



MEMO

To: Metro Planning Commission

From: Lucy A. Kempf

Date: January 16, 2026

Subject: Correction of Record of Metro Planning Commission, January 8, 2026, Item #10, Case #2026Z-002TX-001

At the January 8, 2026, Planning Commission meeting, Planning Staff made a presentation on an amendment to the Downtown Code to create a new subdistrict (East Bend subdistrict). During the hearing, Commissioners posed a series of questions related to the proposed subdistrict standards and how the proposed standards compare/contrast to the standards in the exiting East Bank subdistrict. The purpose of this memo is to correct and more fully answer several technical questions posed by the Planning Commission and ensure you have complete information prior to the second hearing of this item next month at the February 12 Commission meeting.

This Memo includes:

- Questions posed by the Commission, including time stamps from the Commission hearing video in the event that you would like to supplement your review with the public record on YouTube (see this link: <https://www.youtube.com/live/SZnllFpo8wk?si=-KnAE7uuAbvgtDjw>)
- Technical corrections and clarifications needed for your full consideration of this item
- (2) Attachments:
 - Attachments 1: East Bank Allowed Heights
 - Attachment 2: Viewshed Analyses

1. Commissioner Henley: How did the *Imagine East Bank*/IDA guidance and context (relationship to the river, stepping of heights, view corridors) inform the layout and treatment of the uniquely shaped/smaller parcels and pedestrian orientation? Is there some kind of guiding principle that was used? (≈0:02:00–0:05:22)

- The maximum heights in the Initial Development Area (IDA) vary by location within the East Bank subdistrict. Along Waterside Drive – the area closest to the river – height is restricted to 7 stories, and then steps up 20 stories, then 30 stories, with allowances for up to 40 stories in select locations nearer to the stadium, with a step down to 30 stories near the interstate.
- Additionally, in the IDA, all tower footprints are limited to a maximum size of 16,000 square feet, with a maximum linear dimension of 200 feet, and a minimum tower spacing of 75 feet. These restrictions apply to the entire subdistrict. Floorplates may exceed these limits through the modification process.
- The maximum proposed heights in East Bend are 24 stories at Korean Veterans Boulevard and the river with 40 stories allowed deeper into that block, and 8 stories along the southeastern frontage of the river. On specific blocks, heights are limited to 19 stories and 30 stories. A maximum height of 40 stories is allowed in the majority of the subdistrict (13 of the 21 blocks in the subdistrict).
- Within the East Bend subdistrict, tower floorplates are limited in the area between Davidson Street and the river to 18,000 square feet, excluding development adjacent to Korean Veterans Boulevard. Beyond this geographic area, maximum floorplates vary from 18,000 to 14,000 square feet for hotel and residential uses depending on the height of the building, and floorplates are allowed to be up to 25,000 square feet for office use.

Relevant *Imagine East Bank* policy references:

- p. 58: “On the waterfront, buildings will be oriented with respect to the river...Further inland, development in each neighborhood on the East Bank will work with topography and viewsheds to optimize views of the river.”
- p.110: “To encourage views of the river and prominent civic spaces, generally buildings will significantly scale down to the river and major public open spaces.”
- p.136 "Undertake viewshed analyses to understand important views in need of preservation and provide guidance on building placement."
- p.136, "Establish regulations that allow greater density on major corridors and centers within the East Bank."

Refer to **Attachment 1** for a visual illustration of building heights

2. Discussion included mention of the IDA. The IDA is Metro owned land that is now under development agreements with The Fallon Company (approximately 30 acres) (≈0:03:27)

Refer to **Attachment 1** for location and context of IDA on the East Bank.

3. Commissioner Dundon: How will public access to the river be preserved over time (i.e., how do we prevent privatization of riverfront access)? (≈0:08:03–0:09:28)
- A 75-foot public access buffer, measured from the floodway, will be dedicated for a publicly accessible greenway. This is included in the regulating plan for the subdistrict (draft DTC p.59).
 - East Bend differs from the IDA which includes a public road – Waterside Drive – between public open space and building footprints.
4. Commissioner Dundon: What are the long-term management plans for the proposed open/public spaces — will private owners manage them, or will they be city-owned/maintained? (≈0:08:03–0:09:43)
- We anticipate the public spaces will be managed by the private property owners, but this has not been finalized at the entitlement phase.
5. Commissioner Dundon: How is environmental protection being addressed (stormwater runoff, infiltration, coordination with Metro Water, Army Corps, TDEC)? (≈0:09:28–0:13:32)
- Developers in this subdistrict will be subject to Metro Water Services regulations for stormwater permits.
 - Property owners, required to conduct applicable brownfield remediation prior to development, are coordinating with TDEC and EBDA to participate in the state’s Brownfield Voluntary Cleanup Oversight and Assistance Program.
6. Councilmember Horton: Can the public realm design framework explicitly reaffirm priorities for walkability, bikeability, public transit, and Vision Zero (i.e., make pedestrian safety an explicit principle)? (≈0:13:32–0:15:10)
- Yes, content can be added into the Public Realm Design Framework to greater emphasize bike/ped safety and reaffirm the commitment to Vision Zero prior to the next hearing.

7. Commissioner Farr: Why are building heights up to 40 stories allowed so close to the river — shouldn't heights step down toward the river? How does this align with the other side of KVB/adjacent areas? (≈0:17:12–0:19:44, ≈0:21:14–0:23:24)

- Refer to **Attachment 1: East Bank Allowed Heights**
- Based on the Commission's questions, feedback, and review of the policy, the staff are continuing to evaluate the proposed heights.
- In the IDA, height is restricted to 7 stories along the riverfront with one step-up to 20 stories while on the west side of 1st Street. Additionally, in the IDA, all tower footprints are limited to a maximum size of 16,000 square feet.
- In the comparable area of the East Bend subdistrict – between Davidson Street and the river – heights vary from 24 stories and 40 stories near Korean Veterans Boulevard to 8 stories and 19 stories. As visible on the map, the area between Davidson Street and the river is closer to the river than the similar area in the IDA, which has a significantly greater depth of public open space along the river.

Relevant *Imagine East Bank* policy references

- p.136, "Establish regulations that allow greater density on major corridors and centers within the East Bank."
- [2024 Downtown Market Study Recommendations](#), p.8: "To allow for high-rise buildings which are financially feasible, compared to mid- and low-rise buildings, which are financially infeasible."
- p.58: "On the waterfront, buildings will be oriented with respect to the river...Further inland, development in each neighborhood on the East Bank will work with topography and viewsheds to optimize views of the river."
- p.110: "To encourage views of the river and prominent civic spaces, generally buildings will significantly scale down to the river and major public open spaces."
- p.136 "Undertake viewshed analyses to understand important views in need of preservation and provide guidance on building placement."

8. Commissioner Farr: How will tower placement rules (setbacks, floor plate limits, tower spacing) mitigate a "wall" effect and protect adjacent residential neighborhoods? (≈0:19:44–0:21:14)

- We are evaluating a shadow study provided by the property owners, as well as building footprints and heights, and will provide updated information at the next hearing.
- Refer to **Figure 1: Maximum Tower Floorplates** for a comparison between the IDA and East Bend.

MAXIMUM TOWER FLOORPLATE AREA BY DISTRICT BY USE		
River North UDO	none	
Station East SP	none	
East Bank subdistrict/IDA	hotel/resi	16,000 sq. ft.
	office	use permitted by approval
East Bend subdistrict	hotel/resi (floors 11-25)	18,000 sq. ft.
	hotel/resi (floors 25+)	14,000 sq. ft.
	office	25,000 sq. ft. (excluding towers between Davidson St and the river.)
	all uses between Davidson St & river	18,000 sq. ft.

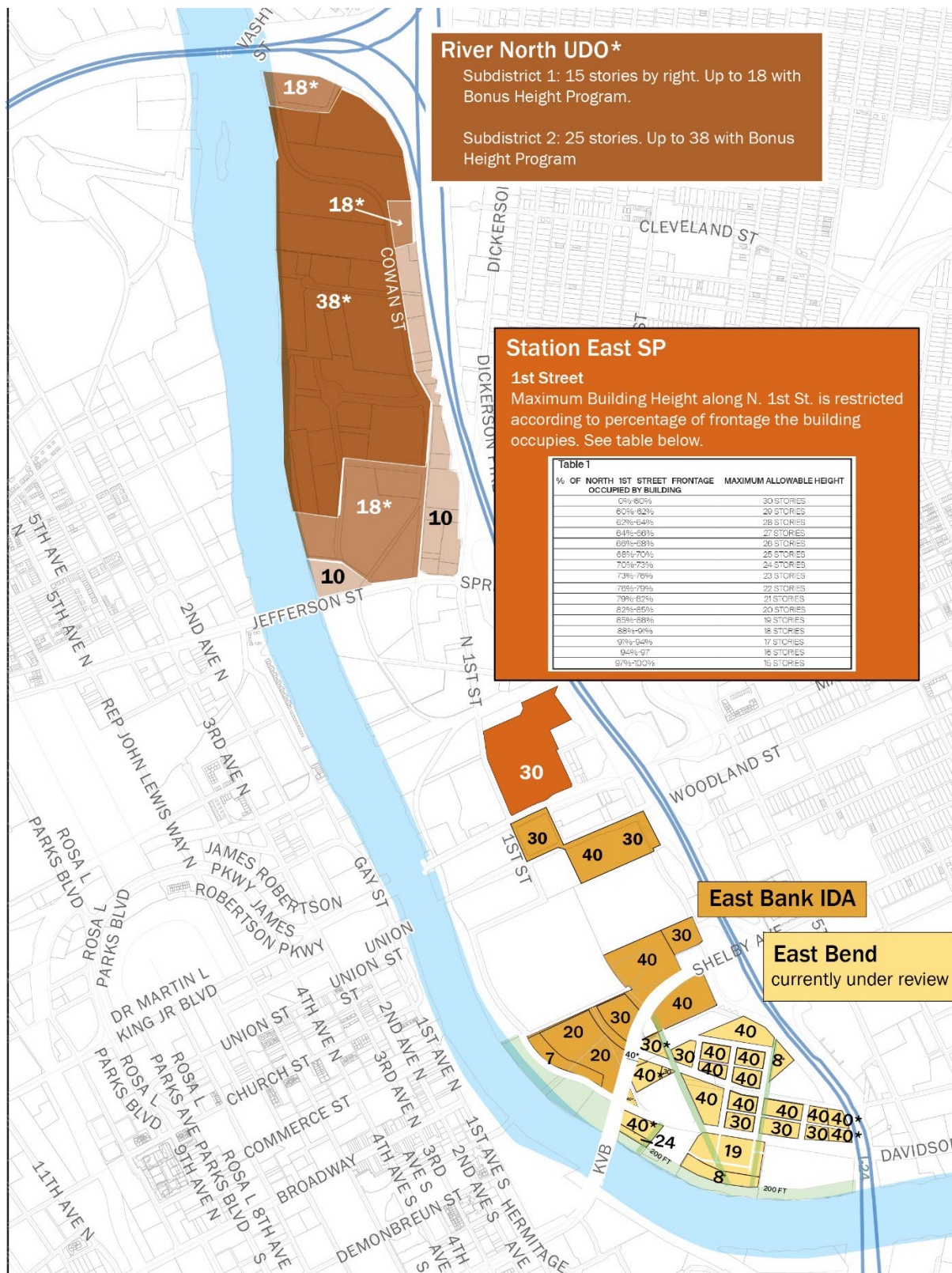
Relevant *Imagine East Bank* policy reference

- p.136 "Undertake viewshed analyses to understand important views in need of preservation and provide guidance on building placement."
- p.136, "Establish regulations that allow greater density on major corridors and centers within the East Bank."

9. Commissioner Dang: Why is bonus height not permitted in this subdistrict (and how will affordability/green building/other bonus-height benefits be handled)? Will future development be required to meet bonus-height program minimums? (≈0:24:20–0:26:55)

- As noted in the presentation, future development will meet the minimum standards of the bonus height program, which have evolved and improved over time.

ATTACHMENT 1: East Bank Allowed Heights



ATTACHMENT 2, PART 1: VIEWSHED ANALYSES



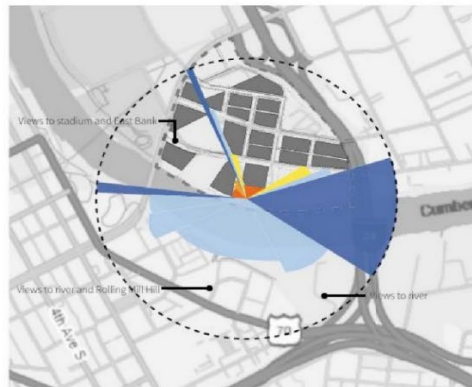
Views from South 2nd St. and Korean Veterans Blvd.



Views from corner of South 2nd St.



Views from I-24 underpass



Views from edge of River



Views from South 2nd St. and East Bank Blvd.

ATTACHMENT 2, PART 2: VIEWSHED ANALYSES

