



NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Dec. 14, 2017

City Council adopts resolution in support of new Design Guidelines

MURFREESBORO, Tenn. — The Murfreesboro City Council Thursday (Dec. 14) adopted a resolution in support of new *Murfreesboro Design Guidelines* that provide framework and principles for the aesthetic character of future development. The document is the culmination of an 18-month process, including public input, spearheaded by Ragan-Smith Associates.

“Over the course of 18 months, a Design Guidelines Steering Committee appointed by Mayor McFarland and the City Council met eight times to provide guidance to Planning Department staff and the City’s consultant, Ragan Smith Associates,” said Margaret Ann Green, AICP, Principal Planner for the City of Murfreesboro. “We are pleased with the final outcome and eager to begin implementing the guidelines following extensive public participation.”

A Public Open House was held Monday, Sept. 18, 2017, in the City Hall Rotunda to receive input from the public on proposed design guidelines for development citywide. Business owners, developers, community leaders and citizens participated in offering ideas to Ragan-Smith Associates and City planners. On Oct. 12, the City Council and Planning Commission held a joint workshop to review the proposed Design Guidelines. The Commission unanimously adopted the Guidelines Nov. 29 following a public hearing.

The design guidelines document includes the following four main subject areas:

- Public street network, including street types, connectivity, traffic calming, public streetscape treatment, transit and service delivery capabilities.
- Building site design, including siting, orientation, preservation, setbacks, parking, pedestrian system, access control, open space, lighting, utilities, stormwater facilities and management and service orientation.
- Landscape, including general requirements, screening and buffering, foundation plantings, residential and commercial street frontage trees, irrigation and service delivery capabilities.
- Architecture design, including “sense of place,” design, general character, height and setbacks, building mass and scale, building elements, materials, color and roof design.

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Work on the design guidelines began in January 2016 with the establishment of a Steering Committee, a review of design guidelines that were proposed in 2005 and the establishment of areas of focus for revisions. In 2005, the City Council approved a contract with Ragan-Smith Associates to draft Citywide design guidelines. At that time, work on design guidelines, which spanned approximately 18 months, was slowed and then halted with the onset of the economic recession. Council opted not to adopt design guidelines.

“As Murfreesboro is experiencing unprecedented growth now and for the foreseeable future, adopting citywide design guidelines is a vital step in ensuring a healthy balance between such varied interests as history, business, green spaces, the arts, recreation, a clean environment, affordable housing and education, while at the same time maintaining a strong foundation for job growth and economic development,” added Green.

Some areas of the City are exempted from the *Design Guidelines* because they already have specific design standards in place or are anticipated to have specific design standards in the future. They include the City Core Overlay District (CCO), Central Business District (CBD), North Highland Avenue Study Area, Historic Bottoms Study Area, East Main Street Revitalization District, East Main Street National Register District, and North Maney Avenue National Historic District.

The Design Guidelines Steering Committee included Amy Farrar, attorney, Farrar|Wright; Rick LaLance, Pinnacle Financial Partners and Murfreesboro City Council member; Blake Smith, Smith Design/Build; Beth Duffield, Rutherford County Chamber of Commerce Workforce Development; Jim Lowen, architect, Lowen Associates; John Blankenship, commercial real estate developer, The Parks Group; Matt Taylor, design engineer, SEC, Inc.; and Kathy Jones, managing broker, The Parks Group and Planning Commission member. The Steering Committee unanimously recommended adoption except for a proposed sidewalk policy.

Clearly defined design guidelines help developers and companies seeking to locate or expand in Murfreesboro better understand the type of development required.

“We have a history of working effectively to balance the interests of developers with our community’s strong desire to emphasize functionality and aesthetics, and these design guidelines will help us articulate these expectations and requirements without ambiguity,” said Green.

The Murfreesboro Design Guidelines can be reviewed on the City of Murfreesboro website at <http://www.murfreesborotn.gov/1425/Murfreesboro-Design-Guidelines>.

For information about the Murfreesboro Design Guidelines, contact Margaret Ann Green, City of Murfreesboro Planning, at 615.893.6441 or via email at mgreen@murfreesborotn.gov.

For City News online, visit www.Murfreesborotn.gov.

Photos attached:

1. *Design Guidelines Logo.jpg*
2. *Design Guidelines Committee meets to discuss proposed guidelines at Bradley Academy Museum, June 28, 2016.jpg*

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