

TEXT STUDY STAFF REPORT
Unified Development Code



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Study Title: Unified Development Code Phase 2: Implementation, “Housekeeping” Text Amendments No. 11

Purpose: To make additional minor changes and clarify the St. Tammany Parish Code of Ordinances: Part II Unified Development Code (UDC), which was adopted on December 18, 2023, via Ordinance No. 23-5339, and became effective August 2, 2024.

Public Notice: 3/26/2025; 4/2/2025

Planning & Zoning Commission: 4/8/2025

Recommendation: Approved

Parish Council: May 1, 2025; June 5, 2025

Location: Parishwide

FINDINGS

1. *History.* A summary of key Council Actions relevant to this Text Study is summarized below.

Ord. No.	Adopted	Effective	Title	Summary	Relevant Code of Ordinances Impacted
23-5339	12/18/23	7/1/24	Comprehensive Rewrite, Part II UDC	Streamlined Part II of the Parish Code of Ordinances into a Unified Development Code.	Ch. 30, 40, 100, 120, 125, and 130
24-5484	6/6/24	6/6/24	UDC Effective date extension	Amended the effective date of St. Tammany Parish Ordinance Council Series No. 23-5339 relative to the renaming and reorganization of the St. Tammany Parish Code of Ordinances Part II: Unified Development Code (Parishwide).	Part II: UDC Chapters 100 - 900
24-5512	7/11/24	8/2/24	Part I Reference Alignment with Part II UDC	Updated and clarified references throughout Part I of the Code of Ordinances (The Code) to correctly reference the Unified Development Code (Part II) prior to its effective date. (Parishwide)	Part I of the Code of Ordinances
24-5513	7/11/24	8/2/24	Part II UDC Housekeeping Amendments 1 and 2	Addressed public comments, improved Code administration, made minor changes and corrections, and clarified the St. Tammany Parish Code of Ordinances: Part II Unified Development Code (UDC) adopted December 18, 2023, per Ordinance No. 23-5339 prior to its effective date on August 02, 2024. (Parishwide)	Part II: UDC Chapters 100 - 900
24-5592	10/3/24	10/4/24	Part II UDC Housekeeping Amendment 3	Updated policies, corrected errors, and clarified standards throughout the St. Tammany Parish Code of Ordinances: Part II Unified Development Code (UDC) adopted December 18, 2023, per Ordinance No. 23-5339 after its effective date on August 02, 2024 (Parishwide).	Part I of the Code of Ordinances and Part II: UDC Chapters 100-900

24-5611	11/7/24	11/7/24	Part II UDC Housekeeping Amendment 4	Updated policies, corrected errors, and clarified standards throughout the St. Tammany Parish Code of Ordinances: Part I Code of Ordinances & Part II Unified Development Code (UDC) adopted December 18, 2023, per Ordinance No. 23-5339 after its effective date on August 02, 2024 (Parishwide).	Part I of the Code of Ordinances and Part II: UDC Chapters 100-900
24-5641	12/5/24	12/5/24	Part II UDC Housekeeping Amendment 5		
25-5700	3/6/2025	3/10/2025	Part I & II UDC Housekeeping Amendment 6		
Calendar No. 7828	N/A	N/A	Part II UDC Housekeeping Amendment 9	Updated policies, corrected errors, and clarified standards throughout the St. Tammany Parish Code of Ordinances: Part II Unified Development Code (UDC) adopted December 18, 2023, per Ordinance No. 23-5339 after its effective date on August 02, 2024 (Parishwide).	Part II: UDC Chapters 100-900
Calendar No. 7843	N/A	N/A	Part II UDC Housekeeping Amendment 10		

2. *An iterative development process.* Following its effective date (08/02/2024), Parish staff have actively engaged with the UDC, identifying areas for improvement based on their direct experience with its implementation. The edits in Housekeeping No. 11 stem from the practical insights gained by staff while working with the UDC. These changes focus on refining, correcting, and enhancing the UDC to better support its application. The intent behind Housekeeping No. 11 is to ensure the UDC continues to function effectively by incorporating staff-driven improvements based on real-world use and experience.
- The Planning and Zoning Commission has reviewed and approved (as amended) two Housekeeping Text Studies (Public hearing on 3/18/24, 5/14/24, and 8/13/2024). Housekeeping No. 1 and 2 were combined into one ordinance (Ord. No. 24-7620), which was approved by the Parish Council on July 11, 2024.

- Housekeeping No. 3 was adopted by the Parish Council at the October 3, 2024 Council hearing (Ord. No. 24-5592).
- Housekeeping No. 4 was adopted by the Parish Council at the November 7, 2024 Council hearing (Ord. No. 24-5611).
- Housekeeping No. 5 was adopted by the Parish Council at the December 5, 2024 Council hearing (Ord. No. 24-5641).
- Housekeeping No. 6, 7, and 8 were combined into a single Amendment No. 6 and were adopted at the March 6, 2025 Council hearing (Ord. No. 25-5700).
- Housekeeping No. 9 was recommended for approval subject to removing #4 at the February 11, 2025 Planning and Zoning Commission hearing, postponed for one month at the March 6, 2025 Council hearing, introduced at the April 3, 2025 Council hearing, and will be on the May 1, 2025 Council hearing for consideration. (Calendar No. 7828).
- Housekeeping No. 10 was recommended for approval subject to an amendment to #2 at the March 11, 2025 Planning and Zoning Commission hearing, introduced at the April 3, 2025 Council hearing, and will be on the May 1, 2025 Council hearing for consideration (Calendar No. 7843).

3. *Summary of proposed changes.* Proposed changes are listed and categorized by the type of change involved below. These proposed changes are also shown in a ‘marked up’ version of the Code in **Appendix A**. In some cases, changes summarized manifest in the Code as part of multiple recommendations in **Appendix A**. To help ‘toggle’ between the proposed change summarized below and the recommended changes tracked in **Appendix A**, the corresponding numbers are listed at the end of each summary item below.

a. Policy changes include:

- i. Amend Sec. 400-3 Commercial Zoning District Regulations to add “Indoor Entertainment” as a permitted use in the Planned Business Campus District (Part II – Unified Development Code, Chapter 400, Appendix A, Recommendation No. **3**).
- ii. Amend Sec. 600-3.2 Land Clearing Standards to add and clarify requirements for Natural Area Incentives (Part II – Unified Development Code, Chapter 600, Appendix A, Recommendation No. **5**).

b. Clarifications include:

- i. Amend Sec. 100-2.2 Planning and Zoning Commission to clarify who Planning and Zoning Commission members may speak to prior to a legal public hearing (Part II – Unified Development Code, Chapter 100, Appendix A, Recommendation No. **1**).
- ii. Amend Section 200-3.8 Land Clearing Application to clarify size requirements for tree surveys (Part II – Unified Development Code, Chapter 200, Appendix A, Recommendation No. **2**).

c. Corrections include:

- i. Amend Section 400-7 Overlay Districts to clarify the revised section of minimum standards for short term rentals (Part II – Unified Development Code, Chapter 400, Appendix A, Recommendation No. 4).
- ii. Amend Sec. 600-4.3 Sign Standards to clarify requirements for monument signs (Part II – Unified Development Code, Chapter 600, Appendix A, Recommendation No. 6).

APPENDIX A
PROPOSED AMENDMENTS
TO
PART II: LAND DEVELOPMENT CODE
ST. TAMMANY CODE OF ORDINANCES
(last amended per Council Ord. No. 24-5641)

Proposed Changes Key:

Blue, Bold, and Underlined Text – Added Text

~~Red and strikethrough text~~ - Deleted Text

Proposed amendments to St. Tammany Parish’s Code of Ordinances, Part II– Unified Development Code, include the following:

1. Amend Chapter 100 – Administration, Sec. 100-2.2 Planning and Zoning Commission to clarify who Planning and Zoning Commission members may speak to prior to a legal public hearing.

Sec. 100-2.2 Planning and Zoning Commission

* * *

O. Rules and Conduct for Commissioners

* * *

2. A Commission member shall not meet or communicate in any fashion with any applicant, proponent, and/or opponent, ~~other interested party, or elected official,~~ to discuss any matter before the commission prior to ~~as well as after~~ a legal public hearing on that matter. Violation of this section may be cause for dismissal of the offending commission member.

2. Amend Chapter 200 – Procedures, Sec. 200-3.8 Land Clearing Applications to clarify requirements for tree surveys, to read as follows:

Sec. 200-3.8 LAND CLEARING APPLICATIONS

* * *

B. SUBMITTAL REQUIREMENTS

* * *

2. In addition to the information required on parish-provided applications forms, the land clearing application must include the following attachments:
- a. Recorded boundary survey, with legal description
 - b. Tree survey showing all non-invasive trees which are within the required natural areas that are ~~live oaks and cypress~~ 8 inches in caliper or larger excepting existing nonprotected trees within the sides and rear natural areas subject to Sec. 600-3.4(E)(4)(c) and all live oaks and cypress within the property boundaries which are 8 inches in caliper or larger for commercial development, including multi-family.

3. Amend Chapter 400 – Zoning Sec. 400-3 Commercial Zoning District Regulations to add “Indoor Entertainment” as a permitted use in the Planned Business Campus District, to read as follows:

Sec. 400-3 COMMERCIAL ZONING DISTRICT REGULATIONS

* * *

Exhibit 400-3 Permitted Uses: Commercial Districts.

	Commercial Zoning Districts									
Use Category Specific Use	NC-1	NC-2	GC-1	GC-2	PBC	HC-1	HC-2	HC-3	HC-4	Use Standards
Commercial										
Entertainment, Indoor					P		P	P	P	

* * *

Sec. 400-3.4 PLANNED BUSINESS CAMPUS DISTRICT

A. PBC Planned Business Campus District.

* * *

2. Permitted uses.

v. Educational facility, vocational school

w. Entertainment, Indoor

~~w. x.~~ Garden supply and greenhouse

4. Amend Chapter 400 – Zoning, Sec. 400-7 Overlay Districts to clarify revised section of use standards for short term rentals, to read as follows:

Sec. 400-7 OVERLAY DISTRICTS

* * *

F. RO RURAL OVERLAY

* * *

c. Nonresidential uses. The following nonresidential uses are permitted within the RO Rural Overlay District subject to development plan review by the Department of Planning and Development in accordance with the procedures outlined in **Chapter 200, Section 200-3.5**.

* * *

x. Short term rentals subject to the requirements in **Sec. 400-8**~~KK~~KK of this chapter.

5. Amend Chapter 600 – General Development Standards, Sec. 600-3.2 Land Clearing Standards to add and clarify requirements for Natural Area Incentives, to read as follows:

Sec. 600-3.2 Land Clearing Standards

* * *

D. Natural Area Requirements and Incentives

* * *

6. *Major Subdivision Incentives.* For subdivisions having greater than or equal to ~~25~~ 6 lots, the incentives prescribed in Exhibit 600-3-3 are permitted, subject to the following:

- a. Provisions and thresholds described in Exhibit ~~600-3.2-2~~ 600-3-1-1: Summary of Land Clearing, Buffer, and Landscape Requirements, Section 900-2.2(J): Greenspace Requirements, and Section 900-2.2(K): Planting Requirements must be provided and met; and
- b. Lot width or area cannot be reduced by more than 20 percent of the required underlying zoning district standards; and
- c. Where the lot width is reduced by up to 20 percent within a major subdivision, the required side yard setbacks may also be reduced by the corresponding width reduction percentage. Where the lot area is reduced by up to 20 percent within a major subdivision, the required front yard, side yard, corner side yard, and rear yard setbacks may also be reduced by the corresponding area reduction percentage.
- d. Credits (including maximums) for Major Subdivision Incentives may be combined, but—through this combination—cannot reduce lot area or width by more than 20 percent of the required lot area and width minimums; and
- e. Incentives cannot be applied to a property or site that is eligible for or employs the regulatory relief provided by nonconforming lots of record and associated contiguous lot regulations provided for in Chapter 500 of this UDC; and
- f. All approved credits applied to a subdivision must be notated on the approved and recorded plat.
- g. Where an incentive is granted subject to the preservation of natural area and/or planting of any landscape materials, the natural area and/or landscape materials must be kept healthy and maintained. If the natural areas and/or plantings do not survive, they must be replaced in kind subject to the approved planting plan and/or final subdivision plan. If no planting plan or landscape plan exists, the replanting must take place subject to Exhibit 600-3-4: Remediation Planting Requirements for Natural Areas.**

Exhibit 600-3-3 Incentives for Major Subdivisions.

PROVISION	INCENTIVE	THRESHOLD / CLARIFICATIONS
Additional Natural Area Preserved	Either a 5 percent decrease in minimum lot width or area or 5 percent credit on the total impact fee for every 5 percent of additional natural area preserved.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Only additional natural area beyond that which is required can count towards the incentive.• No more than 20 percent of the total impact fees assessed for the subdivision may be credited.• Both lot width/area and impact fee incentives may be applicable for a maximum of 20 percent lot width or area reduction and 20 percent credit towards impact fees.
Internal Subdivision Street Tree Canopy	5 percent decrease in minimum lot width or area for <u>the planting of 5 caliper inches of Class A or Class B trees per each proposed lot within an approved street canopy and/or at the bottom of a dry detention pond(s) every 2,000 linear feet of internal streets planted with 1 Class A or 1 Class B tree per every 30 ft.</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Preserved trees contributing to the internal subdivision <u>street</u> canopy can count towards the incentive, provided they meet minimum requirements associated with Tree Preservation Credit – <u>Sec. 600-3.3(D)(1), Corrective Procedures for Protected Trees - Sec. 600-3.3(H), and are shown on a stamped tree survey.</u>• <u>All sections of roadway or areas planted with street trees associated with this incentive must be dedicated to and maintained by the HOA and include an irrigation plan subject to requirements within Sec. 600-3.4(D)(9).</u>• <u>Any use of the Internal Subdivision Tree Canopy Incentive requires a landscape plan stamped by a Louisiana registered Landscape Architect which meets all requirements listed in Sec. 600-3.4(C).</u>• <u>Where a dry detention pond is planted, the planting plan must use a minimum 20’x 20’ grid. Indigenous wetland trees and shrubs to be planted must be a minimum of 1 in. in caliper and 7 ft. in height in a minimum 3–7-gallon pots at the time of planting, or as approved by the Department of Planning and Development.</u>• <u>Mycorrhizal fungi and absorbent polymers must be used for nutrient uptake, moisture absorption and retention. All other planting requirements per Sec. 600-3.4(E)(4)(m) must be met.</u>
Sidewalk Construction	10 percent decrease in minimum lot width or area when sidewalks are provided throughout at least 50 percent of the subdivision.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Maximum 10 percent credit.• 50 percent of the subdivision includes all internal roads having sidewalks on one side constructed in accordance with the requirements of this UDC.

Dedication of Public Space for Civic and/or Recreational Use	15 percent decrease in minimum lot width or area for dedication of space 3x the average lot area in the proposed subdivision.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Maximum 15 percent credit.• Examples of dedicated public space for civic and/or recreational uses includes providing land to accommodate a police station, library, fire station, post office, church, ballfield, playground, or similar use that is available for use by all residents of St. Tammany.• Average lot area in the proposed subdivision shall be calculated using the mean average, not median or mode methods.
Provision of Housing Choice Options	15 percent decrease in minimum lot width or area when at least 10 percent of units provided are not single-family dwellings.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Maximum 15 percent credit.• Provision of housing choice options includes development of multi-family, duplexes, condos, and/or townhomes.• When the calculation of 10 percent of units results in less than 1 unit, a duplex will satisfy this requirement.• When 10 percent results in fraction of a unit (i.e. 1.3 units), the applicant shall round up to the next whole number to be eligible for this incentive.
Increasing Connectivity via Pedestrian Ways, Open Space, and Internal Streets	5 percent decrease in minimum lot width or area when at least 3 connections are demonstrated in plans.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Maximum 5 percent credit.• Connections must link the proposed subdivision to adjacent areas, such as to existing subdivisions, commercial areas, recreational amenities, or Natura Areas.• Connections can be established via:<ul style="list-style-type: none">(1) Sidewalks, where sidewalks must meet the minimum requirements of this UDC and be at least 25 percent the total length of interior streets to qualify as a connection.(2) Streets, where only proposed connections to streets that are external to the proposed subdivision qualify as a connection. A maximum 2 street connections can count towards this credit.(3) Open spaces or Natural Areas that are strategically placed abutting existing Natural Areas on adjacent sites.• Proposed connections that are internal to the proposed subdivision and do not provide increased connectivity to surrounding areas do not qualify for this incentive.
Preservation of Heritage Trees	5 percent decrease in lot width or area for every 125 108 caliper inches of heritage trees preserved.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• All trees must be located within a natural area and/or buffer area that has not been and will not be graded or filled for development.• All trees must be protected in accordance with the requirements of this UDC and must survive construction to be counted towards the incentive.• If any trees die during construction, the applicant must provide the lot width or area as required by the applicable zoning classification or make up the difference through the use of another incentive, such as the Internal Subdivision Street Canopy Incentive.

6. Amend Chapter 600 – General Development Standards, Sec. 600-4.3 Sign Standards to clarify requirements for monument signs and renumber as necessary, to read as follows:

Sec. 600-4.3 SIGN STANDARDS

1. Monument signs. Means a freestanding ground sign which is of monolithic construction in which the sign’s base or support is of uniform composition with the material comprising the sign area of said sign and the base or support of said sign is directly affixed in or to the ground.
- ~~1.~~ 2. *Number of monument signs.* One monument sign shall be allowed for each 1,000 feet of street frontage or fraction thereof in excess of the 1,000-foot increments. A property with more than 1 street frontage shall be allowed 1 monument sign for each 1,000 feet of second street frontage or fraction thereof in excess of the 1,000-foot increments.
- ~~2.~~ 3. *Location of monument signs.* A monument sign must be set back from the street property line at least 5 feet.
- ~~3.~~ 4. Monument signs shall not be located within any clear vision areas as required in this chapter.
- ~~4.~~ 5. *Monument signs for designated uses.*
 - a. *Where allowed.* Monument signs are allowed to be erected and displayed for commercial, industrial, and institutional uses and for multi-family and residential condominiums and for all other uses except other residential uses.
 - b. *Area.* To reduce sign clutter and avoid conflict with required trees, total cumulative monument sign area shall not exceed the following limits:

<u>Building Type</u>	<u>Square Footage Per Side</u>
Single occupancy	32
Multiple occupancy	70
 - i. A double-faced monument sign shall be made of back-to-back sides unless visibility of such sign is impeded in which case the two sides may form a V shape in which the interior angle does not exceed 45 degrees; and
 - ii. The monument sign may have a top, side, and bottom border or column of the same or compatible material in which border or column is not less than 12 inches wide and not more than 24 inches wide, and which border or column compliments and enhances the aesthetic effect of the sign and is not calculated as part of the sign face.
 - c. *Height.* Monument signs cannot exceed a height of 9 feet and the base or support

of said sign must not exceed 24 inches in height. ~~Mounds or earthen berms on which a monument sign is located must be no more than 2 feet in height as measured from the grade.~~

- d. Illumination.* Monument signs may be internally or externally illuminated.
- e. Electronic display.* Electronic displays and/or variable message boards are permitted to occupy a maximum of 50 percent of total monument sign area, except when located at the entrance to a residential or mixed-use subdivision entrance or commercial park.
- f. Monument signs at the entrance to residential or mixed-use subdivision entrances.* All of the requirements of this section shall be met, with the following exceptions for monument signs located at the entrance to residential or mixed-use subdivision entrances.
 - a. A monument sign may be located on each side or in the center median of a residential or mixed-use subdivision entrance.
 - b. When located on either side of the entrance, the signs must be one sided.
 - c. When located in the center of a median, the sign must be two sided.
 - d. In no case may any sign face exceed 48 square feet per sign face.