

## Legislation Text

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**File #:** Resolution 34-2018, **Version:** 1

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Agenda Date: 08/07/2018

**Subject:**

A resolution ratifying updates of the updated Downtown Design Standards and Guidelines, now entitled the “Downtown Littleton Design Standards”

Presented By: Jocelyn Mills, Community Development Director
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**REQUESTED COUNCIL ACTION:**

The request is to consider ratification of the updated Downtown Design Standards and Guidelines, now entitled “Downtown Littleton Design Standards.”

Per Title 2, Chapter 9, Section 1 (D) of the city code, planning commission “may make and adopt such design guidelines it deems necessary to guide development occurring within the city.”

On June 18, 2018, the historical preservation board held a meeting and heard and considered public comment when voting 6-1 to recommend adoption of the Downtown Littleton Design Standards. The nay vote was from member Kastner who indicated he had been out of town and had not had a chance to read the document. Planning commission approved the Downtown Littleton Design Standards on July 9, 2018.

**BACKGROUND:**

In 2006, the historical preservation board and planning commission adopted the Downtown Design Standards and Guidelines. In the 12 years since they were adopted, the pace and type of development in Downtown Littleton has changed dramatically. As one step in responding to these changes, city council directed staff to undertake a public process to review and update the design standards and guidelines by (1), revising the document to be more user-friendly and (2), when viable, transforming guidelines into standards.

To accomplish this project, the city hired Littleton consulting firm Bryant Flink Architecture + Design and assembled a technical advisory team. The technical team included professional representatives from the historical preservation board, planning commission, downtown businesses, and downtown property owners.

The charge to the consultant and the technical team was to make the document more user-friendly and the design standards and guidelines more enforceable. The number and extent of changes that would require a policy discussion have been minimized; instead, the focus has been on technical and editorial changes. Changes that would require a policy discussion have been identified and set aside for a possible future project. The document has been shortened by eliminating duplication, made more user-friendly by reducing technical jargon, and updated with current Littleton photos and new graphics. To increase the document’s enforceability, the consultants, technical team, and staff evaluated each guideline for its ability to be converted to a standard. Those guidelines determined suitable were converted to standards.

### **PRIOR ACTION OR DISCUSSIONS:**

Starting in December, 2017, the technical team met six times with staff and consultants. The draft document that resulted from those meetings was presented at a community open house on April 18 and posted on [www.OpenLittleton.org](http://www.OpenLittleton.org) <<http://www.OpenLittleton.org>> between April 18 and May 1. Comments from Open Littleton and letters received from individuals are attached to this staff communication.

On April 23, the draft was reviewed and discussed at a joint study session of the historical preservation board and planning commission. The consultant incorporated the comments from the first open house, the joint study session, and planning staff into the draft, which was presented at a second community open house on May 24 and a May 30 study session with planning commission. Comments from the May 24 open house, and the May 30 study session have been incorporated into the Downtown Littleton Design Standards document.

Comments and conditions from the historical preservation board on June 18 and from planning commission on July 9 have also been included in the document.

### **CRITERIA AND STAFF ANALYSIS:**

The 2014 Citywide Plan identifies as part of the vision, the importance of respecting the community's history. The Downtown Littleton Design Standards appear to meet the intent of the following goals (and stated policies within each goal area), as stated in the Citywide Plan:

- Goal 1: A Dynamic Littleton. Foster a vibrant and evolving community.
- Goal 4: A Distinctive Littleton. Maintain and expand upon the characteristics that make Littleton an authentic and distinctive community.
  - 4.2 Encourage preservation of historic structures, districts, and places that are significant to Littleton's history.
  - 4.3 Encourage "architecture of place" and small, independent businesses that differentiate Littleton from nearby municipalities.
  - 4.4 Create distinctive gateways to the city, its downtown, and other points of interest.

### **OPTIONS/ALTERNATIVES:**

In Littleton's code, planning commission has final decision-making authority for adopting formal design guidelines per Title 2, Chapter 9. As an extra emphasis on the Downtown Littleton Design Standards, Resolution 34-2018 requests the city council consider ratification of the document. The city council may take the following actions on this application: approve ratification or deny ratification.

### **STAFF RECOMMENDATION:**

Staff recommends city council ratify the Downtown Littleton Design Standards.

I move to approve Resolution 34-2018, to ratify the Downtown Littleton Design Standards.