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& MENK**

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2638 Shadow Lane
Suite 200
Chaska, MN 55318

Phone: (952) 448-8838
Fax: (952) 448-8805
Bolton-Menk.com

Date: December 17, 2025
To: New Prague City Council/Planning Commission
From: Jeff Matzke, Senior Planner, Bolton & Menk
Subject: Unified Development Code - Code Update Discussion

On November 19, 2025 the Planning Commission held a public hearing to consider the draft Unified Development Code (UDC). Following the public comment, the Planning Commission tabled discussion of the item before submitting a final recommendation to the City Council. They directed city staff and Bolton & Menk to provide more details on the topics of sidewalk locations in new developments, tree preservation code regulations, and B-1 (downtown) design materials.

Code Topics for Additional Consideration

Sidewalks

Bolton & Menk researched other community and industry standards for location of sidewalks in street corridors based on land use and street classification. Overall, the requirement of sidewalk along one side of the street on local streets and sometimes minor collector roads in residential zones were found with the exception of cul-de-sac areas and natural environmental sensitive areas (such as wetlands impacts) where no sidewalks could be required. In addition, commercial/industrial areas and all major collector and arterial roadways generally require sidewalks and/or trails on both sides of the street. Therefore, we recommend the following code option for consideration.

A sidewalk is required based on the following criteria:

Commercial areas, in and within 5 blocks of the B-1 Zoning District, and along collector/arterial streets: *Both sides of the street unless a trail is identified in place of a sidewalk.*

Industrial Areas: *One side of street minimum unless a trail is identified in place of a sidewalk.*

Residential Areas: *One side of street minimum, except cul-de-sacs.*

The City could also identify a future plan for bus routes that would require additional sidewalk requirements or allow the City discretion to require additional sidewalks when a pedestrian safety area is identified by a plan or policy.

Tree Preservation

Following comments raised at the public hearing the Planning Commission directed a review of options to alter the tree preservation requirements which would reduce restrictions on tree removals and plan preparation. We present the following 2 options as possible changes to the tree preservation plan requirements.

Option 1 – Increase Tree Removals from 35% to 50%, Simpler Plans

This option maintains the need for a tree preservation plan to be prepared with development a permit applications but increases the allowed tree removals in private lot areas from previously proposed 35% to 50% of the total tree inches onsite. A reminder that trees removed within road right-of-way and in public easements (trail, drainage and utility) do not require replacement. In addition, the tree preservation plans could be prepared by a registered land surveyor for individual lot permits and developments less than 10 acres in size. Otherwise, the plans are required to be prepared by an arborist, forester, or landscape architect.

Option 2 – Surveyor Work for All Plans, Preserve Large Trees, Increase Landscaping

This option would not require arborist, forester, or landscape architect plan preparation but allow surveyors to identify tree locations and sizes in all tree inventory plans. It also would remove any tree replacement requirement with the following exception: 50% of tree inches of all heritage trees removed (outside of public right-of-way and easements) shall be replaced. Heritage trees have a size greater than 27" trunk sizes.

In addition, the following landscaping requirements are added:

Individual Residential Lots - A minimum 2 front yard trees and 1 rear yard tree (double this requirement on corner lots)

High Density Residential/Commercial/Industrial – The code already identified some landscaping but this would be increased to require 1 tree per 40 feet perimeter on all new developments and lot redevelopments.

Option 1 would require a significantly greater amount of replacement of trees in heavily wooded areas rather than Option 2. However, Option 2 would still require an nominal amount of tree replacements on individual development sites. The City should consider tree impacts on past development projects and the ultimate City desired policy for tree replacement.

B-1 Design Requirements – Possible Technology Material Allowance

Comments were made by the public and the Planning Commission regarding allowing new technology and “historic like” materials such as brick-like facades in the B-1 (downtown) design guidelines. In response to these comments the following draft language could be added to the design requirements.

Masonry and other original surfaces shall be preserved. Brick shall not be covered with stucco, shakes, or other veneer unless otherwise approved by the Zoning Administrator. The Zoning Administrator may permit an exterior surface materials not identified in this section, provided the material is a result of new technology and/or the material is by the City’s discretion found to be equal to or better in quality, appearance, and durability and maintains the historic integrity of the structure. The applicant shall submit the manufacturer’s warranty and information of the non-listed material.

Planning Commission Action

The public hearing for the UDC code updates has already been held and the Planning Commission should discuss these remaining topics above. Upon providing direction to city staff/Bolton & Menk on these topics, the Planning Commission should offer a recommendation to City Council for the draft UDC with any comments/conditions of approval.