



## Legislation Text

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File #: 160600., Version: 1

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### Urban Standards for GRU (B)

At their October 6, 2016 regular meeting, the Commission asked that GRU and City Planning look at the Urban Standards Policy in redevelopment areas. This item was referred to the General Policy Committee. Neither GRU nor City Planning have an existing policy specific to Urban Redevelopment. GRU follows development standards that are set forth in the Water/Wastewater Standards and Energy Delivery Service Guide. Our standards are driven by statutory and safety requirements. All documentation related to GRU's Water/Wastewater and Energy Delivery standards can be found at:

<http://www.gru.com/wwwstandards>

<http://www.gru.com/WorkWithGRU/ConstructionDevelopment/EnergyDeliveryServiceGuide.aspx>

Development and redevelopment in urban areas is complicated. Case-by-case exceptions create a challenging development review process for staff and the development community. A balance between City and GRU policies and requirements is critical for efficiency and requires a complex assessment and evaluation of older existing infrastructure.

Staff has already made and implemented many process improvements, including:

- 1) GRU Community Liaison Meetings: Communicate standard changes and request feedback from development community
- 2) Implemented numerous improvements through collaboration with the Chamber of Commerce Small Business Growth Task Force "Efficiency in GRU Plan Review Process"
- 3) Engaged development community to review standards and provide suggestions to increase efficiencies in development review and process
- 4) Conduct project meetings: Allows the Engineer of Record (EOR) and the Developer to receive technical advice on their proposed layout prior to construction plan submittal. GRU suggests alternative approaches when designs do not meet standards
- 5) Reduced utility separation requirements by 25% or greater
- 6) Established mitigation strategies to reduce utility separations to 3.5 foot (sheet pile, casings, tree wells, etc.) as set forth in development review standards and tree ordinance
- 7) Coordinate concurrent plan review with all City Departments to reduce conflicting comments.
- 8) Consulting with review staff prior to and throughout plan review process

9) Significantly improved GRU and City staff coordination and collaboration to facilitate efficient plan review with electronic plan review implementation.

Additionally, there is flexibility in our standards to address plan review challenges:

1) City planning setback requirements are a range which allows flexibility for the placement of structures. This provides alternatives for Engineer of Record to design utility infrastructure and meet setback requirements.

2) As part of adapting to new development trends and space limitations in town, GRU has developed different alternatives including, but not limited to the following:

- a) Building vertical clearance to the sky
- b) Vaulted transformer installation
- c) Building bay (“nook”)
- d) Water meter rooms inside buildings
- e) Alternatives to meeting standards (e.g. mitigation for utility separation)
- f) Beautification programs to improve the aesthetic perspective of GRU’s pad-mounted equipment in urban areas.

None.

GRU and City Planning staff:

- 1) Receive input from the City Commission, the Utility Advisory Board, and the Development Community
- 2) Benchmark other communities’ development standards
- 3) Evaluate alternative standards in urban areas
- 4) Evaluate City/GRU policies and requirements to identify areas in standards to facilitate urban development
- 5) Present evaluations and recommendations to General Policy Committee in March 2017