

# MEMORANDUM



**To:** Planning and Zoning Commission

**Through:** Brian Lockley, AICP, Director of Planning

**From:** Eleana Galicia, Planner I

**Date:** August 9, 2016

**Subject:** P&Z Commission Training Series  
[Topic 5: Site Planning and Architectural Standards](#)

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As part of the Planning Department initiated training series this session will focus on the purpose and intent of the City's Site and Architectural Standards and detail the Site Plan review process for the City of McKinney. Site planning and façade plan review are required for all development in the City, and will occasionally come before the Planning and Zoning Commission for review and approval. This session is intended to inform the commission of the City's development requirements and regulations.

## **WHAT IS A SITE PLAN?**

A site plan is a detailed graphic of the proposed development showing the location of structures, driveways, parking, landscaping and other improvements to be constructed on a parcel of land. The site plan will show dimensions of the property and its relationship to existing setbacks, easements, and utilities (gas, water, sewer, electric, etc.), and how the site will accommodate the proposed development.

## **WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF A SITE PLAN?**

The City of McKinney requires a site plan for the construction of all commercial and multifamily projects located in the City Limits. Site plans are typically reviewed by city officials, consisting of a staff member from the planning, engineering, and building department's as well as the fire marshal's office. Site plans are also required when existing structures and improvements are altered on a site.

Site planning helps ensure safe and functional development by ensuring that new structures, utilities, streets, parking, lighting, signage, and landscaping are developed in conformance with the City of McKinney Zoning Regulations, which are located in Section 146 of the McKinney Code of Ordinances, and other design criteria, such as the City of McKinney Street Design Manual, Storm Water Design Manual, and Water and Wastewater Design Manual. Site development plans help promote public health, safety, and welfare of the citizens of the City of McKinney.

## **ADMINISTRATION OF SITE PLAN REVIEW**

The statutory requirements for site plan review and approval are contained in Section 146-45 of the City of McKinney's Zoning Ordinance. As part of this section details regarding the procedures and supporting materials required for application, review and approval, and the officials responsible for review and approval (i.e. the Director of Planning, Chief Building Official, the Planning and Zoning Commission, and/or City Council) are outlined.

The McKinney Zoning Ordinance is administered by the Development Services Division of the City (Planning Department) and by the City Council with recommendations from the Planning and Zoning Commission. All properties within the corporate limits of the city are subject to the provisions of the Zoning Ordinance.

Site plans are typically administratively approved by Staff, unless the applicant is requesting a variance that requires approval of the Planning and Zoning Commission and/or the City Council. Site plans may also be required to be considered by the Planning and Zoning Commission and/or City Council if required by the governing zoning ordinance on the subject property.

## **WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THE CITY'S ARCHITECTURAL STANDARDS**

The Architectural and Site Standards section of the Zoning Ordinance, Section 146-139 of the Code of Ordinances, were originally adopted in May of 2000, and were revised on March 14, 2015. The purpose of the city's architectural standards are to establish minimum standards for the appearance of non-residential, attached single family residential (townhome), and multi-family residential buildings and corresponding site elements that are recognized as enhancing property values and that are in the interest of the general welfare of the city. The standards are intended to serve as a baseline for the minimum design expectations of the city. These standards are not intended to prohibit architectural innovation nor are they intended to mandate specific architectural styles and concepts. Rather, they are intended to provide for developments of enduring quality that provide visual character and interest.

The primary objectives in establishing these development guidelines are:

- To achieve compatibility and harmony of each building with neighboring buildings and areas of development.
- To protect property values and enhance the owner's investments by ensuring a well-planned and well maintained development.
- To achieve the quality design through minimum design expectations that are flexible enough to remain competitive and consistent with the city's vision set forth in the City of McKinney Comprehensive Plan.

## **SITE PLAN, ARCHITECTURAL STANDARDS, AND THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

The Comprehensive Plan defines the long term vision of how and where the city will grow and change over the next 20 years to accommodate expected population and job growth. Decisions about the Comprehensive Plan directly guide subsequent decisions about zoning. The zoning ordinance helps achieve the vision of the Comprehensive Plan by setting the requirements that define what uses are permitted (e.g. commercial, residential, industrial), and how buildings may be developed or altered (e.g. maximum heights, building setbacks, and design criteria).

## **THE COMMISSION'S ROLE IN RELATION TO SITE PLANS AND ARCHITECTURAL STANDARDS**

Generally, the Planning and Zoning Commission has been appointed to make recommendations to the City Council regarding amendments, updates and actions affecting the Zoning Ordinance. Specifically, Section 146-163 of the McKinney Zoning Ordinance grants the Planning and Zoning Commission the following authority and responsibilities:

1. The Planning and Zoning Commission shall consider and may grant or deny approval of any site plan required, as provided in section 146-45.
2. The Planning and Zoning Commission shall hold a public hearing and make a recommendation to the city council, prior to any consideration by the city council, on any of the following:
  - a. Any change or amendment to any of the provisions or regulations;
  - b. Any change or amendment to the zoning districts map, or any change in any zoning district boundary;
  - c. Any request for specific use permit;
  - d. Site plans as per section 146-45; and
  - e. Amendments to the comprehensive plan.
3. In the MTC - McKinney Town Center zoning district, the planning and zoning commission shall have the authority and responsibilities under the specific administration provisions of the MTC - McKinney Town Center zoning district regulations contained in Appendix G of the city zoning regulations (Chapter 146).
4. The Planning and Zoning Commission shall, either on its own initiative or by direction of the City Council or at the request of the director of planning, schedule and hold a public hearing on any proposed change or amendment to the McKinney Zoning Ordinance.
5. The Planning and Zoning Commission shall have no authority to change any provisions of the McKinney Zoning Ordinance; nor grant any specific use permit; nor change any zoning district boundary; nor grant any variance or exception to the provisions of the McKinney Zoning Ordinance, except as a part of a site plan approval as provided in section 146-45.