



CITY OF FORT LAUDERDALE
City Commission Agenda Memo
REGULAR MEETING

#26-0023

TO: Honorable Mayor & Members of the Fort Lauderdale City Commission

FROM: Rickelle Williams, City Manager

DATE: January 20, 2026

TITLE: Quasi-Judicial Resolution – Alternative Design Request for a Site Plan Level II Development and the Allocation of 607 Multifamily Residential Units – Arosa Developers, LLC – 315 NE 3 Street – Case No. UDP-S24073 – **(Commission District 2)**

Recommendation

Staff recommends that the City Commission consider a resolution approving an alternative design request for a Site Plan Level II development located at 315 NE 3 Street for a fifty-five (55) story (609 feet) mixed-use building containing 607 residential units and 3,726 square feet of commercial space. The City Commission will review the application as required by the City of Fort Lauderdale's Unified Land Development Regulations (ULDR) and determine if the application conforms with the provisions of the ULDR.

Background

The applicant, Arosa Developers, LLC, is proposing a mixed-use development at 315 NE 3 Street and is requesting an alternative design approval for minimum tower stepbacks, encroachment into tower stepback, and podium height. The subject site is zoned Regional Activity Center – City Center (RAC-CC) District and has an underlying future land use designation of Downtown Regional Activity Center.

In accordance with ULDR Section 47-13.20.J.3, in the event the developer of a parcel of land in the Downtown RAC district desires to deviate from the requirements of Section 47-13.20.B, Downtown Master Plan (DMP) Standards, the developer may submit the design of the proposed development for review and determination by the City Commission if the alternative design meets the overall intent of the DMP. The applicant is requesting approval of an alternative design with deviations to the minimum tower stepbacks, an encroachment into the tower stepback, and the maximum podium height.

Pursuant to ULDR Section 47-23.16.B.2.c, Broward County Land Use Plan (BCLUP) Permitted Density Bonus for Affordable Housing, parcels designated Downtown Regional Activity Center, qualify to apply for affordable housing units. Per ULDR Section 47-23.16.D.8, the applicant has opted to provide Payment In-Lieu of Affordable Housing. Payment of \$6,439,663 (\$10,609 per unit multiplied by 607 residential units) shall be paid in full prior to the issuance of the building permit and shall be equally split between the

City of Fort Lauderdale Affordable Housing Trust Fund and the Broward County Affordable Housing Trust Fund, included herein as a condition of approval.

The Development Review Committee (DRC) reviewed the proposal on January 14, 2025. The location map and the development application are attached as Exhibit 1. The applicant's narrative responses to criteria are attached as Exhibit 2. The reduced site plan and elevations are attached as Exhibit 3. A full site plan set is available upon request. DRC comments and the applicant's responses are attached as Exhibit 4.

Downtown RAC Review Process and Special Regulations

The project is located within the Downtown Core Character Area as defined in the Downtown Master Plan. The Downtown Core character area is defined as a mixed-use central business district that encourages a variety and higher intensity of commercial, entertainment, office, civic uses and high-density housing. The design of the development includes vertical slender towers with minimum stepbacks. The following is a summary of how the proposed development addresses Downtown Master Plan design guidelines:

Quality of Architecture

The applicant proposes active ground floors along the frontages facing NW 2 Street and NE 3 Street featuring double-height glass. The ground floor facades will also include aluminum cladding, louver panels and spandrel storefront glass. The south facing frontage along NE 2 Street will include a 2,910-square-foot retail space. The northern facing frontage along NE 3 Street will include an 816-square-foot retail space and lobby area for the residential units.

The parking garage podium is screened with a combination of dimensional aluminum cladding on the western portion and the remainder is screened with aluminum louvers and spandrel glass.

The triple-height amenity deck is located on floors eleven (11) and twelve (12) and provides a pool and pool deck, fitness center, observation deck, co-working space and common open gathering space. The amenity floors are stepped back fifteen (15) feet on the west and thirty (30) feet on the east above the podium with the thirteenth-floor cantilevering over the podium breaking up the vertical massing of the building.

The eastern and western tower facades are accented with white aluminum screening, banding, LED lighting, open balconies, and expansive glass facades that extend from the thirteenth floor to the rooftop. The north façade of the tower is narrower than the south façade to accommodate the shape of the property, and the portion of the tower on the east façade is angled and composed of glass cladding.

The rooftop angles up to the north and south cantilevering over the roof with spandrel glass screening the mechanical equipment. The expressive design with two "C" shapes, creates a striking visual element and a unique, dynamic silhouette. On the south side, a rooftop bar with double-height glazing and a terrace provides expansive views of the City.

The inner surface of the "C" shapes is finished in bronze, and will be subtly illuminated from below, casting a soft glow that accentuates the building's presence on the skyline.

Streetscape Design

The streetscape along NE 2 Street features a five-foot (5) three (3) inch sidewalk, street trees, and on-street parking. The proposed streetscape along NE 3 Street includes a seven (7) foot, six (6) inch sidewalk, street trees, and a landscape strip abutting the building. The project proposes one curb on each of the rights-of-ways. The access to the parking garage is from NE 3 Street, there is a loading area accessible from NE 2 Street to service the commercial space.

Downtown Master Plan Deviations

In accordance with ULDR Section 47-13.20.J.3, in the event the developer of a parcel of land in the Downtown RAC district desires to deviate from the requirements of Section 47-13.20.B, Downtown Master Plan Standards, the developer may submit the design of the proposed development for review and determination by the City Commission if the alternative design meets the overall intent of the DMP. The applicant is requesting alternative site design solutions for minimum tower stepbacks, encroachment into the tower stepback, and to exceed the maximum podium height.

Tower Stepback and Encroachment into Tower Stepback

The alternative design approval request concerns the tower separation, which, in two portions of the development is less than thirty (30) feet from the property line. In order to activate the tower with balconies, the applicant is requesting to encroach as close as thirteen (13) feet, three (3) inches at the west property line adjacent to the Nola Lofts' property and as close as ten (10) feet, two (2) inches at the east property line adjacent to The Rise parking garage, the existing buildings are lower in height than the proposed 315 NE 3rd Street tower. In comparison, Nola Lofts is approximately 127 feet in height and The Rise parking garage is approximately 100 feet tall.

The Project maintains a thirty (30) foot tower separation from the west property line adjacent to the City's Transportation and Mobility property and thirty-one (31) feet, four (4) inches from the property line abutting The Rise's property, where The Rise's tower is separated by an additional twenty-eight (28) feet, eight (8) inches from the shared property line. In instances where the proposed separation is less than thirty (30) feet, it should also be noted that amenity level eleven (11) provides a break in massing by reducing the tower enclosure and providing a thirty-two (32) foot, two (2) inch floor-to-floor height, creating a "void" that allows light and air to permeate through all sides and breaks up the tower massing.

Maximum Podium Height

The applicant is seeking alternative design approval to exceed the maximum podium height. The applicant indicated that due to limitations of the site configuration and narrowness of the property, one (1) additional level of parking is needed in order to accommodate the required parking as well as the fifty-six (56) spaces required to be provided for Nola Lofts located to the west of the subject site. Additionally, the proposed

podium height remains compatible with the surrounding context, including the adjacent Nola Lofts building to the west.

Table 1 provides a summary of the DMP dimensional standards and those proposed for the project.

Table 1. Downtown Master Plan Dimensional Standards Comparison Summary

DMP STANDARD	REQUIRED	PROPOSED	COMPLIES OR DEVIATES
MAXIMUM BUILDING HEIGHT	None (Subject to FAA Approval)	55-stories (609 feet – 0 inches)	Complies
MAXIMUM BUILDING STREETWALL LENGTH	300 Feet	103 feet 4 inches	Complies
MAXIMUM TOWER FLOORPLATE SIZE (SQUARE FEET)	12,500 Square Feet for entirety of tower	Entire tower: 12,491 square feet	Complies
MAXIMUM BUILDING PODIUM HEIGHT	9 floors	10 floors	Alternative Design Request
MINIMUM BUILDING TOWER STEPBACK	None	NA	Complies
MINIMUM TOWER SEPARATION	30 feet minimum abutting adjacent property lines	13'-5" and 30' from Tower Face to west PL 10'-2" and 30' from Tower Face to east PL 3'-10" – 4'-8" for Balcony Encroachments	Alternative Design Request
MINIMUM RESIDENTIAL UNIT SIZE (SQUARE FEET)	400 Square Feet	400 Square Feet	Complies

Water and Sewer Analysis

The adequacy criteria of ULDR Section 47-25.2 are used to evaluate the demand created on public services and facilities by a proposed development. The City's Public Works

Department issued a capacity analysis letter on June 10, 2025, which identified the need to make improvements to the gravity sanitary sewer mains to adequately serve the development. These required improvements overlap with similar infrastructure improvements required for nearby developments. The final sizing of the pipes and associated facilities shall be coordinated with the City's Public Works Department and has been included as a condition of approval.

The City of Fort Lauderdale Public Works Department Water and Wastewater Capacity Availability Letter is attached as Exhibit 5.

Traffic and Parking Analysis

Per the ULDR, 602 parking spaces are required for the proposed project. The proposed site plan provides 654 parking spaces, which includes fifty-two (52) parking spaces required for Nola Lofts, the building to the west, eighty-eight (88) bicycle parking spaces, and bicycle storage area on the first floor. A parking study prepared by TrafTech Engineering Inc., dated September 5, 2025, states that 654 parking spaces are needed for the proposed project using the Institute of Traffic Engineers (ITE) generation rates. Per the analysis the project is expected to generate 589 new vehicle trips per day, with thirty-three (33) vehicle trips occurring during A.M. peak hour, and forty-three (43) vehicles trips occurring the P.M. peak hour. The applicant is proposing to provide mechanical vehicle lifts for the residential parking spaces and will be required to provide a valet parking service.

The applicant's Parking Analysis and Traffic Impact Study are attached as Exhibit 6.

Comprehensive Plan Consistency

The project fulfills Objective FLU 2.4 which states that the City will direct growth to designated Urban Redevelopment/Downtown Revitalization Areas to discourage urban sprawl, maximize the use of existing public facilities and centralize commercial, governmental, retail, residential, and cultural activities.

Conditions of Approval

Should the City Commission approve the development, the following conditions apply:

1. At the time of the issuance of building permits, the applicant will be required to pay a Park Impact Fee for the proposed residential units in accordance with ULDR Sec. 47-38A.
2. Per ULDR Section 47-23.16.D.8, Payment In-Lieu of Affordable Housing, payment shall be made equal to ten thousand six hundred nine dollars (\$10,609) per unit for the total number of units within the development which sum shall increase by three (3) percent annually on January 1st of each calendar year, paid to the City of Fort Lauderdale at the time of building permit issuance, to be equally split between the City of Fort Lauderdale Affordable Housing Trust Fund and the Broward County Affordable Housing Trust Fund.

3. Applicant shall record an Affordable Housing Development Agreement and deed restriction in the public records of Broward County prior to building permit issuance.
4. Prior to Temporary Certificate of Occupancy, the applicant shall execute a Valet Parking Agreement and record the order at its own expense in the Broward County Public Records and provide a copy of the recorded order to the City's Development Services Department.
5. In accordance with the Water and Wastewater Capacity Availability letter issued by the City Public Works Department dated June 10, 2025, the existing sewer distribution system requires improvements to accommodate flow increase from the proposed development. Prior to any Certificate of Occupancy, all necessary improvements stated in the Water and Wastewater Capacity Availability letter shall be constructed, certified and in operation per ULDR Section 47-25.2. This requirement may be amended with issuance of an updated Water and Wastewater Capacity Availability determination from the Public Works Department.
6. Prior to issuance of any building permit:
 1. The proposed removal or relocation of existing streetlight shown on the site plan and civil plans shall be reviewed and accepted by the City Facilities Manager.
 2. The civil plans shall be revised to demonstrate compliance with City standards for roadway geometry, grading, drainage, and harmonization within the NE 2 Street and NE 3 Street rights-of-way.
 3. The Engineer of Record shall provide documentation demonstrating that the existing six-inch (6") service line used to connect the proposed development to the sanitary sewer system has adequate capacity to meet the development's sanitary demand. Alternatively, the Engineer of Record shall update the Civil Plans to show a connection from the proposed development to the existing eight-inch (8") sanitary sewer main on NE 2 Street, as determined by the wastewater capacity analysis performed by the city staff.
 4. All civil engineering, utility, and right-of-way improvement plans shall be reviewed and approved by the Land Development Manager for compliance with applicable City standards, specifications, and codes.
7. Prior to issuance of Final Certificate of Occupancy (C.O.), applicant shall:
 - a. Record a 10' permanent Right-of-Way Easement to the public in perpetuity along north side of the adjacent NE 2 Street, to complete half of 60' Right-of-Way section (for a minor collector) as approved by the City Engineer.
 - b. Record a permanent 10' x 15' (min.) water easement for proposed 6-Inch water meter located within the proposed development and beyond the adjacent NE 2 Street public Right-of-Way and the proposed permanent Right-of-Way

Easement, to facilitate City maintenance access as approved by the City Engineer.

- c. Enter into a Maintenance Agreement with the City for property frontage along NE 2 Street and NE 3 Street. Proposed improvements within adjacent City Right-of-Way include asphalt on-street parallel parking stall paving, concrete sidewalk and driveway paving, concrete curb & gutter and valley gutters, landscaping including flexi-pave, structural soil, root barriers, and irrigation, and pedestrian lighting. Please be advised that applicant will be responsible for maintenance of proposed storm drain infrastructure improvements located within adjacent City Right-of-Way during a one (1)-year warranty period, until accepted by the City's Public Works Department.

Resource Impact

There is no fiscal impact associated with this action.

Strategic Connections

This item supports the *Press Play Fort Lauderdale 2029* Strategic Plan, specifically advancing:

- The Housing Focus Area, Goal 2: Enable housing options for all income levels.

This item advances the *Fast Forward Fort Lauderdale 2035* Vision Plan: We Are Community.

This item supports the *Advance Fort Lauderdale 2040 Comprehensive Plan* specifically advancing:

- The Neighborhood Enhancement Focus Area
- The Housing Element
- Goal 2: The Comprehensive Plan shall support the provision of adequate sites for future housing, including affordable workforce housing, housing for low income, very low-income, and moderate-income families, mobile homes, and group home facilities and foster care facilities, with supporting infrastructure and public facilities.

Attachments

Exhibit 1 – Location Map and Development Application

Exhibit 2 – Applicant's Narrative and Criteria Responses

Exhibit 3 – Reduced Site Plan Set

Exhibit 4 – DRC Comment Report and Responses

Exhibit 5 – June 10, 2025, Water and Wastewater Capacity Availability Letter

Exhibit 6 – September 5, 2025, Traffic Statement, TrafTech, Inc.

Exhibit 7 – Resolution Approving

Exhibit 8 – Resolution Denying

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