City of Spring Hill

Design Review Guidelines

Date Adopted: *July 8, 2013*

By the Design Review Commission
of the City of Spring Hill, Tennessee

INTRODUCTION

Spring Hill is a growing community with unique issues and opportunities related to its historical development and projected future growth. Spring Hill's population grew to 29,036 in 2010, an increase of 308% between 2000 and 2010. Likewise, Spring Hill is projected to grow by another 78% from 2010 to 2030. While growth presents great challenges for Spring Hill, it also generates new opportunities for economic expansion, community development and quality of life improvements for current and future residents.

In June 2011, the City of Spring Hill adopted a Comprehensive Plan that included the following Community Vision Statement:

> *In the year 2030, we envision Spring Hill as a community that has maintained its uniqueness and sense of place, improved the quality of life for its citizens, and continued to grow economically and socially while preserving our natural and cultural legacies. We have embraced our history, preserved our natural resources and community identity, all while promoting economic development and growth.*
>
> *Our city's development pattern reflects the values of the community and commitment to building and maintaining an authentic sense of community, with logical locations for neighborhoods, activity centers and civic institutions. We have kept pace with the city's growth, investing in our schools, parks, roads and public services to improve the health and well-being of Spring Hill. We have also made a strong commitment to economic and community development by creating a collaborative business infrastructure that is productive, competitive and diverse.*
>
> *To achieve our vision, we work tirelessly and in a cooperative fashion, recognizing that what we have in Spring Hill is special and requires the full attention and devotion of all stakeholders to continue to grow in ways that build a stronger, sustainable community. We continue to seek ways to improve the quality of life in the city through regional and local collaboration, ongoing civic dialogue, and commitment to making Spring Hill an even more desirable place to live, work, and play.*
>
> **Source:** Spring Hill Comprehensive Plan, June 2011

These Design Guidelines present general design priorities that can be adapted to individual circumstances of site and building design. Not every case and circumstance can be anticipated, nor is the goal to prescribe the design of every development in Spring Hill. It is anticipated that property owners and developers will be able to build on these principles and create unique, livable, and viable projects that meet the community's vision. Through the successful implementation of the Design Review process and guidelines, the City of Spring Hill intends to secure its unique character and authentic sense of place.

Table of Contents

SECTION 1: GENERAL PROVISIONS

1.1 General Statement of Intent and Purpose

The intent of these design guidelines is not to limit growth or development within the City of Spring Hill or to restrict creative design solutions, but to encourage development that reinforces the vision of Spring Hill as a quality place to live, work and raise a family while maintaining its uniqueness and an authentic sense of place.

The City of Spring Hill Design Review Guidelines serves the following general purposes:

(1) Educate property owners, designers, developers, the public, and plan reviewers on what is expected and desired for all non-residential property, multiple family residential properties and any entrance to a nonresidential development throughout the City of Spring Hill;

(2) Improve the overall quality of commercial and multiple family residential developments in Spring Hill;

(3) Ensure the compatibility of new and revitalized developments with surrounding land uses;

(4) Enhance pedestrian safety and walk-ability;

(5) Present clear principles and priorities for achieving this vision; and

(6) Provide an objective and fair basis for reviewing projects whether administratively by staff or by the Design Review Commission.

1.2 Basis for Design Review

Tennessee Code Annotated § 6-54-133 authorizes a municipality to create a design review commission and develop general guidelines for the exterior appearance of nonresidential property, multiple family residential properties, and any entrance to a nonresidential development within the municipality.

Pursuant to Tennessee Code Annotated § 6-54-133, the Board of Mayor and Aldermen of the City of Spring Hill adopted Resolution 11-61, a resolution establishing a Design Review Commission.

1.3 Applicability

Unless exempt under Section 1.4 (Exemptions) below, the Design Review Guidelines shall apply to all nonresidential property, multiple family residential properties, and any entrance to a nonresidential development regardless of zoning designation within the City of Spring Hill. These standards shall apply to a site plan approval; a revised preliminary plan; a rezoning request when a site plan submittal is required; or a major rehabilitation of an existing commercial or multi-family structure. Major rehabilitation shall mean any renovation, restoration, modification, addition, or retrofit of a structure or site that exceeds fifty (50%) of

the current appraised value of any structure or site as established by the property assessment office of Maury or Williamson County. Major rehabilitation shall not include routine maintenance and repair of a structure or other feature on the surrounding site, such as a roof replacement or general repairs to a parking area or other site feature.

1.4 Exemptions

A development or project under construction, a project where either a valid building permit has been issued, or a previously approved site plan that has not expired before the adoption of these guidelines shall be exempt from these Design Review Guidelines. This exemption does not apply to major rehabilitation to existing or previously approved developments or projects. Also, single-family detached residences and their related accessory structures are exempt from these Design Review Guidelines; however, the City of Spring Hill Zoning Ordinance (Article IV, Section 19.2) contains additional design standards that apply to all new residential building construction.

1.5 Application and Consideration for Design Review

(1) Submittals to Design Review Commission

Prior to application for a building permit, all nonresidential properties, multiple family residential, and any entrances to residential or nonresidential development shall be submitted to the Design Review Commission, along with plans, elevations and landscape plans. A preliminary submittal prior to completion of detailed plans and specifications is recommended but not mandatory.

(2) Consideration by Design Review Commission

Within 30 days after an application has been submitted to the Commission, the City staff shall examine same and present it to the members of the Commission for examination and determination of whether the proposed structure will conform to the design guidelines and be conducive to the architectural development of the City as stated in the Intent and Purpose section of these guidelines. At said meeting, the Design Review Commission shall examine the plans, elevations, landscape plans, and any other specifications or evidence that may be pertinent or requested. The Chairman of the Design Review Commission may request the applicant or his representative to appear at the Commission meeting. The Design Commission shall act as expeditiously as practicable and in no event shall any applicant be caused unreasonable delay.

(3) Approval or Disapproval

At said meeting or at any meeting within fifteen (15) days subsequent thereto, the Design Review Commission shall approve the application if, in its opinion, the proposed development will conform to the design guidelines and be conducive to the architectural development of the city as stated in the Intent and Purpose section of these guidelines. The Design Review Commission shall disapprove and return the application if it determines that the proposed development will be unsuitable in appearance or detrimental to the environment of the community. However, the Design Review Commission may make

comments and recommendations if it sees fit, toward the end of informing the applicant, the building official, the Planning Commission, and the Board of Mayor and Aldermen why the proposal is unsuitable and what might be done to help bring it into conformance.

The important consideration in the decision of whether a proposed project conforms to the Design Review Guidelines is how the project will be seen from adjacent public streets and bordering sites. Structures which are not visible from surrounding locations may be allowed to be more of a departure from these guidelines due to their context than those which are highly visible.

(4) Submittals to Design Review Commission

If the Design Review Commission approves the application, the City staff may submit the plans to the building official for issuance of the building permit. If the Design Review Commission returns the application with its disapproval and recommendations, the City staff shall not submit the project for a building permit until such time that changes have been made and resubmitted in such form that, in the opinion of City staff, is in conformity with the approval of the Design Review Commission.

1.6 Variances and Modifications Allowed

(1) Variances

The Design Review Commission has sole discretion to grant variances from the standards contained in the Commercial and Multi-Family Residential Design Review Guidelines provided that, in the opinion of the Design Review Commission, the Intent and Purpose of the Guidelines (Section 1.1) have been met.

(2) Modifications to Allow Alternative Compliance

The Design Review Commission may waive or modify any design standard contained in these Design Review Guidelines to encourage the implementation of alternative or innovative practices that implement the intent of the modified standard(s) and provide equivalent public benefits without significant adverse impacts on surrounding development.

(3) Conditions of Approval

In granting a variance, deviation, or modification, the Design Review Commission may require conditions that will substantially secure the objectives of the modified standard and that will substantially mitigate any potential adverse impact on the environment or on adjacent properties, including but not limited to additional landscaping or buffering.

1.7 Appeals

Pursuant to Tennessee Code Annotated § 6-54-133, any property owner affected by the guidelines may appeal a decision of the Design Review Commission to the City of Spring Hill Municipal Planning Commission or, if the Board of Mayor and Aldermen has designated the Municipal Planning Commission as the Design Review Commission, the Board of Mayor and

Aldermen. In the event of an approval of an appeal of the Design Review Commission, the project may be submitted to the building official for issuance of the building permit.

1.8 Conflicting Provisions

If the provisions of the City of Spring Hill Design Review Guidelines are inconsistent with one another, or if they conflict with provisions found in other adopted codes, ordinances, or regulations of the City of Spring Hill, including the Zoning Ordinance or Subdivision Regulations, the more restrictive provision will control unless otherwise expressly provided.

SECTION 2: BUILDING DESIGN AND ARCHITECTURAL CHARACTER

Building design and the character of the architecture exhibited are key elements in the built environment that will contribute to the City of Spring Hill's success and prosperity as a community.

2.1 Preferred Community Character

In completing the Spring Hill Comprehensive Plan, a Visioning Workshop and a community character survey was conducted as a means to obtain public opinions and preferences about the visual appearances of the built environment. This survey exercise produced anecdotal data that was interpreted and incorporated into the Spring Hill Comprehensive Plan to define preferred community character. Survey participants rated a series of images organized into six sub-sections: Transportation Landscape/Streetscape, Neighborhoods, Activity Centers, Employment Areas, and Public Buildings.

Results from the survey and excerpts from the Spring Hill Comprehensive Plan are included in the following pages as a guide in demonstrating the Preferred Community Character.

PREFERRED COMMUNITY CHARACTER

A community character survey (also known as Visual Preference Survey) is a means to obtain public opinions about the visual appearance of the built environment. This survey exercise, administered during the Visioning Workshop, produced anecdotal data that was interpreted and incorporated into the planning process. Survey participants rated a series of images organized into seven sub-sections: Transportation Landscape/Streetscape, Housing Types, Activity Centers, Employment Areas, and Public Buildings.

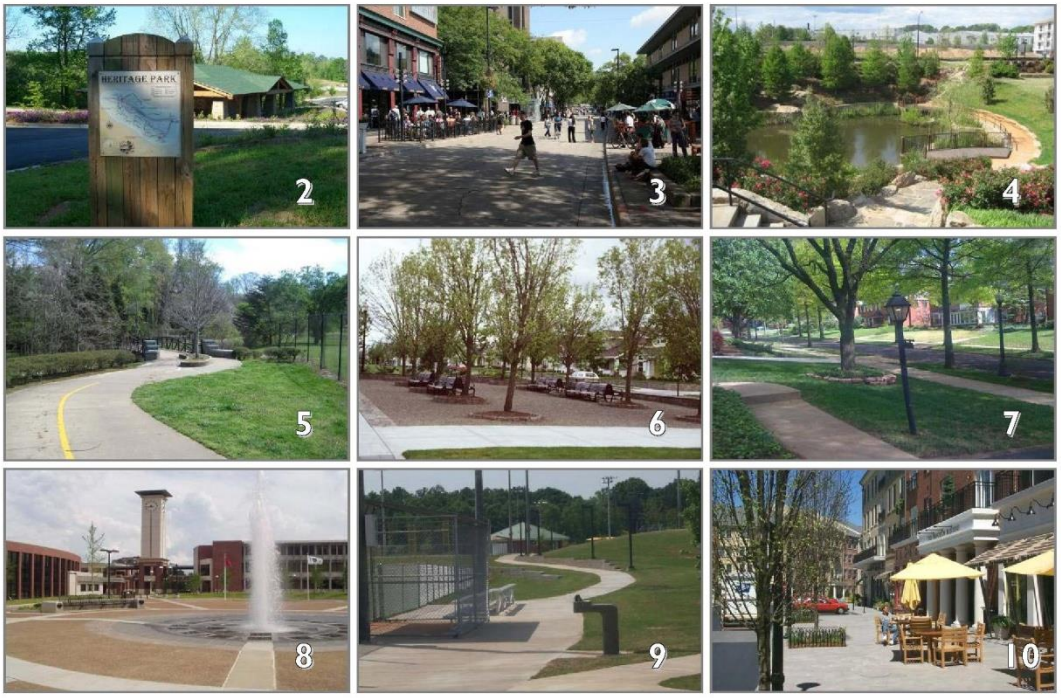
Results are described in the following pages.

Overall

MOST PREFERRED

Overall, the images depicting urban amenities such as walkable neighborhoods, parks and town centers were preferred. Images with excessive asphalt that lacked natural features and wide open urban spaces were overwhelmingly disliked. The participants' most preferred overall image was the "Public Fountain" image that depicts a large urban fountain surrounded by an inviting public plaza with places to sit, gather and socialize.

Most preferred overall image from the Community Character Survey (above)



LEAST PREFERRED

Least preferred images tended to portray architecturally uninteresting and mundane buildings and auto-oriented streets and public spaces. The least favorite overall image was the "Track House" image, with a residential street that has few distinguishable features that make it unique and attractive.

Least preferred overall image from the Community Character Survey (above)

Transportation

MOST PREFERRED

Participants generally preferred transportation images portraying comfortable and attractive streets framed by either mature street trees or buildings.

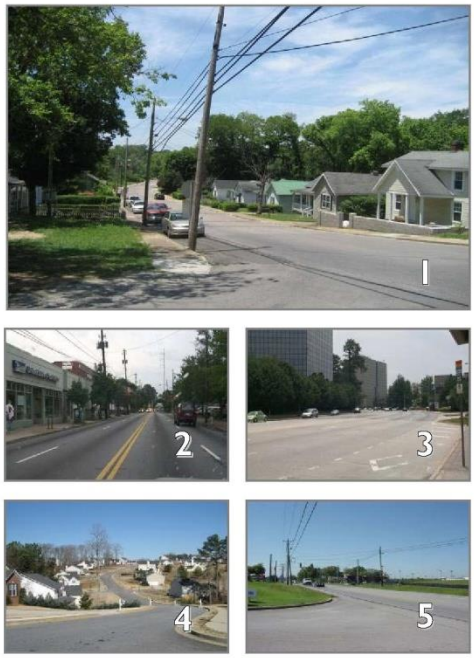
1. **Multi-use trail** – Multi-use trails can provide connections between and within neighborhoods and provide opportunities for recreation and connection with nature.
2. **Urban streets** – Narrow streets with buildings and street trees adjacent to the roadway make a street interesting and comfortable to walk, bike and drive down.
3. **Landscaped streets** –Landscaping streets with mature trees and other vegetation can make a street visually appealing and attractive.
4. **Tree-lined Boulevard** – Tree-lined boulevards create a street that is visually appealing and comfortable to drive and walk down.
5. **Urban commercial street** – Well-designed urban streets encourage walking while also supporting commercial uses.

Most preferred transportation images from the Community Character Survey

LEAST PREFERRED

Participants generally did not prefer images portraying wide-open streets.

1. **Visual Clutter** – Utility poles or obtrusive signs can diminish an otherwise attractive street.
2. **Urban streets** – Urban streets can be narrower than suburban or rural roads.
3. **Wide roadways** –Roadways with multiple lanes and long sight distances create high-speed roadways that are unsafe for automobiles and pedestrians.
4. **Limited residential character** – Suburban neighborhood streets with deep setbacks between the building and street, similar house types, and no street trees creates a street that is unattractive to drive and walk.
5. **Empty roadway** – Roadways in suburban or urban settings that are wide and not lined with trees or buildings can feel empty and lacking in character.



Least preferred transportation images from the Community Character Survey

Landscape and Streetscape

MOST PREFERRED

Participants generally preferred landscaping and streetscaping images portraying well-maintained landscaping strips and street trees..

1. **Landscaping strips** – Trees and shrubs can make a parking area or building front more appealing and interesting.
2. **Pedestrian-Oriented street design** – Buildings with well-designed pedestrian environments improve pedestrian access to commercial buildings.
3. **Parking lot landscaping** –Planting strips in parking lots can make an otherwise unattractive place feel more inviting and unique.
4. **Appropriately scaled signage** – Signage that is integrated in the landscape and surrounding context improves the visual character of an area.
5. **Streetscapes** – Urban streetscapes, with street trees, brick pavers and lamp posts, create visually appealing streets that support pedestrians and adjacent businesses.

Most preferred landscape/streetscape images from the Community Character Survey

LEAST PREFERRED

Participants generally did not prefer commercial areas lacking landscaping or appealing streetscape amenities.

1. **No streetscaping** – Roads with no defining features at the edge of the public right-of-way, such as buildings, sidewalks with street trees, or landscaping strips, lack character and visual appeal.
2. **Large parking lots** – Large, open parking lots with no landscaping strips or streetscape elements to break up the circulation lanes make parking lots unsafe for pedestrians.
3. **Minimal landscaping** –A limited amount of trees or other landscaping make this image less desirable.
4. **No landscaping** – A lack of landscaping between a sidewalk and a parking lot or roadway makes for an unattractive pedestrian space, especially in front of commercial buildings.
5. **Balancing landscaping and buildings** – Buildings and their surrounding landscaping should complement one another, which is not the case in this image..

Least preferred landscape/streetscape images from the Community Character Survey

Neighborhoods

MOST PREFERRED

Participants generally preferred small-scale housing with natural features such as trees and yards defining the space around the house.

1. **Residential streets** – Neighborhoods with small side yards and that have the majority of landscaping in the front or rear create compact and attractive areas to live.
2. **Suburban landscaping** – Suburban residential development is defined by a balance between built features and natural features, with landscaping generally surrounding a building on all sides.
3. **Human-scaled houses** –Single-family detached houses that are well proportioned, address the street, and that are close to the street create a friendly, neighborhood feeling.
4. **Yard features** – Residential yard features, such as picket fences and mature trees, help create attractive neighborhoods.
5. **Interesting architecture** – Interesting and balanced architecture creates uniqueness along a street and within a neighborhood.

Most preferred neighborhood images from the Community Character Survey

LEAST PREFERRED

Participants generally did not prefer large residential buildings or residential streets lacking character.

1. **Mundane neighborhood streets** – Limited variations in architecture and building type and no street trees or other interesting street features fail to create a sense of place along this street.
2. **Suburban landscaping** – Suburban residential development is defined by a balance between built features and natural features, with landscaping generally surrounding a building on all sides.
3. **Yard clutter** –Utility poles and new construction advertising detract from the visual appeal of the building and landscaping.
4. **Deep, open setbacks** –Deep building setbacks and a lack of landscape features to fill the space between the building and roadway fails to make this street an attractive residential environment.
5. **Apartment complexes** – Apartment complexes, with buildings oriented towards the middle of the site, create unattractive spaces at the edge of developments.

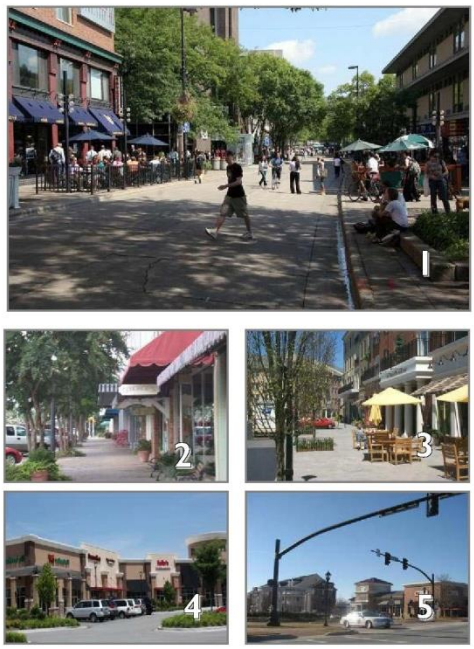
Least preferred neighborhood images from the Community Character Survey

Activity Centers

MOST PREFERRED

Participants generally preferred "Main Street" type images that depict commercial areas supported by walkable, pedestrian-friendly streets.

1. **Street activity** –Outdoor dining, retail businesses oriented towards pedestrians, and other traditional town center activities create places where people want to linger and socialize.
2. **Walkable streets** – Sidewalks with interesting storefronts, well maintained and unobstructed walkways, street trees, and on-street parking make walking enjoyable, inviting and safe.
3. **Mixed use** – Ground level commercial uses, with residential or office above, support a walkable community that depends less on the automobile to support businesses and meet residential needs.
4. **Balancing buildings and landscaping** – Buildings and landscape features that are well-proportioned with one another help create visually appealing places.
5. **Streetscapes** – Streetscapes help create an attractive town center by enhancing the visual appeal of commercial and mixed use buildings.



Most preferred employment areas images from the Community Character Survey

LEAST PREFERRED

Participants generally did not prefer stand alone or commercial buildings with no landscaping or streetscape features.

1. **Rural stand alone commercial** – Rural, stand alone commercial buildings typically do not provide a wide range of commercial services.
2. **Inappropriate building additions** – This building fails to integrate the commercial addition with the original residential building.
3. **No landscaping of pedestrian environment** – This building lacks street trees or pedestrian features that help blend the building into its surroundings.
4. **Limited sidewalk** – The small sidewalk makes accessing this building by foot difficult and unpleasant.
5. **Auto-oriented commercial buildings** – One-story commercial buildings that are separated from the street by a parking lot fail to create a pedestrian-friendly commercial area.

Least preferred employment area images from the Community Character Survey

Employment Areas

MOST PREFERRED

Participants generally preferred large commercial buildings with more traditional architectural features.

1. **Balanced architecture** – Buildings with appropriate architectural features, such as windows of appropriate proportion and traditional materials, make this building visually appealing.
2. **Traditional building materials** – Traditional building materials, such as brick, are desired over more modern materials such as steel and glass.
3. **Human-scaled buildings** – Buildings that are moderate in size and integrated into the surrounding landscape create a more inviting workplace than a tall office building surrounded by parking.
4. **Landscaping** – Appropriate landscaping, such as trees and planting strips, can buffer the views of large parking areas.
5. **Streetscapes** – Streetscapes create attractive areas around businesses and improve the visual character around commercial buildings.

Most preferred employment areas images from the Community Character Survey

LEAST PREFERRED

Participants generally did not prefer conventional office park buildings and stand alone commercial buildings.

1. **Big box office buildings** –Large office buildings with not windows or other interesting architectural features make this building and the area surrounding it unattractive.
2. **Stand alone buildings** – Large buildings that stand alone are not preferred.
3. **Large parking lots** – Wide open parking lots, limited landscaping and one story buildings that do not frame the parking lot, create spaces that are visually unattractive and undesirable to be in.
4. **Awkward building forms** – This building, with a front building elevation that is atypical, was not preferred.
5. **Corporate office parks** – Corporate office parks, with tall glass and metal building facades, are not preferred.

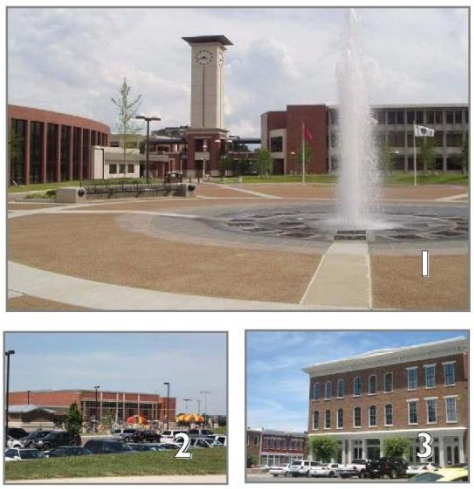
Least preferred employment area images from the Community Character Survey

Public Buildings

MOST PREFERRED

Participants generally preferred images that depict formal public buildings that establish the building and surround area as important public space.

1. **Formal public plazas** – Formal public plazas, framed by surrounding buildings, establish areas as important civic places.
2. **Mixed use public institutions** – Civic buildings that locate administrative offices and recreation areas in close proximity can be a center for community activities.
3. **Multi-story buildings** – Multi-story buildings in a traditional downtown setting are a desirable type of public building.

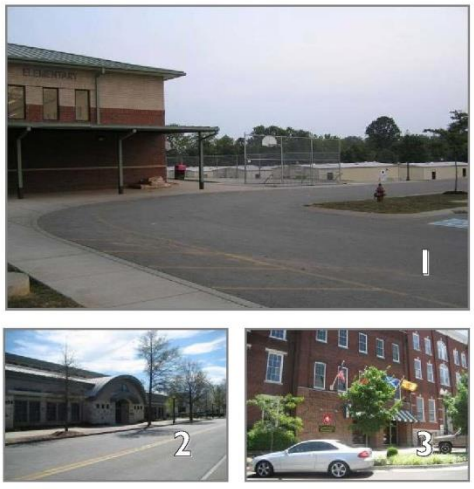


Most preferred public building images from the Community Character Survey

LEAST PREFERRED

Participants generally did not prefer public buildings lacking character or landscaping.

1. **Temporary school facilities** –Portable classrooms are an undesirable school feature.
2. **Limited landscaping** – Public buildings with minimal landscaping are not well integrated into the community landscape.
3. **Large urban buildings** – Public buildings that are several stories tall are undesirable.



Least preferred public building images from the Community Character Survey

2.2 General Building Design Guidelines

The building design guidelines are intended to help protect the integrity and enhance the value of the City's existing neighborhoods by articulating to the development community those design values and preferences that the City has determined will result in a high quality built environment, while maintaining the community's uniqueness and an authentic sense of place.

(1) Building facades visible from a public right-of-way should be of high quality and finished in a manner that is consistent with the front façade.

(2) Buildings that have long walls should use varied setbacks or architectural details to reduce the perceived length and mass of the building.

(3) Development sites with multiple buildings should contain compatible design elements and a strong visual relationship between buildings.

(4) Buildings should reflect the unique style of the city and not develop according to a standard "corporate" or "franchised" style that is typically found with big-box or other national businesses.

(5) Exterior building materials shall be high quality and durable materials. Exterior building wall materials shall be subject to the following:

a. **Primary Building Materials:** The primary materials for exterior wall surfaces, exclusive of all windows, doors, roofs and walkway covers, shall be natural materials such as brick, stone, tile, marble, limestone, glass and glazing, and wood. Hardi-Plank or similar synthentic material to resemble natural materials may also be used as primary building material.

Appropriate use of Primary Building Materials

Other Materials may be considered on a case by case basis. In consideration of alternate materials, the Design Review Commission and the design professional should consider the architectural style of the building, and select appropriate materials for the architectural style.

For industrially-zoned properties, tilt-up concrete wall panels may be used. No more than 60% of the wall area, exclusive of all windows, doors, roofs, and walkway covers, visible from the public right of way may be constructed of tilt-up concrete on a building's exterior. The remaining area visible to the public shall be those materials listed above for the primary building materials.

b. **Secondary Building Materials:** Secondary materials for exterior wall surfaces may be used for up to 20% of the elevations, exclusive of all windows, doors, roofs, and walkway covers, for the purpose of accent. Acceptable secondary building materials include precast concrete, exterior insulation and finishing systems (EIFS), or Dryvit, precast concrete, and textured block. Simulated materials that give the appearance of the primary building materials listed in Section (5)a, above, may be used as secondary building materials.

Appropriate proportion and use of secondary building materials to serve as an accent

Where the rear of the building is not/will not be visible from the public right of way or ingress/egress easement and does not abut a residential development or zoning district, the Design Review Commission may consider up to 50% of the rear of the building to be constructed with secondary building materials. This exception will be reviewed on a case by case basis, with the burden of proof lying with the applicant on the question of visibility.

c. For those properties located within an industrial zoning district, the Design Review Commission shall have the discretion to permit metal facades on the side and rear of a building not generally visible from a public right-of way, and where that side or rear elevation of the building does not abut a residentially-zoned property.

d. Exterior finish colors should fit into the context of the built environment. Subtle earth tones are preferred over stark or bright colors.

e. Door and window framing systems color should blend with the overall design of the building.

f. Any roof that can be viewed by the public must be shingle or colored standing seam metal roofing.

g. In selecting exterior building materials, consideration should be given to the appropriateness of the materials to the scale of building proposed. The dimensional size of the material should relate to the size of the building. For example, a traditional size brick should be used on smaller buildings, with consideration being given for larger brick sizes on larger-scaled buildings.

2.3 Compatibility with surroundings

(1) Building shapes and forms shall be tailored to fit within the existing topography of the site and other site features specifically existing trees and vegetation. Buildings are viewed in context with other buildings in the immediate vicinity with regard to mass, placement, scale, and proportion of window openings, entryways, roof types, and the degree of detail.

(2) Use of Similar Building Materials in a Commercial Center

a. In order to achieve unity between all buildings in a Commercial Center, all buildings in the center, including out parcel buildings, shall be constructed of building materials from the color and materials palette approved for the center.

b. A comprehensive building materials and color package shall be submitted to the Design Review Commission for approval with the first building of a commercial development.

Appropriate use of similar building materials, architectural styles and color palette in a Commercial Center

(3) Use of Similar Architectural Styles or Theme in a Commercial Center

a. A consistent architectural style or theme should be used throughout a Commercial Center, and in particular to tie outparcel buildings to the primary building(s).

b. Building entrances are appropriate locations to express individual building character or identity.

(4) Where a site or building is not part of a Commercial Center, the architecture should consider surrounding sites in terms of building materials, colors and architectural style. These buildings should blend architecturally. The intent is not to have all developments look the same, but to have developments of high quality design and materials, that transition well from surrounding developments where stark contrasts are not evident to the visitor or passerby.

2.4 Building Heights

Building heights shall conform to the City of Spring Hill Zoning Ordinance per the applicable zoning district in which the development is located or as part of a Planned Unit Development approved by the Board of Mayor and Aldermen.

2.5 Adapting prototypical designs to particular sites

Prototype designs shall be adapted to reflect the City of Spring Hill design standards and should be compatible with the site's immediate surroundings. Careful siting, use of compatible materials and colors, and landscaping are some of the ways that a franchise design is expected to be adapted to blend with its surroundings.

Appropriate Prototypical Design

Inappropriate Prototypical Design

Appropriate Prototypical Design

Inappropriate Prototypical Design

Appropriate Prototypical Design

Inappropriate Prototypical Design

Appropriate Prototypical Design

Inappropriate Prototypical Design

Appropriate Prototypical Design

Inappropriate Prototypical Design

2.6 Massing, Facades and Roof Line

(1) Massing

a. Buildings should avoid a long uninterrupted facade planes. The maximum permitted width of an uninterrupted plane shall be seventy-five (75) feet.

b. Pilasters, variations in the roof line or parapet wall, and building wall recesses shall be used to break up the mass of a single building into distinct vertical bays which maintain a rhythm to surrounding buildings.

Architectural material to break up blank walls

(2) Facades

a. Buildings should have a defined base and cap.

b. Window and door openings shall have proportions similar to those on adjoining buildings.

c. Where a clearly established development character and scale exist, new in-fill development should include the key design elements of surrounding buildings with respect to windows, doors, rhythm of bays, detailing, roof forms, materials and colors.

d. Rear and side facades, if visible from public streets, shall be similar to the primary façade in their architectural treatment.

e. Blank walls facing public streets shall be avoided. The use of various architectural materials and patterns shall be used to break up blank walls.

Architectural materials and foundation landscaping to break up blank walls

Defined base and cap

(3) Roofs

a. Roof shapes and forms shall be appropriate to a building's design and scale.

b. Flat roofs or low-pitched roofs with parapet walls are encouraged to screen mechanical units from public view. Alternative roof forms may be used if appropriate for a particular architectural style.

Roof forms appropriate to building's design and scale

2.7 Relationship to Streets

(1) Facades along public streets shall be treated in a manner which creates an attractive and interesting street-front. Undifferentiated and bland facades that are visible from the public right-of-way are discouraged

(2) "Stage set" facades are not acceptable. Aesthetic considerations go beyond the primary elevation of the building. The materials and colors utilized on the street face shall continue on the sides and rear of the structures.

(3) Landscaping shall define the building entries, as well as the entrances to the development from the public street. Landscaping should not impede visibility from entrances onto public streets and shall not conflict with pedestrian traffic.

Defined building entrance

Unique integration of landscaping at building entrance and at streetscape

SECTION 3: LANDSCAPING AND SCREENING

3.1 Preservation of existing trees

The general location of tree-covered areas within a development site shall be illustrated. Specific identification is required for all existing trees proposed to be removed with a diameter at breast height (DBH) of eighteen (18") inches or greater. The extent of the proposed grading shall be shown where trees are to be retained. Measures shall be taken to protect mature healthy trees. Grading, construction, or materials storage should not disrupt their vitality. If ground alterations are of necessity within or near the drip line, or within critical distance of mature trees, they should be planned and executed in consultation with a tree expert. Adequate protection measures shall be performed for trees to be preserved on a construction site. Protection measures shall be maintained during construction to ensure the protection of trees to be preserved. Tree planting specifications shall meet the minimum criteria as specified in City of Spring Hill Zoning Ordinance (Article IV, Section 18 "Landscaping Requirements"), and shall be illustrated in table form on the Landscape Plan.

3.2 Landscape Plan

All new developments, whether public or private, and all existing commercial, industrial or multifamily residential projects where a Site Plan is required to be submitted and approved by the Municipal Planning Commission shall be required to submit a Landscape Plan. All Landscape Plans shall be prepared by a licensed landscape architect or experienced landscape designer.

Landscaped areas shall include all designated open space, and landscaping should be located along the public boundaries of a site, including site entrances and parking areas, around buildings and building entries, along drainage or storm water management structures and detention/retention areas, provide visual and physical separation of conflicting land uses, and hide views or to conceal areas from public view such as loading areas, dumpsters, HVAC units, electrical boxes and meters, and pumping stations.

Landscape Plans shall illustrate proposed new trees, shrubs, and ground covers with plant common names and size. A plant list shall be provided denoting plant names, quantities and sizes. Specific landscaping requirements are found in Article IV, Section 18 of the City of Spring Hill Zoning Ordinance.

3.3 Buffer Yards and Screening

Buffer Yards are defined as a unit of open space improved with screening and/or landscaping materials used to increase compatibility between commercial or industrial districts adjacent to any residential district, or residential developments of differing densities and/or intensities which may or may not be greater than the required yard areas for the zoning district. Specific provisions for Buffer Yards are found in Article IV, Section 17 of the City of Spring Hill Zoning Ordinance.

In addition to Buffer Yards, Screening shall be required in the City of Spring Hill in the following instances:

(1) In all multi-family residential, commercial or industrial developments that are adjacent to a conflicting land use, residentially zoned property or between residential developments of differing densities and/or intensities.

(2) In all developments that have outdoor work areas on vehicles, provide for the storage of vehicles, or provide auto service functions such as the storage of cars while they are being repaired, or developments with outdoor storage containers or equipment storage.

(3) In all developments that provide for the self storage of goods.

(4) Around all waste disposal or garbage collection sites of all multi-family residential, commercial and industrial developments.

Types of Screening:

(1) **Vegetative Screening:** Vegetative screening is the preferred screening method in the City of Spring Hill where industrial and commercial developments adjoin less intensive developments or zones. When vegetative screening is required for conflicting land uses or transitional land uses, the screening, at a minimum, unless otherwise directed by the Design Review Commission, shall form a solid continuous visual screen. The proposed vegetative screening strip shall be composed of trees and shrubs that are of a major deciduous and major evergreen nature. Use and preservation of existing, mature vegetation for screening is encouraged.

Appropriate use of screening to screen service area visible from public street

(2) **Fencing:** Fencing is the preferred screening method in the City of Spring Hill for multi-family developments that adjoin a conflicting land use or a residential development proposing double frontage lots. All required fencing, which is used to screen or create privacy in the City of Spring Hill, shall adhere to the following requirements:

a. The preferred fencing type is brick/masonry or stone. Fencing constructed of treated wood or ornamental metal may be approved by the Design Review Commission and reviewed on a case-by-case basis. The use of untreated wood, plain concrete block, chain link, wire, metal mesh, or corrugated metal panels shall not be used as fencing or screening.

b. The fencing shall provide an opaque view of the screened area.

c. Fences shall be set back from the street right-of-way to allow a clear area for utilities and landscaping. Landscaping shall not conflict with any utility easements.

d. Where approved, wood fences shall have brick or stone columns located a maximum of seventy-five (75') feet on center, and the wooden fencing shall be constructed with a wood cap.

e. Fences shall not create a stockade appearance. This can be accomplished by staggering fencing materials between columns to add depth to the screening. Fences over one hundred (100') feet long on double frontage lots facing streets shall have no more than fifty (50') percent of their length in a straight line and shall provide a setback of five feet or more from the fence line.

f. Fencing shall be designed to facilitate maintenance and shall not modify natural drainage so as to endanger adjacent property.

g. The maximum height of the fence may not exceed a height of eight (8') feet.

h. The use of berms with appropriate dense screen planting along the top of the berm is encouraged.

i. Fencing shall lie within defined common open space areas or easements owned and/or maintained by established property owner associations.

(3) **Berms:** The berm is the preferred screening method for the City of Spring Hill for more intensive commercial and industrial developments; in particular, developments that will have loading docks, storage areas, and large parking areas or drives that adjoin or infringe upon a residential area or zone. The use of the berm may be imposed upon any development as a screening method along a major thoroughfare or between a sidewalk and parking or road. When a berm is required as a screening method or is incorporated into a landscaping plan, the berm shall be a minimum of three (3') feet in height with the Design Review Commission having the option of requiring a five (5') foot high berm depending upon the use being buffered. The slopes on all berms within the City of Spring Hill shall not exceed a ratio of 3 horizontal to 1 vertical.

3.4 Parking Lot Landscaping

(1) **Orientation/Layout**

Parking areas should be designed to complement the streetscape of the adjacent roadway. Areas should include landscaping to minimize the visual impact of large expanses of asphalt and a large number of vehicles. Parking lots shall conform to the requirements set forth:

a. Landscaping shall be provided around the perimeter to serve as a buffer screen and assist in minimizing the impact from public view.

Appropriate screening of parking area from Public Street

b. Parking islands shall be landscaped and be covered with shredded bark, turf, natural river rock and/or low shrubs and shall have at least one tree per island, or two trees if there is a double row of parking. Shade trees and trees of sufficient size at maturity shall be planted in parking lot landscape islands. Parking islands shall include one tree (minimum three (3") inch caliper) for each thirty-five (35') linear feet of parking, loading or residential district frontage. Container grown trees are preferred over burlap for this application.

c. Plant material should not interfere with visibility for motorists at road intersections, or at entrances and exits of parking areas.

d. Maintenance and management of all landscaped areas is the responsibility of the property owner.

e. All landscaped parking islands shall be irrigated. Backflow preventers shall be screened.

Appropriate parking lot landscaping

Inappropriate parking lot landscaping

3.5 Stormwater Management

Overland drainage and detention are required to minimize the impact of peak water discharges on downstream facilities. The rate of peak run-off at site boundaries cannot be greater than peak run-off prior to development. Where site run-off requires detention areas, the areas shall be designed as a visual amenity for the site and be incorporated into the overall landscaping of the site.

All drainage must conform to the City of Spring Hill Subdivision Regulations and shall be approved by the City Engineer and Stormwater Coordinator prior to construction, or alteration in the case of existing stormwater facilities.

All detention areas shall incorporate the following standards:

(1) Earth cut slopes of 3:1 horizontal to vertical shall be preferred for erosion control and maintenance.

(2) Landscaping shall be provided adjacent to the basin so as to provide a visual amenity within the overall landscaping of the site.

(3) In basins that shall retain water so as to provide an aesthetic feature or storm water quality discharge of the development, water should not remain stagnant. Fountains shall be provided to aerate the water surface.

(4) Fencing may be required around retention and detention basins as to be reviewed on a case by case basis.

Appropriate stormwater facility with fountain for aeration and landscaped so as to provide a visual amenity within the overall landscaping of the site

3.6 Maintenance and Irrigation

(1) Irrigation shall be provided to ensure longevity and health of the planting areas on all new construction. Existing and renovated landscaped areas will be evaluated individually based on the complexities of providing irrigation.

(2) Irrigation backflow preventers shall be screened or concealed. Backflow preventers shall not be located within a required streetscape area.

(3) Irrigation systems must be installed below ground, with spray heads flush with the ground surface.

SECTION 4: SITE DESIGN AND SITE ELEMENTS

4.1 Site Design

Sites should be designed so as to consider adjacent land uses and design, site size, location, vehicular and pedestrian movement, interconnectivity, ingress/egress, and the proposed use of the site.

(1) Building Orientation

a. Buildings should be oriented such that their main entrances are visible from the public right-of-way and streets located therein.

b. In areas where setbacks are not consistent, building should be set back the average distance of adjacent building within one-hundred (100') feet of proposed structure.

c. Building service areas, loading areas and utility areas shall not be visible from public streets. Such service areas should be located behind the façade of the main structure. Review of local sanitation company criteria is essential in the placement and number of sanitation collection service areas.

d. Primary entrances to office and retail buildings should be oriented to the public right-of-way, with secondary entrances opening to parking areas.

(2) Parking Lot Design

a. Parking islands shall be interspersed between every fifteen (15) parking spaces with an island being a minimum of five (5') feet in width and no area shall be less than one hundred (100) square feet. All parking lots must have a minimum of ten (10) percent landscaping area.

b. All required parking islands shall be surrounded with a continuous eight (8") inch standard or rolled curb.

c. Landscape divisions between double rows of parking are encouraged for large developments. This helps to break the visual impact of an expanse of a large parking lot.

(3) Interconnectivity

a. Sites shall be interconnected to eliminate the need for residents to utilize the adjacent street to gain access to adjoining sites, and to encourage pedestrian movement between sites.

b. An internal drive network can be used to gain interconnectivity.

(4) Pedestrian and Bicycle Movements

a. Sites shall be designed to provide for internal pedestrian movements, and to neighboring sites and rights-of-way to enhance pedestrian safety and comfort.

b. Areas for bicycle storage should be incorporated into the site.

c. Pedestrian crosswalks should be incorporated in the site, providing clear access from the public right-of-way to the building's main entrance.

d. Crosswalks can be marked with different paving mechanisms. Examples include pavers, bricks, and scored or stained concrete.

(5) Open Space

The City of Spring Hill Zoning Ordinance provides for minimum open space percentages for developments. The location of the open space can be integral to a sites characteristics and scale.

a. A minimum of fifteen (15) percent shall be devoted to permeable surfaces with ten (10) percent of the vehicular use area devoted to landscaping.

b. Landscaping should be located along a building's base to soften the building and add a pedestrian scale to it.

c. Industrial-zoned property should locate the majority of open space to the front of the parcel, to be visible from the public right-of-way.

4.2 Site Elements

Site elements, such as furniture, amenities and public spaces within a site contribute to creating an authentic sense of place and the visitor's overall experience. The addition of site elements may not be appropriate on all sites. However, coordinated and well-placed elements can provide for a greater sense of community, provide places for people to gather, and create focal points and prominence of a site.

(1) Furniture

a. Furniture should be provided to allow for visitor resting places, eating or gathering.

b. Furniture should be of high-quality materials and should coordinate with the scale and design of the development.

c. Furniture colors should be of a natural color. Colors such as cream, black, dark brown and dark green are appropriate.

(2) Outdoor Dining

a. Restaurants are encouraged to provide for outdoor dining spaces.

b. The use of any umbrella covering shall be coordinated with the character of the development in terms of color and design.

c. No signage is permitted on umbrellas.

d. Canvas umbrellas should be of a flame-retardant, mildew-resistant fabric.

e. Outdoor dining areas should be kept clean and free of litter.

(3) Art, Water Features

a. The use of public art, water fountains and other water features and architectural elements that enhance the site may be appropriate.

(4) Miscellaneous

a. Coordinated trash receptacles made of metal, wrought iron, stone or other durable material.

b. Planters made of durable materials should be compatible with other site elements.

c. Bike racks should be provided and located so as not to interfere with vehicular and pedestrian traffic, but still provide easy access to the building entrance.

4.3 Garbage Collection Areas

Trash containment areas including dumpsters, trash, refuse, compactors, and recyclable containers shall be set in a location that is at the rear of the building(s) or site and shall not be located within any designated streetscape/buffer yards. The following criteria shall apply:

(1) Dumpster enclosures shall be located on a concrete pad of sufficient size to accommodate the desired number of receptacles.

(2) Such collection areas shall be enclosed by opaque material on all three sides with doors to remove front end commercial dumpsters.

(3) Dumpster enclosures shall be constructed of brick and/or masonry walls, and screened with appropriate plant material. The dumpster enclosure shall be constructed of a similar material from which the principal use was constructed.

(4) The screening of all dumpsters shall be at least two feet taller than the dumpster, but no more than eight (8') feet tall. Doors shall be in a closed position when the dumpster is not being loaded or emptied and the doors shall have a usable latch to ensure that they can stay closed.

Appropriately screened garbage collection area

Inappropriately screened garbage collection area

(5) The door framework shall be of metal construction.

(6) For restaurants, exterior grease collection devices shall be located underground or within an opaque enclosure similar to the dumpster enclosure.

(7) All refuse material and items to be recycled must be enclosed and located on a concrete pad.

(8) Grocery cart storage should be concealed from public view. Storage of carts should be provided within the interior of the building, or if outside, be incorporated into the exterior design of the building frontage. For cart storage within parking lots, the storage should be screened within or adjacent to planter islands.

4.4 Gas, Electric Meters and Transformer Locations

Utility meters shall be screened from public view with an opaque fence wall or evergreen hedge that screens objectionable views.

Transformers shall be screened with evergreen landscape materials of sufficient height and width at the time of planting. An area of fifteen (15') feet shall remain open on the side of the transformer used for access.

Locations of all meters, gas and electric, must be identified with the type of screening proposed.

Mechanical equipment on roofs or sides of a building shall not be visible from streets. When mechanical equipment is ground mounted, screening shall include either an opaque fence or wall or a suitable evergreen hedge that screens objectionable view from the public.

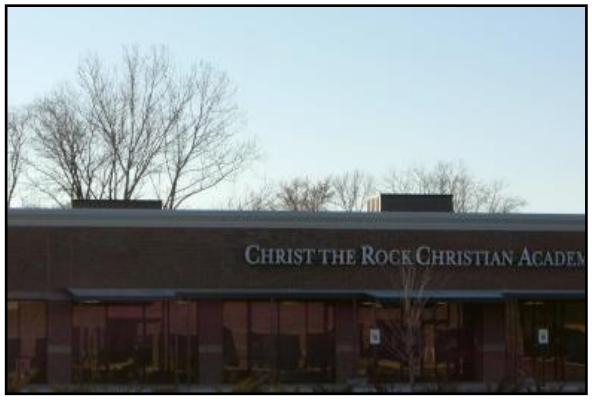
4.5 Mechanical Units, Vents, Plumbing, heating

Ground-mounted mechanical and air conditioning units shall be screened from public view with an opaque fence, wall or evergreen hedge that screens objectionable views.

Roof-mounted mechanical and air conditioning units, vents and pipes must be screened from public view. Where parapets are used, they must be of a height to completely screen such items from neighboring properties and rights-of-way. Individual rooftop screens are not acceptable. Vents, pipes and other rooftop items on a pitched roof must be incorporated into the design of the building. The use of dormers is one way to conceal such items.

The location of all ground and roof-mounted mechanical and air conditioning units must be identified on the plans with the type of screening proposed. Screening shall cover the height of the units proposed.

Appropriate mansard roof screens roof top elements



Inappropriate unscreened rooftop units

4.6 Signage

The City of Spring Hill permits a wide variety of signage intended to identify businesses and institutions, and to convey commercial and non-commercial messages alike. The primary purpose of the City's sign standards is to promote the reasonable, orderly, and effective use and display of signs, while enhancing the physical appearance of the City. Specific sign requirements, including the types of signs allowed and prohibited, dimensions, and siting restrictions are found in Article XVI of the City of Spring Hill Zoning Ordinance.

(1) General Design Criteria

a. Signage should be consistent in size, material, and location within each development, and proportional to the building it is placed on.

b. Signage shall conform to the architectural character of the principal building in terms of style, location, size, configuration, materials, and color.

c. Sign logos shall be subordinate to the overall sign design.

d. All business signs shall face a public street and/or recorded permanent public use easement and not be located on the rear of buildings.

e. The number of signs used should be limited to encourage compatibility with the building and discourage visual clutter.

f. A comprehensive Sign Policy is required for developments of two or more tenants outlining the colors, type, illumination, size, and location of all development signage. Signage should be consistent in size, material, location, and design throughout each development.

SECTION 5: REHABILITATION AND IMPROVEMENTS TO EXISTING BUILDINGS AND SITES

As buildings and sites are renovated, updated and improved over time, it is the desire of the city that these sites and buildings be updated to comply with the current Design Guidelines and open space requirements, to the extent possible. The use of high quality materials for such renovations should be used. Deteriorated materials should be removed.

Any change to the exterior of a building or site where a Site Plan is required to be submitted and approved by the Municipal Planning Commission shall require approval from the Design Review Commission.

The following categories of changes to the exterior of a building or site may be approved by City Staff if it is of the opinion of City Staff that such changes are in conformity with current Design Review Guidelines and such changes will not interfere with the character of the area where such changes are proposed:

(2) Replacement of existing materials with the same, including materials, design and color.

(3) Repainting or re-roofing.

(4) Repair or replacement of items with similar material and color.

(5) Replacement of windows with the same design and color.

Applicants are encouraged to work closely with the city staff to review existing and proposed conditions of a building or developed site to determine the best alternatives. In lieu of an opinion by City Staff, an applicant of any change to the exterior of a building or site may request to appear before the Design Review Commission.