

**SUBJECT:** A report and recommendation on a proposed extension of Interim Development Control (IDC) Overlay District No. 88, “Surface Parking in the Downtown Development Zoning District” in the Central Business District, for a period of nine additional months.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

Provided in addition to this report are:

- Exhibit A - Location Map
- Exhibit B - IDC Review Criteria
- Exhibit C – IDC Directive

**BACKGROUND:**

In September 2022, Council Member Mark Jeffreys introduced legislation to amend certain zoning code provisions governing the development of surface parking lots in the DD, “Downtown Development,” zoning district. On September 15, 2022, City Manager Sheryl M. M. Long directed the Department of City Planning and Engagement (DCPE) to conduct a zoning study of the proposed legislation, make recommendations for modifying the legislation, if any, and pursue an Interim Development Control (IDC) Overlay District over the DD, “Downtown Development,” zoning district for the duration of the study.

The City Planning Commission recommended approval of an emergency three-month IDC to Cincinnati City Council on September 16, 2022, and Cincinnati City Council approved the establishment of IDC No. 88 on September 21, 2022. The approved IDC No. 88 provides that the following permits and approvals are subject to review by the Department of City Planning and Engagement and the City Planning Commission while the zoning study is underway:

- building permits, certificates of compliance, and certificates of appropriateness for new construction, alterations, modification, or expansion of existing surface parking facilities
- changes in use to a surface parking facility
- site improvements associated with surface parking facilities

IDC No. 88 encompasses most of Downtown and parts of East End, Mount Adams, Mount Auburn, Pendleton, Over-the-Rhine, and West End neighborhoods.

The Department of Planning and Engagement’s study will include research and analysis of surface parking related to public interests and services, case study, and best-practice research, and additional topics surfaced through public-engagement activities. Department of City Planning and Engagement (DCPE) staff is planning an initial community engagement meeting in late 2022 to identify questions, concerns, and desires of stakeholders affected by the DD zoning district. DCPE staff intends to conduct study research and hold additional community engagement activities as needed in the first 2-4 months of 2023. DCPE staff would then present findings and recommendations to the City Planning Commission and City Council in the spring of 2023.

### **CRITERIA FOR A ONE-YEAR IDC DISTRICT**

Pursuant to Section 1431-11 of the Cincinnati Zoning Code, City Council may extend an IDC Overlay District established pursuant to Section 1431-09 for nine additional months if notice has been given and a public hearing held in accordance with Section 111-1, Hearings on Zoning Amendments, of the Municipal Code and on finding that:

- (a) *Ongoing Study*. The City Planning Commission is studying proposed Cincinnati Zoning Code or map amendments that would affect the area within the IDC District;
- (b) *Study Completion*. The study is not yet completed, but may reasonably be expected to be completed and Cincinnati Zoning Code amendments enacted within the year; and
- (c) *Inconsistent Uses*. There is a prospect of changes in use, construction of new structures or alteration or demolition of existing structures that would be inconsistent with preliminary objectives or findings for the area approved by the City Planning Commission.

Staff findings on the above criteria is described further in the “Analysis” section of this report.

### **ANALYSIS:**

The initial three-month period of IDC Overlay District No. 88 is currently set to expire on December 20, 2022, unless City Council approves an extension of IDC Overlay District No. 88 for an additional nine months. The City Council must receive an affirmative recommendation from the City Planning Commission to make this extension. An additional nine months would leave IDC Overlay District No. 88 in effect until September 21, 2023 (if approved by City Council), or until the zoning study is complete and any potential text amendments have been approved by City Council, at which time the IDC Overlay District could be dissolved by ordinance.

As described above, the City Council may extend IDC No. 88 for a period of nine months if the City Planning Commission gives them an affirmative recommendation on the finding that:

- a) *Ongoing Study*. The City Planning Commission is studying proposed Cincinnati Zoning Code or map amendments that would affect the area within the IDC District;

*Staff analysis: The Zoning Code text amendments proposed by Council Member Jeffreys would prohibit the creation of new surface parking lots in the study area. Since the DD zoning district is in one of the City’s densest commercial and residential areas, the proposed legislation could affect how a large number of users access and traverse the Central Business District. Additionally, prohibiting new surface parking facilities could impact City services and commercial activity in and around the study area. Therefore, the Department of City Planning and Engagement staff believe these impacts require more study before making recommendations on the proposed text amendments.*

- b) *Study Completion*. The study is not yet completed, but may reasonably be expected to be completed and Cincinnati Zoning Code amendments enacted within the year; and

*Staff analysis: As indicated in the study plan, the Department of City Planning and Engagement staff intend to conduct research and community engagement over a two-to-four-month period with the possibility of an additional three to six months should any zoning code changes be pursued after*

*the study is complete. With this timeline, a three-month IDC is insufficient to complete the study and possible zone changes and will require the nine-month extension.*

- c) *Inconsistent Uses.* There is a prospect of changes in use, construction of new structures or alteration or demolition of existing structures that would be inconsistent with preliminary objectives or findings for the area approved by the City Planning Commission.

*Staff analysis: IDC No. 88 was established to study the impacts and appropriateness of surface parking in the study area. In the five-day period between the City Planning Commission's affirmative recommendation and City Council's establishment of IDC No. 88, the Department of Buildings and Inspections received two permits for new surface parking lots. The Department of City Planning and Engagement Staff are concerned more permits to build or expand surface parking lots will be submitted if IDC No. 88 is dissolved before the study is complete and potential amendments are approved. The Department of City Planning and Engagement staff believe new and expanded surface parking lots would be inconsistent with the preliminary objectives for IDC No. 88 and that its extension is needed to protect against this likely outcome.*

IDC No. 88 helps to ensure the compatibility of any proposed surface parking facilities in the DD zoning district while the Department of City Planning and Engagement studies the effect of surface parking in that area. The proposed extension of IDC No. 88 for nine additional months will give the Administration enough time to complete its zoning study, engage the community, and take any proposal(s) through the approval process of City Planning Commission and City Council. If it becomes necessary, IDC No. 88 could potentially be extended two more times, each for six additional months, with City Planning Commission and City Council approval. An IDC is meant to be temporary and cannot be in place for more than two years.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:**

Department of City Planning and Engagement staff posted notice of the establishment of the district and the time and place of a public hearing on the extension of the district for an additional nine-month period within ten business days of the establishment of IDC No. 88 by placing an advertisement in the Cincinnati Enquirer on September 30, 2022. Staff has received no public inquiry to-date.

**CONSISTENCY WITH PLANS:**

*Plan Cincinnati (2012)*

*Plan Cincinnati* does not specifically address the concerns related to the establishment of IDC No. 88, however conducting a zoning study in this scenario is consistent with three Initiatives Areas. It is consistent with the Compete Initiative Area in the Strategy to “target investment to geographic areas where there is already economic activity” (page 115) and the Action Step to “continue development of existing growth opportunity areas” (page 116), which specifically identifies the “Central Business District (CBD), Over-the-Rhine (OTR), and the Uptown neighborhoods as the primary sources of City tax revenue”, which surface parking lots do little to support. Secondly, there is consistency with the Live Initiative Area to “become more walkable” (page 157) because large expanses of surface parking along street fronting properties discourage human-scale activity and movability. Lastly, this is consistent with the Connect Initiative Area Goal to “Develop an efficient multi-modal transportation system that supports neighborhood livability” (page 129) and more specifically with the Strategy to “expand options for non-automotive travel” (page 130) in that it could encourage people to walk instead of use cars to access and move around Downtown.

*Cincinnati 2000 Comprehensive Development Plan for Downtown* (1986)

The proposal is also consistent with *Cincinnati 2000 Comprehensive Development Plan for Downtown* (1986) which calls for “preservation of the City’s historic and architecturally significant buildings” (p. 2).

**RECOMMENDATION**

The staff of the Department of City Planning and Engagement recommends that the City Planning Commission take the following actions:

- 1) **ADOPT** the Department of City Planning and Engagement’s staff findings that the proposed extension of IDC No. 88 meets the criteria set forth in Cincinnati Zoning Code Section 1431-11, *One-Year IDC Overlay Districts*, as discussed on pages 1 – 3 of this report; and,
- 2) **RECOMMEND** that City Council extend Interim Development Control (IDC) Overlay District No. 88, “Surface Parking in the Downtown Development Zoning District,” for a period of nine additional months, or until the Department of City Planning and Engagement’s zoning study is complete and implemented.

Respectfully submitted:



Maria Dienger, City Planner  
Department of City Planning and Engagement

Approved:



Katherine Keough-Jurs, FAICP, Director  
Department of City Planning and Engagement







**EXHIBIT B**

**Regulations and Application Review Guidelines for  
Interim Development Control Overlay District No. 88,  
“Surface Parking in the Downtown Development Zoning District,” and  
Designation of Administrative Reviewer**

**Section I. Applications Subject to Review:**

The following applications shall be reviewed by the City Planning Commission during the pendency of Interim Development Control Overlay District No. 88, “Surface Parking in the Downtown Development Zoning District”:

(a) Building permits for:

- i. new construction of surface parking facilities;
- ii. alteration, modification, or expansion of surface parking facilities;
- iii. changes in use to a surface parking facility use; and
- iv. site improvements associated with surface parking facilities.

(b) Certificates of compliance for:

- i. new construction of surface parking facilities;
- ii. alteration, modification, or expansion of surface parking facilities;
- iii. changes in use to a surface parking facility use; and
- iv. site improvements associated with surface parking facilities.

(c) Certificates of appropriateness for:

- i. new construction of surface parking facilities;
- ii. alteration, modification, or expansion of surface parking facilities;
- iii. changes in use to a surface parking facility use; and
- iv. site improvements associated with surface parking facilities.

Notwithstanding the foregoing subsections (a), (b), and (c), applications for building permits, certificates of compliance, and certificates of appropriateness to make the following alterations, modifications, or improvements to existing surface parking facilities shall not be subject to review by the City Planning Commission:

- i. Resurfacing that does not increase or expand the existing surface area;
- ii. Restriping;
- iii. New lighting;
- iv. New fencing; and
- v. New landscaping.

## **Section II. Designated Administrative Reviewer:**

Council designates the Department of City Planning and Engagement as the staff reviewing authority for Interim Development Control Overlay District No. 88, “Surface Parking in the Downtown Development Zoning District.”

## **Section III. Application Review Guidelines:**

In addition to any other necessary reviews and approvals as required by the Cincinnati Municipal Code and any other applicable laws, any application subject to review in Section I above shall be reviewed by the City Planning Commission to determine whether the application conforms to all applicable laws, ordinances, and regulations and is in the public interest.

In determining whether the application is in the public interest, the City Planning Commission shall consider those factors listed below that are relevant to the application. The application’s failure to conform to any single factor is not necessarily a sufficient basis for denial.

- a) *Community Character.* The proposal has a density, scale, size, location, programmatic configuration or function, and use that is compatible with, and designed to activate and enhance, the downtown streetscape.
- b) *Placement.* The proposed siting, setbacks, and orientation is designed to maximize multi-modal mobility that emphasizes pedestrian safety, participation, circulation, and connectivity.
- c) *Integration.* The proposal is designed to provide seamless transitions and connections, promoting interconnectivity between adjoining and abutting land uses to avoid disharmonious development patterns.
- d) *Accessibility.* The proposal is designed to promote public and private interactions and accessibility through multi-modal connections to existing or planned street grids or pedestrian-oriented pathways.
- e) *Stormwater Management.* The proposal is designed to address and minimize potential adverse effects relating to off-site stormwater runoff owing to any relative increase in impervious surface area or decrease in vegetative land cover related to the proposed development.
- f) *Zoning.* The proposal conforms to the underlying zone district regulations and is in harmony with the general purposes and intent of the zoning code.
- g) *Guidelines.* The proposal conforms to any guidelines adopted or approved by Council for the district in which the proposed work is located.

- h) *Plans.* The proposal conforms to a comprehensive plan, any applicable urban design or other plan officially adopted by Council, and any applicable community plan approved by the City Planning Commission.
- i) *Proposed Zoning Amendments.* The proposal is consistent with any proposed amendment to the zoning code then under consideration by the City Planning Commission or Council.
- j) *Adverse Effects.* Whether the proposal is likely to impose any adverse effect on the access to the property by fire, police, or other public services; traffic conditions; or the development, usefulness or value of neighboring land and buildings.



**Dienger, Maria**

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**From:** Keough-Jurs, Katherine  
**Sent:** Thursday, September 15, 2022 3:41 PM  
**To:** Peppers, Alex; Dienger, Maria  
**Subject:** Fwd: DD Parking Zoning Text Amendment & IDC  
**Attachments:** image001.png; Signed ORD & TRANS - Modifying Zoning Code Surface Parking.pdf

Alex and Maria,

Please proceed with the request below.

Thanks,  
Katherine

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** "Long, Sheryl" <Sheryl.Long@cincinnati-oh.gov>  
**Date:** September 15, 2022 at 3:11:15 PM EDT  
**To:** "Keough-Jurs, Katherine" <Katherine.Keough-Jurs@cincinnati-oh.gov>  
**Cc:** "Rocco, Giovanni" <Giovanni.Rocco@cincinnati-oh.gov>, "Weber, William" <William.Weber@cincinnati-oh.gov>  
**Subject:** FW: DD Parking Zoning Text Amendment & IDC

Hello Katherine,  
Please see the request from CM Jefferies office. Please proceed with execution of the request.

Thank you,  
Sheryl

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**From:** Rocco, Giovanni <Giovanni.Rocco@cincinnati-oh.gov>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, September 14, 2022 2:30 PM  
**To:** Long, Sheryl <Sheryl.Long@cincinnati-oh.gov>  
**Cc:** Weber, William <William.Weber@cincinnati-oh.gov>  
**Subject:** DD Parking Zoning Text Amendment & IDC

CM Long,

This afternoon, our office transmitted the attached ordinance to the Clerk's office to be placed on the Council Calendar for next week. Given the nature of this zoning change, we would like the Administration to pursue an IDC in the DD District as it relates to surface parking while this proposal goes through the zoning process. Given the sensitive nature of this proposal, we would like the CPC to consider the IDC this Friday.

Thank you, and feel free to reach out with any questions.

Gio Rocco | Chief of Staff

Councilmember Mark Jeffreys  
801 Plum Street, Room 346-A | Cincinnati, OH 45202  
(O) 513-352-3464  
[Giovanni.Rocco@cincinnati-oh.gov](mailto:Giovanni.Rocco@cincinnati-oh.gov)  
<https://www.cincinnati-oh.gov>

**Downtown Residents Council**  
Public Library, Tower Room (3rd fl)  
800 Vine Street, Cincinnati, Ohio 45202

**Pendleton Neighborhood Council**  
Brewdog Cincinnati  
316 Reading Rd., Cincinnati OH 45202

**Over-the-Rhine Community Housing**  
114 West 14th Street  
Cincinnati, OH 45202

**West End Community Council**  
Carl Linder YMCA  
1425 Linn Street, Cincinnati, Ohio  
45214

**Mt. Adams Civic Association**  
Holy Cross/Immaculata Parish Center  
30 Guido Street, Cincinnati, Ohio 45202

**Over-the-Rhine Community Council**  
OTR Community Center  
1715 Republic Street, Cincinnati, Ohio  
45202

**West End Neighborhood Development  
Corporation**  
2008 Freeman Avenue  
Cincinnati, OH 45214