

“Recommend to the City Council possible development guidelines and physical attributes for downtown Columbia.”

In considering development guidelines for downtown, the DLC recommends preserving the historic integrity of the area while incorporating sustainable practices.

The purpose of design guidelines is to provide general information about the renovation of existing buildings and considerations for new development. The economic vitality as well as the aesthetic quality of each business enterprise is important, and both are linked in part to the success of surrounding commercial establishments. Studies have shown that thoughtful design improvements often lead to greater sales for a business. Similarly, the physical character of downtown Columbia contributes greatly to the overall image of the community for its residents, customers and visitors. Such written and graphic information are helpful, interpretive, explanatory recommendations, unless contained within or referenced by an ordinance.

The following paragraph addresses why the Columbia City Council should consider downtown design guidelines. This excerpt is from downtown Lincoln, Nebraska.

Guidelines give developers and citizens an understanding of the city's expectations and provide consistent criteria by which to review proposed projects. They ensure a degree of order, harmony and quality within the built environment, so that individual buildings and projects succeed on their own yet also contribute to a unified and distinct downtown Lincoln district. The guidelines are a descriptive template for maintaining and improving the urban character of the downtown without dictating or prescribing a specific style or theme. And they encourage new development and renovation that complements and respects Lincoln's existing historic downtown character.

At this point, we recommend all projects applying for publicly funded and/or TIF assistance located within the Columbia DLC expanded downtown study area adhere to an architectural design review process. Current proposed TIF projects are adhering to the basic downtown principles checklist on page 28.

In the future, the City Council should consider substantial improvements (exceeding 50% of the current property value) and new construction to be subject to an architectural design review process in order to protect the viability and cohesiveness of downtown Columbia.

We recognize development guidelines may need to be customized for concept areas identified within the DLC expanded downtown study area. Most important, additional public input is essential to complete this task.



APPROPRIATE



Figure 1 - Building Rehabilitation



Figure 2 - Building Rehabilitation



Figure 3 - Mixed Use Infill



Figure 4 - Mixed Use Infill



Downtown parking garages are well placed around downtown and designed to be discrete. (Greenville, SC)



Parking garages can be designed with active frontages that incorporate retail or, as at RiverPlace, gallery space.

INAPPROPRIATE



Aluminum Facade



Storefront Materials / Storefront Alterations



Blank Walls



Awning Materials



DESIGN GUIDELINES – EXAMPLES

http://www.lincoln.ne.gov/CITY/plan/dt_plan/mtg/060805/mp1.pdf

<http://fcgov.com/riverdistrict/>

Infill development example

<http://www.sierraclub.org/sprawl/community/transformations/downtown.asp>

Downtown Alley & Integrated Walkway – this is a plan but concepts could provide guidelines for our alleys and walkways.

<http://www.downtownfortcollins.org/alley.html>

Guidelines may be developed through future design charrettes and could address building setback, height, roof-top HVAC units, blank walls and appropriate and inappropriate materials, such as:

Appropriate building materials – buildings renovated or constructed within the DLC downtown boundaries would have exterior walls that are made of the following materials or a combination thereof:

- LEED Certified Products
- Stone
- Cast Stone
- Architectural Stone
- Brick
- Glass
- Aluminum storefront
- Architectural Shingles
- Architectural Metal Roofing
- EPDM/TPO Roofing

Inappropriate building materials – the following materials would not be used on the exterior walls of any buildings within the DLC downtown boundaries:

- Colored or painted block concrete
- Exposed architectural structural steel
- Tilt-up concrete
- Hardi-plank Siding
- Vinyl Lap Siding
- Long span Metal Building Siding
- T-111 Plywood Siding
- EIFS – stucco-like Exterior Insulation Finish System
- Wood Shake Shingles
- Split-faced block

Roof-Top HVAC Units – all roof top type heating, ventilating, air conditioned and air handling units on buildings in the DLC downtown boundaries would be architecturally screened with an allowable building material or parapet wall and equipped with noise abatement devices or baffles or be of a type that incorporates noise limited features in the units.



TASK 5

WHAT DESIGN GUIDELINES CAN DO:

- Outline, explain, and interpret the general design criteria desired in an area.
- Help reinforce the design character of an area by respecting and reinforcing its visual aspects.
- Protect the value of private and public investment, which might otherwise be undermined by the undesirable consequences of poorly managed growth.
- Indicate which approaches to design a community encourages, as well as which it discourages.
- Serve as a tool for designers and their clients to use in making preliminary design decisions.
- Increase public awareness of design issues and options.

WHAT DESIGN GUIDELINES CAN NOT DO:

- Serve the same legal purpose as an ordinance. An ordinance is a law, design guidelines suggest a preferred outcome.
- Limit growth, or regulate where growth takes place. Guidelines apply only to the visual impact of individual development project on the character of an area. Growth itself is a separate issue that must be separately addressed through zoning ordinances and local plans.
- Control how space within a building is used. Guidelines typically focus on the project exterior, the publicly visible portions of buildings, not with how interior space is laid out or used.
- Guarantee that all new construction will be compatible with an area or guarantee creativity that is essential to the best sorts of sensitive design.
- Guarantee “high quality” construction. Materials may be suggested in design guidelines, however the final visual results cannot be guaranteed.

TIF PROJECT CHECKLIST: DOWNTOWN DESIGN PRINCIPLES		
Principles	Yes	No
Strive for mixed-use buildings that offer a combination of retail, commercial and residential functions.		
Preserve the historic character of downtown Columbia through adaptive re-use and protection of existing assets, including historically-significant buildings, alleys and brick streets.		
Promote design standards and architectural integrity through the use of economic incentives.		
Protect options for affordable retail space for small businesses, unique shops, and artists through the use of economic incentives.		
Preserve walk-ability of downtown between clusters of parking garages, retail and residential.		
Direct re-development toward vacant or blighted lots or areas.		
Make the building front and all adjacent street-face sides of corner buildings permeable (no blank walls).		
Prohibit parking lots in front of the building.		
Build to the sidewalk, i.e., the property line.		
Make the decision-making process clear, open and predictable.		



COMPREHENSIVE SUSTAINABLE PLANS

The City should use a comprehensive sustainable development such as one or a combination of the following:

The Natural Step Framework, a comprehensive model for planning complex systems, is openly published and free. TNS Framework has helped many organizations worldwide integrate sustainable development into their strategic planning and create long-lasting transformative change. The program is continually refined and redeveloped. It uses an upstream approach that anticipates and avoids problems, rather than reacting to their downstream effects.

www.thenaturalstep.org

Smart Growth: Communities across the nation are concerned that current development patterns — dominated by “sprawl” — are not in the long-term interest of our cities, existing suburbs, small towns, rural communities, or wilderness areas. Though supportive of growth, communities are questioning the economic costs of abandoning infrastructure in the city, only to rebuild it further out.

www.smartgrowth.com

Sustainable Cities tackles the challenges of urban sustainability. Headquartered in Vancouver, Canada, Sustainable Cities is a think tank and a “do tank,” delivering results through practical demonstration projects and peer-learning networks. Long-term urban sustainability involves planning cities and regions to exist in harmony with the natural environment, while sustaining their human populations and economic base. Long-term integrated planning looks out 50 to 100 years and treats the city as a complex system, addressing environmental, economic, social and cultural well-being, as well as governance and infrastructure.

<http://sustainablecities.net/plusnetwork>



The District

Sustainable cities support growth while questioning the economic costs of “sprawl” and abandoning city infrastructure. The DLC supports preserving historic properties through adaptive re-use.



TASK 5

The Earth Charter Community Action Tool, or EarthCAT, is a guide to developing and implementing a community sustainability plan. Users learn from the experiences of other communities as they set goals, develop strategies, and select indicators for monitoring progress. www.earthcat.org

International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives or ICLEI-Local Governments for Sustainability addresses sustainability issues locally, nationally and internationally. Columbia, Mo., is a member of ICLEI. www.iclei.org

LEED for Neighborhood Development: Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design, or LEED, developed by the U.S. Green Building Council as a third-party verified-green metric to evaluate buildings, will broaden its scope in Summer 2009 to include neighborhood development.

LEED ND is described as: "The LEED for Neighborhood Development Rating System integrates the principles of smart growth, urbanism and green building into the first national system for neighborhood design. LEED certification provides independent, third-party verification that a development's location and design meet accepted high levels of environmentally responsible, sustainable development." <http://www.usgbc.org/DisplayPage.aspx?CMSPageID=148>

Benefits of Developing a LEED ND Community:

- Reduce Urban Sprawl
- Encourage healthy living
- Protect threatened species
- Decrease automobile dependence



MU Campus Facilities Communications

The Downtown Leadership Council supports preserving the historic character in the expanded study area, including such homes as this in the Historic East Campus Neighborhood District.

LEED ND Benefits to Project Developers:

- Potentially reduced fees or waiting periods: many municipalities reduce fees or waiting periods project approval if developer can demonstrate a commitment to sustainability. Successfully completing the first stage of LEED ND certification (pre-review approval) may assist projects that are still in the planning stages to gain the necessary approvals expediently and cost-effectively.
- A good impression on your neighbors: A LEED ND certification can help explain the environmental and community benefits of a project to residents and businesses in nearby areas. The rating system also encourages projects to work collaboratively with the existing neighborhood to make sure their needs are addressed.
- Higher tenancy rates: Increasing demand for housing in highly walkable or transit-accessible areas can result in higher tenancy rates.



HISTORIC PRESERVATION

Structures contribute to the downtown experience, and planned growth in the area may impact properties considered historic in the Historic East Campus District and Stephens College properties. The Downtown Leadership Council supports preserving the historic character of downtown Columbia through adaptive re-use and protection of existing assets, including historically-significant buildings, alleys, and brick streets.

Two recent examples of Columbia's interest in preserving properties of historic value include:

- The Columbia Historic Preservation Commission has recently completed a survey of the Old Southwest Neighborhood west of Garth Boulevard.
- The Columbia Historic Preservation Commission also has secured a grant to survey the properties impacted by the Sasaki Plan, generally described as bounded by Elm, Locust, Hitt and College.

ENERGY

Incorporating Historic Preservation is an important component of any successful downtown development strategy. Because the energy embodied in the construction of a building is 15 to 30 times the annual energy-use, historic preservation is also part of the solution to energy conservation.

Energy is a key parameter in any discussion of downtown development. It is important in two ways:

- downtown is intimately connected to transportation issues community wide
- energy consumed by downtown buildings directly affects the area's economic viability.

Downtown, as the central hub of the city, affects many important transportation-related functions within the city. Recognizing that transportation is heavily dependent on energy-use links any downtown development to a community-wide transportation energy policy. However, the issues are multifaceted and complex. These issues should be targeted for an in-depth analysis.

Energy used in downtown buildings, however, has been addressed by the committee. It is both a challenge and an opportunity for the area. Energy used to provide lighting, heating, air conditioning and other loads, comprises a substantial cost to the area's business owners that is passed on to patrons. While total energy expenditures have not been quantified, estimates of energy expenditures downtown are as high as \$10 million annually. As energy costs rise, it is imperative that energy efficiency be included in any downtown redevelopment plan.



The District

Installing a district heating and cooling system, provided through a central power plant, could save energy and money.



TASK 5

The current inventory of buildings includes a diverse set of structures with a wide range of ages and energy efficiencies. Most commonly, structures with the lowest efficiency are rental units. Owners have no incentive for improving heating/cooling equipment and tenants do not have the means to invest in a long-term payoff project.



Assassi Productions, photo/International Architects Atelier, architect

The MU Power Plant is an example of a combined heat and power plant. Electricity is produced from a primary fuel and the waste heat is used to heat and cool facilities doubling the energy efficiency on campus.

Most downtown structures, excluding institutionally owned facilities, are heated and cooled by small roof-top units. Brick structures have little wall insulation and, depending on accessibility, may have inadequate ceiling insulation. Improving the energy efficiency of the current building stock would require wide-scale replacements of heating/cooling systems, modifications to controls, and improvements to building shells.

An alternative approach, is a district heating and cooling system, whereby, because the buildings are in close proximity, heating and cooling is provided through a central plant. Buildings use heated or chilled water that is delivered in underground pipes from a central system and therefore avoid energy and equipment costs for individual systems. District Heating and Cooling Systems exist in the Midwestern cities of St Louis, Kansas City, Omaha and Oklahoma City.

Advantages of a district system include:

- energy efficiency
- equipment savings
- the ability to use thermal storage, taking advantage of cooler outdoor night-time temperatures and reducing summer peak electric rates.



Further savings could be made if the central plant were a Combined Heat and Power (CHP) unit, similar to the University of Missouri power plant, where electricity is produced from a primary fuel and the waste heat is used to heat and cool facilities on the campus, doubling the energy efficiency.

Such a system could provide a backbone of downtown development, creating new building opportunities, such as those suggested in the Sasaki plan, where equipment and operational savings are inherent to new structures.

Establishing such a district would, admittedly, require long-range planning and implementation. First steps could begin now, by:

- seeking advice from MU's Campus Facilities-Energy Management on establishing an energy efficient CHP plant;
- discussing the City's Water and Light's long-term power-supply plan that includes an option of installing new natural gas fired units in the service territory;
- considering potential funding sources from the state through MODESA or the Financial Stabilization Plan.





Columbia Chamber of Commerce

Working together, it is possible to make Columbia the best city in the world.

— Nick Peckham,
chair, Downtown Leadership Council

