



AGENCY: City Council
MEETING DATE: April 25, 2022
DEPARTMENT: CDD
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AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY

TITLE:

Receive Report and Consider Adoption of City Council Resolution Approving the Revised 2022 Citywide Design Guidelines Update for Commercial, Industrial, and Multi-Family Buildings

ISSUE:

The City of Fort Bragg's Design Guidelines were initially adopted by the City Council in 2004. The Guidelines have been an integral part of city planning in Fort Bragg and have helped the city retain its character and maintain property values. While effective on many levels, the existing Guidelines have become outdated. They do not address current trends and are not entirely relevant to many proposed projects. In 2019, the Planning Commission considered revisions to the Citywide Design Guidelines at three public meetings related to reuse of the former Mill Site. However, this document was never formally adopted by City Council. As a result of these meetings, an Ad-Hoc Committee was appointed – composed of two Councilmembers (Albin-Smith and Morsell-Haye) and two Planning Commissioners (Andreis and Rogers), to refine and update the City's Design Guidelines. This Ad-Hoc Committee met multiple times from February 2021 to February 2022. The intent was not to start "from scratch," but rather to reorganize and finalize the work done in 2019. A draft of the updated document may be found on **Attachment 1**.

ANALYSIS:

What are Design Guidelines?

Design Guidelines are a qualitative document independent of the General Plan, Inland Land Use and Development Code (ILUDC), and Coastal Land Use and Development Code (CLUDC). The goal of the Design Guidelines is to provide clear and useful recommendations and requirements for the design, construction, review, and approval of commercial, industrial, and multi-family residential development in Fort Bragg. The guidelines are intended as a reference point for a common understanding of the minimum qualitative design expectations and offer as a way of achieving attractive and functional projects.

As opposed to the ILUDC or CLUDC, the Design Guidelines are also intended to be interpreted with some flexibility as not all design criteria may be workable/appropriate for each project. In some circumstances, one guideline may be relaxed in order to accomplish another, more important guideline. The overall objective is to ensure that the intent and spirit of the Guidelines are followed and to attain the best possible design within reason.

Relation to Other Documents

Fort Bragg's Design Guidelines provide an important benchmark for evaluating new construction, additions, and remodels, and are the basis for the "findings" necessary for many project approvals. Section 18.71.050(F)(7) & 17.71.050(F)(7) of the Inland & Coastal

Development Code requires a Design Review permit for most construction activities and further establishes that such permit may not be issued unless the design complies and is consistent to the Design Guidelines. The Guidelines also implement General Plan policies related to Community Design.

Summary of Action

Subsequent to the completion of the Guidelines, staff brought the document to Planning Commission twice. On March 16, 2022, a workshop/public hearing was held to gather feedback. Responses from the Commission and the public were minimal. Staff updated the document accordingly to this feedback.

On March 30, 2022 a second public hearing was held to present the revised document and finalize any additional feedback. The Planning Commission made their recommendation to City Council without any additional changes to the document.

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

Staff recommends that Council adopt a resolution approving the revised 2022 Citywide Design Guidelines Update for Commercial, Industrial, and Multi-Family Buildings.

ALTERNATIVE ACTION(S):

Provide direction to staff for further revision of the Citywide Design Guidelines Update.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no immediate financial impact or budget action necessary due to the recommended action.

GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS IMPACT:

The Citywide Design Guidelines is a qualitative document intended to provide guidance to staff, applicants, and the public on development projects. There is no quantifiable scope to calculate emission impacts. The Design Guidelines will only apply to specific project sites under new construction or remodeling of existing structures. At time of review of these projects, greenhouse gas impact will be reviewed on a case by case basis.

CONSISTENCY:

Conformance with the City of Fort Bragg General Plan

The revisions to the Guidelines were reviewed to be in compliance with the goals, policies, and programs of the City of Fort Bragg General Plan. The following section includes said goals, policies, and programs from the Inland General Plan and comparison to Design Guideline policies or staff analysis:

General Plan Goal, Policy, or Program	Related Design Guidelines Standard or Analysis
Program CD-1.1.1: Periodically update the Citywide Design Guidelines.	Throughout the years there have been multiple attempts to update, consolidate, and replace the Design Guidelines. The most recent adopted version of the document occurred in

	2004 but other attempts to update have occurred in 2011, 2013, and 2019. The 2021 update would be culmination of these attempts and would allow for compliance with Program CD-1.1.1.
Commercial & Multi-family Residential Development	
Program CD-1.1.2 Commercial and Multifamily Development: Continue to complete Design Review of commercial and multi-family development to ensure that they fit harmoniously with the scale and design of existing buildings and streetscape of the City.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Commercial development shall compliment and/or Incorporate design elements and features from the historic architectural styles of the Central Business District, such as bay windows, porches, projecting eaves, awnings, and similar elements that add visual interest to the development. 2. Architectural style should be compatible with the surrounding character, including building style, form, size, materials, and roofline.
Policy S-3.4 Drought Tolerant Landscaping: New development shall include drought tolerant landscaping for landscaped areas in commercial and multi-family residential uses.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Landscaping designs that do not require irrigation systems are preferred. Projects that include irrigation shall emphasize water-efficient plants. Rainwater and greywater are encouraged to meet all irrigation needs. 2. Trees and plants native to the Northern California coast and those that flourish in the region shall be selected. Plant materials should also be selected for their low maintenance qualities.
Central Business District	
Goal CD-2 Preserve the central business district as the commercial, civic, historic, and cultural center of the community.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Buildings should be composed of elements and details representative of Fort Bragg's architectural heritage. This may be expressed through the use of window and door treatments, storefront details, cornices, etc. Designers should familiarize themselves with the design elements and details used on older buildings in the downtown area and should incorporate contemporary versions of these older designs.
Goal LU-3 Ensure that the Central Business District remains the historic, civic, cultural, and commercial core of the community.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Buildings should be composed of elements and details representative of Fort Bragg's architectural heritage. This may be expressed through the use of window and door treatments, storefront details, cornices, etc. Designers should familiarize themselves with the design elements and details used

	on older buildings in the downtown area and should incorporate contemporary versions of these older designs.
Policy CD-2.2 Pedestrian Activity: Encourage increased pedestrian movement and activity in the Central Business District.	1. The provision of usable pedestrian-oriented spaces is strongly encouraged. The following types of open space should be considered: plazas; courtyards; outdoor dining; corner cut-off areas with enhanced amenities; and mid-block pathways and/or alleys.
Policy CD-2.5 Strengthen the Distinctive Identity of the Central Business District: Strengthen the distinctive identity and unique sense of place of the Central Business District.	1. Buildings should be composed of elements and details representative of Fort Bragg’s architectural heritage. This may be expressed through the use of window and door treatments, storefront details, cornices, etc. Designers should familiarize themselves with the design elements and details used on older buildings in the downtown area and should incorporate contemporary versions of these older designs.
Policy LU-3.1 Central Business District: Retain and enhance the small-scale, pedestrian-friendly, and historic character of the Central Business District (CBD).	1. Whenever an infill building is proposed, identify the common horizontal elements (e.g. cornice line, window height/width and spacing) found among neighboring structures, and develop the infill using a similar rhythm or alignment.
Policy LU-3.2 Mixed Uses: Support mixed use development (i.e., a combination of residential and commercial uses) in the Central Business District that does not conflict with the primary retail function of this area.	No guideline is related to this policy but no guideline conflicts with this policy.
Policy LU-3.3 <u>Historic Buildings and Mixed Uses</u> : In the Central Business District and in other commercial areas with historic residential structures, encourage residential uses, mixed residential, and commercial uses, and the preservation of historic structures.	No guideline is related to this policy but no guideline conflicts with this policy.
Policy LU-3.4 <u>Encourage Infill Development</u> : Encourage infill development of vacant and underdeveloped land in the Central Business District and adjacent commercial areas before amending	1. Whenever an infill building is proposed, identify the common horizontal elements (e.g. cornice line, window height/width and spacing) found among neighboring structures, and develop the infill using a similar rhythm or alignment.

the Inland General Plan and rezoning to obtain additional commercial land elsewhere.	
Chapter 3: Special Use Commercial Design Guidelines	
No specific General Plan goals, policies, or programs were found related to any of the special use types.	
Chapter 4: Industrial	
Goal LU-5 Support industrial development which is consistent with the protection, enhancement, and restoration of natural and scenic resources.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Light industrial buildings in the Mill Site Light Industrial zoning district should have an industrial or contemporary architectural character that is consistent with the historic fabric of the Mill Site or the development patterns of the nearby skunk train industrial buildings. 2. When industrial/warehouse uses are located adjacent to less intense uses (e.g., residential or retail commercial), additional landscaping in conjunction with appropriate decorative walls and setbacks should be provided to mitigate potential adverse impacts.
Policy LU-5.1 <u>Siting New Industrial Development</u> : Site new industrial development so that it is contiguous with, or in close proximity to, existing developed areas able to accommodate it, or where such areas are not able to accommodate it, in other areas with adequate public services and where it will not have significant adverse effects on natural and scenic resources, either individually or cumulatively.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. When industrial/warehouse uses are located adjacent to less intense uses (e.g., residential or retail commercial), additional landscaping in conjunction with appropriate decorative walls and setbacks should be provided to mitigate potential adverse impacts. 2. Street side facades of large industrial buildings, that are visible from a public street, should include architectural features such as reveals, windows, openings, and changes in color, texture, and material to add interest to the building elevation and reduce visual mass.
Policy LU-5.2 <u>Industrial Land Use Standards</u> : Require that industrial development avoid or minimize creating substantial pollution, noise, glare, dust, odor, or other significant adverse impacts.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Outdoor lighting (e.g., location, height, and number) should be designed to foster security. Site and building entries should have enhanced illumination to increase visibility and safety. 2. Large expanses of highly reflective surface and mirror glass exterior walls should be avoided to prevent glare impacts on adjacent public streets and properties.
Program S-3.4.1: Require landscaping for all new commercial and industrial	No guideline is related to this program but no guideline conflicts with this program.

development to use drought tolerant plants and no vegetative turf unless recreation needs or other area functions specifically requires turf.	
Chapter 5: Sign Guidelines	
Policy CD-3.1 Entryways: Clearly define the points of entry to the City through the use of distinctive signs, lighting, and landscaping.	See Chapter 2 – Gateways & Corridors.
Program CD-3.1.1: Maintain distinctive signs placed in a landscaped area at the south entryway at Highway 20/Highway One and at the north entryway on Highway One at the City Limits.	See Chapter 2 – Gateways & Corridors.

ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINATION:

The Design Guidelines are categorically exempt from the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Class 1 Section 15301 Existing Facilities because the Design Guidelines will only apply to specific project sites under new construction or remodeling of existing structures. At the time approval for a new building or remodeling of an existing building is considered, an environmental determination will be made on a case-by-case basis.

IMPLEMENTATION/TIMEFRAMES:

If approved, the Design Guidelines update would be adopted on April 25, 2022 and made effective thirty (30) days after.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Draft 2022 Guidelines Update
2. Planning Commission Recommendation
3. City Council Resolution of Approval