



Legislation Text

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Ordinance No. 17-97 adopting the South Nevada Urban Renewal Area Streetscape Standards (Legislative)

Presenter:

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Summary:

The South Nevada Urban Renewal Area Streetscape Standards articulate the required redevelopment standards that are specific to the South Nevada Urban Renewal Area. While the focus is on the S. Nevada Ave and Cheyenne Rd. frontages, the standards cover a wide range of issues throughout the District. The overall intent of the Standards is to provide predictability and consistent high-quality design along the corridor as properties redevelop.

Previous Council Action:

No previous City Council action on streetscape standards in the District. City Council created the South Nevada Urban Renewal Area and approved the urban renewal plan via Resolution No. 120-15 on November 24, 2015.

On September 25, 2017, this item was introduced at the City Council Work Session.

On October 10, 2017, this ordinance was approved on first reading with a vote of 9:0:0.

Background:

Urban Renewal is largely about curing blight and economic development. However, recent efforts have brought to light the value of creating and empowering design standards and guidelines that can articulate the need for consistent design elements including landscape, hardscape, access control, site design, signage, and other similar issues. Developing standards that address many of these issues can help create a sense of place and ensure that future development, especially when redevelopment is initiated by multiple developers, is complementary and helps improve the overall success of the district. Without coordinated design elements, blight may still be removed, but the development that replaces it may not reach its full potential.

In order for the proposed standards to be effective, they need to be enforceable. While the Colorado Springs Urban Renewal Authority Board approved the document in April of 2017, their action doesn't give the City the authority needed to force compliance. The City Planning Commission reviewed the standards and unanimously recommended approval at their August 17th meeting.

The document is made up of the following sections: Introduction; Application / Approval; Sidewalk Design; Street Sections; Signage; and Landscape. While the document is applicable throughout the South Nevada Urban Renewal District, the focus of the document is along S. Nevada Ave. and E. Cheyenne Rd. The bulk of the document focuses on the various design elements and options for

streetscape improvements including, sidewalk width/location, hardscape amenities (e.g. seat-walls, benches, bollards, etc.), landscape design, pedestrian connections, etc. These issues are particularly important given the state of the area's current infrastructure. Most notably, the existing sidewalk along S. Nevada Ave. is typically 4 to 5 feet wide and attached to the curbline. The concrete is often in poor condition and pedestrian ramps are often out of compliance with ADA standards.

One critical component of the document is Section B. which describes the applicability and approval process. Essentially, proposed redevelopment will be evaluated using the streetscape standards and guidelines as part of a development plan, concept plan, plat or rezone application to City Planning. Work that does not require application submittal (e.g. interior remodel, façade improvements, change of tenant, etc.) will not be required to comply with the guidelines or reconstruct the public frontage adjacent to the site. That said, City Planning and the Urban Renewal Authority will continue to educate property owners about the document and the value they create for all properties within the corridor. Additionally, any property owner or developer who wishes to utilize tax increment financing available through the Urban Renewal Authority within the District will be expected to make public benefiting improvements

Financial Implications:

N/A

Board/Commission Recommendation:

The City's Planning Commission voted unanimously to recommend approval of the Streetscape Standards with two additional considerations including the addition of language describing relief procedures and allow for approved replacement fixtures to be substituted for specific fixture types if unavailable.

Stakeholder Process:

The public process involved with the creation and processing of these standards included frequent and detailed coordination with the three primary development teams active within the Urban Renewal District. Additionally, Staff initiated communication with multiple other significant property owners along the corridor to get their input and solicit support for the standards. In July of 2017 City Staff organized a public meeting to inform the community about the draft Streetscape Standards. Approximately 100 people attended the meeting; there was also significant media attention before and after the meeting.

Alternatives:

City Council could choose to approve, deny or modify the proposed ordinance.

Proposed Motion:

Move to approve an Ordinance empowering the South Nevada Urban Renewal District Streetscape Design Standards.

Approval of an Ordinance empowering the South Nevada Urban Renewal District Streetscape Design Standards.