



Agenda Item # 49

MEMORANDUM

TO: Tennessee Technology Corridor Development Authority
Metropolitan Planning Commission

FROM: Buz Johnson

DATE: March 3, 2010

SUBJECT: Consideration of an Update of the [TTCDA Design Guidelines](#) (2-A-10-OB)

Staff Recommendation:

APPROVE the updated TTCDA Design Guidelines.

Background:

The MPC staff is pleased to present for your approval an update of the TTCDA Design Guidelines, the primary set of design standards and principles used to guide new development within the Technology Overlay of the Tennessee Technology Corridor. Based on an examination of the issues affecting how properties in the Technology Overlay have been developed in recent years, the MPC staff has incorporated new ideas with regard to building and site design, landscaping, circulation, lighting, and signage.

Summary of Proposed Changes:

Major changes to the document can be summarized as follows:

- Landscape requirements and standards have been expanded to provide better direction on how developments should be landscaped as part of the total site design process. The appendices now include recommended plant materials for a variety of settings, as well as those species that should be avoided by landscape architects and designers.
- A broader range of required off-street parking spaces has been added, which allows needed parking based on actual land uses.
- Requirements related to hillside and ridgetop development in the Technology Corridor have been added to be consistent with the current effort to upgrade development and preservation requirements for those portions of the county that are characterized by slopes in excess of fifteen percent. Included are suggested building layouts that show how parking areas can be designed to result in minimal site disturbance.
- The glossary of design and planning terms has been expanded, while photos and illustrations have been added throughout the document to provide a visual context for various design concepts.
- Several suggested right-of-way cross-sections have been included in the appendices to show how roadways and streets can also accommodate the safe movement of pedestrians and bicycles.

- Language was added to provide more direction on how properties should be illuminated and how such illumination can be minimized so that it does not have a negative effect on surrounding property.

Minor Changes to the Final Draft:

The update of the Design Guidelines was placed on the MPC/TTCCA website so that interested citizens could examine the proposed changes and provide comments to the MPC staff. The following changes were made to the draft after its posting on the website:

- Page 9 – A change to Table 1 explaining the term Mixed-Use.
- Page 11 – More was added to Table 2 describing the setbacks for buildings with parking in front of the building.
- Page 12 – Changes to 1.6.4, 1.6.5, 1.6.6, and 1.6.7 explaining more in terms of pedestrian and bicycle circulation.
- Page 14 – A footnote added to Table 3 to show that on-street parking can be used to reduce the amount of required and allowed off-street parking.
- Page 23 – A change to 1.12.2 that defines allowable maximum height as been measured from the average natural grade of the building site.
- Page 30 – A change to 2.1.3 clarifying the need to screen mechanical units from view.
- Page 34 – The addition of 3.1.8 to explain the requirement for a 20-foot landscape area in required front yards.

Review of the Updated Design Guidelines:

Thirty-four architects, developers, engineers, and property owners were notified by letter of the opportunity to comment on the revisions as posted on the website. In addition, staff from the Knox County Engineering and Public Works Department reviewed the draft document and provided comments on several plan sections. After the updated Design Guidelines is approved by MPC and TTCCA, the document will be forwarded to County Commission for final consideration.