

# AGENDA



Thursday, January 29, 2009

## Neighborhood Planning & Zoning RECOMMENDATION FOR COUNCIL ACTION

Item No. 16

**Subject:** Approve a resolution adopting amendments to the Downtown Design Guidelines.

**For More Information:** Jorge Rousselin, 974-2975; Sylvia Arzola, 974-6448.

**Boards and Commission Action:** Recommended by Design Commission.

**Prior Council Action:** May 18, 2000 - the City Council adopted Design Guidelines for the Downtown area.

September 28, 2006 - the City Council directed the City Manager to work with the Design Commission to update and revise the Downtown Design Guidelines.

August 7, 2008 - the Design Commission presented their proposed recommendations to the City Council.

On May 18, 2000, the City Council adopted the Downtown Design Guidelines as recommendations for all downtown development and redevelopment projects by both the public and private sector.

On September 28, 2006, the City Council directed the Design Commission to revise and update the guidelines, and to include recommendations for density bonus options that would provide public benefits such as affordable housing, plazas, and open space.

In August 2008, the Design Commission provided a briefing for the Council on their proposed recommendations.

The Guidelines are collected into four categories:

- area-wide;
- public streetscape;
- plazas and open space; and
- guidelines for buildings.

Below is a summary of the Design Commission's major recommended changes from the original Downtown Design Guidelines:

- Revise name of the guidelines from "Downtown Design Guidelines" to "Urban Design Guidelines for Austin."
- Change in focus from only downtown, to any area of Austin where density is desired;
- The Downtown boundaries of the guidelines have been removed;
- The sections on Downtown districts have been removed;
- Goals and values regarding sustainability have been added;
- Guidelines related to open space have been added; and
- A guideline limiting the amount of parking in a building facade between levels 2 to 5 has been added.

Attached are the amended Guidelines as recommended by the Design Commission.

Staff recommends approval of the Design Guidelines as a policy document.