

1 **RESOLUTION NO.**

2 **WHEREAS**, Austin is committed to quality, safe, affordable living for all,  
3 especially for students attending colleges and universities; and

4 **WHEREAS**, the University Neighborhood Overlay (“UNO”) was  
5 established in 2004; and

6 **WHEREAS**, Resolution No. 20230223-043 directed the City Manager to  
7 review the City’s experience with UNO and make land use recommendations that  
8 may be applicable for other areas within the City that are adjacent to campus  
9 facilities with a high need for student housing; and

10 **WHEREAS**, in March of 2024, as part of implementing Resolution No.  
11 20230223-043, the City released a report titled “University Neighborhood Overlay:  
12 A Local Case Study” (“Case Study”); and

13 **WHEREAS**, according to the Case Study, the UNO density bonus program  
14 has been the most effective density bonus program at encouraging private  
15 developers to provide an abundance of dense student housing adjacent to the  
16 University of Texas at Austin while producing income-restricted units, thereby  
17 enabling many low-income students to live near campus for below-market rates in  
18 newer developments; and

19 **WHEREAS**, inflation-adjusted rents in UNO today are an average of \$204  
20 less than rents in 2004; and

21 **WHEREAS**, UNO continues to become a more diverse neighborhood since  
22 its original adoption, seeing a 13 percent increase in non-white populations from  
23 2010 to 2020, according to the Case Study; and

24           **WHEREAS**, 11 percent of UNO households do not own a vehicle compared  
25 to six percent citywide; and

26           **WHEREAS**, UNO’s design standards include reducing parking minimums,  
27 allowing greater density, and enhancing sidewalks have created a safer, more  
28 walkable neighborhood for its thousands of residents and visitors compared to  
29 Austin overall; and

30           **WHEREAS**, despite its walkability, getting to a supermarket still requires a  
31 car-trip or careful planning for UNO residents, as there are still areas in UNO  
32 where they cannot reach a grocery store within 25 minutes; and

33           **WHEREAS**, UNO was updated in 2014 and 2019 to increase the number of  
34 income-restricted units in West Campus, deepen affordability, extend the  
35 affordability period, and address some of the equity concerns from the original  
36 iteration, setting a precedent for updating UNO to better address the needs of the  
37 students residing in the area; and

38           **WHEREAS**, on January 9, 2024, the Planning Commission initiated an  
39 amendment to City Code Title 25 to remove height limits for Inner West Campus;  
40 and

41           **WHEREAS**, UNO’s success in creating thousands of mixed-income  
42 housing units adjacent to transit has helped increase ridership for existing bus  
43 routes along Guadalupe and future Project Connect Phase 1 Light Rail; and

44           **WHEREAS**, Resolution No. 20240201-054 initiated an Equitable Transit  
45 Oriented District (“ETOD”) Overlay that would allow up to 120 feet of height,  
46 with an exploration of additional height above 120 feet, for non-single family

47 properties within one-half mile of the Project Connect Phase 1 Austin Light Rail  
48 project alignment, excluding existing overlays and regulating plans; and

49 **WHEREAS**, according to the Case Study, the remaining redevelopment  
50 potential in the current UNO boundary is limited; and

51 **WHEREAS**, since 2019, issues have been identified necessitating a further  
52 update to UNO to address equity and livability issues such as windowless  
53 bedrooms, SMART bedroom dispersion, and mobility enhancements for people  
54 walking and rolling; **NOW, THEREFORE,**

55 **BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF AUSTIN:**

56 The City Council initiates amendments to City Code Title 25 (*Land*  
57 *Development*) to amend the UNO to achieve the following:

- 58 1. Sleeping rooms with windows or openings that allow access to natural  
59 light, including exploring options for natural ventilation;
- 60 2. Functionally equivalent market-rate units and affordable bedrooms  
61 that include windows and openings;
- 62 3. Expansion of the UNO affordable housing bonus program to  
63 additional areas in the UT Campus area, including areas that are  
64 adjacent to the current bonus area;
- 65 4. Height limits achievable with participation in the UNO density bonus  
66 program in alignment with the Planning Commission's  
67 recommendation to remove height limits for Inner West Campus and  
68 Dobie;

- 69 5. Height limits that are similar to height limits that can be achieved with  
70 participation in the ETOD overlay, at minimum;
- 71 6. An appropriate step down of heights in expansion areas;
- 72 7. Subdistrict boundaries that expand Inner West Campus;
- 73 8. Increased ground floor commercial development requirements in  
74 areas receiving increased entitlements;
- 75 9. Amended design guidelines to further encourage ground floor  
76 activation and store fronts instead of parking, and further concealment  
77 of parking structures and dumpsters;
- 78 10. Enhanced sidewalks, bikeways, and pedestrian realm improvements  
79 on key corridors for east-west travel to the University of Texas from  
80 West Campus to expand capacity to move people and increase safety;  
81 and
- 82 11. Tenant protections that reflect any recommendations that result from  
83 the City's comprehensive density bonus updates.

84 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

85 The City Manager is directed to make programmatic updates to UNO that, to  
86 the extent feasible, achieve the following objectives:

- 87 1. Avoiding concentrating income restricted bedrooms by requiring  
88 property owners to disperse affordable bedrooms throughout  
89 residential units in a development participating in the SMART  
90 housing program;

- 91 2. Upgrading the Affordable Housing Online Search Tool (“AHOST”)  
92 so that students have dynamic, frequently updated information  
93 regarding affordable housing options for students;
- 94 3. Requiring participating property owners to provide sufficient support  
95 to students in the case of delayed move-in dates beyond the start of a  
96 lease, in coordination with the University of Texas at Austin;
- 97 4. Requiring all rental developments participating under UNO to be  
98 inspected every five years for code violations;
- 99 5. Reducing the likelihood that participating property owners price-fix  
100 rents via software algorithms; and
- 101 6. Extending the required period of affordability for existing affordable  
102 units within UNO through funding after evaluating the relative  
103 efficacy of preventing the expiration of affordable units in existing  
104 buildings or securing affordable units in new construction.

105 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

106 The City Manager is directed to initiate the following regarding mobility  
107 improvements in West Campus:

- 108 1. Expand the boundaries of UNO’s Parking Benefit District (“PBD”) to  
109 more areas of West Campus, in coordination with UNO density bonus  
110 expansion;
- 111 2. Explore the merits of converting UNO’s PBD to a Parking and  
112 Transportation Management District (“PTMD”);

- 113 3. Ensure broad stakeholder representation of residents and businesses in  
114 PBD/PTMD oversight, especially student representation;
- 115 4. Engage the West Campus community, especially renters, to identify  
116 projects to be funded by the PBD/PTMD, including but not limited to  
117 street repair, sidewalks, curb ramps, and in-street scooter corrals;
- 118 5. Explore and provide recommendations to convert 23rd Street from  
119 Rio Grande Street to Guadalupe to a pedestrianized street;
- 120 6. Utilize a data-driven, community-informed approach to identifying  
121 and implementing micro-mobility parking spaces, in coordination  
122 with MetroBike expansion planning, and prioritize on-street corrals;
- 123 7. Identify potential funding opportunities and a timeline for street safety  
124 improvements for high injury network streets within and adjacent to  
125 UNO; and
- 126 8. Explore, with CapMetro and the University of Texas, a more holistic  
127 approach to campus shuttles and other mobility options to expand  
128 accessibility to grocery stores and other healthy food destinations.

129 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

130 The City Manager is directed to explore:

- 131 1. Creating commercial development incentives or requirements,  
132 especially on corridors receiving enhanced pedestrian and bikeway  
133 requirements, that encourage and maintain useful stores for everyday  
134 livability and locations that sell produce and healthy food such as  
135 grocery stores and markets; and

- 136 2. Modifying development requirements to discourage above-ground  
137 parking and encourage shared parking and underground parking in  
138 areas with no height limits.

139 The City Council initiates amendments to Title 25 (*Land Development*) to  
140 the extent necessary to implement any recommendations that result from exploring  
141 these ideas.

142 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

143 The City Manager is directed to engage area stakeholders on proposed  
144 changes to UNO and return with a final ordinance for Council approval by Spring  
145 2025.

146  
147 **ADOPTED:** \_\_\_\_\_, 2024 **ATTEST:** \_\_\_\_\_

148 Myrna Rios  
149 City Clerk  
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