) and must meet specific standards within the Overlay regarding landscaping and buffering.
- Character Areas: given the unique conditions of the commercial corridors within the CRA, the Zoning Overlay creates five (5) Character Areas within which design guidelines and additional performance standards will apply. The character areas include:
  - University Village Character Area
  - University Commercial Character Area
  - Merrill Commercial Character Area
  - Arlington Road Character Area
  - Catalyst Character Area
- Design Guidelines: the overlay contains design regulations for building form and finish materials, height, fencing, landscaping/buffering, signage, parking, walkways and pedestrian connections, screening, and lighting.
- Performance standards: the overlay regulates alcohol distance limitations (in the University Village and Catalyst character areas), drive through window services and queuing lanes, and outdoor display and sale of merchandise (in character areas).
- Amortization period: lawfully existing fencing, landscaping and signage at the time of the effective date of the ordinance are required to meet the new overlay standards within 5 years.

**Background Information:** City Council approved a Finding of Necessity confirming the presence of slum and blight conditions via Resolution 2015-476-A and approved a CRA Redevelopment Plan and created a tax increment district via Ordinance 2015-738-E. The Renew Arlington Agency Board approved the Zoning Overlay in its current form with the approval of Resolution RA/CRA 2019-01. The intent of the Arlington CRA Zoning

Overlay requirements is to protect and enhance the Arlington CRA's unique aesthetic and physical appearance; improve property values; promote an environment that is visually appealing and safe for vehicular, bicycle and pedestrian traffic; and promote appropriate redevelopment of blighted areas. This will be done by amending the zoning ordinance to include urban design development standards for the land use relationships of the corridors. The standards will address the incorporation of human-scale aesthetics into street and building design. Building design and location shall reinforce a pedestrian-oriented character including linkages between land uses through a functioning bicycle-pedestrian system. The design principles that guide the proposed standards were developed through an extensive community participation process.

**Policy Impact Area:** Arlington community redevelopment

**Fiscal Impact:** Undetermined

**Analyst:** Clements