

NEIGHBORHOOD COMMERCIAL CORRIDOR DESIGN PRINCIPLES



**CITY OF SACRAMENTO PLANNING AND BUILDING
DEPARTMENT**

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I. Introduction

The Purpose of this Document.....PAGE 7
How to Use This Document.....PAGE 8

II. Corridor Design

Streetscapes and the Pedestrian Edge.....PAGE 11
Corridor Nodes.....PAGE 13
Gateways, Districts, and Themes.....PAGE 14

III. Site Design

Building Location and Site Organization.....PAGE 15
Circulation of Cars and Trucks Bicycles
and Pedestrians.....PAGE 17
Parking.....PAGE 20
Site Amenities.....PAGE 22
Landscape.....PAGE 24
Site Signage.....PAGE 28
Site Security.....PAGE 29
Equipment and Services.....PAGE 34
Resource Conservation.....PAGE 37



IV. Building Design

Building Style and Theme.....PAGE 39
Scale/Massing/Articulation.....PAGE 42
Materials/Textures/Colors.....PAGE 45
Resource Conservation.....PAGE 47
Signage.....PAGE 48
Equipment and services.....PAGE 50
Building Security.....PAGE 51

V. Appendix:.....PAGE 53

Reference and Supporting Documents and Plans

VI. Maps:

Corridor Map.....PAGE 55
Design Review Districts.....PAGE 56

A Users Guide to the Neighborhood Commercial Corridor Design Principles is available as an optional separate document



The **Purpose** of this Document

- Articulate a vision for future development in the City's commercial corridors that is sustainable, functional and attractive.
- Promote the reuse and revitalization of existing commercial centers by encouraging new private investment.
- Assist the City Council, Planning Commission, Design Review and Preservation Board, City staff, developers, architects, and project planners involved in development within these areas by creating greater consistency in the process.
- Promote mixed use development that includes residential, which will bring new customers and business opportunity.
- Promote quality development in commercial corridors through project approval streamlining, flexible development standards, and a proactive design approach.
- Encourage intensification of land use on development opportunity sites and in areas appropriate for higher densities, and promote development in certain districts identified in commercial corridor urban design plans.
- Ensure that all commercial projects within revitalization areas - such as streetscape improvements, new

development, adaptive reuse and rehabilitation - meet standards for design quality, appropriate to the scale, scope, and location of the project.

These goals provide the foundation for achieving Sacramento's vision for vibrant, successful, and enduring commercial corridors. These corridors provide a key opportunity for vital economic growth for businesses, and contribute to the success of viable neighborhoods and community.



Property that shows a lack of maintenance and care, or that appears vacant or 'fortress like' detracts from the streetscape and can discourage investment and revitalization in an area.

When property is appropriately used and well cared for, it becomes an integral part of a healthy and inviting neighborhood and streetscape. Private investment in property is the backbone of commercial corridor economic health and vitality



How to Use This Document

Project proponents and their design team will use this document as an information tool, since it outlines what will be required for project planning approval. It will also be useful for City Staff in determining if a project proposal meets the minimum design standards necessary as part of approval review of a discretionary entitlement such as a special permit, variance, or rezone. Additionally, the city may use these guidelines to review certain development projects within designated commercial corridors that are assisted by public funds.

Designers should use the guidelines as a framework for decisions made during the design process. This will insure timely processing of applications, and minimize revisions, delays and misunderstandings.

Reviewers, such as the Planning Commission and its staff will use the design principles to provide consistent, objective, and fair review of proposed projects.

Alternative Design Approaches

Design Principles cannot be simplified to a “step by step” cookbook approach. Each design challenge is in some way unique, with it’s own issues of context, constraints, objectives, challenges and opportunities. Although it would be ideal if every project could rise to the standards that might be used for new ‘greenfield’ construction that may not be possible due to **physical constraints** such as property

*Note: The City strongly encourages applicants to exceed the **minimum** standards, codes and requirements.*

The scale of projects can also be a factor. Large Projects will be generally expected to meet most or all of the principles. Small projects may be able to meet only a subset of the principles.

A companion User’s Guide document includes examples of application of these guidelines to various project types, and various sizes of projects.

The City recognizes that each project must be considered individually, and is committed to a collaborative review process that has the shared objective, between project proponents, project reviewers, and other interested parties of ensuring enduring and sustainable commercial areas and promoting quality design. Flexibility in considering alternative approaches to good design allows the City to encourage design creativity, and avoid possible undue hardships in particular situations.

Organization of this Document

To provide the needed FLEXIBILITY and ADAPTABILITY of these guidelines to many different types and projects, they are organized into two levels. **Principles**, and **Guidelines**.

Principles represent the overall concepts that are required/mandatory. They are the underlying objectives of good project planning and design. They will be referenced by the City to determine compliance with this document. Principles are broad in scope and allow for flexibility in approach and alternative design solutions

Rationales are included for the principles to assist in clarifying why the principle was adopted, and why it is important to the overall purpose of this document.

Guidelines are suggested approaches to meeting the principle. The text and figures are presented as examples, but do not illustrate all possible solutions applicable to all situations. There are alternative approaches that, in a particular set of circumstances, could well be a more appropriate way to meet the principle.

Special Planning Districts, Design Review Areas, and Overlay Zones

Overlay zones and Special Planning Districts (SPD) represent a more prescriptive regulatory approach. Where design guidelines, urban design plans, SPD's, and Planned Unit Developments (PUD) have been adopted for a specific area (see Appendix), those specific regulations and guidelines take precedence over the Commercial Corridor Design Principles. If these documents are silent in a certain area the Design Principles document shall take precedence.

Existing Uses

Many existing uses are anticipated to remain in operation, and will undergo periodic exterior modifications, expansions, and changes in use. When these changes occur, they should respect and respond to the evolving context and character of the neighborhood commercial area by using these guidelines as outlined here.

The Future of The Neighborhood Commercial

Corridor Design Principles

Changes in planning and design practices will result in the need to modify the design principles document. The Planning Commission will re-evaluate the principles periodically, with input from the community and the staff, and make adjustments as necessary. The latest version of this document can be found on the internet at :

www.cityofsacramento.org/planning/

The City of Sacramento is interested in promoting innovative solutions to Design Challenges of Commercial Corridors. How can security grills, or a trash enclosure, be attractive and still functional? How can a bench and planter be made 'trouble free'? If you have a photo or drawing of a great design solution, you'd like to share, send it to NCCDP@cityofsacramento.org for consideration for online posting.

If you have questions, comments or suggestions concerning the development process e-mail the Development Oversight Commission at DOC@cityofsacramento.org.

Streetscapes and Pedestrian Edges

Principle: Incorporate design elements that soften the edges between the street and individual properties, to provide a people oriented scale and character.

Rationale: Many of the City's existing neighborhood commercial corridors are characterized by automobile dominated streetscapes possessing inconsistent building setbacks, parking in front of buildings, limited pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure, and a lack of landscaping features. Commercial corridors can benefit from a variety of streetscape improvements that to give a corridor a "sense of place" and a more pleasing character. Even in situations where there are likely to be few actual pedestrians, a people oriented scale and character makes properties look inviting and appealing.

Guidelines:

LANDSCAPING:

- Landscaping is one of the most important elements in creating a streetscape and pedestrian edge. Provide a variety of trees and plantings along street frontages and in roadway medians.

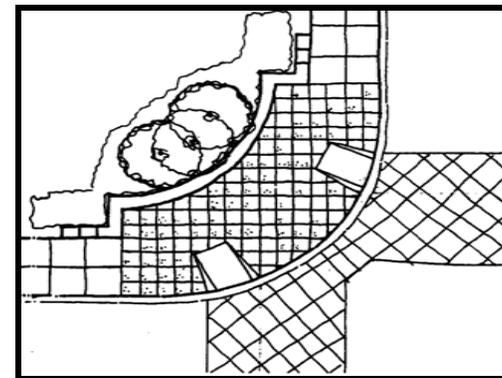


Planters can hide cars, provide shade, and create a softened pedestrian edge.

ALTERNATIVE PAVING:

- A change in grade, texture, material, color, or finish of paved areas, particularly at crosswalks and other intersections of pedestrian and vehicle routes, can greatly improve visibility and safety, and enhance a design composition if handled well.

Variation without a purpose, however, can be a source of visual 'clutter'. Further, the design and composition of surface materials must be accomplished while meeting accessibility requirements.



Alternative paving at crosswalks and intersections can improve visibility and safety.

NARROWER OR OFFSET OR CURVED TRAVEL LANES

- Narrower travel lanes for arterial streets slow traffic and create safer pedestrian environments. Offsets and curves can also slow traffic where appropriate, on surface streets as well as within a project site.

PROVIDE FOR BICYCLES

- Incorporate bike lanes into streetscapes. Provide places for bicycles to travel, and park securely.

ON STREET PARKING:

- Allow for on-street parking to serve commercial parking needs, particularly in infill areas where sites are limited in

size and the potential for on site parking is limited.

STREETSIDE AMENITIES

- Provide amenities appropriate to the location such as pedestrian shelters, benches, or trash receptacles. Note that these elements need to be maintained to be a positive contribution to the streetscape.



Pedestrian amenities should be maintained to make a streetscape inviting and functional.



NOTE: STREETSCAPE PLANS

Approved specific streetscape plans and guidelines supersede these Commercial Corridor Design Principles where they have been adopted. The Planning and Building Department can tell you whether there is a streetscape plan specific to your location. Examples of areas with specific plans include the Alhambra corridor and the Broadway corridor

GATEWAYS

- Some locations act as ‘entryways’ to a neighborhood or area. These locations should be highlighted as gateways, by providing a focal point such as special signage or identifying landscaping at the intersection. Establishing or confirming an identity can create a unique sense of place and community, and increase pride in the residents and businesses.



A prominent tower element anchors a mixed use corner.

NODES

Principle: Site planning and project density must be appropriate for the project location. Projects located in areas near major intersections (arterial & collector streets), transit stations, or activity centers such as high activity businesses are areas referred to as nodes. At these locations designs should support the higher density, pedestrian- and transit-friendly goals that are appropriate for these areas. The planning department can indicate if your location is considered a 'node'.

Rationale: Many commercial corridors have become elongated strips of repetitive, one-dimensional retail streetscape. In some cases the architecture is nondescript, and lacks character and detail. These areas have become oriented primarily toward the passing automobile, and they lack the ability to create a “sense of place” in that one such area tends to look the same as another. Nodes can break up this monotony, and create clear centers of activity and intensity, with lower intensity and lower key streetscapes between the node elements. Mixed use development is often appropriate at nodes, such as housing located above retail uses. This creates viable uses for upper stories, and reinforces the qualities that create a node in the first place.

The concept of Node Development patterns helps define a hierarchy of space, land use, and urban form, which in turn creates friendly, attractive, and walkable corridors with a sense of place and community.

Guidelines:

CORRIDOR NODES

- Projects located in corridor nodes should be designed to accommodate higher levels of pedestrian traffic and alternative modes of transportation such as light rail, bus, bicycle etc.
- Where appropriate, projects located in corridor nodes should take advantage of any allowable flexibilities that may contribute to reinforcing the activity and density at the nodes. Examples include increased building height, reductions in parking, setback reductions, combining of uses such as locating office or residential over commercial, etc
- Projects accessible by bus or light rail should be designed to facilitate and encourage pedestrian access from the nearest transit stop.
- Where appropriate, projects may incorporate a mix of uses, providing upper story residential or office uses that are compatible with ground floor retail, cultural, entertainment or office uses.



When Projects are Located OUTSIDE of CORRIDOR NODES:

- ***Design elements of the project including scale should be compatible with surrounding or nearby residential neighborhoods.***
- ***Public spaces and open space opportunities should be provided along these portions of commercial corridors.***

GATEWAYS, DISTRICTS, AND THEMES

Principle: Projects shall be designed to compliment any areas of a commercial corridor that serve as a gateways or are a part of a themed commercial district. Themed districts may be architectural, cultural, historical, or land use oriented. Themed districts are identified in various supporting documents that address individual commercial corridors.

Rationale: Entry points or gateways to commercial corridors can be essential in supporting an identity or “sense of place” for local neighborhoods and communities. Themes can help unify an area and reinforce identity and sense of place. Both gateways and themes can contribute to a sense of pride, and a sense of belonging.

Guidelines:

GATEWAYS

- Projects located at the edges of nodes and/or that anchor commercial corridors should reflect their role as part of an existing or potential gateway and should accentuate corners with the use of landscaping, architecture, public art, signage, etc.

THEMED DISTRICTS

- In districts identified to have a common theme or purpose, design elements of individual projects should be complimentary and supportive of the theme or purpose. This may include signage, facade treatment and awnings, colors, textures, signage, and landscaping. Good design allows for supporting a theme without simple repetition. Common elements, colors, or forms can be used to link designs together.



Gateway to a Neighborhood



Building with Gateway Features

BUILDING LOCATION AND SITE ORGANIZATION

Principle: Site planning and building location must address continuity of the urban environment, consistency of the public streetscape, and potential impacts on existing and planned adjacent uses. Site planning must address potential traffic, transit access, parking, circulation and safety issues, light and glare, noise, odors, dust control and security.

Rationale: Appropriate building location and site organization can help to create an interesting and safe streetscape that promotes interaction and visibility. For example, pedestrian-oriented ground floor retail combined with residential development can provide “eyes on the street,” and increased activity and security for the corridor. Building orientation also plays an important role in neighborhood context particularly in proximity to residential development.

Guidelines:

- Where pedestrian-oriented storefronts exist or should be established, the character of the street as a shopping area should be expressed by features such as display windows, individually of shop frontages, awning, canopies and signage. Some uses that do not normally require functional storefronts can still ‘fit in’ to an area where storefronts are expected, by using



This building did not need windows on the street for interior function; but they were provided so that the streetscape had appropriate character.

spandral (opaque) glass.

- Buildings should be arranged to create functional public and private outdoor spaces, including sidewalks, patios, entryways, and courtyards.
- Locate structures to create continuity of frontage along the street face, by matching or reducing front and side setbacks in relation to adjacent structures.
- Buildings should be oriented toward the primary nearby street. Deep setbacks behind large expanses of parking areas or vacant land should be avoided.



Preferred Setback



Discouraged Setback

- Pedestrian orientation must be considered in site planning, including building size and placement, circulation, and open space design. Provide adequate walkways without obstructions to pedestrian movement (i.e., curbs and steps), but separated from traffic.

- Buildings should be oriented to provide for natural lighting opportunities within interior spaces. The 'depth' of interior spaces should generally be no more than four times their width.
- Buildings on corner lots should address *both* streets with windows, entryways, architectural detailing, and/or landscaping. If possible corner projects should provide some architectural element to anchor the corner. This can be accomplished using a building feature element and/or strong landscaping features.



This project uses strong architectural elements to accentuate it's corner location.

- For projects where a large setback from the street exists, or is a functional requirement, provide elements to reduce the visual prominence of the parking from the street. Examples include greater landscaping, berms, architectural walls, 'micro-retail' spaces, etc.

A large setback was mitigated on this site by creating small retail elements adjacent to the street, which mask the parking lot and reinforce the streetscape



- For developments with frontages of 150 feet or more, monotonous facades should be avoided. This can be achieved by breaking up the building mass, in particular the roofline, and incorporating variety, articulation, vertical elements, color and material changes to add interest.



A variety of forms can break up what would otherwise be a large building mass, and also be used to "tell a visual story" about the neighborhood context.

CIRCULATION OF CARS, TRUCKS, PEDESTRIANS AND BICYCLES

Principle: Balanced circulation routes must be provided for both vehicular and pedestrian movement. Conflict between vehicles and people must be minimized, and convenience should be maximized. Access points should be clear and obvious and articulated to announce 'entry' or 'exit'. Prominent, attractive pedestrian circulation routes must be provided from the public streetscape to each building or complex entrance.

Rational: Vehicular movements on commercial sites include customers, employees, as well as delivery trucks and trucks that remove trash. Pedestrians include people walking and bicycles. There are also visual impacts to circulation. For the customer, the arrival to the site is part of the 'first impression' that can contribute to a positive experience. Getting into the site should be convenient and clearly obvious, to avoid frustration. Once on the site, it should be clear where to go to park the car or bicycle, and the parking area should be reasonably secure and protected from the overhead sun. Trucks that arrive and leave the site for delivery, or picking up of trash, may conflict with both cars, and pedestrians. The service areas trucks access are usually separate from access points of customers and employees.

Increasing the walkability of commercial corridors enhances pedestrian activity and opportunities for retail spending. Turning shopping from a goal-oriented to an experience-oriented activity produces friendly and vibrant areas where people choose to return.

Guidelines:

PEDESTRIAN CIRCULATION

- Pedestrian planning should provide for easy access to public bicycle/pedestrian ways, nodes, neighborhood centers and transit stops. Pedestrian routes should be as obvious, direct, and simple as possible.
- Pedestrian walkways should connect each primary entrance of a commercial building to adjacent parking lots, structures, or site amenities and public sidewalks. Pedestrian routes are required, by law, to be ADA accessible.



This parking lot walkway provides protection from cars and sun, while contributing a design feature to the site .

- Pedestrian and vehicular entries should be separate. For purposes of improving visibility and safety, pedestrian access may employ changes grade, texture, material, color

and/or finish to differentiate from driveways.

- Walking distances to transit services should be considered in project design. Pedestrian accessibility should be measured by the actual paths available.
- Pedestrian routes should be designed to be as direct as possible to discourage landscape damaging shortcuts.
- Bicycle parking should be located close to, and with direct access to buildings. Parked bicycles should be out of the travel paths. Screening for bicycles may be desirable, if they can still be visible for security.
- Projects should be consistent with and supportive of the policies of the City's Pedestrian Master Plan and Bicycle Master Plan.
- All facilities and amenities should be made accessible to people with disabilities.

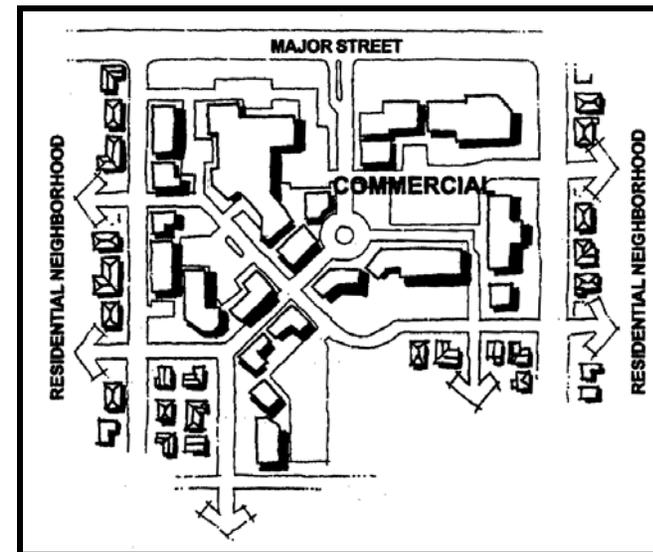


Attractive bicycle parking

VEHICLE CIRCULATION

- Driveways, parking lots, and access routes should be consolidated whenever feasible to limit curb cuts, minimize development costs, and reduce auto/pedestrian conflicts. Minimizing curb cuts reduces impacts to pedestrians, cyclists and on-street parking.

- Access to parking lots should be generally provided from side streets.
- Parking lots with dead ends or that require backing out onto drives should be avoided whenever possible.
- When possible, large parking lots (over 50 vehicles) should have more than one point of entry/exit.
- If gates are used to secure vehicle or parking areas, they should be treated as a design element, and should meet the requirements of the public works department to avoid backing up of vehicles onto public streets.



- Textures, patterns, and colors are encouraged in the design of paved parking areas or entries.
- Large monolithic areas of unbroken, single-color, untextured paving are discouraged. Use planting, site

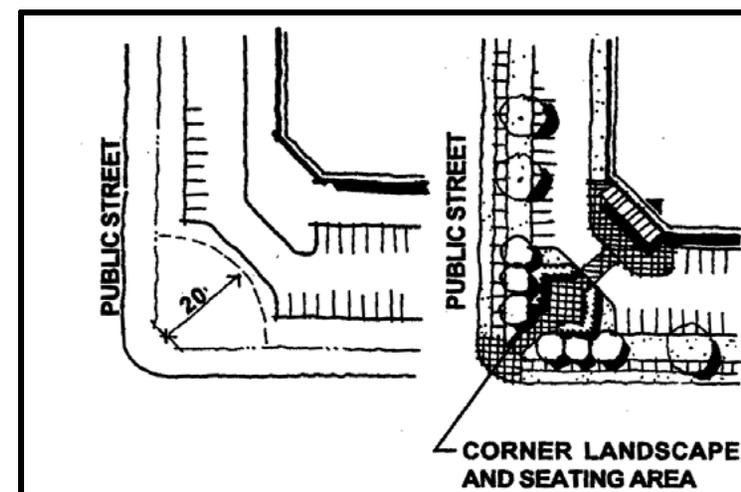
features, berms, etc to break up large areas.

- Where practicable and appropriate, connections between adjacent non-residential development should be provided, so that vehicles will not have to re-enter public streets. This reduces traffic conflict at entry/exit points.
- Highlighting project entryways drives and parking court entries by using landscape or pavement features is generally encouraged to enhance the streetscape.



This wall element both highlights the entry and screens parked cars.

- Access points for service trucks and pick up of garbage and trash should be separated to the extent possible from cars. The heavier demands of trucks, particularly when lifting dumpsters, should be considered in the paving design (such as by using concrete in front of dumpster enclosures rather than asphalt).



- To the greatest extent feasible, common or shared service and delivery access should be provided for adjacent buildings. Locations for service access can be prone to greater potential conflict between trucks and cars and pedestrians, and be higher maintenance areas, so minimizing their occurrence can provide design and operation benefits.

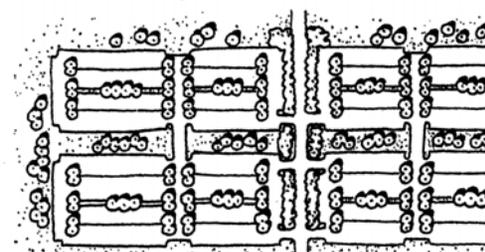
PARKING

Principle: The visual prominence of parked vehicles shall be minimized whenever possible. Parking must be designed to minimize potential pedestrian conflicts, and provide for simple and efficient vehicle movement. Parking paved areas should be as small as is needed for the purpose intended.

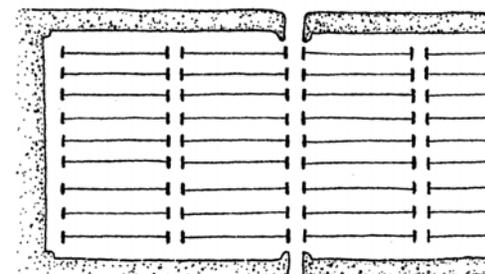
Rationale: Planning for safer and efficient movement of vehicles and pedestrians can result in an aesthetically appealing site with less impervious surface and increased storefront visibility. In addition, pedestrian ingress and egress provides opportunities for increased transit use and pedestrian activity.

Guidelines:

- It is preferable in urban and infill locations to locate parking areas to the rear or side of the property or beneath buildings rather than along street frontages. Screening parking areas from views exterior to the site is encouraged.
- Collective and shared parking areas are strongly encouraged.
- Parking lot access should be generally provided from side streets.
- Landscaping and walkways should be provided between parking lots and public streets, right-of-ways, and pedestrian routes.



DO THIS...



...NOT THIS

- Parking should be provided to meet but not exceed expected demand, taking into account pedestrian and transit trips, ride-share programs, and shared parking agreements.
- Lighting in parking areas is a key design component. Lighting should avoid glare that affects adjacent properties. The design of the fixture and its height should be compatible with the overall site and building design. See also the principles under site security.



Decorative fixtures can enhance a streetscape or parking area.

- Pedestrian circulation through parking areas should be treated with attention equal to that of auto circulation. Devices such as trellises, pavement changes, etc that separate people and cars are encouraged. When large parking areas are required, a clearly defined pedestrian path inside the parking area that provides safe and easy access to and from buildings and sidewalks must be included in the design.
- Areas for extended parking (12 or more hours) of fleet, company, or service vehicles (excluding inventory) should be located at the rear of the property or in other low visibility areas, to avoid taking prime frontage and prime parking locations that could serve customers.
- Parking areas visible from the street right-of-way should be screened from view with landscaping plants, berms, partial walls, or other types of architectural features such as colonnades and trellises.



This parking area is screened with landscaping and public art.

NOTE: Parking lot design must comply with a variety of city codes and regulations. For example they are subject to Chapter 17.64 of the City Zoning Code; Title 24, California Code of Regulations; ADA regulations; requirements for drainage, slope and driveway encroachments into the street right of way, etc.



Large unbroken expanses of asphalt are ugly and get extremely hot in the summer.



A Trellis and fence used effectively as screening for parked cars.

SITE AMENITIES

Principle: Projects must be designed whenever feasible to maximize opportunities for creating usable, attractive, and integrated public spaces and site amenities. Nearly every project can incorporate some degree of site amenity, which will vary appropriate to the overall scale and character of the project.

Examples of site amenities include mini-parks, public plazas, street furniture, public art, sidewalk cafes, transit shelters, open/green spaces, pedestrian walkways, water features, clock towers, landscape feature, landscape lighting, receptacles for trash, trellises, arbors and colonnades.

Rationale: Site amenities and pedestrian-scale features (such as outdoor plazas, street furniture, public art, transit shelters, and sidewalk cafes) in commercial developments offer spaces for social interaction and create a sense of openness and welcome. They contribute to a positive impression of a project by both passersby and users. They can contribute to a theme, and, when well designed, make a particular property unique and appealing. Overall development quality and character of commercial areas are greatly enhanced by the use of site amenities.

Guidelines:

- Transit stops (bus or light rail) should be distinguished from the surrounding context by changes in paving materials, larger sidewalk width, amenities, and shade/shelter structures. They should be considered a 'feature' of a site, and embraced in the overall site design. The design, site and location of transit shelters, bus stops, and bus stop

seating areas must be coordinated with Sacramento Regional Transit.

- Public areas should be visible from the street. See Site security.
- Exterior site design and landscaping should provide functional social spaces and/or pedestrian amenities.



Pedestrian amenities can include such features as benches, drinking fountains, and trash containers. The design of these items must consider security and durability. For example, benches with 'arms' do not make convenient 'couches'.

- Site amenities provided by a commercial development project should be accessible from the sidewalk and/or public walkways. Site amenities that are 'fragile' or moveable, or those that might serve as icons attracting vandalism, should be in secure areas of the site.
- Materials used to construct any site amenity shall be at least of equal quality as the materials of the primary buildings and landscaping on the site.

- Where architectural features of a building do not provide a focal point or anchor at a major street corner, site amenities such as public art/sculpture, fountains or other water features, public plazas or open space, and landscape features, are strongly encouraged.



An accessible, functional social space complements this store



Functional elements like trash containers and newspaper vending can be integrated into a design theme



This clock tower provides a focal point for the project



Wide sidewalks, benches and a grassy area add to a quality pedestrian space.



A kiosk can provide refreshment while making the sidewalk more lively and interesting



A decorative carrier makes these newspaper racks appear more uniform



This pedestrian shelter is a part of an overall site design which welcomes pedestrian activity and provides protection from rain and sun



A water feature can be welcome relief

LANDSCAPING

Principle: Landscape is a key component of virtually every commercial property. Plants must be integrated into site design to the maximum extent feasible. Planted areas must be used to enhance the appearance of structures, define site functions and edges, screen undesirable views, and introduce color, texture, and softness.

Rationale: There is no one other single element that makes a greater contribution to the visual appeal of a site than landscaping. In urban, developed areas, the connection to nature that plants provide has universal appeal. In addition, well cared for landscape, particularly landscape that incorporates flowering plants, creates the impression that ‘someone here really cares about this place’. That impression can contribute to pride and the maintenance and care of other property. Landscape also provides functional benefits in contributing to reducing heat gain during the summer and providing naturally cleaner air.

Usable, attractive and functional open space and landscaping provides a pleasant and inviting shopping and business environment, which ultimately increases sales and property values. Landscape elements include both ‘softscape’ of plants, trees, flowers, groundcover and shrubs; and the ‘hardscape’ of sidewalks, patios, plazas, and entryways and fences. In a well designed landscape, both hardscape and softscape integrate into an overall design composition.

Guidelines:

- Where there are unattractive elements that need to be screened, dense landscaping of plants and/or landscape

vertical elements can provide the needed visual separation. Examples of elements that often need such screening include but are not limited to unattractive views, storage areas, stand alone unfinished or untreated trash enclosures, mechanical equipment, transformers, backflow devices and other similar elements.



This exposed valve is unattractive

Backflow devices are large and ugly and often must be located in prominent locations. Landscape is the most effective way to screen them from view. These plants allow access AND visual relief. Note the hydrant must be kept clear for emergency access



- Appropriate landscaping usually includes a variety of trees, shrubs, and other plantings. Unpaved areas should be planted with irrigated plant materials. Unpaved areas where landscaping would be challenging should be mulched (including compacted decomposed granite) to minimize weed growth and improve appearance.
- Landscaping compatible with building design is encouraged. Trellises, arbors, cascading landscaping, vines and perimeter garden walls are encouraged.



Pedestrian walkway buffered from parking by architectural elements and landscaping

Even small planters can be a source of color and delight over a long season



- Landscaping should be in scale and compatible with the project and adjacent land uses.
- Security issues should be considered in the landscape design of the site, including creation of barriers and screening. Openness and visibility can be maintained even with significant landscape coverage, with proper selection and maintenance of plant materials.

- Landscape plans should avoid potential conflicts between landscaping, lighting and signage by proper plant material selection, placement, and maintenance. Plants must be selected with their ultimate height, width, density and pace of growth in mind.
- Provide deciduous shade trees along south sides of structures whenever possible to help reduce cooling loads during the summer and allow solar gain during the winter months.
- Streetscapes should incorporate a planter strip separating the sidewalk from the street (except where prohibited by the existing street cross section). Planting of trees within the planter strip is strongly encouraged for visual and shading benefits.



A planter strip along a street can provide shading and screening

- Retain existing mature trees in landscaping, site, and building plans whenever possible. Note that large trees may require city permission for removal or major pruning.
- Landscaping must not impede access to hydrant connections or other essential services, but can be used in a good design to soften these elements and make them blend in.
- Dead plants are visually worse than no plants at all, since they send a message that 'no one cares about this place'. Landscape areas bring with them a responsibility for maintenance, which includes watering, removing debris and litter, pruning and replacement of plants when necessary.

Even though there is no place for a planter along the street in this particular location, plants are used effectively along the building edge itself.



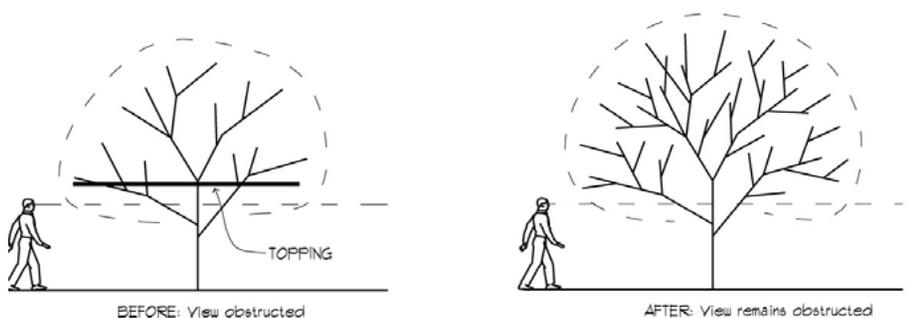
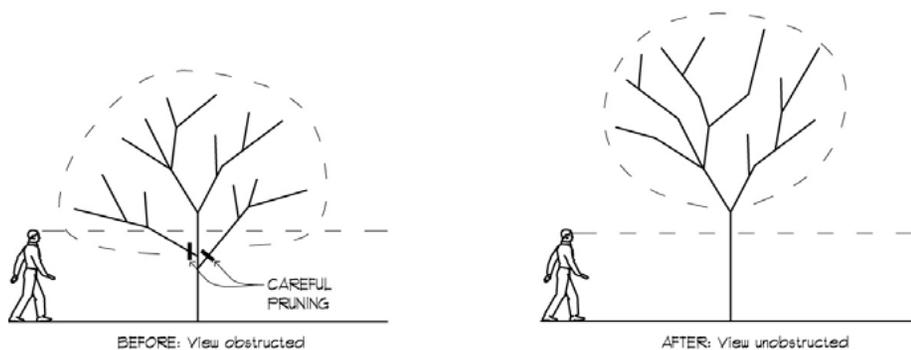
- Where there is insufficient space for a typical planter, plants can still be used if carefully selected and trained.
- Fences and low walls can create pleasing and functional definition of space. Particularly in conjunction with plants they can be an effective part of a landscape design.



Fences and low walls can be effective elements in a landscape design.



This wall and landscaping screen the parking behind very effectively.



Visibility of signage and buildings while at the same time having a coverage of trees requires using reasonably large trees to start and using 'upward' pruning to raise the canopy as they grow. Topping trees has the result of creating even denser growth at the cut branch stubs, and leads to deformed trees with shortened life that cannot provide shading .



While commercial corridors rarely resemble parks, they do not have to be barren of landscape character and features to be functional. The site below is unpleasant in part due to lack of plantings.



Note: All new landscaping must comply with the City of Sacramento codes and ordinances, include provisions for Water Conservation Ordinance and the minimum requirements set forth in the zoning ordinance. There are particular requirements for shading of parking lots and irrigation of all plant materials.

SITE SIGNAGE

Principle: Signage should be as unobtrusive as is feasible for function, and complement the overall site design and building architecture.

Rationale: Every commercial occupancy requires signage. When multiple business occupy the same site, as in a shopping center, signage is needed for customers to know 'who is there' and 'where they are' once they are on site. Too much and too prominent signage can be confusing, visually cluttering, and detract from a streetscape. Large signs are useful only when viewed from far away, and at high speeds. Smaller signs can be functional, and do not compete with the building design for prominence.

Guidelines:

- Signage should be the minimum in size and number needed to do the job. Excess signage creates visual clutter and defeats the purpose of signage.



- Signage should be considered both during the day, and at night. Sign lighting should be indirect to avoid glare and harshness.

- Monument signs that relate to the pedestrian edge and lower traffic speeds are preferred to higher signs.
- Dimensional signs, such as signs that use individual letters or that are made of 'raised panels and letters' are generally preferable to flat 'box signs' since they are more integrated generally with architectural treatments.
- Signs that are painted directly on building walls or plain flat panels such as sheets of plywood are generally discouraged.
- Signs at site entries should be sized and designed to accommodate all future tenants and individual businesses.

This sign accommodates all the tenants of the shopping center in one structure



NOTE: Signage must comply with the City of Sacramento Sign Ordinance, and separate permits are required for signage.

SITE SECURITY: LIGHTING, FENCES, GATES and WALLS

Principle: Site design must provide for security appropriate to the use and location.

Lighting: Every site must have provision for lighting that is both functional and also respects the scale and character of adjacent development. Lighting must not intrude upon or create a nuisance for nearby occupant, especially abutting residential areas. At the same time, lighting should provide for adequate visibility and security for customers and those passing by.

Fences, Gates, and Walls: Access control methods such as fences, gates, and walls must not create an intimidating or fortresslike appearance which would detract from the appearance of a site. Other security features that are functional and effective should be integrated into the design, and not contribute to a negative impression or appearance.

Rationale: Lighting not only provides for increased security and visibility, but also contributes to the design character of a project, and encourages extended hours of active use. Lighting can act both as a functional deterrent to unwanted activity, and also add drama and visual interest to the streetscape.

Many projects require controlled access to all or part of the site, in order to avoid undesirable activities that may occur after business hours. Security through access control may be functionally needed and can be achieved through sensitive design to avoid creating a negative and oppressive streetscape impression.

Guidelines:

LIGHTING

- Exterior lighting should be architecturally integrated with the building style, material and colors.
- Raised light pole bases should be attractively designed and well-detailed to be compatible with the overall project. The use of un-articulated cylindrical type concrete, metal, or fiberglass pole bases is discouraged.



Appropriate pedestrian scaled lighting enhances project character and improves security and visibility at night.

- Parking areas and entry drives should be lighted to facilitate pedestrian movement and safety, especially where parking is located away from street views. Pole mounted lighting should be spaced for both functional effectiveness as well as energy efficiency, and generally be no taller than 16

feet. Cutoff type fixtures should be used where glare could be a problem for adjacent properties or streets.

- Lighting should be provided at building entries, for safety and to visually accent the entry. Note however that light itself is NOT visible; only objects and surfaces can appear 'bright'. Light colored surfaces, with light directed on them, create brightness. Merely placing light fixtures in an area will NOT create a sense of brightness at night, unless there are surfaces or objects that can reflect the light.
- Coordinate planting and lighting plans. Choose appropriate light pole size and location to avoid conflicts between mature trees and lighting.
- Pedestrian walk lighting should be of an appropriately lower scale and style such as bollard type lighting, step lighting and/or low pole mounted lights.



These entries are clearly illuminated, although there is too much contrast—too little light—between the doors, due to the dark wall color.

- Non-directional up-lighting that contributes to backscatter and fugitive light against the nighttime sky is discouraged.
- Landscape lighting which creates a sense of beauty and character is encouraged. Most effective landscape lighting

design HIDES the light source; for example uplighting trees can create a pleasing night effect, but this is negated if the glare from the fixture is visible.



Decorative fencing used in combination with landscaping can be both effective and attractive.

This lighting scheme creates a soft and uniform lighting for the sidewalk as well as highlighting the landscaping at night





This lighting scheme is both attractive and functional. It combines uplighting at feature palms, a brightly articulated entry, a softly lit building mass, and decorative neon integrated with the architecture.

integrated into a design to be inobtrusive when open, and obvious when closed. There are also requirements from public works that will affect gates, to avoid 'backing up' of vehicles into the street. Fences must be integrated with the design of the site.

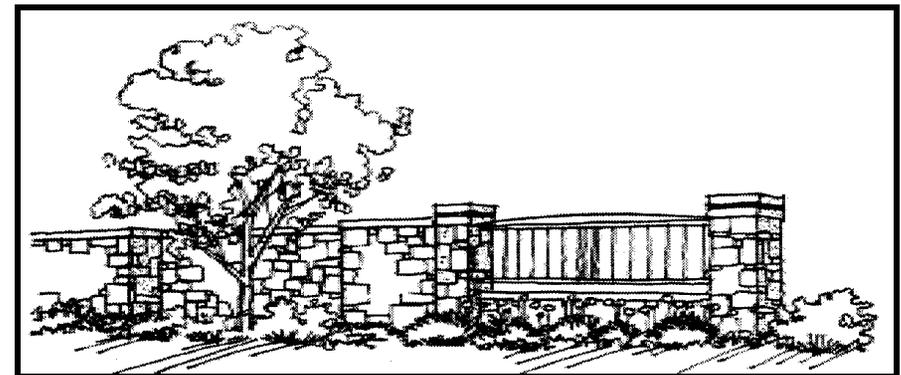
This gate is both decorative and functional. During business hours, it swings open to be unobtrusive and part of the landscape; after hours it swings closed to secure the parking area.



Glare from a fixture which directs light directly at the viewer detracts from the visibility and character of an illuminated sign. The individual letters of the sign, however, provide a more architecturally integrated appearance than if a box type sign had been used.

ACCESS CONTROL: FENCES, GATES, and WALLS

- In many cases it is desirable to provide means to 'secure' a parking area after business hours to control unwanted activities and trash accumulation. Gates should be

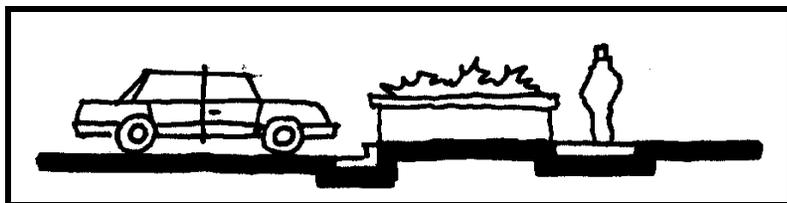


Masonry wall screened by landscaping to decrease visual monotony

- Masonry walls or fences should be designed to minimize visual monotony through changes in plane, height, material

or texture and/or significant landscape massing where appropriate.

- Blank, undivided expanses of wall without changes in plane, texture, masonry pattern, or without relation to human scale are discouraged.
- Breaks in fencing and walls should be provided through the use of columns, landscaping, transparent sections, and/or different materials.



Alternative fence design to keep pedestrian away from cars.

- Fencing and gating should be designed as an integrated part of the site, rather than as a separate element. For example, a planter can be integrated with a wall; or a wall can be a continuation of the architecture of an adjacent building.
- Fencing should not account for more than 50% of the total lot dimension fronting on the main corridor.
- Alternative fencing designs and materials, (for example wrought iron with brick columns



Razor wire sends the wrong message.

eight foot on center, or hedges combined with shortened walls) are encouraged. Woven wire (chain link) fencing, or razor/barbed/concertina wire is highly undesirable or in some cases not permitted (refer to the City's Zoning Code).

- Wrought iron fencing of the stock black tubular variety is encouraged to be accented with plants, brick or stone pilasters, or other features. Long uninterrupted lines of tubular black fencing are discouraged



Wrought iron fence adds little to this site's visual appeal.

- Fencing should be screened to the greatest extent possible with landscaping to soften the appearance.
- Security fencing should be of decorative design compatible with the building architecture and with the wall element, if provided.
- Solid fencing, walls, large hedges, or other similar barriers exceeding four (4') feet in height are generally discouraged.
- Fencing should allow pedestrian ingress and egress to the project site. Fencing should not create a barrier to pedestrian movement.

- Fencing must not exclude use of hydrants or fire department connections. All gates should have “knox” access for emergency use subject to review and approval by the City of Sacramento Fire Department.



Pedestrian site entrance

- Screen walls at outdoor dining areas should be scaled accordingly for visibility and safety.

OTHER SECURITY FEATURES

- Projects which have a residential component should encourage the use of neighborhood watch and good neighbor policies.
- Public areas should have a high visibility from the street so they can be monitored for undesirable activity.
- The site as a whole should have open visibility from the street, and adjoining properties, so that there routine police patrols and passersby will be able to provide ‘eyes on the site’ monitoring conditions.

- Where a portion of the site is concealed for aesthetic reasons, secure access should be provided. Where gates are provided, they should enhance the appearance of the property as seen from the street or adjoining properties.



Chain link fencing is unattractive and inappropriate on commercial frontages.

The parking area at this site is secured with gates that are integrated into the overall architecture and site design. Note also the use of solar collectors to provide shading over the parking area !



EQUIPMENT, SERVICES AND ACCESSORY STRUCTURES

Principle: Service elements and infrastructure such as trash enclosures, loading docks, storage, and mechanical equipment must be screened from street views and integrated into the design to make it as unobtrusive as possible. Accessory structures such as storage facilities must be integrated with the architectural style of the project.

Rationale: Unsightly and poorly located accessory and service elements can detract from the visual appeal of a property and a streetscape, increase visual clutter, and create hazards for pedestrians and autos. With proper design, these elements can be integrated into a site to be unobtrusive and inoffensive.

Guidelines:

ACCESSORY STRUCTURES/STORAGE

- The design of accessory structures should be consistent with the overall architectural design of the adjoining building. Roof pitches should match those of the main building roof. Exterior materials and colors should also be consistent with primary structures.
- Prefabricated trailers, metal shipping containers, and other temporary structures create a negative and cluttered appearance and can foster an impression that the business is temporary or not committed to it's neighborhood. These types of elements are not permitted by City ordinances to be used as part of ongoing business operations or site design.

- Storage areas should be integrated into the building design, including architectural treatments consistent with the primary building and similar design elements or accents.
- Storage for inventory, equipment, or other materials should be fully enclosed. When visible from the street or active adjacent uses, these areas should be screened by a landscaped buffer. City ordinances restrict or prohibit using outside spaces as part of normal and ongoing business operations.

Outside areas visible from the street must not be used for storage or routine display of inventory



Service functions must not be performed in outside areas visible to the street.

TRASH and RECYCLING ENCLOSURES

- Trash enclosures should contain enough space to facilitate both waste disposal and recycling. Containers should not block each other and should be user friendly.

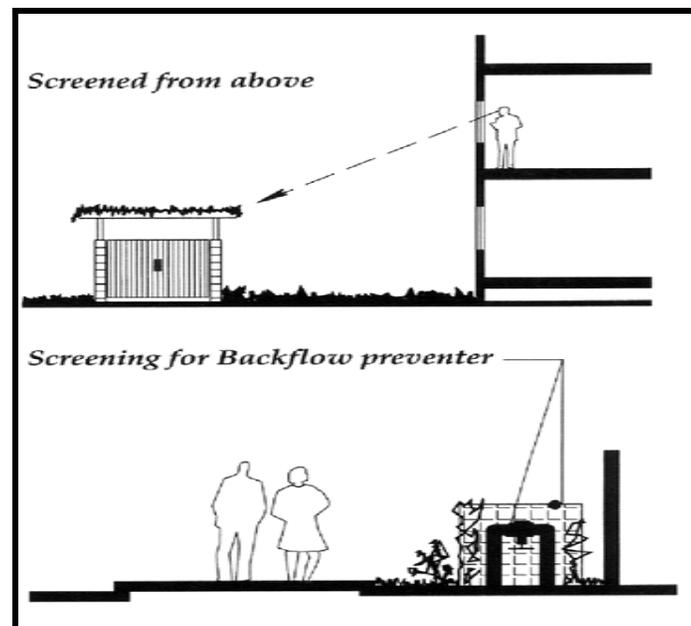


A good example of a trash enclosure that is screened from public view.



Trash dumpsters left out in parking areas are a hazard and are unsightly.

- Trash enclosure design should address solid waste personnel safety. All enclosures should have access routes that allow solid waste personnel to easily access dumpsters for collection. Vertical curbs should be avoided, and materials for sidewalk or driveway access should be flat to prevent wheels from becoming stuck.
- Views of trash storage areas should be minimized from public streets and be located to avoid impacting adjacent properties.
- Trash enclosures are required to be constructed of split face block, brick, stucco over block or similar quality materials that are durable. Avoid the use of plain cinder block.



- Landscaping should be incorporated around trash enclosures to provide for more effective screening.
- The access route used to get at the trash enclosure must be considered in the site design. For example, large dumpsters require 'straight on' access for pick up, and are not feasible to be 'rolled out' manually on a regular basis. Large enclosures should be positioned so that service trucks can approach them straight on, with a concrete apron at the front and wash down provisions incorporated into the design.

NOTE: Trash enclosures must meet City standards for design and also meet requirements for compliance with the City's recycling ordinance [Chapter 3, Section 4, City of Sacramento Zoning Ordinance]. Maintenance of trash enclosures (i.e., pick up of loose trash) is regulated by Chapter 19.01.121 of the City Code.

MECHANICAL/HVAC/UTILITY EQUIPMENT

- Mechanical equipment (e.g., heating, cooling, antennas, satellite dishes, air conditioners or similar mechanical devices) should be integrated into the architectural design of projects as much as possible. When integration is not possible, mechanical equipment should be screened from view.



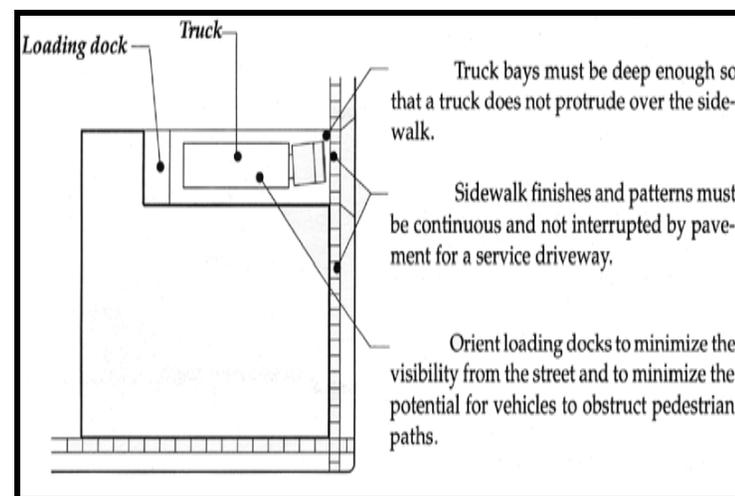
The various pieces of equipment, like this transformer, that are functionally needed but unattractive, should be located out of sight, or screened.

- Minimize the visibility of roof-top mechanical equipment by grouping plumbing vents, ducts, and equipment away from the public view. Adjust the form of the roof or add screening elements, so that the equipment does not create an unsightly visual element at the top of the building.
- Screening elements should be an integral part of the overall building design.

- Utility equipment such as transformers, electric and gas meters, electrical panels and junction boxes should be screened by walls and/or landscaping. Cluster utilities and services where feasible.
- Mechanical equipment should be installed consistent with the Comprehensive Floodplain Management Plan.
- Where possible, provide shade adjacent to mechanical equipment to reduce temperature at air intakes.

LOADING DOCKS:

- Provide sufficient space for transport vehicles so they do not interfere with normal pedestrian and automobile circulation.



Loading areas should be oriented to minimize pedestrian and auto conflicts.

RESOURCE CONSERVATION

Principle: New development and substantial rehabilitation development must incorporate design features which conserve resources. These include measures for energy conservation, recycling of materials, and provisions for drainage and water quality control.

Rationale: Resource conservation is a community-wide issue that has to be implemented project by project. By including resource conservation considerations in project design, they become an integral part of the development process. New construction usually creates more potential to implement resource conservation strategies than small renovation projects, but every project can contribute toward these goals.

Guidelines:

DRAINAGE AND WATER QUALITY

Controlling urban runoff pollution from new developments during and after construction is critical to the success of Sacramento's Comprehensive Stormwater Management Program (CSWMP). The goal is to minimize the increase in runoff pollution typically caused by land development and protect the beneficial uses of receiving waters by employing a sensible combination of pollutant source control and site specific treatment measures.

In accordance with the Federal Water Pollution Control Act, the City is required to implement a Comprehensive Stormwater Management Program in order to reduce pollutants in urban runoff to the maximum extent practicable.



This planter without curbs serves to catch runoff

PARKING LOTS

- With early planning and design it is possible that areas required for tree planting can also be used to satisfy the City's requirement to provide on-site treatment of stormwater.
- Parking lots which are part of new developments with 1 acre or more of impervious area are generally required to provide treatment control measures that capture and treat stormwater runoff through settling, filtration, and /or biodegradation.
- Integrating treatment measures with areas used for tree shading may significantly reduce land requirements and costs.

RECYCLING AND WASTE HANDLING AREAS

- Provide covered and lockable trash and recycling containers. Consolidating them within a trash enclosure is encouraged to promote their use.



This drainageway is both functional and attractive.

- Reuse and recycling of materials, and selection of materials which are produced using sustainable methods such as plantation grown wood is encouraged.
- Provide grades or slopes of paved areas which direct runoff toward a dead-end sump or a drain connected to the sanitary sewer. Do not locate storm drains in the immediate vicinity of waste handling areas where runoff is likely to be noxious.

VEHICLE WASH AREAS

- Pave, berm and grade designated vehicle wash areas should drain into the sanitary sewer.

SOLAR ENERGY

- Parking lot and building shading with deciduous trees can provide significant reductions in cooling requirements and reduce the urban heat island effect.

- Integration of solar collection with other project elements like shading can provide multiple benefits.

Note: New sites shall be designed to incorporate urban runoff mitigation measures as identified in the City of Sacramento Guidance Manual for On-Site Stormwater Quality Control Measures. Refer to the Department of Utilities, Stormwater Management Program for specific design and plan approval.

WATER CONSERVATION

- Landscape design should incorporate measures to conserve water, including plant selection and consideration of subsurface or drip irrigation.



Integrated Solar Panels and Shading provide multiple benefits.

BUILDING STYLE AND THEME

Principle: When a new building façade is created (either by new construction, or rehabilitation of existing buildings), it must be compatible with the context of its location. In some locations, where a ‘theme’ is emerging or has become established, compatibility requires that a building design be influenced by thematic elements that are particular to that theme. In other areas, compatibility is measured by broader considerations of scale and character of the area as it is expected to be in the future.

Rationale: A new building presents a special opportunity to help shape the character of a neighborhood. Buildings are the primary source of a feel and identity that a streetscape might develop. Where an area has been determined by the City to have an emerging or existing prevailing architectural theme, new designs must reinforce and contribute to that evolution. A designer has two paths that can be followed in developing design compatibility in a theme area. One approach is to replicate the elements that establish that style, and incorporate into the design the shapes, colors, details, and other stylistic components that, taken together, define the operative style. For example, in an area with an ‘art deco/moderne theme’, thematic operative elements might include a pastel color palette, stepped façade elements, linear accents, rounded forms, evocative of that style.

Another approach to stylistic compatibility is to take the elements of a style and interpret them in a new and contemporary way. In the hands of a talented and experienced designer, this approach can be successful and create new and fresh motifs and interpretations. If handled poorly, however, this alternative approach can result in

discontinuity and incongruous and conflicting buildings. That is why the review of a project which is attempting to use the latter approach, of developing new interpretations of a style, must be considered more carefully in a review process.

In areas which do not present an existing or emerging theme, designs still must show a respect for context, but this must be done in a way that respects that context that will exist as the area improves and matures. In other words, designs in these areas must avoid using the weak and inappropriate aspects of the surroundings as an influence, and incorporate design elements that point to the future of the area as it will improve over time. When successful, such designs inspire other good design, and contribute toward the movement of a neighborhood and streetscape toward a more beautiful and functional future. A variety of design ideas, colors, materials, and forms can contribute to vitality, visual interest, and continued investment and improvement in a commercial corridor.

Some of the issues that are to be considered in evaluating the broad concern of compatibility include historic and local architectural styles, the scale and character of the adjacent neighborhood and the trends as revitalization occurs, views, building scale in relation to the site, and the proximity to adjacent uses both present and those anticipated in the future.



New investments in good design can encourage additional new investments

Building Design

Building Style and Theme

Guidelines:

- Projects within defined sub-districts should respect the character of the sub-district by either
 - Using appropriate period- or location-specific architectural styles or elements; or
 - Using innovative interpretations of the classic motifs; this approach will require a much greater level of talent and experience on the part of the designer to be successful.
- In commercial centers, there should be a stylistic or thematic expression that ties the individual storefronts and buildings together. This can be accomplished in one of two ways:
 - Using a similar visual theme for all facades; or
 - Using a more innovative interpretation of 'theme'; this approach will require a much greater level of talent and experience on the part of the designer to be successful.
- Variety in architecture elements, and architectural style, is generally encouraged.



In some locations there are design themes established or evolving that should influence new developments

- Buildings should not be simple boxes. Roof form, mass, changes in plane such as by furring, moldings, shapes and materials, etc should be used to create variation and visual interest.
- Projects should be designed to respect the privacy of surrounding uses. Upper story windows, terraces, that provide privacy intruding views into adjacent yards are discouraged. Mitigation may include landscape elements, architectural screening elements, or limiting uses or windows on building sides which abut residential areas.

This restaurant addresses the street frontage and provides a variety of architectural amenities.



- Provide clearly defined building entries that are in scale with the proposed project, and that relate directly to the street frontage wherever possible.
- Corporate identity in the design theme should be secondary to consistency with the architecture of the surrounding neighborhood or community.

Building Design

Building Style and Theme

- Awnings, trellises or canopies are encouraged above windows, doors, and entrances to provide shade and architectural relief from flat facades.

- Provide illuminated addresses that are clearly readable from the street.

This store projects community identity more than a "cookie cutter" corporate identity; it is located in an area which has a 'modern/art deco' character.



Retail and office entries receive different but effective articulation in this example of a renovation project. The office has a contrasting door color, the retail space has an awning with integrated signage. Variations in the form of the building itself also add articulation and interest.



Simple design treatments can be very effective on small buildings. Here the colors, molding at the parapet, and full width awning work well together. A signage banner announcing a sale is temporary; after just a few days it would be ineffective and create visual clutter.

Note: The path of travel up to and including all building entrances must meet both the ADA and Title 24, California Code of Regulations for accessibility. Additional requirements for sanitary facilities and other accessibility requirements will also apply to both new construction and renovations/rehabilitations.

Note: Projects located within areas that have adopted urban design or other specific plans should reference those documents for additional architectural guidance and recommendations regarding building design requirements.

Note: Some buildings are listed structures of historic significance. For these buildings, there are special requirements that must be considered in design of a rehabilitation or adaptive reuse.

SCALE / MASSING / ARTICULATION

Principle: Projects must relate to the surrounding *existing or emerging* context with respect to building scale, mass, setbacks, and articulation.

Rationale: Variations in the form of a building can add visual interest and break up what would otherwise be a large box-like form into more pleasing and visually harmonious elements. A variety of techniques can be used to ‘break up’ the mass of a building. Suggested techniques include stepping the building height, furring out walls to create offsets in plane, adding battens or reveals to walls surfaces, and insets or other variations in plan.

Guidelines:

SCALE/MASSING/ARTICULATION

- Projects at defined nodes or gateways are encouraged to provide prominent visual landmarks such as a projecting tower, promenade, arcade, or other pedestrian-oriented feature. These types of ‘signature’ elements can help anchor a node and give it a unique identity and sense of place.

A Tower element was used to articulate and anchor this prominent corner site



- Long facades should be designed with sufficient building articulation and landscaping to break them up into smaller visual elements. Long expanses of uninterrupted wall area, unbroken roof forms, and box-like structures should be avoided.



This building adds visual interest and aesthetic quality by stepping the building height.



This building lacks any visual interest with its plain facade and flat roof pitch.

Building Design

Scale, Massing and Articulation

- Street elevations should contain appropriate features to provide visual interest, including posts or columns, wainscoting, decorative tiles, shutters, window boxes and other pedestrian level details.
- Buildings should be stepped down at upper levels in areas with a relatively smaller-scale character. There should be a scale transition between intensified land uses and adjoining lower intensity land uses.
- A shopping center type of project should either have a unified and consistent theme, or it should be visually 'broken up' into separate visual elements. Even where the approach is a unified theme, units clustered into one structure should have some variation in setback, staggered roof planes, or other adjustments to avoid a monotonous or overpowering institutional appearance.



Contemporary shopping centers often have a great variety of forms and elements that add to visual interest. This helps keep a design fresh and exciting for five to ten years, at which point it may need to be updated to maintain its effectiveness

- Articulation such as cornice detail, insets, windows, reveals, furring, score lines, and/or trim should be used to break up the visual massing of building facades. Elements should be chosen that are appropriate to the overall stylistic

treatment. Unarticulated and windowless walls are discouraged. Landscape can also be used to soften walls where fire codes or other constraints eliminate or reduce allowable windows.

Note: The details and articulation features used must be appropriate to the building's overall composition and architectural style.



Variation in parapet height can add some visual interest to a street elevation. For a small project, this may be limited to stepping up and down; for a larger project, a more three-dimensional effect would be appropriate

In larger developments, the building form itself should be modeled, to go beyond the effect of a "stepped parapet wall" as seen in the example above.



Building Design

Scale, Massing and Articulation



These Entryways are stepped back from the main façade, and emphasized with columns and shade structure.



What would otherwise be a flat façade is enlivened with the installation of a simple overhead trelliswork that also provides shade protection for pedestrians.



A pedestrian passageway cut through the corner of this building helps to break up it's otherwise monolithic massing.



Pedestrian access can be highlighted by architectural form as is illustrated here.



Accenting the corners of a simple building form can be an effective strategy, combined with articulation of the business entries.



In some contemporary design, geometry is used for effective articulation.

MATERIALS / TEXTURES / COLORS

Principle: Building facades must feature high-quality materials and coordinated colors. Most design motifs should utilize multiple materials, colors and textures, in a coordinated way.

Rationale: Quality buildings, as are expected in quality areas, go beyond the basics requirements of shelter. For example, a building with plain stucco off-white walls and a flat roof by itself cannot contribute to the impression of quality of an area. Quality in materials, design and detail add to property values, pride, sense of place, and inspire continued investment and upgrading of commercial corridors.

Guidelines:

- Material selection should be based on what is appropriate to a given design motif, and how they will hold up over time. Generally, the use of such low cost and non-durable materials as plywood siding, corrugated metal and plastic, and imitation materials such as paste-on-brick or stone will not be acceptable.
- Materials on buildings should be varied in order to create patterns and break up larger masses into smaller, more people-oriented forms. Variety is generally encouraged, provided it does not lead to visual clutter.
- Colors should be used to articulate building design as is consistent with the design motif. Most buildings should have at least four colors or materials used in their façade design.

- Textures in a building façade should be used to create variations in form and massing, by using the shadows they create. Where materials are expected to be uniform, textures should be uniform. One of the clues, for example, to well done stucco work, is the uniformity of texture in the finished surface. Careful, quality application of materials is important to final appearance and durability and should be practiced by all contractors.



Colors and materials in contemporary design can be successful, as illustrated above, even when they are derived from industrial palettes. Note that these same materials in another design context would be very inap-

- The patterns created by the window and door placement must be carefully considered. Generally it looks best if there is alignment across the length of a façade at the top and bottom of doors and windows, and if they are used in mass areas, rather than “one here and one there”. The patterns created by the openings in a façade can help add variety and interest to the design.

- Building address numbers should be clearly visible from the sidewalk.
- The color of the glass and storefront framing should be carefully considered. Clear glass should be used for retail spaces. If the glass has a west or south exposure, it may be necessary to use awnings, landscaping or other means to control solar heat gain. Dark opaque glass may be used if windows are 'non functional' and being used to create a pleasing streetscape effect; however the dark color of the glass must be integrated into the overall color palette of the façade.



This building has a monolithic look, the dark glass contributes to an un-inviting character.

- Very high quality materials, are encouraged to be used in locations where their visual impact will create an overall impression of quality for a façade. For example, stone panels, or copper trim, even if used in modest quantities, can have a large visual impact.



This otherwise blank and unappealing wall was transformed with the use of color (paint) into a delightful and inspiring work of art..

An element of whimsy can be injected into a design with the use of interesting materials or colors, as in this example. Note the addition of plants and the brick base that add to this fun window railing detail.



RESOURCE CONSERVATION

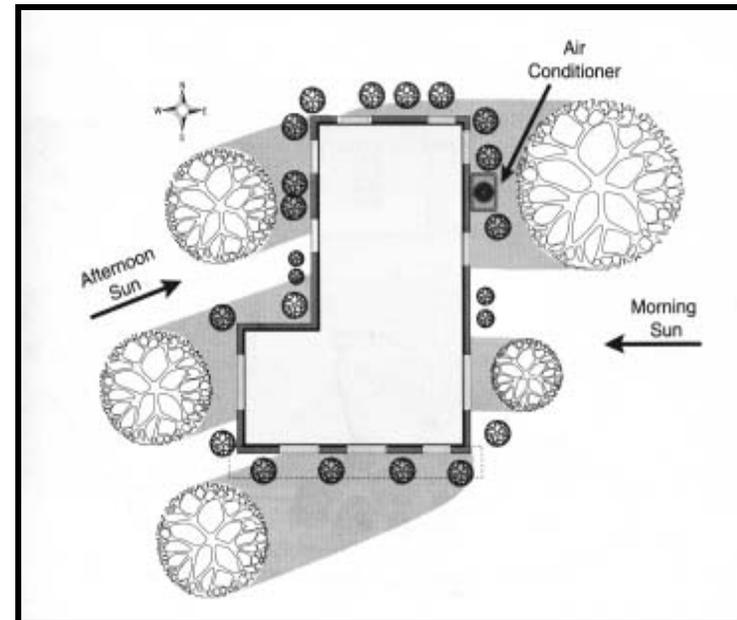
Principle: New developments and rehabilitation of existing buildings must incorporate building design features that conserve resources.

Rationale: Attention to energy and resource conservation in design will lead to short- and long-term economically and environmentally sustainable development.

Guidelines:

- Energy consumption of buildings can be reduced through design choices. Examples include building orientation that minimizes sun exposure on glazing, use of shade trees to reduce solar gain, reducing interior volume, using light colored roofing materials such as 'cool roof' coating, etc.
- Install energy efficient lighting in public and private areas where feasible.
- Install measures such as Energy Star rated roofs, strategically placed shade trees, shaded pavement and other landscaping to reduce site and building temperatures.
- Where possible, include renewable energy measures such as photovoltaic roofs and ground source heat pumps.
- Use recycled and sustainability harvested building materials wherever possible.
- Use Drainage Swales to provide for surface water infiltration and groundwater recharge.

- Use low voc paints and coatings when feasible, and avoid use of solvent and other materials that negatively impact air quality.



Sample residential landscape is shown in the graphic to the left. Large trees planted on the westward and south sides to cast the maximum shadows and on the east side to shade the air conditioner. Shrubs planted on all sides of the house help to reduce wall and soil temperatures. Source: *The Implementation of Energy Conservation Landscaping Through Local Ordinances*, by J.H. Parker, Florida International University, Department of Physical Sciences, 1982.

NOTE: State Energy Conservation Codes apply to new construction and substantial remodeling and renovation projects. With careful design, even these stringent requirements can be exceeded.

BUILDING SIGNAGE

Principle: Building signage must be an integral part of the architectural design of every commercial establishment. Signage should be as unobtrusive, and be of high quality in design, materials, and execution.

Rationale: Virtually every commercial building requires signage to help customers to find the location. Too much or too large signage can be counterproductive, detracting from the architectural statement of a building, and creating visual clutter and confusion. The simplest and most elegant approach to signage is usually also the most effective in the long term. Short-term signage announcing sales or special events is effective only if it is used for a short term, and it can block the openness and clarity of a façade if overused.

Guidelines:

- Signs should be integrated with the architecture of the façade, and constructed of quality weatherproof materials consistent with the design motif of the project.
- Poles and “canned” signs are strongly discouraged, as are signs made of simple non-dimensional sheets of painted plywood, plastic, or metal.
- Signage should be designed for its effect both during the day, and at night. Sign lighting should be indirect to avoid glare and harshness.
- Dimensional signs, such as signs that use individual letters or that are made of ‘raised panels and letters’ are generally preferable to flat ‘box signs’ since they are more integrated generally with architectural treatments.

These signs made of individual letters are more compatible with the building than a ‘can’ sign would be.



- Signage should be the minimum in size and number needed to do the job. Excess signage creates visual clutter and defeats the purpose of signage.

Too much signage can create visual clutter and defeat the purpose of the signs. It can also detract from the character and appeal of a storefront, which make attracting customers more difficult. Blocking windows with signs also impedes security.



- Signs that are painted on walls or panels are discouraged, and in most cases will not be permitted. Any painted sign must be professionally prepared and executed.

- Addresses of buildings must be displayed in accordance with City of Sacramento ordinances.
- Signs at building entries should be sized and designed to accommodate all future tenants and individual businesses served by that entrance.

NOTE: Signage must comply with the City of Sacramento Sign Ordinance, and separate permits are required for signage.



Building signage can lend character and style to the façade and create a unique expression for the building user.



This wall sculpture tells a story without words.



Signage elements can be graphic expressions that add to the visual dynamic of a street if professionally done. This same signage concept, if painted unartfully directly on the building wall would not be successful.



A monument sign can be simple, effective and visually attractive



Some signage becomes part of the history and character of a streetscape. The same sign if proposed on a new development would not be acceptable. Note also the streetscape banner.



These metal Individual letters make an attractive, effective and simple sign.

BUILDING EQUIPMENT AND SERVICES

Principle: Service elements and infrastructure such as louvers and exhaust vents, mechanical equipment, pipes and conduits, etc, must be integrated into the architectural design. Where such elements cannot be concealed in or behind the building structure, they must be screened from street views.

Rationale: Unsightly and poorly located equipment and service elements can detract from the visual appeal of a building and increase visual clutter. With proper design, these elements can usually be integrated into a building to be unobtrusive and inoffensive.

Guidelines:

- Roof-mounted equipment should be concealed behind parapets or screen walls whenever feasible. Where equipment cannot be fully concealed, it should be painted to match the visually adjoining surfaces. Any new equipment should be located in as unobtrusive a position as possible. Where screened walls are used, they should be integral to the building design.
 - Surface-run pipes and conduit, where visible from streets or portions of the property where customers circulate, should not be added. Any existing visible piping or conduit should be removed whenever it is in the vicinity of a proposed project. These types of exposed utilities are associated with low grade construction and detract from the character and visual appeal of a property. Their existence on one building tends to encourage their use on nearby buildings as a means to lower construction cost.
- Additions to buildings that utilize prefabricated trailers, metal shipping containers, and other temporary structures create a negative and cluttered appearance and will not be approved. Where such additions exist, they should be removed when they are in the vicinity of proposed work.
 - Fire sprinkler valves and other required devices should be located as unobtrusively as possible.
 - Hose bibs that provide for washing the exterior of buildings should be provided for new construction and substantial remodels. They should be located in unobtrusive yet convenient locations.



The plumbing connections in this planter are screened effectively

- Storage for garbage, if integrated in the building design, should be located in a position where the odors and debris associated with use will not detract from the overall building character.

BUILDING SECURITY

Principle: Building design must include architecturally integrated provisions for security appropriate to the use and location.

Lighting of buildings should be designed in such a way as to not only provide for security, but also create a pleasing nighttime appearance.

Other security features that are functional and effective should be integrated into the design, and not contribute to a negative impression or appearance.

Rationale:

Security is a critical part of the design of any building. Losses due to security breaches are a burden to both the business, its customers and employees, and to the community at large. Security solutions that create a 'fortress like' character, however, send a message that 'this is an unsafe area' and make investment, improvement and revitalization less likely. The objective of these guidelines is to allow property owners and business owners to achieve needed security, without compromising the revitalization and pleasing visual attractiveness that these guidelines are intended to promote.

Building Lighting not only provides for increased security and visibility, but also contributes to the design character of a building and encourages extended hours of active use. Lighting not only can act as a functional deterrent to unwanted activity, but also add drama and visual interest to the façade.

Guidelines:

LIGHTING

- Building lighting should be architecturally integrated with the building style, material and colors. Surface-mounted lights should be selected and located to not produce unwanted glare either on the property, to the street, or to adjoining properties. The typical 'wall-mounted box' security fixture is unattractive, produces significant glare, and adds no enhancement to the appearance of a building at night. These types of lighting solutions are discouraged. More architecturally-integrated solutions to building lighting include, placing fixtures in the landscape or on poles aimed at the building. The light source then is not seen; only the effect of the light illuminating the building.



This lighting adds visual interest and drama while providing for security and functional use of the business at night

- Entries should get accent lighting that creates a focal point, such as by the use of recessed fixtures over the door locations.

WINDOW GRILLS

- Window grills are a common element in many City commercial corridors. Simple tubular metal grills mounted on the exterior are discouraged, since they are generally unattractive and do not meet the intent of this section. Alternatives that are architecturally integrated include:
 - Interior mounting of the grills
 - Using grills that are decorative in character
 - Using windows that by their size and geometry offer inherent protection from intrusion.
- Innovative solutions to window security that have architectural enhancement character are encouraged. See the web site of this document for additional examples of window security treatments that are innovative and functional.



These security grills are interesting and playful as well as functional.



While this building is secure, it creates a negative impression on the street. Obstructing windows removes the effect of “eyes on the street” which improves neighborhood security generally. In addition, by creating the appearance of an insecure area, tends to discourage improvements, investment, and the transition of the area to a more secure environment through positive activity and business.

- In some cases, entire facades of a structure are desired to be secured, for example by pull down metal shutters. The appearance of these shutters, when closed, must be considered in a successful design to not create a fortress like effect. In general, full façade shutters are discouraged, as they can contribute to a visual ‘no man’s land’ at night by eliminating the effect of windows as eyes on the street, and create a visual experience of bleakness and fear that discourages legitimate and desirable activity such as walking. Ultimately, buildings that fully shutter encourage adjoining properties to take similar measures, which can contribute to a downward spiral of disinvestments and visual blight.



Buildings that appear too secure add to blight and contribute to fear and disinvestments in areas.



APPENDIX A

Special Planning District (SPD):

Broadway-Stockton Special Planning District

Northgate Boulevard Special Planning District

Alhambra Special Planning District

Del Paso Boulevard Special Planning District

Richards Boulevard Special Planning District

R Street Special Planning District

Overlay Zones:

Urban Neighborhood Overlay Zone

Neighborhood Corridor Overlay Zone

Midtown Commercial Overlay Zone

65th Street / Transit Overlay Zone

Urban Design Plans:

Fruitridge Road Revitalization Conceptual Master Plan

Marysville Boulevard Urban Design Plan

Franklin Boulevard Urban Design Plan

Broadway/Stockton Urban Design Plan

Streetscape Plans:

Broadway/Stockton Streetscape Master Plan

Freeport Boulevard Master Plan (Phase I)

Florin Road Streetscape Master Plan

Del Paso Boulevard (Uptown) Streetscape Master Plan

