MEETING SUMMARY
Union City Planning and Zoning Ordinance Review and Update
Community Meeting #2

Date: August 20, 2026
Time: 6:00 p.m.
Location: Gathering Place 6280 Bryant Street, Union City, GA 30291
Virtual: Zoom
https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84507690931?pwd=1GuY2vrGGeTt4kapsmb6HLMemcCJ3K.1

City of Union City Attendees:

Janna Keller, Asst. Director of Community Development; Devesh Doobay, Senior Planner; Jalen Hudson, Planner I; and Xavier Walker, Operations and Communication Dept.

Project Team Attendees:

Carletta Singleton (Project Manager, TCF); Danielle Cherry-Hoover (Public Engagement, TCF)

Meeting Overview

The Union City public community meeting was held to give a review of the current Planning and Zoning Ordinance rewrite. The overview included the ongoing Planning and Zoning Update, current progress, key focus areas, and next steps in the process. The session provided residents, stakeholders, and community members with an opportunity to draft recommendations on the Zoning Ordinance Update that will shape future growth and development in Union City.

Union City Zoning Ordinance Review and Update Presentation

Carletta Singleton, Project Manager, The Collaborative Firm (TCF)

- Provided an overview of the project goal to modernize Union City's zoning ordinance in alignment with Georgia zoning procedures law, applicable case law, and American Planning Association (APA) best practices.
- Highlighted public engagement activities to include the project website as an information resource, community events, and survey results (closed July 31, 2026).
- Reviewed how the initiative represents a comprehensive effort to modernize land-use frameworks, align city regulations with the Comprehensive Plan.
- Discussed how streamline administrative workflows, and expand flexible development models (such as diverse residential housing options and dedicated commercial/industrial districts) may impact the city, residents, business owners, etc.

Key Strategic Zoning Initiatives

Zoning Category / Tool	Core Objectives & Updates	Operational Impact
Technology Warehouse Office (TWO)	Achieve compatibility between competing land uses. Removes industrial uses and data centers from Town Center. Relocates them to dedicated zoning districts e.g. LI, HI.	Protects residential uses in mix-use districts and balance housing and economic developments.
Diverse Residential Housing (R5/R6)	Expands permissions for alternative medium-density layouts including duplexes, triplexes, townhomes, and courtyard cottages.	Implements the Comprehensive Plan's goal of introducing attainable and affordable residential typologies into legacy single-family areas.
Open Space Conservation District	Establishes an official zoning district dedicated strictly to green spaces, conservation lands, public parks, preserves environmentally sensitive areas, and civic plazas.	Protects land trusts and newly developed public parks, greenways, and trails into structural preservation.
Concurrent Variances & Admin Approvals	Enables administrative approvals for minor modifications and use permits. Legislative approval for concurrent variance processing.	Accelerates review and approvals and predictable timelines for zoning case delivery.

Town Center Mixed-Use (TCMU)

To counter the historical trend of industrial over-saturation within mixed-use areas, the planning division is instituting distinct programmatic changes to the TCMU parameters:

- **Remove Industrial Use:** Bulk data management centers and industrial warehousing assets are prohibited within this mixed use residential and commercial /office center.
- **Mandatory Balanced Execution:** Developers are bound to legal performance timelines ensuring that retail, office space, and walkable connectivity standards are deployed concurrently with residential structures.
- **Attainable Live-Work housing:** The inclusion of high-density live-work spaces is permitted with minimum dwelling units e.g. 700 heated floor square feet, creating diversified affordable urban living options and densities support Transit Oriented Development.

Community Questions & Answers

Question: Is parking an issue in the downtown area, and should more space be allocated?

Answer: Parking needs were evaluated under the existing Article X Off-Street Parking Ordinance. To support a vibrant, higher-density downtown, the project team recommends reducing parking requirements when developments provide sidewalks and connections to greenways, trails, bicycle facilities, and public transit.

Question: What are setback requirements, and what happens if a project fails to meet them?

Answer: Setbacks define the mandatory physical distance a structure must maintain from the property boundary line. If a developer cannot fulfill these parameters due to site constraints, they are legally required to apply to request a variance to authorized waivers and/or exemptions.

Question: Can a clear differentiation or formal definition be provided between standard rental property usage and self-storage units?

Answer: Yes. Self-storage rental units may not be used as dwelling spaces. This distinction will be added to Article III—Definitions.

Question: How can the municipality improve public trust and transparency throughout the zoning process?

Answer: Trust can be fundamentally elevated by executing targeted community education programs, posting project and zoning case information on city website, and restructuring the ordinance text to prioritize due process, public notification, qualitative, quantifiable, and transparent criteria rather than abstract, subjective or easily misinterpreted legal vernacular.

Question: How will the updated ordinance enforce rules without relying on subjective interpretations?

Answer: The updated draft recommends strictly quantifiable and qualitative baselines. For instance, rather than generic guidance, physical metrics (e.g., explicit square-foot maximum boundary limitations) will be instituted to allow code enforcement to conduct measurable verifications.

Question: What measures are being implemented to make zoning review timelines more predictable for developers?

Answer: This project includes a task to revise zoning case application flowcharts that identify precise case review and approval benchmarks for each phase of execution (including pre-application meeting, staff evaluations, Planning & Zoning Commission public hearing, and final City Council public hearing) to mitigate project delays.

Question: What will be the legislative framework governing special versus conditional land-use permits under the new ordinance?

Answer: The zoning ordinance updates propose to simplify the approval process for 'special use' designations. According to the American Planning Association, special uses and conditional uses are considered to be synonymous. The project team recommends a “Use Permit” process that includes an administrative review and approval for limited uses, temporary uses; and special uses based on performance standards require approval by Planning and Zoning Commission; and Mayor/Council. The list of permitted uses is 'by right' will require review by city staff.

Question: How does the updated zoning ordinance address long-standing non-conforming configurations, structures, or historical parcels?

Answer: The zoning update formally introduces a balanced framework for 'legal non-conforming" uses' and/or structures with an amortization schedule based on discontinued business uses, lapse of tax occupational license, or structural damages due to fire or weather disaster.

Question: How does the city intend to address developer requests to implement large-scale industrial warehouses and regional logistics assets?

Answer: The update completely removes heavy industrial uses and data warehouses from the primary Town Center Mixed Use (TCMU) district. Instead, the city is creating a highly targeted 'Technology Warehouse Office Park (TWOP)' zoning district, allowing office buildings, warehouse storage/logistic, data centers and other high-capacity mix use office and industrial facilities.

Question: What regulatory mechanisms will be deployed to enforce promised commercial and retail components within mixed-use developments?

Answer: The updated ordinance revamps the existing strict 50-50 land use allocation policy and introduces specific development and permitting timelines. From the date of project approval, developers face explicit milestone limits to initiate land-disturbance permits for the integrated residential, commercial and retail portions, preventing implementation of single use buildout in mixed-use districts.

Conclusion and Next Steps

The ongoing restructuring of Union City's zoning ordinances updates bridges the technical requirements of development with clear, objective community benefits. By shifting to quantifiable rules, streamlining approvals through concurrent variances, and establishing protective land buffers, the updated ordinance ensures predictable economic growth.

- The updated draft text is currently undergoing comprehensive administrative review by municipal staff and legal counsel.
- After formal compliance adjustments, the unified ordinance is scheduled for public presentation and legislative adoption hearings *October 26, 2026*.
- Draft zoning ordinance text amendments and zoning map updates to undergo staff and legal review by late Summer 2026.
- The final enactment before Union City Mayor and City Council is scheduled for *November 17, 2026*.
- *The dates of the public hearings have been revised to November 30, 2026, for Planning and Zoning Commission and subsequently the Mayor/Council on December 15, 2026.*