



CITY OF NORMAN, OK STAFF REPORT

MEETING DATE: 12/11/2025

REQUESTER: Alpha Phi Sorority

PRESENTER: Kelly Abell, Planner I

ITEM TITLE: CONSIDERATION OF APPROVAL, ACCEPTANCE, REJECTION, AMENDMENT, AND/OR POSTPONEMENT OF ORDINANCE O-2526-13: AN ORDINANCE OF THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF NORMAN, OKLAHOMA, AMENDING SECTION 36-201 OF THE CODE OF THE CITY OF NORMAN SO AS TO GRANT SPECIAL USE FOR A FRATERNITY OR SORORITY HOUSE IN THE R-3, MULTIFAMILY DWELLING DISTRICT, FOR THE NE/4 OF SECTION 6, TOWNSHIP 8 NORTH, RANGE 2 WEST OF THE INDIAN MERIDIAN, CLEVELAND COUNTY, OKLAHOMA; AND PROVIDING FOR THE SEVERABILITY THEREOF. (1401 COLLEGE AVENUE; WARD 7)

APPLICANT/REPRESENTATIVE	Alpha Phi Sorority / Wallace Design Collective
LOCATION	1401 College Avenue
CORE AREA	Yes
EXISTING ZONING	R-3, Multifamily Dwelling District
EXISTING LAND USE	Urban Medium
CHARACTER AREA	None
PROPOSED ZONING	R-3, Multifamily Dwelling District, with Special Use for a Fraternity or Sorority
PROPOSED LAND USE	No change requested
REQUESTED ACTION	Rezoning from R-3, Multifamily Dwelling District, to R-3, Multifamily Dwelling District with Special Use for a Fraternity or Sorority

SUMMARY:

The applicant, Alpha Phi Sorority, is requesting rezoning from R-3, Multifamily Dwelling District, to R-3, Multifamily Dwelling District, with Special Use for a Fraternity or Sorority House. The proposed scope of work includes interior renovations, exterior façade improvements, a front and rear addition, realignment of the primary building entrance, and a reconfiguration expansion of the circular driveway to allow additional parking near the entrance.

EXISTING CONDITIONS:

SIZE OF SITE: 2.30 Acres

SURROUNDING PROPERTIES

		Subject Property	North	East	South	West
Zoning		R-3	R-3	R-3	R-3	RM-6
Land Use		Urban Medium	Urban Medium	Urban Medium	Urban Medium	Urban Medium
Current Use	Sorority	Fraternity	Fraternity	Sorority	Fraternity	

EXISTING ZONING DESIGNATION

R-3, Multifamily Dwelling District

The R-3, Multifamily Dwelling District, is intended to provide opportunities for a variety of residential housing types at moderate to high densities, including single-family homes, duplexes, and apartment buildings. The district serves to support a diverse housing stock while encouraging compact, efficient residential development in areas with appropriate infrastructure and services.

LAND USE DESIGNATION

Urban Medium

Fairly compact, walkable pattern of moderate urban development with variety in housing types. Allowances for commercial and recreational activities designed for community-wide access. Moderate to low building spacing and separation of uses, with pockets of mixed-use development.

- Medium-intensity strives for more residential than non-residential uses at compatible densities and scales, with opportunities for more intense master planned developments.
- Gross densities in any single development should be greater than 8 units per acre.

CHARACTER AREA DESIGNATION

No Character Area Designation

No Character Area was assigned to this area under the AIM Norman Comprehensive Plan.

NEAREST PUBLIC PARK

Reeves Park is approximately 3/4 of a mile from this facility off Jenkins Avenue, which can be accessed via sidewalk through the University of Oklahoma Campus.

PROCEDURAL REQUIREMENTS:

PRE-DEVELOPMENT: PD-25-24

No neighbors attended this meeting.

September 25, 2025

BOARD OF PARKS COMMISSIONERS:

The subject property is recognized as a legal tract and does not require platting. As the project does not include any new residential development and does not require a trail easement, it is not subject to review by the Board of Parks Commissioners.

REVIEW COMMENTS SECTION

This application was submitted to the following agencies, departments, and/or divisions for review and comment. An asterisk (*) indicates that the agency, department, and/or division responded with comments inconsistent with the AIM Norman Plan. Items italicized and blue in these sections represent City Staff analysis.

CITY DEPARTMENTS

Fire Department

Building Permitting Review

Public Works/Engineering

Transportation Engineer

Planning

Utilities

COMMENTS BY DEPARTMENT

FIRE DEPARTMENT

Fire codes will be addressed at the building permit stage.

BUILDING REVIEW

Building codes and accessible parking spaces will be reviewed at the building permit stage.

PUBLIC WORKS/ENGINEERING

The proposal has no subdivision requirements or placement of utilities; Engineering has no comments.

TRANSPORTATION ENGINEER*

The Transportation Engineer stated there are no traffic concerns with this proposal.

PLANNING

ZONING CODE CONSIDERATIONS

Purpose – R-3, Multifamily Dwelling District

The R-3, Multifamily Dwelling District, is intended to provide opportunities for a variety of residential housing types at moderate to high densities, including single-family homes, duplexes, and apartment buildings. The district serves to support a diverse housing stock while

encouraging compact, efficient residential development in areas with appropriate infrastructure and services.

The applicant is requesting Special Use for an existing sorority house to allow for the expansion of the building and the parking area. The proposed zoning is consistent with the uses in the R-3, Multifamily Dwelling District, and compatible with the surrounding uses, as the area is mostly comprised of sorority and fraternity houses.

Uses Permitted

- The applicant intends for the property to continue use, as the Alpha Phi Sorority residential living quarters. The request for Special Use is prompted by a proposed building and parking expansion. All other R-3 uses will be allowed on the site.

The use is consistent with and compatible with the surrounding uses, as the area is predominantly occupied by sorority and fraternity houses.

Area Regulations

- Front yard. The minimum depth of the front yard shall be 25 feet.
- Side yard. The minimum width of the side yard shall be five feet.
- Rear yard. The minimum depth of the rear yard shall be 20 feet. One-story unattached buildings of accessory use with a ten-foot wall height shall be set back one foot from the utility easement or alley line.
- Lot width. There shall be a minimum lot width of 50 feet at the building line for single-family and two-family dwellings, and ten feet additional width for each additional family occupying the structure; such lot shall abut on a street not less than 35 feet.
- Intensity of use.
 - There shall be a lot area of not less than 5,000 square feet for a single-family dwelling, and 7,000 square feet for a two-family dwelling or a single-family dwelling and a garage apartment on the same lot.
 - There shall be a lot area of not less than 9,000 square feet for apartment houses, and 3,000 square feet additional area for each dwelling unit more than three on the lot.
 - When a lot of less area than herein required, either in existence on the effective date of the ordinance from which this section derived, July 13, 1954, or by subdivision complying with NCC 30-605 having all boundary lines touching lands under other ownership, that lot may be used only for the uses permitted in R-1, Single Family Dwelling District.
- Accessory buildings shall not cover more than 30 percent of the rear yard.
- Impervious area. The total amount of impervious areas, including all buildings and permanently paved areas, shall not cover more than 65 percent of a lot. Paving for parking as required in NCC 36-548, and other impervious surfaces, shall not cover more than 50 percent of the front yard and comply with NCC 36-550(a)(3). Total impervious area of the front yard can be increased to 70 percent when one or more of the following circumstances occur:
 - The driveway is needed to access a garage for three or more cars.
 - The driveway is part of a circular driveway that includes a landscaped separation from the sidewalk; or
 - The driveway is located on a cul-de-sac lot with lot frontage of less than 40 feet.

The proposed project is consistent with the R-3 area regulations. This is an existing structure with a proposed addition to the front and rear as shown with a dashed line on the site plan. The proposed additions will remain in compliance with the applicable zoning regulations.

Height Regulations

- Except, as provided in NCC 36-546, no buildings shall exceed three stories in height.
- Any accessory building exceeding 12 feet in height shall have the required side and rear yard setbacks increased by one foot for each additional foot of height above 12 feet; provided, however, that no accessory building shall exceed the height of the principal building to which it is accessory.

The proposed project is an existing three-story structure and is consistent with the current R-3 Height Regulations.

Landscaping

- Landscaping shall be provided and maintained in accordance with the City of Norman's applicable landscaping regulations, Section 36-551, Landscaping Requirements for Off-Street Parking Facilities, which may be amended from time to time.

The proposed project is consistent with the landscaping requirements. The site plan shows a landscaped median between the circular driveway and the street. Existing landscaping on the remainder of the site will remain the same.

Lighting

- All exterior lighting shall be installed in conformance with the applicable regulations in Section 36-549, Commercial Outdoor Lighting Standards, which may be amended from time to time.

The proposed project is consistent, as the proposal shows no new exterior lighting to be installed at this time. If there is to be new lighting installed, it will be addressed during the building permit stage.

Signage

- Signs on the property will comply with the applicable Medium-Density Residential Requirements in Chapter 28, Sign Regulations, which may be amended from time to time.

The proposed project is consistent, as the proposal shows a new sign to be installed near the entrance off College Avenue, located on the landscape island. The proposed signage will be addressed with a sign permit application at the time of building permit.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN CONSIDERATIONS

Character Area Policies

General Policies

Residential Policies

- New residential development should blend with existing housing, incorporating tools such as buffering requirements and right-sized public spaces as defined in land use categories.

- Accommodate a variety of housing styles, sizes, densities, and price points to suit diverse housing needs.
- New residential developments should use a variety of techniques to avoid the appearance of identical homes, increasing vibrancy and diversity in the built environment.

The proposed project is consistent with existing conditions, as the surrounding properties are predominantly sorority and fraternity houses.

No Character Area Designation

No Character Area was assigned to this property under the AIM Norman Comprehensive Plan.

Land Use Development Policies

Urban Medium

- Fairly compact, walkable pattern of moderate urban development with variety in housing types. Allowances for commercial and recreational activities designed for community-wide access.
- Moderate to low building spacing and separation of uses, with pockets of mixed-use development.
- Medium-intensity strives for more residential than non-residential uses at compatible densities and scales, with opportunities for more intense master planned developments.
- Gross densities in any single development should be greater than 8 units per acre.

The proposed project is consistent due to the residential nature of the project.

Building Types

- Mostly small-scale; 2- and 3-story buildings are common. Developments may go up to 4 stories when located along an arterial street.
- A variety of housing types including small-lot single-unit detached, duplex, townhomes, triplex, quadplex, and appropriately scaled multi-unit buildings create cohesive neighborhoods.
 - Higher intensity multi-unit residential housing would be allowed when parcels are located along and with direct access to an arterial street.
- Architectural and design choices (i.e. front porches, visibility of the front door on the primary structure, avoidance of garage door more prominent than front doors) reinforce the built environment and enhance the area's character and history.
- Public and private spaces (i.e. by the prevalence of porches, recreational roof decks, outdoor dining, etc.) are clearly defined and cultivate a sense of place.
- Mixed-use buildings that include retail, workspace, and residences are common.

The proposed project is consistent as it involves an existing three-story, higher-density structure.

Site Design

- The scale and layout of the built environment are conducive to walking.
- Parking is secondary to the movement of people and visibility of destinations.
- Layout of the streets and arrangement of lots should be thoughtfully considered with regards to transitioning between neighboring properties and uses and takes precedence over individual lot design.

- Street trees should form a continuous urban canopy over public areas and rights-of-way.

The proposed project is consistent, as most of the parking is located behind the building. Pedestrian movement is at the front of the property making it the primary mode for movement of people to the structure.

Transportation

- A highly connected multi-modal network is required to support the current and future needs of these important areas. Improving access for pedestrians and bicyclists will be a priority, including modernizing multi-modal infrastructure.

The proposed project is consistent, as there are existing sidewalks and walkways to the site and structure. The installation of a walkway on private property is proposed to connect to the existing public sidewalk. No public improvements are planned.

Utility Access

- A full range of utilities should be available. If services are not already in place, they must be extended by the developer during the platting process to be suitable for development. If development occurs adjacent to existing facilities that are determined to be insufficient to meet the demands of the proposed development, the developer must upgrade the existing facilities to enhance the capacity of the utility systems.

The proposed project is consistent with the Utility Access Policy as the project currently connects to existing utilities.

Public Space

- This UM Land Use supports a variety of public spaces including parks of various sizes, regional trails, and walking paths.

The proposed project is consistent, as it provides existing sidewalks with established pedestrian connections to adjacent public spaces, supporting broader circulation and accessibility goals.

Neighborhood and/or Special Area Plans

This location **is not** within a Neighborhood or Special Planning Area.

A.6. UTILITIES

AIM NORMAN PLAN CONFORMANCE

Proposed project is in accordance with AIM Water and Wastewater Utility Master Plans.

SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT

Proposed project meets requirements for City streets and provides access for solid waste services.

WATER/WASTEWATER AVAILABILITY

- **Water Availability**

Adequate capacity within the water system exists to serve the existing project.

- **Wastewater Availability**

Adequate capacity within the wastewater system exists to serve the existing project.

ALTERNATIVES/ISSUES:

IMPACTS: The proposed building and parking expansion are compatible with the surrounding area, which is predominantly composed of fraternities and sororities.

The proposed project is consistent with AIM Norman by promoting pedestrian connectivity through an internal private walkway that links directly to the public sidewalk network. The proposed entrance realignment, façade improvements, along with a private walkway will reinforce the built environment.

CONCLUSION: Staff forwards this request for rezoning from R-3, Multifamily Dwelling District, to R-3, Multifamily Dwelling District, with Special Use for a Fraternity or Sorority and Ordinance O-2526-13, for consideration by Planning Commission.