



Request	DTC Modification
Project Name	Nashville Yards Parcels 4 & 5
Case Number	2018DTC-009-001
Council District	19 – O’Connell
Requested by	Ragan-Smith Associates, Inc., applicant; Uptown Property Holdings, LLC, owner
Staff Reviewer	Hammer
Staff Recommendation	<i>Approve with conditions</i>

APPLICANT REQUEST

Modifications to the Downtown Code

A requested modification to the standards of the Core Subdistrict of the Downtown Code (DTC) for property located at 1001 Church Street, located west of 10th Avenue North and north of Church Street. The proposed project is located on Parcels 4 and 5 of the Nashville Yards development, consisting of 2.55 acres of land. The project contains an approximately 20-story office tower situated on parking structure that sits below these elements. A second tower of similar size is anticipated to be constructed atop the northern portion of the parking structure. This tower is noted with placeholders, as the applicant team acknowledges that the tower is planned, but the design is not finalized.

The project also connects to an elevated private street, which would be built on top of the current right-of-way of 10th Avenue North. The existing 10th Avenue North would be referred to as “Lower” 10th Avenue North and the elevated portion would be referred to as “Upper” 10th Avenue North. Agreements related to this private street to the south of Church Street were approved by Council bill BL2016-531, whereas agreements regarding the north side are currently being considered by bill BL2018-1442. Both the north and south portions of Upper 10th Avenue North connect directly to the Church Street viaduct. Vehicular access to the parking structure would be from both Lower and Upper 10th Avenue North.

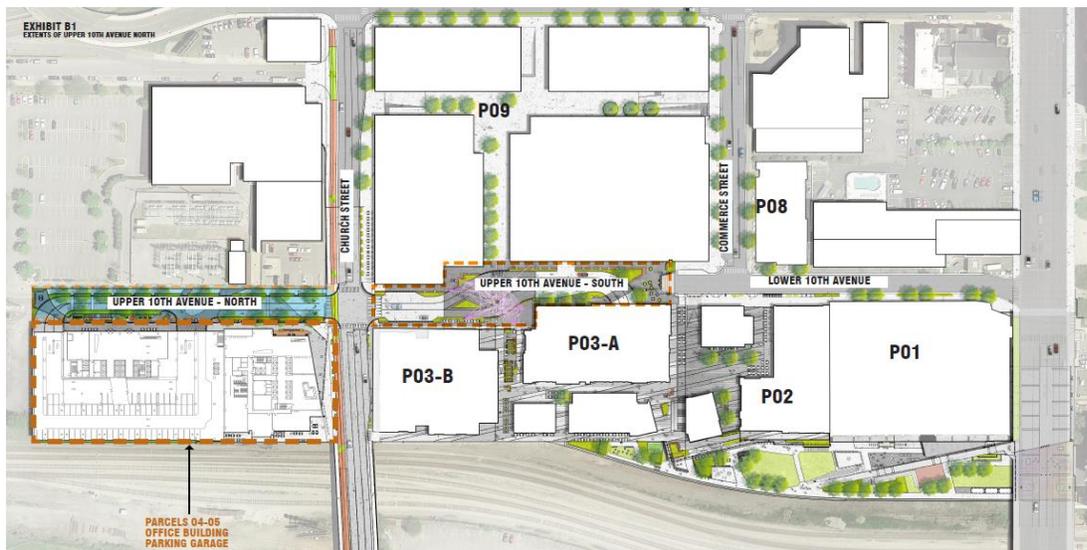


Figure 1: Nashville Yards Development Plan Parcels



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Requested Modifications to the DTC Standards:

1. Allow active use standard to be met by uses along Church Street and Upper 10th Avenue North.
2. Allow measurements from grade and of height from Upper 10th Avenue North.
3. Allow frontages that do not meet required build-to zone.
4. Omit of street trees along Lower 10th Avenue North and Church Street frontage.
5. Allow entrances to structured parking exceeding 35' on Lower and Upper 10th Avenue.

ANALYSIS

Parcels 4 and 5 of the Nashville Yards project are proposed to have an atypical site configuration that utilizes the Church Street elevated viaduct and creates a new elevated street, Upper 10th Avenue North. Many of the modifications are requested due to this unique site design, as the standards of the DTC do not contemplate this site configuration. Many of the requests are similar to those requested by this applicant team for Parcels 2 and 3 of Nashville Yards, which activated the Broadway and Church Street viaducts, as well as Upper 10th Avenue.

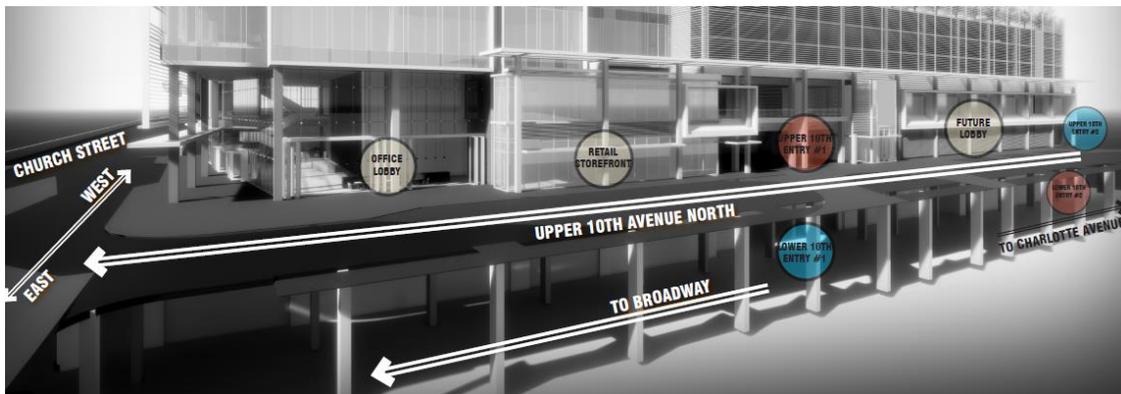


Figure 4: Section of Upper and Lower 10th Avenue North

Figure 4, shown above, illustrates how Upper 10th Avenue North fits into the other components of the proposal. Although there is no direct vehicular connection between Upper and Lower 10th Avenue North, the site plan does allow for pedestrian circulation between the two levels. A stairwell, shown in Figure 5 below, built into the new Upper 10th Avenue will allow for direct access for pedestrians without needing to enter the building.

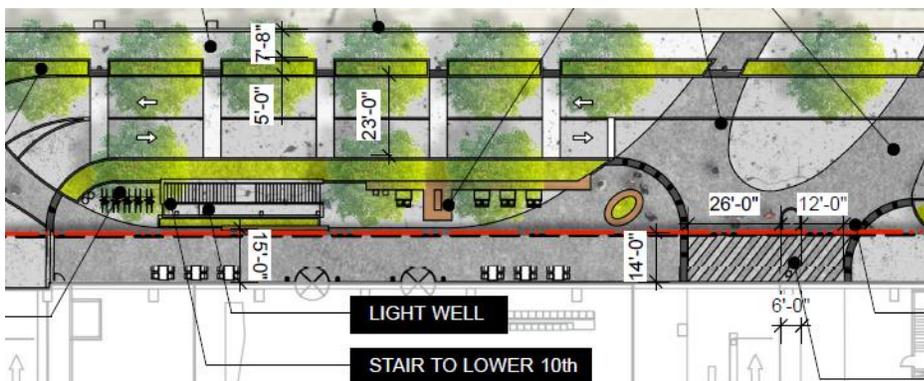


Figure 5: Vertical Circulation between Upper and Lower 10th Avenue North



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Allow active uses along Church Street and Upper 10th Avenue North as active use

The DTC emphasizes creating an engaging pedestrian-scale experience that contributes to the vibrancy of Downtown. To this end, the DTC contains standards that are meant to create a continuous active street wall that fosters a sense of place for both passersby and site users.

Due to the unique configuration of Upper and Lower 10th Avenues, the project is proposed to have active ground floor uses on Upper 10th Avenue and Church Street and not on Lower 10th Avenue. The project proposes using the frontage on Lower 10th Avenue for back-of-house operations, including parking structure entrances and loading areas. Placing active uses in these locations would be consistent with the modifications approved for Nashville Yards, Parcels 2 and 3. The active uses on Upper 10th Avenue would serve as a logical northern terminus for the retail paseo across Church Street within Parcels 2 and 3. Staff supports this request for the location of these active uses, noting that the presence of Upper 10th Avenue North makes requiring active uses on Lower 10th Avenue North undesirable.

Measurements from grade and of height from Upper 10th Avenue North

The DTC requires both measurements from grade and measurements of height to be calculated from the average elevation of the public sidewalk. Grade is used for standards like minimum ground floor height and ground floor glazing. The DTC also specifies that height should be measured in stories and shall be measured from each street frontage. Other than being used to measure overall building height, where height is measured from determines the maximum height for individual stories. Maximum height for individual stories cannot exceed 25' from finished floor to finished floor for each of the first two stories and cannot exceed 18' floor-to-floor for stories above that, except that the top story can be 25', provided the building is more than 5 stories in height.

As active uses would be more appropriate on the Upper 10th Avenue North and Church Street frontages than Lower 10th Avenue North, measurements that pertain to these frontages should be taken from those locations as well. Staff supports this request, as the modification would not grant additional height entitlements; neither tower will maximize their height entitlement of 30 stories.

Allow frontages that do not meet required build-to zone

The frontages proposed also do not strictly meet the Core subdistrict standard of a 0'-10' build-to zone with an 80% minimum façade width. In this location, Church Street is identified as a primary street and 10th Avenue North is a secondary street. Therefore Church Street is the principal frontage and 10th Avenue North is a minor frontage.

The proposed design at this corner, shown in Figure 6, would allow the 20-story building to seem less imposing to pedestrians, as the ground floor is recessed and obtuse angles on upper floors of the façade create visual interest. Although the building does not strictly meet the build-to zone, the proposed design presents a creative alternative and staff supports this request.



Figure 6: Ground Floor from Intersection of Church Street and Upper 10th Avenue North



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Omission of street trees along Lower 10th Avenue North and Church Street frontage

The design team for this project has also requested to omit street trees along two frontages: Lower 10th Avenue and Church Street. Lower 10th Avenue is not an ideal location for street trees, as access to natural light will be limited by the presence of Upper 10th Avenue. At this location, Church Street is an elevated viaduct with no existing planting strips or tree grates, making adding street trees infeasible. In addition, omitting already infeasible street trees along this frontage will allow for the addition of an off-street north-south bicycle facility. The DTC emphasizes the sidewalk corridor as a vital part of the urban character of every neighborhood and identifies pedestrian paths, landscaped planters, street furnishings, and street trees as elements that contribute to that character. Parcel 1 of the Nashville Yards development faced a similar challenge along the Broadway viaduct and proposed 2.5' x 9' planters with perennials in lieu of street trees. Due to the site conditions, staff is in support of this request, but is recommending that similar planters be used along the Church Street frontage.

Allowing entrances to structured parking exceeding 35' on Lower and Upper 10th Avenue

The DTC limits the width and frequency of vehicular access points in order to minimize disruption to the sidewalk corridor. Entrances to structured parking cannot exceed 35' and must be separated by at least 35'. Although Upper 10th Avenue North would be a private street, the DTC applies to all vehicular openings to parking structures.

The applicants have requested several entrances to structured parking that exceed the maximum width on the Lower 10th Avenue North frontage measuring 41'-0", 43'-0", and 43'-6", shown below in Figure 7. The entrances of 41'-0" and 43'-0" are entrances for passenger vehicles, whereas the 43'-6" opening is for service vehicles. Due to the presence of Upper 10th Avenue North, Lower 10th Avenue North at this location is anticipated to serve a service and utility purpose, lined with service entrances and access to mechanical elements rather than be lined with active uses. The columns of Upper 10th Avenue North also complicate turning movements and sight distances, making larger entrances warranted. Due to this site condition, staff recommends approval of the modification.

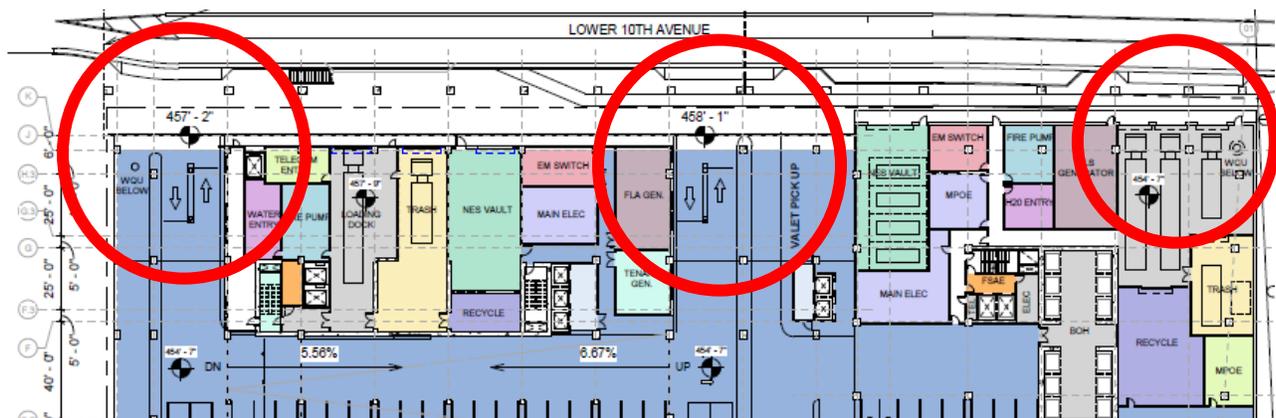


Figure 7: Lower 10th Avenue North Vehicular Entrances

The applicants have also requested two entrances to structured parking that exceed the maximum width on the Upper 10th Avenue North frontage measuring 42'-6" and 44'-0", shown in Figure 8 below. Upper 10th Avenue North is, in essence, a private street that terminates at the northernmost property line of the subject property, meaning that vehicular traffic must proceed through the



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building to return to the intersection of Upper 10th Avenue North and Church Street. Due to this atypical elevated street, entrances are three lanes wide. The site is large enough to devote a large portion of the building's footprint to internal drop-off areas, valet services, and parking areas. To mitigate the effect of this request, the applicants are proposing a pedestrian refuge island for the opening of 44'-0". As Upper 10th Avenue North terminates adjacent to the opening of 42'-6", the sidewalk corridor at terminates as well, making the intent of the standard not applicable. For these reasons, staff recommends approval of this modification.

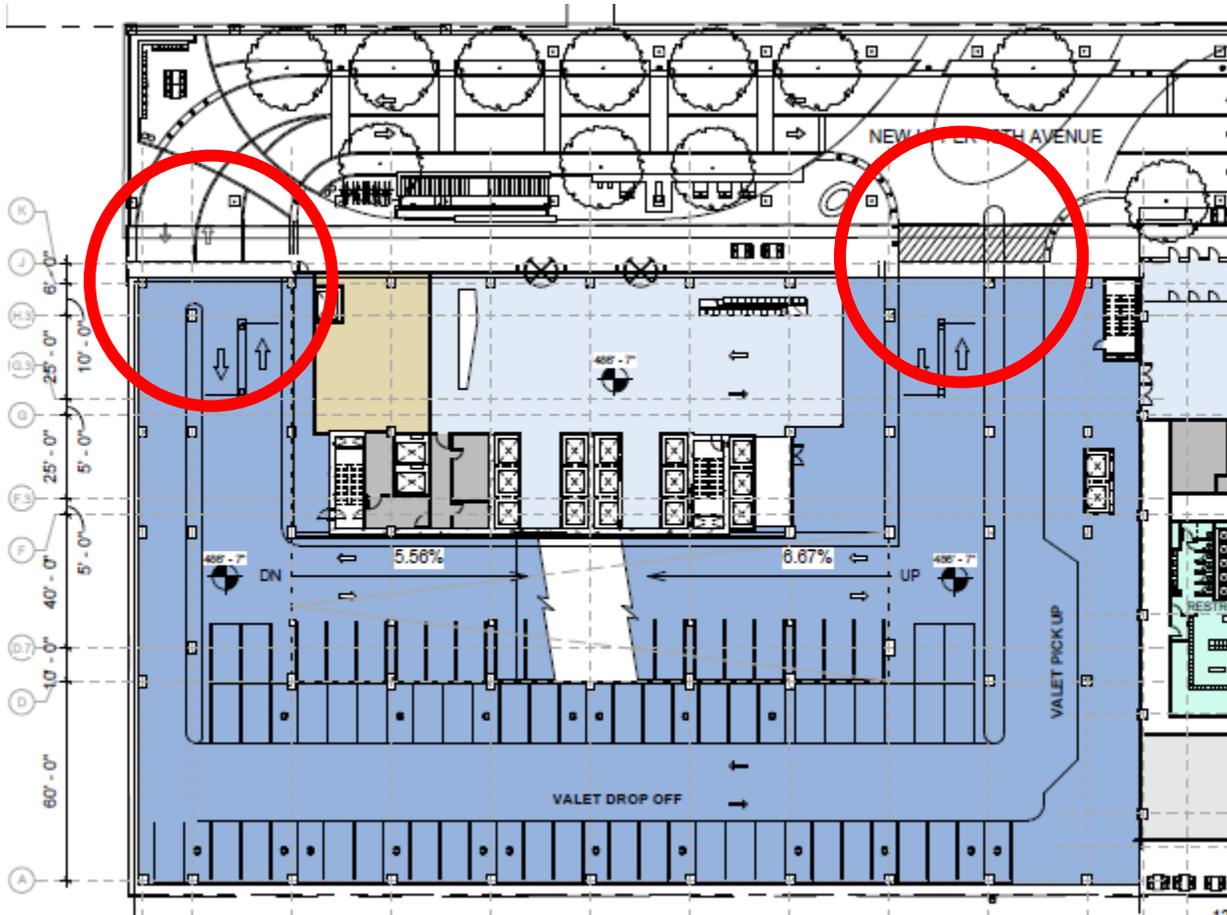


Figure 8: Upper 10th Avenue North Vehicular Entrances

All vehicular accesses will be required to comply with all other standards of the Parking and Access section, including utilizing protective devices, like bollards, and clearly indicating the distinction between vehicular lanes and pedestrian areas through changes in grade, color, texture or material.



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STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends approval with conditions. Although the site layout is atypical, the proposed project is consistent with the DTC's vision for activated ground floor uses and pedestrian-scale site design. As many of the modifications have been recommended for approval based on the existence of Upper 10th Avenue North, approval of the modifications must be contingent on its approval. Additionally, due to the size of the project and transportation needs of the site, the applicants should coordinate with Metro Nashville's Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Program to assess and implement TDM strategies.

1. Metro Council must approve BL2018-1442, which establishes Upper 10th Avenue North.
2. Planters shall be shown along the Church Street frontage to mitigate the omission of street trees, staff to review prior to final site plan approval.
3. Applicant team shall coordinate with Metro Transportation Demand Management (TDM) staff to discuss implementation of TDM strategies.
4. The DTC final site plan must show the protective devices (e.g. lighting, signage, bollards, etc) and clearly indicate the distinction between vehicular lanes and pedestrian areas through changes in grade, color, texture or material to demonstrate compliance with standards associated with entrances to structured parking.

