

CITY COUNCIL RESEARCH DIVISION LEGISLATIVE SUMMARY

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Bill Type and Number: Ordinance 2024-39

Introducer/Sponsor(s): Council President at the request of DIA

Date of Introduction: January 10, 2024

Committee(s) of Reference: LUZ, NCSPHS, R

Date of Analysis: January 11, 2024

Type of Action: Amendments to the Ordinance Code regarding Downtown Review Board procedures

Bill Summary: This bill amends Section 656.361.7.1, Subpart H, Part 3, of the Ordinance Code, Zoning Code to revise the project types subject to staff review and Downtown Review Board (“DDRB”) review.

The amended language specifies that signs that comply with Subpart B of Chapter 656 and projects that consist only of landscaping, hardscaping, street furnishings, and/or vehicle use area components, and do not require any Deviation, be subject to staff review only. It specifies that capital projects, including but not limited to streetscape projects, lane elimination projects, and park projects, shall require only a design review by DDRB as long as they do not require Deviation. It specifies that federally designated landmarks within a locally or federally designated historic district are exempt from DDRB Conceptual Review but require final approval by the DDRB after issuance of any required Certificate of Appropriateness.

It eliminates the Workshop requirement, which requires that designers of projects present the need for a Deviation along with potential alternative design solutions, for specified projects. The projects exempt from the Workshop requirement shall be (a) existing buildings when the requested Deviation would not expand or intensify the non-conformity; (b) building entrance criteria for new construction; and (c) rooftop criteria for new construction. Any Workshop requirement elimination is invalid if the property fronts the St. Johns River, Hogans Creek, or McCoy’s Creek.

It gives authority to DDRB staff to determine if an application for a sign permit for any parcel within the Downtown Sign Overlay Area can be reviewed and approved by staff or if it needs to be forwarded to the DDRB for a recommendation of approval or denial.

Background Information: The Downtown Investment Authority (“DIA”) and DDRB identified several opportunities for development review efficiencies regarding downtown development as part of the Mayor’s Economic Development Transition Committee. The DIA Board approved this amendment to the Ordinance Code on October 18, 2023, to clarify and streamline various review processes of the DDRB.

Policy Impact Area: Downtown development

Fiscal Impact: Minimal cost to the City; potential for savings through streamlining review processes for downtown development

Analyst: Webb