

Weiser Design Review Questions

1. Will ordinance bring additional costs to businesses who might be considering Weiser and push them to surrounding communities? **While there could be additional costs, they should be minor and not discourage potential businesses seeking to locate in Weiser. Similar concerns have been presented at P&Z and Council meetings for years as justification for the absence of even basic standards. The evidence does not support this conclusion. Through the years, Department of Commerce and other community development professionals have explained most businesses prefer communities who adopt standards that protect return on investments. Recent Design Review committee negotiations with Maverick, Walgreens, and even O'Reilly's confirm that most businesses expect design review standards as part of the permitting process. Design is more about better choices than additional requirements.**
2. What was the process used to come up with this ordinance? **In June 2023, we began reviewing Design ordinances from other communities both in and out of state, focusing on small rural cities with similar cultural values. These included Plainfield, Ca, Coeur d'Alene, Garden City, Star, Emmett, and Nampa, Idaho. We eventually settled on Nampa's which we edited and in March 2024, submitted to the Mayor for legal review. After waiting for nearly a year with no response, early in 2025 we inquired with the Clerk and were advised our draft proposal could not be found. In March 2025, we received a draft ordinance from the city attorney which ironically enough, was also based on Nampa's with only minimal changes from our original draft. We immediately reviewed and returned with minor edits.**
3. Does the ordinance create economic advantages, disadvantages, or is it neutral? **It probably does both. In general, customers gravitate toward businesses which offer a welcoming and attractive experience over those which don't. It levels the playing field for all businesses by establishing a common, minimum design standard.**
4. Why can't Design review be handled by our current staff? **Staff will handle most design review applications. Only when there are larger (more than 2,000 sf) or more**

complex projects will the diverse expertise of our Design Review Committee become involved.

5. Why is there a city council member on the committee? This was conceived by the Mayor when the original committee was established. The City Attorney reviewed and recommended the inclusion of an ex-officio member of the City Council to act as Secretary for the Committee.
6. What does the term “projects” mean on Page 3, 1-6-4, Powers, Duties, Responsibilities. Please refer to Title 10, Chapter 20-2, A 1-4.
7. Clarify the language in on Page 6, 10-20-5 (B) “Staff Report” and 10-20-5 (C) “The Committee shall be empowered to interpret design standards and make exceptions to standards”. This will likely be a modified version of a building permit or zoning application. An example used by Nampa is attached.
8. Clarify the language in section 10-20-9 regarding design requirements about “recreation areas”. Weiser City code presently has no requirement for recreation areas in a multi-family development. While many developers automatically include on-site recreation “space”, this addition to our code provides a baseline requirement which can be achieved in a variety of ways. This enhancement to our multi-family development reflects and embodies community values received during public input on our Comprehensive Plan.