

PROPOSED TEXT AMENDMENT
UNIVERSITY AND RESEARCH OVERLAY DISTRICT
October 27, 2021

ADD Section 9.U. UROD – University and Research Overlay District as follows

9.U. UROD - UNIVERSITY AND RESEARCH OVERLAY DISTRICT

9.U.1. Purpose

The University and Research Overlay District (UROD) is an overlay district designed to advance the policies and goals articulated in the Master Plan regarding the maintenance and expansion of Stamford’s role as a regional educational, corporate and cultural center, and to improve access to education and training opportunities. The goal of the UROD is the expansion of affordable Faculty or Staff Housing, student housing and *Dormitories*, research laboratories, space for educational and instructional purposes, and other development which complements the physical and social characteristics of a higher education institution. The University and Research Overlay District is designed to:

- Encourage investment in higher density affordable housing for students, faculty and staff.
- Promote the ability for faculty, students and staff to live in the vicinity of their work and academic institutions.
- Improve multimodal access and create a more pedestrian-oriented environment.
- Promote uses that complement the needs of higher education institutions and expand Stamford’s research capacity.

9.U.2. Criteria for Designation

To be eligible for designation as a University and Research Overlay District, an Area must meet the following requirements:

- a. Minimum Area. The Minimum area for a UROD shall be five (5) acres; areas smaller than five (5) acres may be added to an existing UROD if contiguous to an existing UROD district; and
- b. The Area must be located in Master Plan Categories 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13 or 16.

9.U.3. Authorized Uses

a. Authorized Uses, As-of-Right. In addition to the uses permitted in the underlying Zoning District, the following uses shall be permitted as-of-right within the UROD:

Apartment – Garden Type
Art & Antique Shops
Book Store
Child Day Care Center, Family Day Care

Clinic, Community Health Center
Colleges and Universities*
Commercial – Apartment Building
Community Center
Data Center (University Affiliated)*
Dormitory*
Dwelling, Group or Town House
Faculty or Staff Housing (University Affiliated) *
Food Catering
Food Shops, Retail
Gymnasium or Physical Culture Establishment (University Affiliated)*
Home Occupation
Hotel, Inn
Innovation Center*
Laboratories, Research*
Library, Other*
Media Lab*
Museum, Non-Profit
Offices, Business & Professional (University Affiliated)*
Performing Arts Center (University Affiliated)*
Professional Offices, Medical
Restaurant
Social Hall
Theater – Must be under 5,000 square feet if not University Affiliated

* Eligible Use for development standards pursuant to Section 9.U.5.

b. **Authorized Uses, Special Permit.** The following uses shall be permitted by *Special Permit* within the UROD:

Amusements – Outdoor Temporary, Circus, Fairs, etc.
Convention and Conference Center*
Passenger Terminals & Stations

* Eligible Use for development standards pursuant to Section 9.U.5.

9.U.4. Eligibility and Review Procedure for Subsection 9.U.5 Bonus Development Standards

a. A use, *Building* or *Development* shall be eligible for the bonus development standards set forth in Subsection 9.U.5 upon administrative approval by the Zoning Board if each of the following conditions are met:

- (1) At least 25% of the *Gross Floor Area* of a *Building* or *Development* is used for Eligible Uses (i.e., uses marked with an asterisk (*) in Subsections 9.U.3.a. and 9.U.3.b);
- (2) Eligible Uses which require *University Affiliation* shall provide legal documentation of such affiliation; and
- (3) A narrative description of the following shall be submitted:
 - (a) Description of the project and how it meets the goals and requirements of the *CMP*;

- (b) A chart showing the distribution – by square footage – of eligible uses and non-eligible uses;
 - (c) Plans, diagrams and descriptions of the bonus development standards proposed to be utilized for the project, including a detailed breakdown of parking provided;
 - (d) Public Amenities required and how they comply with the standards of Section 6 of these Regulations;
 - (e) Other amenities which the Applicant has committed to; and
 - (f) Any information requested by Land Use Bureau staff or the Zoning Board.
- b. In the event all of the conditions set forth in this Subsection 9.U.4 are not met, then a property shall not be eligible for the development standards of Subsection 9.U.5 and the property shall be subject to the zoning requirements of the underlying zoning district.

9.U.5. Bonus Development Standards

Within the University and Research Overlay District, the Applicant shall be eligible for the following bonus development standards upon administrative approval by the Zoning Board when Subsection 9.U.4 is satisfied:

- a. Bonus Density.** Permitted *Floor Area Ratio* or *Density* may be increased by up to 25% over the base *Floor Area Ratio* or *Density* of the underlying zoning district.
- b. Bonus Height.** Permitted *Building Height* may be increased by:
 - (1) one (1) story where the underlying zoning district provides for a the maximum *Building Height* of four (4) stories or less, and
 - (2) two (2) stories where the underlying zoning district provides for a maximum *Building Height* of five (5) stories or more.
- c. Bonus Coverage.** Permitted *Building* and *Lot Coverage* may be increased by up to 25% of the *Building* or *Lot Coverage* in the underlying zoning district.
- d. Exemption from BMR Requirements.** Where *Faculty* or *Staff Housing* is to be provided, they shall be exempt from the BMR requirements of Section 7.4.
- e. Vehicular Parking.**
 - (1) No parking shall be required for Eligible Uses that (i) are located within Parking Category 1 and (ii) are within 1,000 feet of a publicly accessible parking facility (walking distance measured from the entrance of the *Building* to the entrance of the facility); and
 - (2) For Eligible Uses outside of Parking Category 1, the parking requirement shall be at least 75% of the parking required pursuant to Section 12 or the requirements of the underlying zoning district, whichever is less.

9.U.6 Required Development Standards for Eligible Uses

- a. **Affordability Plan.** Where *Faculty* or *Staff Housing* is provided, an *Affordability Plan* complying with the provisions of Subsection 7.4.E.2. of these Regulations shall be filed by the Applicant and subject to approval by the Zoning Board and filed on the land records. The *Affordability Plan* shall provide that

housing cost, including but not limited to rent, mortgage payments, basic utilities and taxes is permanently limited to no more than 30% of the gross taxable income as defined in the *Affordability Plan*. The property owner shall report annually pursuant to the requirements of the *Affordability Plans* pursuant to Subsection 7.4.E.2.n.

b. **Bicycle Parking.** Both the Class A and Class B bicycle parking, as described in Section 12, shall exceed the minimum required number by at least 25%.

c. **Publicly Accessible Amenity Space.**

(1) Unless already required by the underlying zoning district regulations, any use, *Building* or *Development*, including Redevelopment, in the UROD shall provide at least 5% of the Lot Area as Publicly Accessible Amenity Space in accordance with Section 6 of these Regulations. Portions of public sidewalks on Applicants' property shall count towards this requirement.

(2) On Zoning Lots of one (1) acre or less in area, Applicant may request to buy out fully or in part from this requirement upon administrative approval by the Zoning Board. Such fee in-lieu payment shall be calculated as follows:

$$\text{Sf for which a buy-out is sought} * \$200.00 = \text{buy-out amount}$$

The buy-out amount shall be adjusted annually by the increase in the Consumer Price Index, as calculated by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics for the Northeast Region, starting in 2021 (2020 is the base year). Prior to issuance of a building permit, Applicant shall pay the full buy-out amount into a City of Stamford account dedicated to streetscape improvements in the UROD as designated by the Director of Administration, or designee..

(3) On Zoning Lots larger than one (1) acre, Applicant may request, subject to *Special Permit* approval by the Zoning Board, to buy out fully or in part from this requirement if the Zoning Board finds that:

- i. site constraints limit the provision of high-quality *Publicly Accessible Amenity Space*; or
- ii. the fee-in-lieu would deliver better streetscape and public amenities if deployed elsewhere in the public realm within the UROD.

Such fee-in-lieu payment shall be calculated as follows:

$$\text{Sf for which a buy-out is sought} * \$300.00 = \text{buy-out amount}$$

The buy-out amount shall be adjusted annually by the increase in the Consumer Price Index, as calculated by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics for the Northeast Region, starting in 2021 (2020 base year).

Prior to issuance of a building permit, Applicant shall pay the full buy-out amount into a City of Stamford account dedicated to streetscape improvements in the UROD as designated by the Director of Administration, or designee..

d. **Public Internet.** Any use, *Building* or *Development* in the UROD over 2,500 square feet shall provide free and accessible wi-fi with a download and upload connection speed of at least 300 megabits per second in all lobbies, amenity spaces and other publicly accessible retail or commercial spaces, including outdoor *Publicly Accessible Amenity Spaces* and sidewalks.

e. **Signage.** All signage shall comply with the regulations for the CC Center City District.

- f. **Wayfinding signage.** Public wayfinding signage shall be provided pursuant to Wayfinding Master Plan, dated June 2018, as amended, and prepared by the City of Stamford Office of Economic Development.

9.U.7 Parking Standards for all non-Eligible Uses within UROD

- a. For all non-Eligible Uses listed in Subsections 9.U.3.a. and 9.U.3.b. that are located within Parking Category 1, the parking requirement may be reduced by up to 50% of the required parking pursuant to Section 12 or the requirements of the underlying zoning district, whichever is less, subject to administrative review and approval by the Zoning Board; and
- b. For all non-Eligible Uses listed in Subsections 9.U.3.a. and 9.U.3.b., located outside of Parking Category 1, the parking requirement may be reduced by up to 25% of the parking required pursuant to Section 12 or the requirements of the underlying zoning district, whichever is less, subject to administrative review and approval by the Zoning Board.

AMEND Section 5.E. – Use Regulations by adding the following Definitions:

Data Center

Data Center shall mean a use involving a building/premise in which the majority of the use is occupied by computers and/or telecommunications and related equipment, including supporting equipment and personnel, where information is electronically processed, transferred and/or stored.

Convention or Conference Center

A *Building* or group of *Buildings* used for business or professional conventions, conferences, seminars, product displays, trade shows, special events, recreational activities, and entertainment or athletic functions, along with accessory functions, including temporary outdoor displays, and food and beverage preparation and service for on-premises consumption, excluding the provision of rooms for rent.

Faculty or Staff Housing

All places where employees, including faculty and other staff of *Colleges and Universities*, reside including state-owned houses and apartments, and where the housing cost, including but not limited to rent, mortgage payments, basic utilities and taxes is permanently limited to no more than 30 percent of the gross taxable income as defined in the *Affordability Plan*.

Innovation Center

A flexible office space designed to accelerate the growth of entrepreneurial endeavors by providing an array of business, technology or research support resources and services that may include flexible physical space, access to capital, common services, and computer networking connections. Space may be used for limited manufacturing or prototyping. The space may include incubators and accelerators.

Laboratory, Research

A use involving a building designed, intended or used for medical, literary, commercial, bio-technological or other research or experimentation, provided, the use thereof is not noxious, offensive or detrimental to the neighborhood by reason of odors, fumes, dust, smoke, vibration, noise or other objectionable characteristics.

Media Lab

Computer lab, production studio, or other space that supports the fields of technology, art, digital media, and new media.

Performing Arts Center

A Performing Arts Center is a multi-use space used by the performing arts, including but not limited to music, dance, opera, theater, musical theater and opera, or a cluster of individual specialized performing arts venues under one roof or in close proximity.

University Affiliated or University Affiliation

Building or use owned, leased, or otherwise used by, or having some other formal agreement with, a College and University, and serving the purposes of a College and University.