Walkable Places

Presented by
Planning & Development Department
City of Houston

Walkable Places Subcommittee
Wednesday, March 8, 2017

Project Schedule

PHASE I	PHASE II	PHASE III	PHASE IV
Background Information & Best Practices	Framework/ Decision Making	Ordinance Amendment	Public Outreach & City Council Adoptions

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Jan	Jun

2017   **2018**

I. Recap: Walkable Place vs Walkability

Walkable Place

Walkable,
but not a Walkable Place

I. Recap: How to Create a Walkable Place?

- Multimodal transportation
- Mix of land uses
- Active Ground Floor
- Pedestrian Scale
- Integrated Pedestrian Realm

Transit Corridor Development (TCD)

TCD (17%)
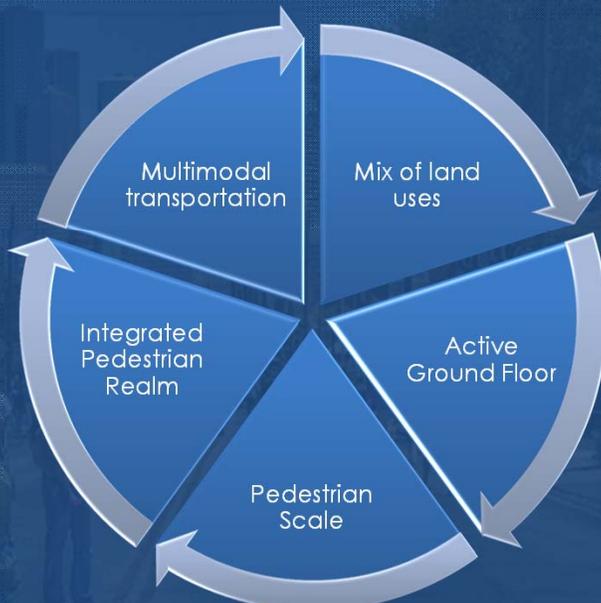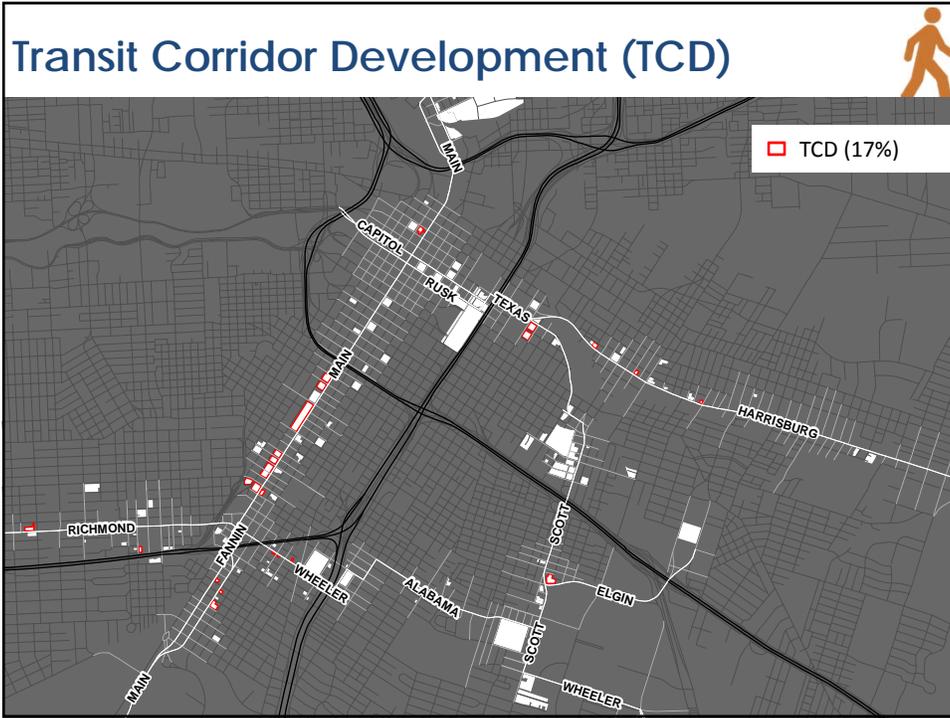
Transit Corridor Development (TCD)

- Reduced Building Line:
  - Type A Street & Transit Corridor Street

- Required Criteria
  - Min 15′ Pedestrian Realm
  - Min 50 % Frontage
  - Min 30% Transparency
  - At Least One Public Entrance

Case Studies-Main Street

Case Studies-Richmond Avenue
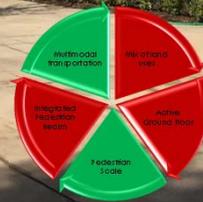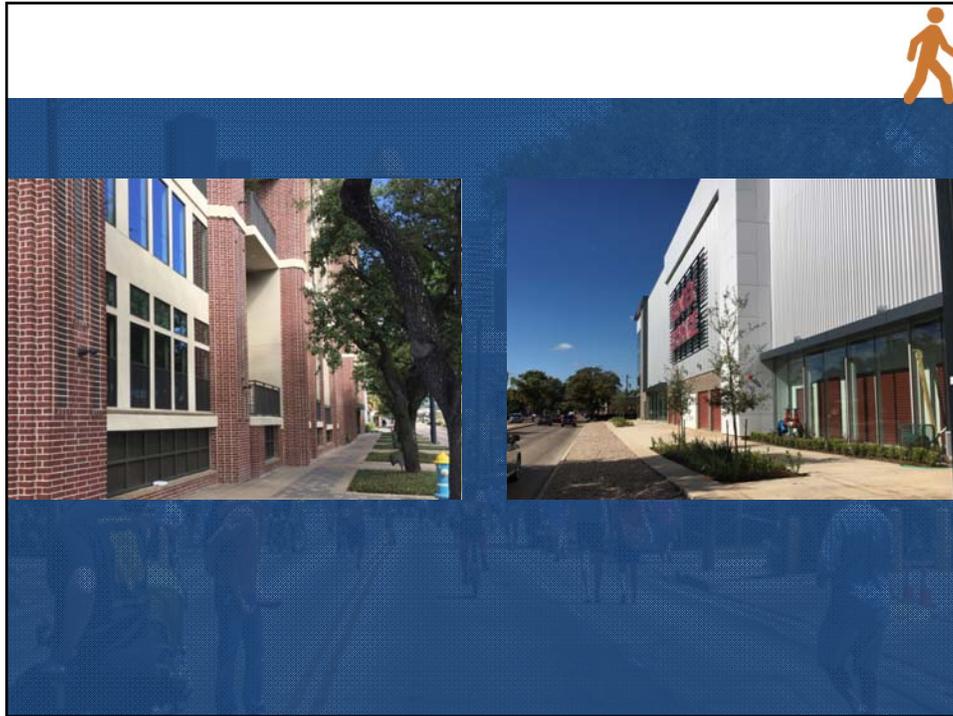
Questions from the Case Study

- Why have so few developments taken advantage of the transit corridor ordinance?

- What could have been done differently to encourage more walkable development along transit corridors?

- For those opting into transit corridor ordinance, are we getting walkable places?

Meeting Agenda

I.   Recap

II. Case Studies in Other Cities

III. Public Comment

II. Case Studies in Other Cities

- https://youtu.be/uYPMmKrwgPc

Case Studies in Other Cities

- Selecting Applicable Locations
  - City-Initiated
  - Applicant-Initiated
- Standards to Promote Walkable Places
  - Building Setbacks
  - Parking Requirements
  - Building Frontage
  - Pedestrian Realm Requirements
  - Active Ground Floor
  - Building Façade and Design

Case Studies in Other Cities

- Selecting Applicable Locations
  - City-Initiated
  - Applicant-Initiated

Selecting Applicable Locations

- City-Initiated: city designated areas/streets with special rules <u>required for compliance</u>
  - Geographic Area
  - Street Classification

City-Initiated: Geographic Area
Charlotte-6 Focus Areas

- Intent:
  - Influence redevelopment

- Method:
  - Connection of Multimodal Networks
    - transit, pedestrian, bicycle & roadway
  - Public/private partnership
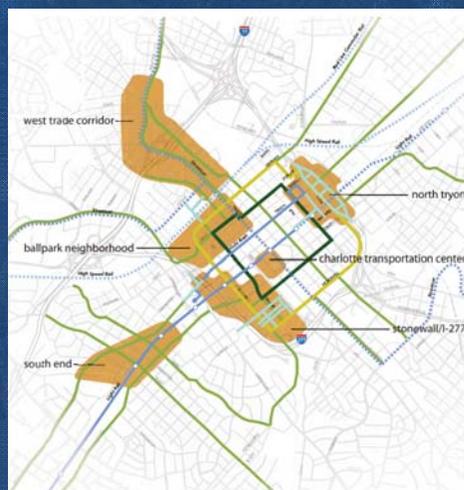
City-Initiated: Geographic Area
Charlotte-6 Focus Areas

- Design Principles
  - Density
  - Active Ground Floor
  - Parking Design
  - Flexible Ground Floor
  - Streetscape Improvements

City-Initiated: Geographic Area
Atlanta- Beltine Overlay District

- Intent:
  - Encourage pedestrian and transit oriented developments

- Method:
  - Transform existing railroad into multimodal network
    - transit, pedestrian, bicycle & roadway
 - ½ mile buffer from railroad
  - Public/private partnership

½ mi .radius
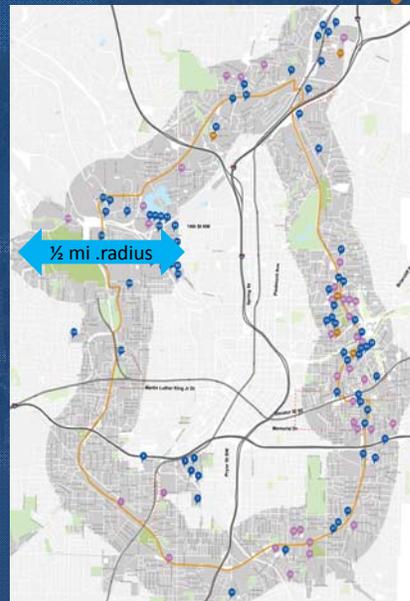
City-Initiated: Geographic Area
Atlanta- Beltine Overlay District

## City-Initiated: Geographic Area
Oakland-Lake Merritt Area Plan

- Intent:
  - Connect important destinations
  - promote a vibrant, high-intensity, mixed use neighborhood
- Method
 - ½ mile radius around Lake Merritt BART Station

½ mile walking distance

Lake Merritt Area Plan Boundary
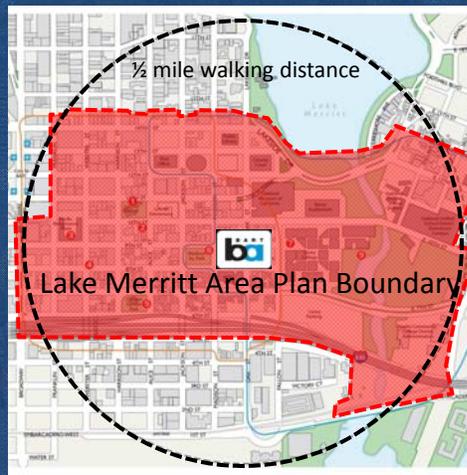
City-Initiated: Geographic Area Washington D.C.-Downtown

- Intent:
  - Encourage mixed use buildings
  - Spur housing, retail and art uses
- Method
  - Expand Downtown
  - Allow TDR System
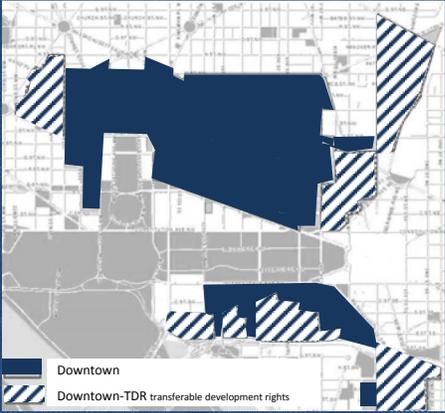
■ Downtown

▨ Downtown-TDR transferable development rights

City-Initiated: Geographic Area Washington D.C.-Downtown/TDR Zones

- Maximum FAR
(Floor Area ratio)
  - Maximum Density Requirements or GFA

- TDR
(Transferable Development Rights)
  - Excess density rights
  - Bought and sold to developers
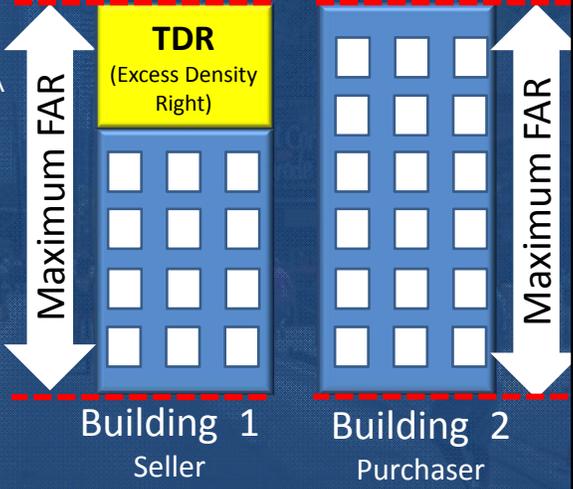
Maximum FAR

TDR
(Excess Density Right)

Maximum FAR

Building 1
Seller

Building 2
Purchaser

City-Initiated: Geographic Area
Houston- Major Activity Centers (MACs)

- Intent:
  - Promote density
  - Discourage impact on single family neighborhood

- Method
  - Boundary based on compliance of specific criteria
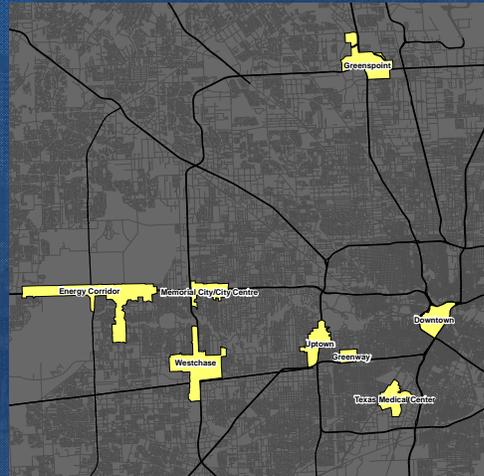
City-Initiated: Geographic Area
Houston- Parking Exempt Area (CBD)

- Intent:
 - Promote density

- Method
  - Boundary determined by CoH

II. Selecting Applicable Locations

- City-Initiated: city designated areas/streets with special rules <u>required for compliance</u>
  - Geographic area
  - Street Classification

City-Initiated: City of San Francisco Street Classification: Better Streets Plan

- Intent:
  - To have streets serve as public space
- Method
  - Design Criteria for street classifications
    - Commercial
      - Downtown Commercial
      - Commercial Throughway
      - Neighborhood Commercial
    - Mixed Use
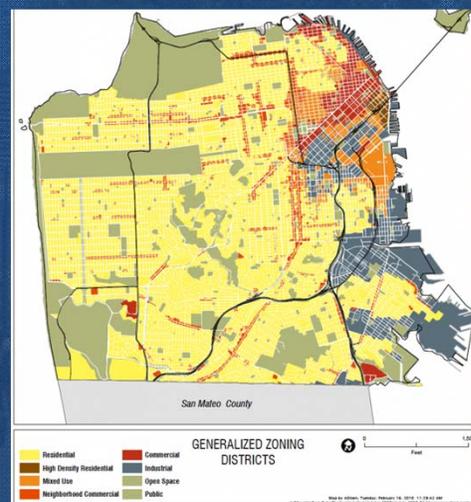
City-Initiated: Street Classification
City of Austin

- Intent:
  - To have streets serve as public space
- Method
  - Design Criteria for street classifications
    - **Core Transit Corridors**
    - Urban Roadways
    - Suburban Roadways
    - Highway
    - Hill Country Roadway
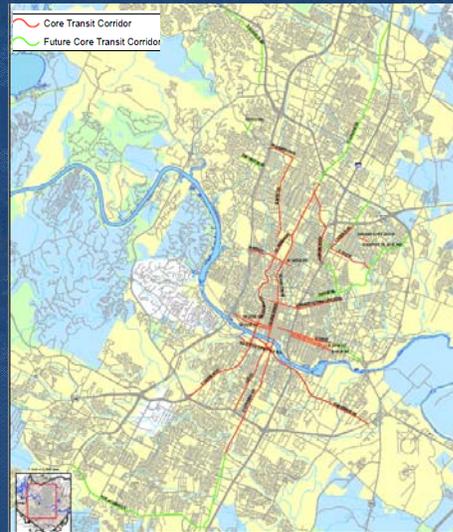
City-Initiated: Street Classification
City of Atlanta: Midtown-Storefront Corridors

- Intent:
  - Prevent Incompatible Land Uses
  - Ensure pedestrian oriented buildings
  - Encourage MARTA use
- Method
  - Design and Parking Criteria for specific streets
    - Storefront Corridors

City-Initiated: Street Classification
City of Atlanta: Midtown-Storefront Corridors

Selecting Applicable Locations

- Applicant-Initiated: city designated areas/streets with special rules <u>available for application</u>
  - Geographic area
  - Street Classification

Applicant-Initiated: Geographic Area
City of Austin: VMU Overlay District

- Intent:
  - Establish vertical mixed use (VMU) developments
  - Encourage development along transit corridors
- Method
  - City Council designated boundary along Core Transit Corridors
  - Optional design standards
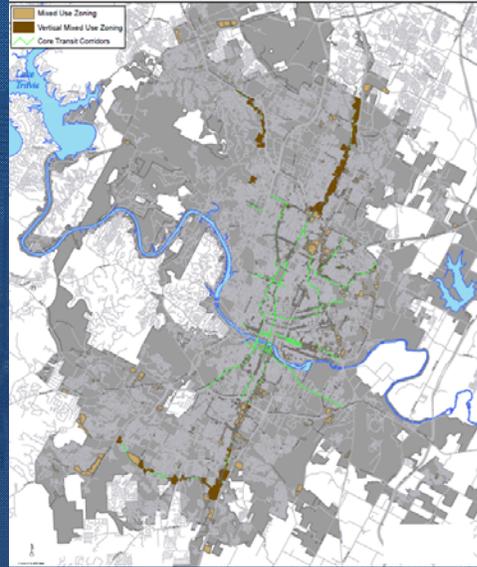
Applicant-Initiated: Geographic Area
Charlotte: Transit Supportive Overlay District

- Intent:
  - Transit Oriented Development with ½ mile of transit station
- Method
  - City Council designated boundary around transit station
  - Optional design standards

Applicant-Initiated: Geographic Area
Charlotte: Pedestrian Overlay District

- Intent:
  - Promote a pedestrian-oriented setting along Business Corridors
  - Encourage adaptive reuse
- Method
  - Petition based application on particular corridor
  - Approved by city council

Applicant-Initiated: Geographic Area
## Houston: Special Parking Areas (SPAs)

- Intent:
  - To accommodate parking needs within certain areas
- Method
  - Application by management entity
 - Parking management plan approved by City Council

II. Selecting Applicable Locations

- Applicant-Initiated: city designated areas/streets with special rules <u>available for application</u>
  - Geographic area
  - Street Classification

Applicant-Initiated: Street Classification Houston: Major Thoroughfares 80′ or less

- Intent:
  - Pedestrian Friendly Development
  - Reduced building lines of 0,5, or 15 feet
- Method
  - Optional design standards

Applicant-Initiated: Street Classification
Houston: Transit Corridor Development

- Intent:
  - Transit Corridor Development
- Method
  - Optional design standards

Selecting Applicable Locations
Discussion

- Two Broad Approaches for Selecting Locations:

  - City-Initiated: city designated areas/streets with special rules <u>required for compliance</u>

  - Applicant-Initiated: city designated areas/streets with special rules <u>available for application</u>

- What are the pros and cons for these two approaches?

- How might they work in Houston?

Selecting Applicable Locations Discussion

- Geographic Area Approach: create unique rules in designated geographic areas

- Street Classification Approach: create unique rules along designated corridors

- What are the pros and cons for these two approaches?

- How might they work in Houston?

Case Studies in Other Cities

- Selecting Applicable Places
  - City Initiative
  - Applicant Initiative
- Standards to Promote Walkable Places
  - Building Setbacks
  - Parking Requirements
  - Building Frontage
  - Pedestrian Realm Requirements
  - Active Ground Floor
  - Building Façade and Design

Standards to Promote Walkable Places

- Building Setbacks
  - Average Building Line
  - Min Building Line
  - Max Building Line
  - Upper Level Building Line

Building Setback Requirements: Average Building Line

- Average of existing building setbacks

- Measured from Property line

- Applicable cities:
  – San Francisco, CA
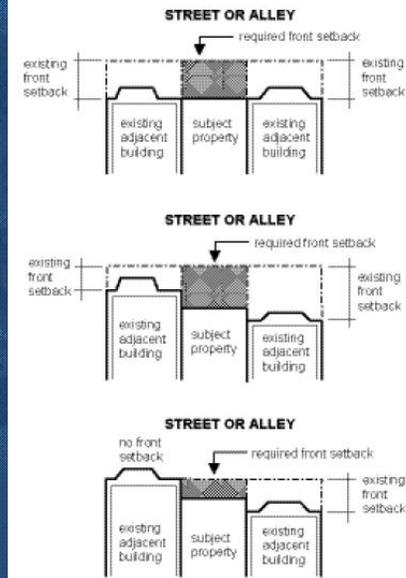
Building Setback Requirements: Minimum Building Line

- Min BL
  - determined by streetscape plan

- Measured from back of curb

- Applicable cities:
  - Charlotte, NC

Building Setback Requirements: Maximum Building Line

- No min BL
- 10′ max BL

- Measured from Property line

- Applicable cities:
  - Portland
  - Oakland
  - Denver

## Building Setback Requirements: Upper Level Building Line

- Setbacks required based on height
  - taller building must be staggered
- Applicable cities:
  - San Francisco
  - Charlotte

Building Setback Requirements: Houston: Minimum Building Line

- Min BL
  - Determined by street classification
- Reduced Min BL
  - Optional
  - Subject to design criteria

Building Setback Requirements: Discussion

- Is a building close to the street necessary for walkable places?

- If so, are optional minimum building line standards adequate, or is a maximum building line necessary?

Standards to Promote Walkable Places

- Building Setbacks
- Parking Requirements
  - Parking Exempt Areas
  - On-Street and Off-Street Parking Calculations
  - Min and Max Parking
  - Transit Oriented Development
  - Reductions/Incentives for Developments
  - Shared Parking
 - Surface Parking
  - Bicycle Parking

Parking Requirements:
Parking Exempt Areas

- Parking exempt areas

- Applicable cities:
  - Austin
  - San Francisco
  - Washington DC
  - Portland
  - Oakland
  - Denver
 - Houston

Parking Requirements:
Exchangeable On-Street & Off-Street Parking

- Min parking
  - Determined by use
- Requirement:
  On-street parking and off-street parking spaces
- Applicable cities:
  - Charlotte

Parking Requirements:
Min and Max Parking

- Minimum parking
  - by use classification
- Maximum parking
  - in certain high density mixed use areas
- Applicable cities:
  - Atlanta
  - Austin
  - San Francisco
  - Portland
  - Denver
  - Oakland

Parking Requirements:
Transit Oriented Development

- Parking Exemption
  - within 1500' from a transit station
- 50% Parking Reduction
- Max parking
  - 150% of min parking
  - 10 spaces > than min **or** 125% of the min
- Applicable cities:
  - Portland
  - Atlanta
  - Oakland
  - Denver

PORTLAND CITY CENTER

PORTLAND TRANSIT HALL

Parking Requirements:
Reductions/Incentives for Developments

- Affordable housing
- Senior housing
- Multifamily near transit
- Historic Buildings
  - Adaptive reuse
  - Additions
- Applicable cities:
  - Oakland,
  - Denver,
  - Portland
  - Washington D.C.
  - Austin
  - Houston

Parking Requirements:
Shared Parking

- Shared parking allowed within certain distance
- Applicable cities:
  - Oakland
  - Charlotte
  - Portland
  - Atlanta
  - Denver
  - Houston

Parking Requirements:
Surface Parking

- Prohibited between buildings & streets
- Applicable cities:
  - Atlanta
  - Denver
  - Austin
  - Charlotte
  - San Francisco
  - Portland
  - Oakland
  - Washington D.C.

street | street
unacceptable | acceptable
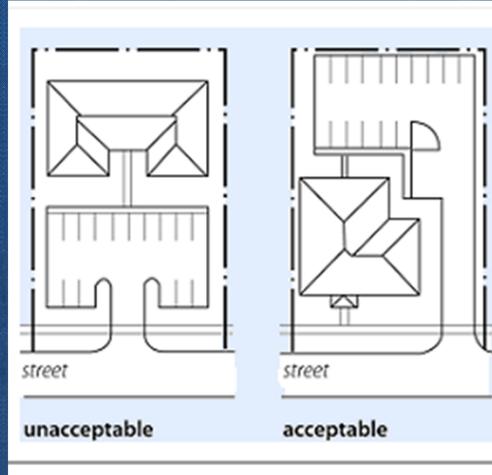
Parking Requirements:
Bicycle Parking

- Bicycle parking required for most uses

- Applicable cities:
  - Denver
  - Austin
  - Portland
  - San Francisco
  - Atlanta
  - Washington D.C.

Parking Requirements: Houston

- No Parking requirements within Parking exempt area

- Minimum Parking Requirements by Use Classification

- Parking reduction incentives

- Shared Parking

Parking Requirements: Discussion

- Does parking significantly impact walkable places?

- If so, are minimum parking standards adequate, or are maximum parking standards necessary?

Standards to Promote Walkable Places

- Building Setbacks
- Parking Requirements
- Building Frontage

Building Frontage Requirements

- Max building frontage
  - Along specific corridors
- Applicable cities:
 - San Francisco
  - Austin
  - Charlotte

Standards to Promote Walkable Places

- Building Setbacks
- Parking Requirements
- Building Frontage
- Pedestrian Realm Requirements
  - Min/max setback
  - No setback
  - Minimum Façade Width

Pedestrian Realm Requirements:
Min 15' Pedestrian Realm, Min/Max setback

- Min Pedestrian Realm
  - Sidewalk Zones
    - Planting zone
    - Clear zone

- Applicable cities
  - San Francisco
  - Portland

8' Min. Clear Height

Clear Zone | Planting Zone

Min 15' Pedestrian Realm
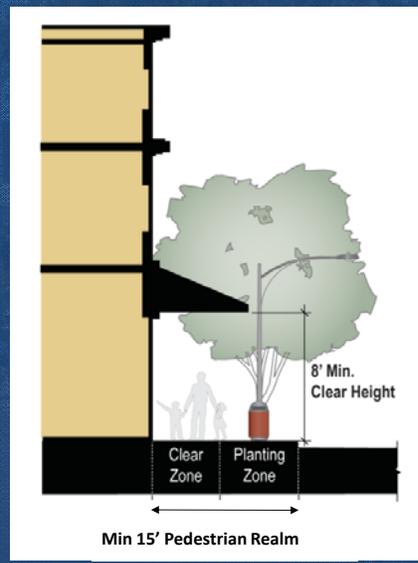
Pedestrian Realm Requirements:
Min 15′ Pedestrian Realm, no setback

- Min Pedestrian Realm
  - Sidewalk Zones
    - Planting Zone
    - Clear zone
    - Supplemental
      - Optional

- Applicable cities
  - Atlanta
  - Austin
  - Houston
  - Denver
  - Charlotte

Outdoor dining may be separated from Sidewalk only by planters, shrubs, or fencing no higher than 42 in.

Clear Zone | Planting Zone

20' - 30' max — width varies

Optional Supplemental Zone | Required Sidewalk (See Roadway types for specific Sidewalk requirements)
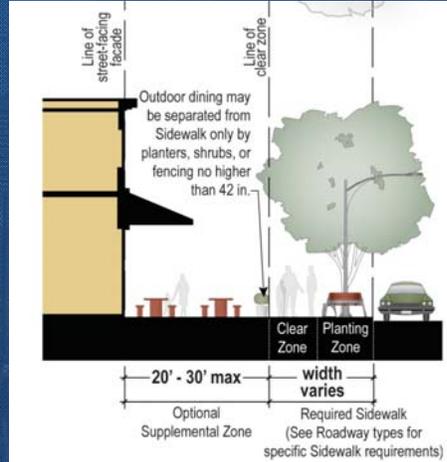
Figure 10 & 11:
Optional supplemental zone may be expanded to 30 feet for a maximum of 30 percent of the frontage.

Pedestrian Realm Requirements:
Façade Width

- Min width of façade must abut pedestrian realm

- Applicable cities
  - Austin
  - Houston
  - Portland
  - Oakland
  - Atlanta
  - Washington D.C.
  - San Francisco
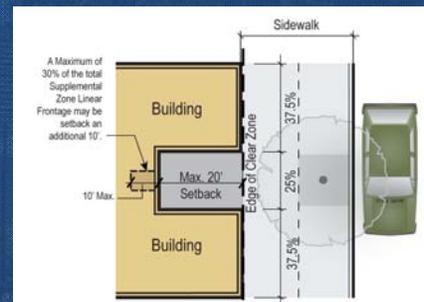
Sidewalk

A Maximum of 30% of the total Supplemental Zone Linear Frontage may be setback an additional 10'.

Building

Max. 20' Setback

10' Max.

Edge Of Clear Zone

Building

37.5% | 25% | 37.5%

Standards to Promote Walkable Places

- Building Setbacks
- Parking Requirements
- Building Frontage
- Pedestrian Realm
- Active Ground Floor

Active Ground Floor Use

- By Street Classification
  - along specific streets
  - Number of entrances
- By Designated Area
- Applicable cities:
  - Austin
  - Denver
  - Oakland
  - Portland
  - Atlanta
  - Washington D.C.
  - Charlotte
  - San Francisco
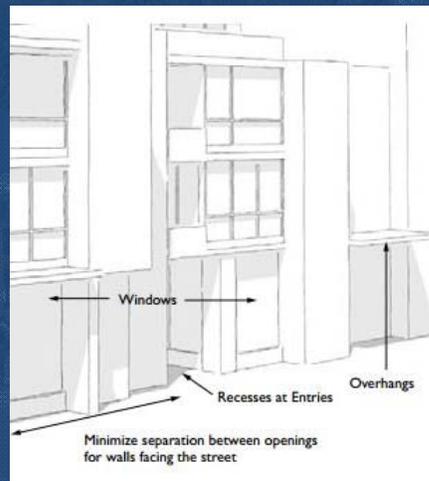
Standards to Promote Walkable Places

- Building Setbacks
- Parking Requirements
- Building Frontage
- Pedestrian Realm
- Active Ground Floor
- Building Façade and Design
  - Transparency
  - Minimum and Maximum Height
  - Minimum Ground Floor Height
  - Parking Structures

Building Façade & Design Transparency

- Minimum ground floor transparency requirements
- Applicable cities:
  - Oakland
  - Atlanta
  - Denver
  - San Francisco
  - Portland
  - Austin
  - Charlotte
  - Washington D.C.

Building Façade & Design
## Min and Max Height

- Min Height
- Max Height
  - Designated by corridor or area
- Applicable city:
  - Charlotte
  - Denver
  - Portland
  - Oakland
  - Atlanta

Building Façade & Design
Minimum Ground Floor Height

- Min Height
  - Ground Floor
  - Designated by corridor or area
- Applicable cities:
  - Charlotte
  - San Francisco
  - Austin
  - Denver
  - Portland
  - Oakland
  - Atlanta

Building Façade & Design
Parking Structures

- Required
  - Active ground floor
  - Screening
  - Min Height
  - Min Depth

- Applicable cities:
  - Charlotte
  - San Francisco
  - Austin
  - Atlanta

PARKING

RETAIL

20'

PARKING DECK
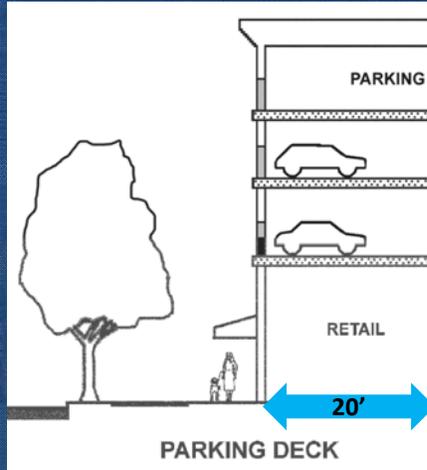
Building Design Standards
Discussion

- Does building design significantly impact walkable places?

- If so, should we consider building design criteria for creating walkable places in Houston?

III. Public Comment