



MEMORANDUM

Agenda Item # 9

Date: August 14, 2014
To: Planning Commission
From: Mark Donaldson, Executive Director
Subject: [Central City Sector Plan](#) and Amendments to the General Plan and Sector Plans
7-F-14-SP

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Approve the Central City Sector Plan and Amendments to the General Plan and Sector Plan.

BACKGROUND:

MPC staff completed the Central City Sector Plan update that amends the previously adopted 2003 Central City Sector Plan and the General Plan. The plan incorporates adopted recommendations contained within the Broadway-Central-Emory Place Small Area Plan, Downtown North/I-275 Redevelopment and Urban Renewal Plan, Fort Sanders Neighborhood Plan, Magnolia Avenue Corridor Plan, Martin Luther King, Jr. Avenue Corridor Plan, and Oakwood-Lincoln Park Neighborhood Plan. The major sections of the plan include land use, transportation, historic preservation, green infrastructure, and community facilities.

The public engagement process included the use of a survey (approximately 500 responses) and neighborhood, business association, and general community meetings (approximately 140 attendees).

Summarized below are highlights of the plan recommendations:

1. Most of the downtown area and commercial corridors can support multiple land use types, which resulted in the creation of twenty-one (21) unique mixed-use special districts (MU-SD) and several areas/corridors designated with a standard mixed-use (MU) classification, such as “regional mixed use center” (MU-RC) in the downtown area and “urban corridor mixed use” (MU-UC) along a portion of Broadway. The major difference between these mixed-use classifications is that MU-SD’s have specific recommendations that do not conform to the standard land use classifications, and/or include recommendations for enhancements to transportation systems or community facilities. The 2003 sector plan (as amended) contains five (5) unique MU-SD’s and several standard mixed-use designations.
2. The Five- and Fifteen-Year Improvement Plan lists potential work programs to implement the recommendations of the sector plan. Many of these recommendations involve converting single use commercial corridors into mixed-use extensions of adjacent neighborhoods and creating pedestrian-friendly streetscapes. Form-based codes should be considered for many of these corridors in the long term; however, new basic or planned mixed-use zone district(s) that are intended for small areas or individual lots could be considered in the short-term. Currently, proposed infill developments, even when consistent with plan recommendations, are required to

seek inappropriate zoning that is not intended for small, urban-oriented commercial lots. This ultimately requires numerous variances and challenges to allowing the desired mix of uses, increases the overall financial risk of developments, and generally discourages investment that would benefit the corridor, and the city as a whole.

3. The majority of residential areas currently designated as Low Density Residential (LDR) are proposed to be classified as Traditional Neighborhood Residential (TDR). The TDR classification is similar to LDR with the exception that it acknowledges neighborhood characteristics that typify the Central City Sector, such as mixed housing types, reduced setbacks, sidewalks, small lots, and alleys. The plan recommends developing a new residential zone that recognizes these unique characteristics, such as the proposed Heart of Knoxville Residential District.
4. The multi-day fire in 2012 at Shamrock Organic Products mulching operation on Ailor Avenue resulted in the City of Knoxville creating a report that detailed the events that led up to the fire and proposals for minimizing the recurrence of such an event in the future, which were implemented. The report also requested a small area plan be developed for this area to determine if land use changes are necessary. This coincided with the start of the Central City Sector Plan update, and in studying the area, it was determined that a stand-alone plan was not necessary. An expanded review as part of the sector plan update was completed and called the Marble City/Sutherland Avenue Small Area Plan. Regarding the industrial areas, the plan concludes that the industrial land uses are appropriate where they currently exist, including the mulch site as long as the new safety and operational requirements recommended in the City's report are followed. However, additional screening of those operations should be considered. The small area plan also recommends a "complete street" strategy for Sutherland Avenue and creates three MU-SD's to address specific land use recommendations along the corridor.
5. The need for additional greenway and bicycle facility connections from neighborhoods to major destinations, such as downtown, shopping districts, or parks, was a recurring theme in public comments. Greenways typically follow open space corridors along creeks or run parallel to major roadways when right-of-way is available. In the Central City, this is complicated because there are very few continuous open space corridors and many roads are not wide enough to accommodate on-street bike lanes or parallel greenway trails. Many of the connections will be developed in phases as opportunities become available. The sector plan recommends certain connections as priorities; more detailed recommendations will soon be available since the city has hired consultants to develop citywide bicycle facilities and greenway corridor plans, which should be completed later in 2014.

**KNOXVILLE-KNOX COUNTY
METROPOLITAN PLANNING COMMISSION
A RESOLUTION ADOPTING THE CENTRAL CITY SECTOR PLAN
AND AMENDING THE KNOXVILLE/KNOX COUNTY GENERAL PLAN**

WHEREAS, the Knoxville-Knox County Metropolitan Planning Commission, a regional planning commission established pursuant to state statute, has the duty to make and adopt plans for the physical development of Knoxville and Knox County; and

WHEREAS, the Metropolitan Planning Commission staff prepared a background report, containing an inventory of existing conditions and trends regarding the sector; and

WHEREAS, this plan is consistent with the plan maps and policies of the Farragut-Knoxville-Knox County Growth Policy Plan, maintaining the Urban Growth Boundary, Planned Growth Area and Rural Area of the Growth Plan; and

WHEREAS, this plan is consistent with the goals of the Knoxville-Knox County General Plan, including those related to development of a strong economy, provisions of transportation choices, development and enhancement of neighborhoods, communities and corridors, provisions for strategic investments, and protection of historic resources and water quality; and

WHEREAS, the Metropolitan Planning Commission staff held five public meetings to solicit public input and incorporated the input into this plan; and

WHEREAS, this plan includes recommendations concerning land use, transportation, community facilities, green infrastructure, historic resources, and includes a five and fifteen year plan with proposed implementation methods, including capital improvements.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE KNOXVILLE-KNOX COUNTY METROPOLITAN PLANNING COMMISSION:

SECTION 1: The Commission hereby adopts the Central City Sector Plan, dated August 2014 and amends the General Plan.

SECTION 2: The Planning Commission further recommends that the Knoxville City Council adopt the plan and amend the General Plan.

SECTION 3: This Resolution shall take effect upon its approval.

Date

Chairman _____

Secretary _____