



City of Austin

Recommendation for Action

File #: 25-0850, **Agenda Item #:** 62.

5/22/2025

Posting Language

Conduct a public hearing and consider an ordinance granting additional floor-to-area ratio entitlements to the 701 West 6th Street project at 701 and 709 West 6th Street and 512 Rio Grande Street in accordance with the Downtown Density Bonus Program under City Code Section 25-2-586(B)(6). Funding: This item has no fiscal impact.

Lead Department

Planning Department.

Fiscal Note

This item has no fiscal impact.

For More Information:

Jorge E. Rousselin, Planning Department, (512) 974-2975.

Council Committee, Boards and Commission Action:

September 23, 2024: Reviewed by the Design Commission.

May 13, 2025: To be reviewed by the Planning Commission.

Additional Backup Information:

Case Number: SP-2023-0494C

The applicant is requesting administrative approval for the construction of a 66-story mixed-use building comprised of retail and 413 residential units, garage parking, and streetscape improvements in accordance with the Downtown Density Bonus Program (DDBP).

In accordance with City Code Section 25-2-586(B)(6), the applicant is requesting additional floor-to-area ratio (FAR) from 15:1 to 30:1 for a proposed mixed-use building. The project is participating in the DDBP for bonus area up to 15:1 FAR, to be granted administratively.

To participate in the DDBP, projects must first satisfy the gatekeeper requirements as described in Section 25-2-586(C)(1), which are:

1. To substantially comply with the Urban Design Guidelines,
2. To execute a restrictive covenant committing to provide streetscape improvements along all public street frontages, consistent with the Great Streets Standards, and
3. To execute a restrictive covenant committing to achieve a minimum two-star rating under the Austin Energy Green Building program, using the ratings in effect at the time the application is submitted.

For this project, the applicant has provided sufficient documentation to meet the gatekeeper requirements, as outlined below:

1. The project will implement streetscape improvements consistent with Great Streets standards along

West 6th Street and Rio Grande Street, with a pedestrian-oriented design featuring wide sidewalks, street trees, benches, bike racks, trash receptacles, and streetlights.

2. The applicant has committed to achieving a minimum two-star rating under the Austin Energy Green Building Program.
3. The applicant has provided documentation indicating they will substantially comply with the Urban Design Guidelines and staff has found the project substantially compliant with the Urban Design guidelines.

The applicant seeks a total “Bonus Area” – defined by Section 25-2-586(A)(1) as “the gross floor area that exceeds the maximum floor-to-area ratio allowed with the site’s primary entitlement” – as the bonus area approved administratively between 8:1 and 15:1 FAR (as permitted by Section 25-2-586(B)(3)), and the bonus area above the administrative allowance of 15:1 FAR (as permitted by Section 25-2-586(B)(6)), up to a maximum 30:1 FAR.

The applicant has proposed to achieve the bonus area allowances through the following means:

1. Bonus area from 8:1 to 15:1 FAR: Pay **\$797,874 of fees-in-lieu for affordable housing** (to satisfy Section 25-2-586(E)(1)(b)(i)).
2. Bonus area from 8:1 to 15:1 FAR: Applicant provides funding in the amount of **\$797,874 towards the Third Street Bike-Pedestrian Bridge & Trestle Improvement project** to be delivered by the Owner to the City for allocation to the Transportation and Public Works Department’s Seaholm Multimodal Improvements - Subproject No. 13322.001 (to satisfy Sections 25-2-586(E)(1)(b)(ii) and Section 25-2-586(E)(12)).
3. Bonus area from 15:1 to 30:1 FAR: Pay **\$1,709,730 of fees-in-lieu for affordable housing** (to satisfy Section 25-2-586(E)(1)(b)(i)).
4. Bonus area from 15:1 to 30:1 FAR: Applicant provides funding in the amount of **\$1,709,730 towards the Third Street Bike-Pedestrian Bridge & Trestle Improvement project** to be delivered by the Owner to the City for allocation to the Transportation and Public Works Department’s Seaholm Multimodal Improvements -Subproject No. 13322.001.

All fees-in-lieu above, totaling \$2,507,604, will be paid into the Affordable Housing Trust Fund and the \$2,507,604 for the Third Street Bike-Pedestrian Bridge & Trestle Improvement project will be delivered by the Owner to the City for allocation to the Transportation and Public Works Department’s Seaholm Multimodal Improvements -Subproject No. 13322.001.

With this, the applicant has met the Code requirement to go above and beyond what is required to achieve the administrative FAR allowance for community benefits as provided in Section 25-2-586(B)(6)(d)(1).