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PRESS RELEASE

James Holland Named Community Development Director

February 2, 2017 - The City of Abilene has named James Holland to serve as Community Development Director. James will assume the duties of the position beginning February 20, 2017. As Community Development Director, James will administer the City's planning and zoning regulations, historic preservation efforts, and floodplain regulation. He will also serve as the staff liaison to the Planning Commission, Airport Advisory Board, Heritage Commission, and Economic Development Council.

The Community Development Department has an annual operating budget of about \$198,000, which is funded from general government receipts.

James previously served as Community Development Director for seven years beginning in 2003. While with the City, he was instrumental in updating the Comprehensive Plan, establishing the Neighboring Revitalization Program, and establishing the Downtown Historic District. The City also experienced a surge in residential developments during James' tenure, as several residential subdivisions were put into the City's inventory.

"James has the advantage of having worked for the City of Abilene as Community Development Director prior to his endeavors in the private sector," says City Manager David Dillner. "He has a wide range of knowledge and skills and will be an important asset to the organization and community."

James has also worked in the private sector, working for Planning Works, LLC, Black and Company Realtors, and Abilene Machine, Inc. Most recently, James served as the executive director for the Abilene Area Chamber of Commerce.

James earned a Masters degree in Regional and Community Planning from Kansas State University and a Bachelor of Arts degree in Economics and Geography from Emporia State University. James brings many skills to the City to include knowledge of regulatory administration, implementation of digital communications, and knowledge of economic development strategies and methods.

Several of the assignments that will be at the top of James' priorities include: planning an updating to the Comprehensive Plan, preparing an update to the City's signage regulations, streamlining the development review process, facilitating an information clearinghouse for business and development interests within the community, and assisting with the review and update of the floodplain maps. James will also lead up a more proactive code enforcement effort to address blight and nuisances throughout the community.



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