

DESIGN REVIEW MANUAL WHITE BLUFF, TENNESSEE

2026 EDITION

Article 1 – Design Review

Article 1.1 – Purpose of Design Review

The purposes of the Design Review process are to:

1. **Preserve and enhance community character.** To maintain and strengthen the distinctive architectural and visual character of the Town of White Bluff, ensuring that new development complements the established scale, form, and materials of surrounding areas.
 2. **Promote high-quality and context-sensitive design.** To encourage design that responds appropriately to the site, its natural features, and surrounding development, allowing flexibility and creativity within the framework of adopted standards.
 3. **Ensure functionality, safety, and accessibility.** To promote the safe, efficient, and attractive arrangement of buildings, circulation systems, parking, signage, lighting, and open space for both vehicles and pedestrians.
 4. **Support environmental stewardship and sustainability.** To encourage environmentally responsible practices such as low-impact development, energy-efficient design, tree preservation, and the use of native vegetation.
 5. **Enhance property values and economic vitality.** To protect and strengthen property values, attract quality investment, and foster an aesthetically pleasing community image that supports tourism and economic growth.
 6. **Provide clarity, consistency, and fairness in review.** To establish a predictable, transparent, and equitable process for applicants, design professionals, and reviewing authorities, ensuring that all development proposals are evaluated according to uniform criteria.
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Article 1.2 – Intent

This Manual aims to support the Town of White Bluff's goals, policies, and design objectives, as outlined in the adopted Comprehensive Plan, Zoning Ordinance, and Subdivision Regulations.

This Manual serves as a regulatory tool to:

1. Oversee the physical appearance and functional quality of new development and redevelopment within the Town.
2. Establish clear standards and procedures that promote coordinated, high-quality design consistent with the Town's long-range vision; and
3. Ensure all design choices align with the goals of the Zoning Ordinance, sound planning principles, and the protection of public health, safety, and general welfare.

All provisions of this Manual shall be interpreted and applied consistently with these adopted plans and regulations. If conflicts arise, the more restrictive provision shall take precedence.

Cross-Reference: See *Article III* of the Town of White Bluff Zoning Ordinance for information on Design Review applicability, authority, and procedures.

Article 1.3 – Applicability

1. Projects Subject to Design Review.

Design review shall apply to all new construction, exterior modifications, site development, or redevelopment activities that require approval of a Site Plan under the Town of White Bluff Zoning Ordinance. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Commercial, office, and industrial developments.
- Multi-family residential development.
- Public and quasi-public buildings and facilities.
- Subdivisions or Planned Unit Developments (PUDs) proposing new building types or design themes; and
- Additions, façade renovations, or site modifications that significantly impact the external appearance, circulation, or landscaping of an existing development.

2. Exemptions.

The following activities are exempt from Design Review unless otherwise required by the Planning Commission or Zoning Ordinance:

- Single-family and two-family homes on individually platted lots.
- Ordinary maintenance, repair, or replacement using largely similar materials and design.
- Interior renovations that do not change the building’s exterior appearance or site layout; and
- Temporary uses and structures approved by the Zoning Ordinance.

3. Authority. The Planning Commission shall have the power to review and approve, approve with conditions, or deny any project subject to Design Review under this Manual. The Planning Staff may conduct preliminary reviews and offer recommendations or provide administrative approvals, as authorized by the Zoning Ordinance.

4. Relationship with Other Regulations. Compliance with this Manual does not exempt an applicant from following all other relevant Town codes, ordinances, and regulations. In the event of a conflict, the stricter rule shall apply.

Cross-Reference: *White Bluff Zoning Ordinance, Article III – Design Review and Site Plan Requirements.*

Article 1.4 – Definitions and Interpretation

1. **Definitions.** Unless specified otherwise, all words and terms used in this Manual shall have the same meanings as those in the Town of White Bluff Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision Regulations. If a term is not defined in these documents, it will be interpreted according to its commonly accepted meaning in the fields of planning, design, or construction.
2. **Interpretation.** This Manual shall be interpreted to promote the public health, safety, and welfare of the community, consistent with the intent of the Town of White Bluff Comprehensive Plan. Any ambiguity in wording or application of a standard shall be resolved by the Planning Commission or its designee, based on the overall purpose and objectives of this Manual.
3. **Conflict of Provisions.** In the event of any conflict between this Manual and other Town ordinances, the more restrictive provision shall govern.
4. **Administrative Guidance.** The Planning Commission may adopt supplementary design guidelines or illustrative examples to help ensure consistent interpretation and application of these standards, as long as such materials do not alter or contradict the regulatory intent of this Manual.

Article 2 – Design Review Standards

The following standards are established to guide the review of site and building designs for projects subject to Design Review under Article 1. These provisions aim to ensure that all new development and redevelopment within the Town of White Bluff maintains a consistent level of quality, safety, and compatibility with surrounding areas.

All design elements shall be evaluated for conformance with these standards and the purposes of this Manual.

Article 2.1 – Site Design and Layout

Article 2.1.1 – General Principles

All developments shall be designed to promote orderly, efficient, and visually coordinated site design. The Planning Commission shall consider:

1. The relationship between buildings, parking, and open space and neighboring properties.
2. Compatibility of scale, orientation, and massing.
3. Safe and convenient pedestrian and vehicle circulation; and
4. Preserving natural features, existing vegetation, and topography whenever possible.

Article 2.1.2 – Site Coverage and Orientation

1. Buildings shall be positioned to reinforce existing street patterns and reduce the visual impact of parking areas.
2. The orientation of structures should utilize the natural topography and reduce grading.
3. Whenever feasible, development should be grouped to protect important trees, drainage features, and viewsheds.

Article 2.1.3 – Circulation and Access

1. Internal circulation systems shall provide safe, logical movement for both vehicles and pedestrians.
2. Access points shall be designed to reduce conflicts with neighboring properties and to comply with Town access-management standards.
3. Sidewalks and pedestrian paths shall connect all primary building entrances, parking lots, and public rights-of-way.
4. Shared access drives and cross-connections between neighboring lots are encouraged.

Article 2.1.4 – Parking and Loading Areas

1. Parking areas shall be situated behind or beside main buildings whenever possible.
2. Avoid large stretches of uninterrupted pavement by incorporating landscaped islands or pedestrian corridors.
3. Loading areas shall be concealed from public streets and neighboring residential uses through fencing, landscaping, or building placement.

Article 2.1.5 – Open Space and Amenities

1. Developments shall include usable open spaces proportional to their size and activity level.
 2. Common areas, courtyards, plazas, or landscaped buffers should be incorporated into the overall site design.
 3. Site amenities such as seating, shade trees, lighting, and pedestrian features are promoted in commercial and mixed-use developments.
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Article 2.2 – Building Design and Materials

Article 2.2.1 – General Principles

1. Building design should create a cohesive, visually appealing, and contextually suitable built environment.
2. Architectural style is flexible; however, design must show consistency in form, proportion, and materials suitable for the site and surrounding area.
3. Buildings should be designed to have human scale and visual appeal on all sides viewable from a public street or neighboring property.

Article 2.2.2 – Massing and Articulation

(Ordinance No. 393, 2018 Amendment)

1. Long or monotonous façades shall be avoided. Buildings should include vertical and horizontal elements through variations in surface, roofline, material, or color at regular intervals to break up visual uniformity.
2. Each building elevation visible from a public right-of-way must include at least one of the following:
 - A change in wall plane of at least two feet in depth.
 - A change of at least two feet in roof height or parapet height.
 - Includes distinct architectural features like pilasters, columns, or bays spaced no more than 50 feet apart.

3. Multi-tenant buildings must offer variation in storefront design to showcase each tenant's identity while preserving overall architectural harmony.

Article 2.2.3 – Roof Form

1. Rooflines should be designed as integrated architectural elements that enhance the building's form.
2. Flat roofs must have parapets with defined cornices or caps.
3. Pitched roofs must have consistent slopes and materials that match the surrounding development.
4. Rooftop mechanical equipment shall be concealed using parapets, roof forms, or architectural features that match the primary building materials.

Article 2.2.4 – Materials and Colors

(Ordinance No. 393, 2018 Amendment)

1. Primary building façades shall be made of high-quality, durable materials like brick, stone, wood, fiber cement, or architectural precast concrete.
2. The use of synthetic stucco (EIFS) should be limited to upper stories or architectural accents and should not exceed 20% of any façade.
3. Metal siding shall be allowed solely as an architectural accent and must feature concealed fasteners along with a matte or textured finish.
4. Highly reflective or fluorescent colors are not allowed.
5. At least two complementary materials and colors must be used on any building facade exceeding 1,000 square feet.

Article 2.2.5 – Entrances and Transparency

1. Main entrances must be easily identifiable, architecturally prominent, and facing the main street or pedestrian path.
2. Commercial and mixed-use buildings must include transparent glass on at least 30% of the ground-floor street-facing façade to enhance visibility and encourage pedestrian activity.
3. Canopies, awnings, and other shading devices are encouraged to improve pedestrian comfort and enhance building articulation.

Article 2.2.6 – Architectural Compatibility

1. Building design should reinforce the character of the surrounding area by maintaining compatible scale, materials, and proportions.

2. Designs for new development must respect distinctive features of historically significant structures on or near the site.
 3. Franchise or prototype architecture must be adapted to align with the intent of this Manual and reflect the character of the community.
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Article 2.3 – Landscaping and Buffering

Article 2.3.1 – Purpose

Landscaping and buffering are essential parts of site design meant to:

1. Improve the visual quality of development.
2. Provide shade, reduce glare, and lessen heat island effects.
3. Reduce the visual prominence of parking and structures.
4. Screen incompatible uses; and
5. Encourage sustainable stormwater management via natural infiltration.

Article 2.3.2 – General Requirements

1. All required landscaping shall be designed, installed, and maintained according to the standards of this Article and the Town of White Bluff Zoning Ordinance.
2. Landscape areas must be protected by curbing, wheel stops, or similar measures to prevent vehicle damage.
3. Landscaping must not block visibility at intersections or driveways according to Town sight-distance standards.
4. All disturbed areas that are not otherwise stabilized shall be covered with grass, groundcover, or other approved plant material.

Article 2.3.3 – Landscape Plan Requirements

(Ordinance No. 393, 2018 Amendment)

1. A detailed landscape plan must be submitted for all developments subject to Design Review.
2. The plan must be prepared, signed, and sealed by a registered Landscape Architect licensed in Tennessee.
3. The landscape plan shall include:
 - Existing vegetation and features to be maintained;
 - Proposed plant species, sizes, and locations.

- Irrigation or watering systems; and
 - Notes outlining planting methods, upkeep responsibilities, and replacement procedures.
4. Landscape plans must be reviewed alongside site plans and approved by the Planning Commission or its designee.

Article 2.3.4 – Plant Material Standards

1. All plant material must be high quality, free of disease, and suitable for the region’s climate and soil conditions.
2. At least 75 percent of the plant materials shall be native or drought-tolerant species.
3. Deciduous trees must have a minimum caliper of 2 inches at planting; evergreen trees must be at least 6 feet tall; shrubs must reach a minimum height of 18 inches.
4. Invasive or prohibited species, as identified by the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation, must not be used.

Article 2.3.5 – Irrigation Systems

(Ordinance No. 393, 2018 Amendment)

1. Automatic irrigation systems must be installed and maintained for all commercial, industrial, and multi-family developments, as well as for any landscaped area exceeding 5,000 square feet.
2. Irrigation systems should be designed to reduce water waste by using zoned controls, timers, and rain sensors.
3. The Planning Commission may approve alternative irrigation methods that produce similar results, such as cistern-based or drip systems.

Article 2.3.6 – Buffers and Screening

1. Landscape buffers must be provided between incompatible uses as required by the Zoning Ordinance.
2. Buffers shall include continuous plantings, fences, berms, or walls that offer a visual screen of adequate height and opacity.
3. No structures, driveways, or storage areas shall be located within a required buffer yard, except for approved utilities or pedestrian pathways.
4. A minimum 50-foot buffer must be maintained where specified in zoning approvals, and no obstruction or disturbance is allowed within that area.

Article 2.3.7 – Maintenance

1. The property owner shall be responsible for keeping all landscaped areas in a healthy, neat, and orderly condition.
 2. Dead or diseased plant materials must be replaced within 60 days of notification by the Town.
 3. Irrigation systems must be maintained properly to ensure they work effectively over time.
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Article 2.4 – Lighting, Signage, and Screening

Article 2.4.1 – Purpose

The purpose of this article is to ensure that exterior lighting, signage, and mechanical equipment are designed and installed to improve site safety and aesthetics while reducing negative impacts on neighboring properties and public rights-of-way.

Article 2.4.2 – Exterior Lighting Standards

1. Lighting should be designed to ensure sufficient visibility and security while reducing glare and light trespass onto neighboring properties.
2. Fixtures shall be fully cut off or shielded to direct light downward and prevent skyglow.
3. Lighting intensity should match the activity level and location of the site.
4. All lighting in parking lots, pedestrian walkways, and building exteriors must be uniform in style, materials, and color temperature.
5. Decorative lighting fixtures can be used to enhance architectural design themes but must not cause nuisance glare or exceed illumination limits established by the Zoning Ordinance.
6. All lighting must comply with current Illuminating Engineering Society (IES) recommendations and Town of White Bluff outdoor lighting regulations.

Article 2.4.3 – Signage Coordination

1. Signs should be designed as part of the overall site and building design.
2. Materials, colors, and typefaces must be compatible with the building's architecture and the surrounding streetscape.
3. Freestanding signs must be placed within landscaped areas and designed with decorative bases made from materials consistent with the main building.
4. Wall signs should be incorporated into architectural features like cornices or sign bands and must not block windows, doors, or architectural details.

5. All signs must adhere to the Town of White Bluff Sign Ordinance and any relevant overlay district standards.

Article 2.4.4 – Mechanical Equipment and Utility Screening

1. All mechanical equipment, utilities, dumpsters, and loading areas must be screened from view of public streets and neighboring properties.
2. Screening can be achieved using a combination of fencing, walls, landscaping, or architectural features that match the primary building materials.
3. Roof-mounted mechanical units must be completely concealed by parapets or architectural enclosures that are part of the roof design.
4. Screening materials must be durable, opaque, and kept in good condition at all times

Article 2.4.5 – Service and Refuse Areas

1. Trash enclosures must be built from masonry or materials matching the main structure, with solid gates or doors that completely conceal the contents.
2. Enclosures should be sized to fit both waste and recycling containers and placed to ensure safe and easy service access without blocking circulation or parking.
3. Gates must stay closed except when in use.
4. Landscaping should be installed around the edges of service areas to reduce visual impact.

Article 2.5 – Streetscape and Pedestrian Design

Article 2.5.1 – Purpose

The purpose of this Article is to promote safe, attractive, and connected streetscapes that enhance community character, support walkability, and create a unified public realm throughout the Town of White Bluff.

Article 2.5.2 – General Standards

1. Streetscape design should complement the surrounding development pattern and reinforce a consistent visual identity along public corridors.
2. Pedestrian and bicycle facilities should be designed to logically connect to neighboring developments, public sidewalks, and greenway or trail systems.
3. Streetscape improvements must be coordinated with public infrastructure projects and kept in good condition by the property owner or designated association.

Article 2.5.3 – Sidewalks and Pedestrian Connectivity

1. **Location and Width.** Sidewalks shall be provided along all public street frontages and internal circulation routes in accordance with the Town’s Subdivision Regulations and Major Thoroughfare Plan.
2. **Continuity.** Pedestrian walkways must create a continuous network connecting building entrances, parking areas, and adjoining sidewalks or trails.
3. **Accessibility.** All pedestrian facilities must adhere to the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) standards for accessibility and safety.
4. **Crosswalks.** Crosswalks must be clearly marked with pavement markings, contrasting materials, or decorative treatments that improve visibility and pedestrian safety.
5. **Pedestrian Amenities.** Commercial and mixed-use developments shall include benches, trash receptacles, planters, and bicycle racks to enhance pedestrian comfort.

Article 2.5.4 – Street Trees and Plantings

1. Street trees must be installed within the right-of-way or immediately adjacent to it, in coordination with the Town Engineer and Public Works Department.
2. Tree spacing generally ranges from 30 to 50 feet on center, depending on species and site conditions.
3. Only species approved by the Town and suitable for urban conditions shall be used. Native and drought-tolerant trees are highly encouraged.
4. Planting areas must provide enough soil volume and root space to ensure the long-term health of trees.
5. Tree grates or guards might be necessary in areas with heavy pedestrian traffic.

Article 2.5.5 – Street Furniture and Lighting

1. Street furniture, such as benches, trash receptacles, and planters, must have a coordinated design, color, and material consistent with the architectural character of neighboring development.
2. Pedestrian-scale lighting shall be installed where appropriate to improve safety and aesthetics, with fixtures no taller than 16 feet.
3. Light standards, poles, and hardware must match the architectural and landscape style of the corridor.

Article 2.5.6 – Streetscape Coordination and Maintenance

1. Streetscape improvements should be designed as integral parts of the site development, not as afterthoughts.
2. Developers must coordinate with the Town about the placement of utilities, streetlights, and trees to prevent future conflicts.
3. Property owners are responsible for maintaining all streetscape improvements within or adjacent to their property boundaries unless the Town otherwise maintains them.

Article 2.6 – Environmental Design and Stormwater Management

Article 2.6.1 – Purpose

The purpose of this Article is to ensure that all development and redevelopment in the Town of White Bluff follows environmentally responsible design practices that protect water quality, reduce flooding risk, and preserve the natural landscape.

Article 2.6.2 – General Environmental Design Principles

1. Site design should reduce disturbance to existing natural features, such as trees, slopes, streams, and drainageways.
2. Development should follow the natural contours of the land and minimize excessive cut and fill.
3. Environmentally sensitive areas like floodplains, wetlands, and steep slopes should be preserved as much as possible.
4. Developers are encouraged to use Low Impact Development (LID) techniques such as bioswales, rain gardens, pervious pavement, and vegetated buffers.
5. Site improvements should aim to minimize impervious surfaces and enhance water infiltration.

Article 2.6.3 – Stormwater Management Standards

1. All stormwater facilities must comply with the Town of White Bluff Stormwater Management Regulations and the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation (TDEC) regulations.
2. Detention and retention ponds should be designed as visually appealing landscape features that improve the overall site design.
3. Stormwater facilities should include native plantings to stabilize slopes, enhance water quality, and provide habitat value.

4. Drainage features should be designed as open and naturalized systems whenever possible, instead of enclosed pipes or concrete channels.
5. Detention basins, driveways, and utility easements shall not be counted toward minimum net acreage for density calculations in any Planned Unit Development (PUD). (Ordinance No. 393, 2018 Amendment)

Article 2.6.4 – Tree Preservation and Canopy Standards

1. Existing trees and natural vegetation shall be preserved where feasible, especially within buffer zones and along property lines.
2. For developments exceeding one acre, a tree survey identifying existing trees greater than eight inches in caliper must be submitted with the site plan.
3. At least one tree must be provided for every 10 parking spaces, along with perimeter landscaping.
4. Trees removed for site development shall be replaced on a caliper-inch-for-inch basis, up to a maximum of 20% of the total site area.
5. Preserving mature trees can contribute to required landscape plantings if approved by the Planning Commission.

Article 2.6.5 – Erosion and Sedimentation Control

1. Construction activities must adhere to TDEC erosion prevention and sediment control requirements.
2. Silt fencing, sediment basins, and stabilized construction entrances must be installed before grading begins.
3. Disturbed areas must be stabilized with permanent vegetation or approved cover within 15 days after final grading.
4. Erosion-control measures must stay and be maintained until the Town confirms final stabilization.

Article 2.6.6 – Environmental Performance

1. Site and building designs are encouraged to meet or surpass standards of recognized sustainability programs, such as LEED, Energy Star, or Tennessee Smart Yard.
2. Using native or drought-tolerant species, dark-sky-compliant lighting, and energy-efficient systems is encouraged to minimize environmental impacts.
3. Developers should prioritize long-term operational sustainability, including minimizing maintenance, energy use, and stormwater runoff.

Article 2.7 – Utilities and Infrastructure

Article 2.7.1 – Purpose

The purpose of this article is to ensure that utilities and supporting infrastructure are designed and installed to enhance safety, reliability, and visual quality, in line with the Town’s adopted standards and public service goals.

Article 2.7.2 – Underground Utilities

(Ordinance No. 393, 2018 Amendment)

1. All **electric, communication, and other utility lines** within new subdivisions or developments shall be installed **underground**.
2. Existing overhead lines should be placed underground whenever feasible during major redevelopment or infrastructure improvement projects.
3. The design, construction, and installation of all underground utility systems must comply with the specifications and requirements of the serving utility provider and the Town of White Bluff.
4. Utility easements shall be clearly identified on all site and subdivision plans.

Article 2.7.3 – Street Lighting

(Ordinance No. 393, 2018 Amendment)

1. Developers shall install streetlights with underground conductors along all internal and perimeter roadways of new developments.
2. Streetlight placement must adhere to Town standards for spacing, illumination levels, and fixture types.
3. Decorative or pedestrian-level lighting may be necessary in commercial and mixed-use zones to improve aesthetics and safety.
4. All streetlight fixtures must be full-cutoff and compliant with dark-sky standards.

Article 2.7.4 – Fire Protection and Emergency Access

(Ordinance No. 393, 2018 Amendment)

1. Adequate fire hydrant infrastructure must be installed and operational before vertical construction begins on any development site.
2. An Emergency Access Plan must be prepared and approved by the White Bluff Fire Department before a grading permit is issued.
3. All site plans must show unobstructed fire lanes, turning radii, and clearances sufficient for emergency vehicles.
4. The use of AutoTURN® or an equivalent turning-path analysis for both fire trucks and solid waste vehicles shall be included as part of the Planning Commission submittal package.
5. The Planning Commission may require secondary or looped access routes when necessary for public safety.

Article 2.7.5 – Driveways and Access Improvements

(Ordinance No. 393, 2018 Amendment)

1. All new driveway aprons shall be built with hard-surface materials (asphalt or concrete) from the roadway to at least 20 feet inside the right-of-way line.
2. Driveway locations must comply with the Town's access management and sight distance standards.
3. Shared access drives are promoted to minimize curb cuts and enhance safe entry and exit.

Article 2.7.6 – Phasing of Infrastructure

1. All required roads (to binder course), water, sewer, stormwater, and fire protection infrastructure must be installed, inspected, and approved before issuing any building permits for vertical construction.
2. Final surface paving and landscaping must be completed before the issuance of the final certificate of occupancy, unless otherwise approved by the Town Engineer.
3. The Town may approve temporary access or utility arrangements only when needed to keep construction on schedule and ensure emergency access.

Article 2.7.7 – Coordination and Maintenance

1. All public utilities and infrastructure shall be installed in coordination with the Town Engineer, Public Works Department, and relevant utility providers.
2. Easements, rights-of-way, and infrastructure improvements shall be clearly indicated on final plats and dedicated to the Town where applicable.
3. Developers are responsible for maintaining private utility systems unless the Town or utility provider approves otherwise.

Article 3 – Design Review Procedures

Article 3.1 – Purpose

The purpose of this article is to establish a consistent, transparent, and efficient process for reviewing development proposals subject to the Town’s Design Review requirements. These procedures ensure that all applicable standards of this manual and the Town of White Bluff Zoning Ordinance are applied fairly and consistently.

Article 3.2 – Applicability and Authority

1. All projects listed in Article 1.3 of this Manual must undergo a Design Review before any building or grading permit is issued.
2. The authority to review, approve, approve with conditions, or deny Design Review applications shall rest with the Planning Commission, as outlined in Zoning Ordinance Article IV, Section 4.030 – Site Plan and Design Review.
3. The Planning Commission might delegate administrative review authority to the Planning Staff for minor amendments or modifications that align with previously approved plans.

Article 3.3 – Pre-Application Conference

1. Applicants are highly encouraged to consult with the Town Planner and relevant staff before submitting their application to review design standards, procedures, and submittal requirements.
2. The purpose of the pre-application meeting is to identify potential design issues early and ensure complete and compliant applications.
3. Staff may offer nonbinding suggestions to help improve the proposal before formal submission.

Article 3.4 – Application Requirements

1. All Design Review applications must include the following materials, unless the Town Planner waives them.
 - A completed application form and the required fee.
 - A site plan that complies with Zoning Ordinance Section 4.030.3.
 - Building elevations, materials, and color specifications.
 - Landscape and lighting plans.
 - Stormwater and utility layouts.
 - An AutoTURN or similar vehicular circulation analysis, if required; and

- Any supplementary documentation requested by the Planning Commission or staff to assess compliance with this Manual.
2. Incomplete submittals will not be scheduled for Planning Commission review.

Cross-Reference: *Zoning Ordinance Article III, Section 3.120 – Site Plan Requirements.*

Article 3.5 – Review Process

1. Upon receiving a complete application, the Town Planner shall review the submission for compliance with this Manual and the Zoning Ordinance.
2. The Town Planner shall prepare a written staff report and recommendation for review by the Planning Commission.
3. The Planning Commission will review the application at a regularly scheduled meeting and may:
 - Approve the application as submitted.
 - Approve the application with conditions or modifications; or
 - Reject the application and specify the reasons for its noncompliance.
4. The Planning Commission’s decision shall be final unless it is appealed according to *Zoning Ordinance, Article VIII – Exceptions and Modifications.*

Article 3.6 – Conditions of Approval

1. The Planning Commission may impose reasonable approval conditions needed to ensure compliance with this Manual and the Zoning Ordinance.
2. Such conditions shall be documented in the final approved plans and shall be attached to the land.
3. No building permit shall be issued until all approval conditions are satisfied or bonded in a manner acceptable to the Town.

Article 3.7 – Modifications and Amendments

1. Minor modifications that do not significantly change the approved site layout, building footprint, or external appearance may be approved administratively by the Town Planner.
2. Major modifications that significantly change site circulation, building design, or use intensity must undergo re-review and receive approval from the Planning Commission.
3. Requests for modifications must include updated plans and a justification statement.

Article 3.8 – Expiration and Extensions

1. Design Review approval shall be valid for twelve (12) months from the date of approval unless a building or grading permit is obtained.
2. The Planning Commission may grant one extension of up to twelve (12) additional months if a written request is submitted before expiration.
3. If approval expires, a new Design Review application will be required.

Article 3.9 – Appeals

1. Anyone aggrieved by a decision of the Planning Commission under this Article may appeal that decision to the Board of Zoning Appeals (BZA) in accordance with *Zoning Ordinance Article VIII, Section 8.100 – Board of Zoning Appeals*.
2. Appeals must be filed within thirty (30) days of the Commission's decision and must include the grounds for the appeal in writing.
3. The BZA's decision shall be final, subject to judicial review as mandated by Tennessee law.

Article 4 – Design Review Checklist

Article 4.1 – Purpose

The purpose of this Article is to establish a standardized checklist for applicants, design professionals, and Town staff to use in evaluating compliance with the Design Review standards of this Manual and the Town of White Bluff Zoning Ordinance. This checklist is meant to:

1. Enhance consistency and efficiency in application review.
2. Clarify required submittal materials and design expectations; and
3. Ensure all developments comply with the Town’s adopted design, landscaping, and infrastructure standards.

Article 4.2 – Submittal Checklist

All Design Review applications shall include the following materials unless waived in writing by the Town Planner:

Category	Required Submittal Item	Reference
Application & Site Data	Completed Design Review application form and applicable fee.	Zoning Ord. §3.160
	Scaled site plan showing lot boundaries, structures, setbacks, easements, and rights-of-way.	Zoning Ord. §3.120
	North arrow, scale, and date.	Manual Art. 3.4(1)
Architectural Design	Building elevations with dimensions, materials, and color schedules.	Manual Art. 2.2
	Roof form, parapet, and screening details.	Manual Art. 2.2.3
	Transparency and entrance locations.	Manual Art. 2.2.5
Landscaping & Open Space	Signed and sealed landscape plan (Registered Landscape Architect).	Manual Art. 2.3.3
	Plant schedule with species, quantities, and calipers.	Manual Art. 2.3.4
	Automatic irrigation plan and controls.	Manual Art. 2.3.5

Category	Required Submittal Item	Reference
	Open space and buffer yard locations and dimensions.	Zoning Ord. §3.150 & Manual Art. 2.3.6
Circulation & Parking	Vehicular and pedestrian circulation plan, including cross-access.	Manual Art. 2.1.3
	Parking layout and tabulation.	Zoning Ord. §4.010
	Driveway and access design (20' hard-surface apron).	Manual Art. 2.7.5
	Fire and refuse truck turning templates (AutoTURN®).	Manual Art. 2.7.4(4)
Lighting & Signage	Lighting fixture specifications and photometric plan.	Manual Art. 2.4.2
	Sign details, materials, and placement.	Manual Art. 2.4.3
Utilities & Infrastructure	Underground utility layout (electric, communication, gas, water, sewer).	Manual Art. 2.7.2
	Fire hydrant layout and water pressure certification.	Manual Art. 2.7.4(1)
	Emergency access plan (approved by Fire Department).	Manual Art. 2.7.4(2)
Stormwater & Environmental	Grading, drainage, and stormwater management plan.	Manual Art. 2.6.3
	Erosion and sediment-control plan.	Manual Art. 2.6.5
	Tree preservation and replacement plan.	Manual Art. 2.6.4
Administrative	Digital submittal (PDF or CAD format).	Manual Art. 3.4
	Signed Owner/Developer Certification and Engineer/Architect seals.	Manual Art. 3.4
	Any variances or waivers requested (with justification).	Zoning Ord. §8.100

Article 4.3 – Review Compliance Checklist

Town staff and the Planning Commission will use the following checklist to assess each submitted plan for compliance with adopted standards.

Design Element	Compliance Standard	Reference
Site Design	The layout supports pedestrian and vehicular circulation, minimal grading, and preserves natural features.	Manual Art. 2.1
Building Design	Massing, materials, and articulation consistent with community character.	Manual Art. 2.2
Landscaping	Meets minimum plant size, irrigation, and buffer requirements.	Manual Art. 2.3
Lighting	Fixtures shielded, full-cutoff, dark-sky compliant.	Manual Art. 2.4
Signage	Compatible with building design and Sign Ordinance.	Manual Art. 2.4.3
Streetscape	Sidewalks, trees, and pedestrian amenities are provided.	Manual Art. 2.5
Environmental	Incorporates stormwater best practices (LID).	Manual Art. 2.6
Utilities	All new utilities underground; adequate fire protection provided.	Manual Art. 2.7
Compliance with Zoning	Consistent with permitted use, setbacks, height, and coverage.	Zoning Ord. §5.00 & District Regs.
Procedural Requirements	Application complete, fees paid, and conditions satisfied.	Manual Art. 3

Article 4.4 – Certification of Compliance

Upon approval by the Planning Commission, the Chairperson shall sign the Design Review Certification block on the final site plan, confirming compliance with this Manual and the Town of White Bluff Zoning Ordinance.

No building or grading permit shall be issued until such certification is finalized and documented in the Town's official records.

Article 5 – General Provisions

Article 5.1 – Purpose

The purpose of this Article is to ensure that the provisions of this Manual are consistently interpreted, administered, and enforced in conjunction with the Town of White Bluff Zoning Ordinance and applicable State law.

Article 5.2 – Enforcement Authority

1. The Town Planner and other properly authorized Town officials shall be responsible for enforcing this Manual.
2. The Building Official shall not issue any building or grading permit unless the proposed development has obtained Design Review approval as required herein.
3. The Planning Commission shall have the authority to determine compliance and to impose corrective measures or conditions necessary to achieve the purposes of this Manual.

Article 5.3 – Violations and Penalties

1. Any violation of the provisions in this Manual will be considered a violation of the Town of White Bluff Zoning Ordinance.
2. Each day that the violation(s) persist shall be treated as a separate offense.
3. Violations will be subject to the penalties and remedies outlined in *Zoning Ordinance Article VII, Section 7.030 – General Provisions*, as well as relevant provisions of Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 13, Chapter 7.
4. The Town may deny permits, revoke approvals, or seek injunctive relief for ongoing noncompliance.

Article 5.4 – Amendments

1. The provisions of this Manual may be amended by ordinance of the White Bluff Town Council following a recommendation from the Planning Commission.
2. All amendments must be accompanied by a written finding that the change aligns with the Town's Comprehensive Plan and advances the objectives of this Manual.

Article 5.5 – Appeals

1. Anyone affected by a decision made under this Manual may appeal that decision to the Board of Zoning Appeals (BZA) within thirty (30) days, as outlined in the *White Bluff Zoning Ordinance, Article VIII, Section 8.100 – Board of Zoning Appeals*.
2. The BZA's decision shall be final, subject to judicial review as permitted by Tennessee law.

Article 5.6 – Interpretation

1. In interpreting and applying the provisions of this Manual, they shall be considered the minimum requirements for promoting public health, safety, and the general welfare.
2. Nothing in this document shall be understood to repeal or interfere with the enforcement of other ordinances, regulations, or laws of the Town or State.
3. Where this Manual sets a stricter requirement or higher standard, its provisions shall take precedence.

Cross-Reference: *Zoning Ordinance Article VII, Section 7.070 – Legal Status Provisions.*

Article 5.7 – Severability

If any section, subsection, clause, or phrase of this Manual is held invalid by a court of competent jurisdiction for any reason, such decision shall not affect the validity of the remaining portions, which shall remain in full force and effect.

Cross-Reference: *Zoning Ordinance Article VII, Section 7.070 – Legal Status Provisions*

Article 6 – Administrative Provisions

Article 6.1 – Purpose

The purpose of this article is to establish the administrative framework for implementing, interpreting, and maintaining this Design Review Manual. These provisions ensure consistent and transparent application of design standards in coordination with the Town of White Bluff Zoning Ordinance.

Article 6.2 – Responsibility of the Planning Commission

1. The **Planning Commission** shall have the primary authority for interpreting and administering this Manual, consistent with its duties under *Tennessee Code Annotated §13-4-101 et seq.*
2. The Planning Commission shall:
 - Review and act on all Design Review applications as required by **Zoning Ordinance Article III – General Provisions.**
 - Suggest amendments to the Board of Mayor and Aldermen to keep this Manual up-to-date and effective.
 - Establish policies or create design guidelines to clarify the application of the standards outlined herein; and
 - Ensure decisions are supported by facts and recorded in official minutes.

Article 6.3 – Duties of the Planning Staff

1. The Town Planner will act as the main administrative officer for Design Review.
2. The Town Planner shall:
 - Offer pre-application consultation to help applicants prepare compliant submissions.
 - Review applications for completeness and compliance before they are considered by the Planning Commission.
 - Prepare written staff reports and recommendations.
 - Coordinate interdepartmental review with Public Works, Utilities, and Fire Department staff; and
3. The Town Planner may approve minor modifications in accordance with Section 3.7 of this Manual – Modifications and Amendments.

Article 6.4 – Recordkeeping and Public Access

1. All Design Review applications, plans, and approvals shall be kept as part of the official records of the Town of White Bluff.
2. These records must include the Planning Commission’s findings, approval conditions, and any subsequent modifications or amendments.
3. Design Review records shall be accessible to the public during normal business hours according to the Tennessee Public Records Act (T.C.A. §10-7-503 et seq.).

Article 6.5 – Coordination with Other Regulations

1. This Manual shall be used together with the Town’s Zoning Ordinance, Subdivision Regulations, **Stormwater Management Regulations**, and Building Codes.
2. Compliance with this Manual does not exempt the applicant from fulfilling other Town, County, or State requirements.
3. In cases of conflict, the more restrictive standard shall apply.

Article 6.6 – Compliance Inspections

1. The Building Official and Town Planner may perform site inspections during and after construction to verify that the development complies with all approved Design Review plans.
2. If deviations are found, the Town may issue a stop-work order or require corrective measures.
3. Final certificates of occupancy will not be issued until all Design Review conditions have been verified to be met.

Article 6.7 – Fees

1. Application and review fees for the Design Review shall be set by resolution of the Board of Mayor and Aldermen.
2. Fees shall include administrative costs, staff time, and other expenses the Town incurs in processing applications.
3. The Town shall keep an up-to-date fee schedule accessible for public review.

Article 6.8 – Periodic Review and Update

1. The Planning Commission shall review this Manual at least once every five (5) years to ensure its ongoing relevance and alignment with the Town’s Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Ordinance.

2. Updates will cover new design practices, sustainability standards, and public feedback gathered during the review process.
3. Amendments must follow the procedures outlined in Section 5.4 of this Manual – Amendments.

Article 7 – Effective Date and Certification

Article 7.1 – Effective Date

1. This Manual shall become effective and be enforced once it is adopted by ordinance of the Town Council of the Town of White Bluff, Tennessee, following a recommendation from the Municipal Planning Commission.
2. All development applications submitted on or after the effective date must comply with this Manual's provisions.
3. Projects with final site-plan approval before adoption may proceed under previously approved standards, unless the Planning Commission decides that compliance with this Manual is needed to protect public health, safety, or welfare.

Article 7.2 – Supersession

This Manual overrides all previous design review manuals, guidelines, or administrative policies adopted by the Town of White Bluff that conflict with its provisions.

Article 7.3 – Certification

The undersigned officials hereby certify that this Town of White Bluff Design Review Manual – Modernized 2025 Edition was properly adopted in accordance with Tennessee Code Annotated §13-4-101 et seq., and the procedures outlined in the Town of White Bluff Zoning Ordinance.

Certification Page

Adopted by the Town of White Bluff Town Council

Date of Adoption: _____