



## NEWS RELEASE

### **Mike Browning**

PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICER

Twitter: @cityofmborotn

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/cityofmurfreesborotn](http://www.facebook.com/cityofmurfreesborotn)

PHONE: 615-848-3245/642-3230 mobile

EMAIL: [mbrowning@murfreesborotn.gov](mailto:mbrowning@murfreesborotn.gov)

Website: [www.murfreesborotn.gov](http://www.murfreesborotn.gov)

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:** Feb. 18, 2016

## **City of Murfreesboro and Ragan-Smith Launch Murfreesboro North Highland Avenue Planning Study**

**MURFREESBORO, Tenn.** — The City of Murfreesboro and Ragan-Smith Associates have begun a planning study to strengthen and enhance the North Highland Avenue corridor of the City. The study area is generally the area north of the downtown square; extending from the intersection of East Clark Boulevard and North Highland Avenue south to Lytle Street; east along Lytle Street to Middle Tennessee Boulevard and west along Lytle Street to Northwest Broad Street. The nine-month planning study will result in a future land use plan, a development scenario, potential infrastructure improvements and market recommendations.

Multiple opportunities for the public and key stakeholders to provide input and feedback throughout the process will be available, including in-person interviews, a steering committee with multiple meetings, a visioning charrette and two community open houses.

“The purpose of the study is to see what is possible for this key corridor in our City,” said Matthew Blomeley, AICP, Principal Planner for the City of Murfreesboro and lead Murfreesboro planner for this project.

After Saint Thomas Rutherford Hospital moved to the Gateway area, many medical offices followed, leaving an inventory of empty buildings. With the Murfreesboro Police Department moving into the former Murfreesboro Medical Clinic facilities and MTSU purchasing the Bell Street building, reinvestment is already occurring.

“We see incredible opportunity for improvement in this corridor, which is the area between MTSU and our downtown,” added Blomeley. “The timing of the study is ideal and the resulting recommendations that come from the study will support ongoing efforts to revitalize and attract businesses, retail, arts and entertainment to our downtown. We urge the community to participate throughout the process and look forward to hearing from them about the possibilities.”

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The work process includes a thorough review of existing planning documents, field reconnaissance of the study area, review of the character of the area, a transportation and infrastructure analysis and a market analysis to identify the area's potential.

"Living in Murfreesboro, I'm very familiar with this key area of our town," said Randy Caldwell, Ragan-Smith Executive Vice President and a registered landscape architect (RLA). "Our team is very excited to be working on this project, and we look forward to uncovering the potential for the area, while retaining the unique positive aspects that make it a desirable place for people and businesses to live and locate."

Ragan-Smith developed the Master Plan for Murfreesboro's Gateway project and has worked on multiple development and planning projects and studies in the mid-state region.

Working on the Ragan-Smith team are: Kevin Guenther, RLA, LEED AP, ASLA, Keith Covington, Third Coast Design Studio; Randy Gross, Randall Gross Development Economics and Terri Sterling Donovan, Sterling Communications.

For information about the North Highland project, contact Matthew Blomeley, Murfreesboro Planning, at 615.893.6441 or via email at [mblomeley@murfreesborotn.gov](mailto:mblomeley@murfreesborotn.gov).

*For City News online, visit [www.Murfreesborotn.gov](http://www.Murfreesborotn.gov).*

**Graphic attached:**

1. *North Highland Avenue.jpg*

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