

Commercial Design Guidelines

The commercial areas in North Sacramento display varied urban design patterns and architectural styles that reflect their unique historical influences. The traditional, more pedestrian-oriented “main street” form is found on Del Paso Boulevard, while the mid-20th century, auto-oriented form is found on Arden Way and El Camino Avenue.

Despite the range of historical periods and architectural variety found in North Sacramento, the neighborhood’s commercial streets will benefit from design guidelines that strengthen their walkability and visual appeal, as defined in these Design Guidelines.



The human-scaled design of this building on Del Paso Boulevard contributes to a pedestrian-friendly commercial district.

Introduction

COMMERCIAL HISTORY AND NEIGHBORHOOD CONTEXT

The relevant history of each commercial area is outlined in this section, with an emphasis on architectural styles, construction materials, and notable buildings found on primary commercial streets. The architectural styles mentioned in this section are described in greater detail in Appendix C, "Commercial Architectural Styles," at the end of this document.

North Sacramento was developed after the advent of the automobile, and its street patterns and commercial areas reflect this. The major commercial streets established under the influence of the Johnstons in the early 20th century, including Del Paso Boulevard, Arden Way, and El Camino Avenue, were intended to carry a significant amount of automobile traffic. Del Paso Boulevard, at 100 feet wide, was considered unusually wide for its time.

Although the City of North Sacramento was formally established in 1924, its commercial success expanded dramatically when a bridge connecting North Sacramento to Sacramento was constructed in 1934. Del Paso Boulevard then became one of the most traveled roads in northern California and served as the catalyst for a successful adjoining commercial and industrial corridor.

The prosperity of the area declined after the North Sacramento Freeway (SR 160) was constructed in 1955 and diverted traffic from the area. Despite consolidation with the City of Sacramento in 1964, North Sacramento continued to suffer from economic stagnation.



Renovated Streamline Moderne building



"Iceland" ice skating rink on Del Paso Boulevard

Introduction

Recent efforts to revitalize North Sacramento have brought a diverse range of businesses and infrastructural improvements. The neighborhood enjoys a variety of restaurants, entertainment venues, retail stores, and services that attract visitors from throughout the Sacramento area. Del Paso Boulevard continues to be a key thoroughfare between Sacramento and areas to the north, including Natomas. Recent streetscape improvements have attempted to mitigate the impact of this traffic with landscaped medians, signage, street trees, and other improvements.

The architecture on Del Paso Boulevard represents a wide range of styles popular from the 1920s through the present. Del Paso Boulevard has several fine examples of Art Deco and Streamline Moderne architecture, while recent infill development represents a variety of more contemporary styles.

El Camino Avenue and Arden Way are active commercial streets that provide convenience shopping, including groceries, fast food, and banking, as well as some larger scale retail businesses providing such goods as recreational vehicles. These streets carry a high volume of local and through traffic, and do not exhibit the pedestrian scale of development found on Del Paso Boulevard. Architecture along El Camino Avenue and Arden Way primarily reflects late twentieth century contemporary design typical of large-scale development. Nevertheless, design techniques that can improve the visual appeal of these streets are suggested in these Design



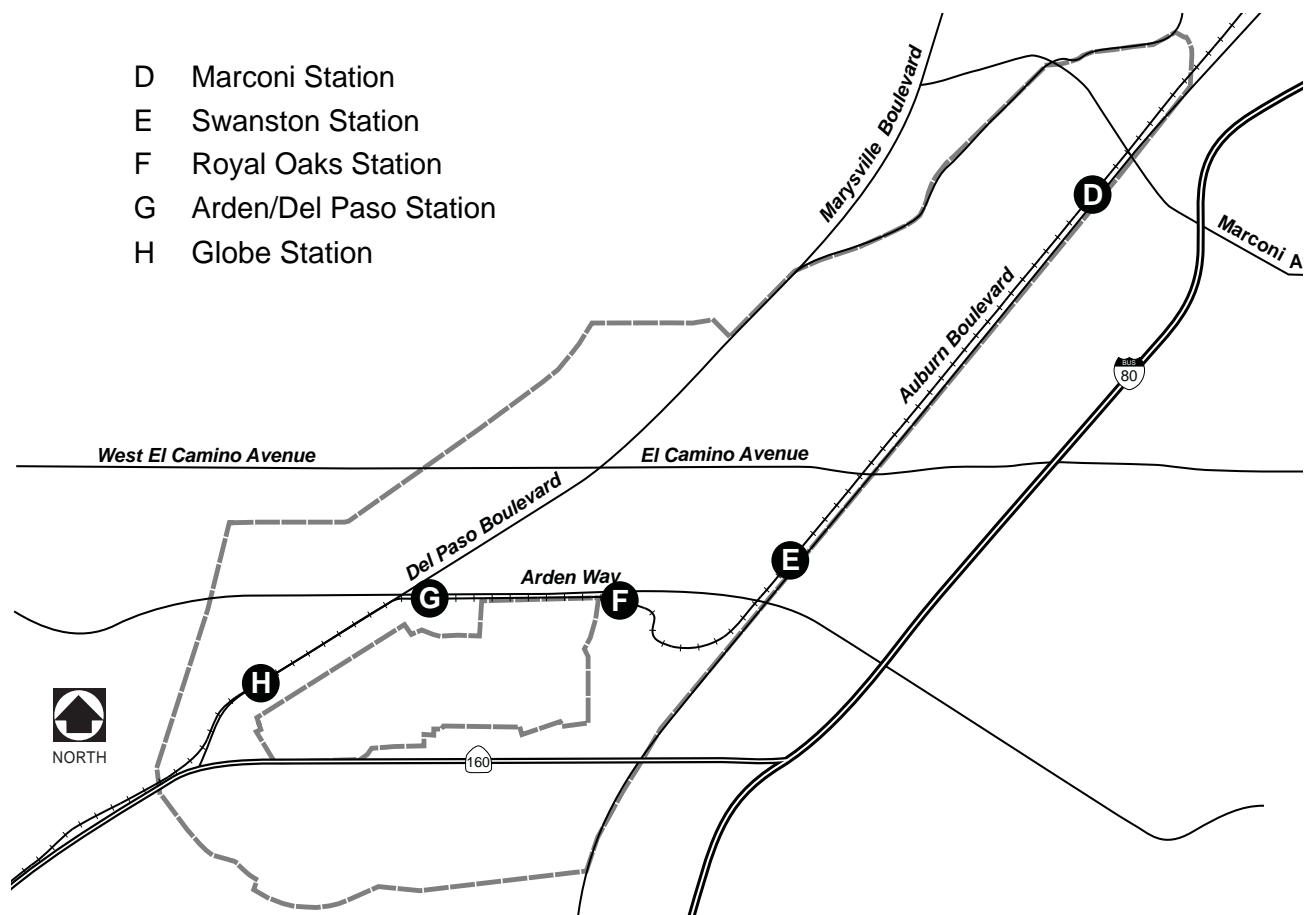
The North Sacramento School District office is a notable civic building in the North Sacramento neighborhood.

Introduction

Guidelines, including screening of parking areas, building orientation and facade design, and landscaping treatments.

NORTH SACRAMENTO REGIONAL TRANSIT STOPS

There are five Sacramento Regional Transit stops in North Sacramento: Globe, Arden/Del Paso, Royal Oaks, Swanston, and Marconi. Future mixed-use development will be focused around these five stops, with the Swanston stop receiving particular design attention based on the *Swanston Station Village Plan* to be completed in 2007.



Please note: the lettering system identifying the stops is derived from that used by Sacramento Regional Transit.

TRANSIT-ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT

The new transit-oriented development (TOD) around North Sacramento's transit stops will be based on recognized design principles. These TOD principles include:

- a concentration of commercial, office/professional, and residential uses around the transit stop;
- mixed-use buildings that have front entries focused toward major pedestrian streets, town squares, or plazas;
- enhanced bicycle and pedestrian facilities and routes within the transit district; and
- a reduction of auto-oriented facilities to encourage more bicycle and pedestrian activity.

Design guidelines tailored to the specific characteristics of TODs have been included in the Commercial Design Guidelines. The City will give preference to projects that are designed in accordance with these Design Guidelines.

For additional information, see Appendix A, Transit-oriented Development, and Appendix D, Checklist for Evaluating Transit-Supportive Uses.



The Arden/Del Paso Transit Stop on Arden Way

Commercial

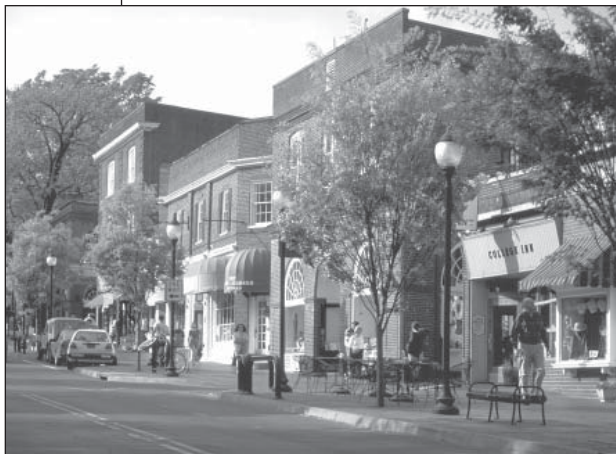
SITE DESIGN

This section provides direction for the site design of new commercial development and the renovation of existing structures. Effective site planning techniques should create a unified commercial environment that reflects the character and history of the area.

- The major principles for commercial site design are intended to:
- create a comfortable and welcoming pedestrian environment;
- enhance the vitality of the commercial district;
- create a distinctive character and sense of place for commercial streets; and
- clearly define the public realm with a “streetwall” of commercial buildings that frame the street.



A commercial district with a traditionally designed “streetwall” of buildings



A pedestrian-oriented commercial district can include street trees, cafe seating and wide sidewalks.

50 Building Orientation, Setbacks, and Build-to Lines

Design Principle

Buildings should be constructed to the front of the property line behind the sidewalk, with allowable variation in the setback to provide for café seating, plazas, and other additions to the public realm.

Rationale

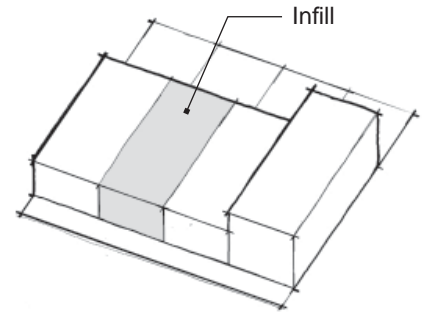
Commercial buildings in urban areas have typically been built to the front of the property line behind the sidewalk, creating a line of buildings with a consistent “streetwall” that supports a strong relationship between the building, the sidewalk, and the street. This streetwall should be reinforced by new construction and additions. The streetwall may be varied to create usable public spaces such as outdoor café dining and small plazas with seating.

Design Guidelines

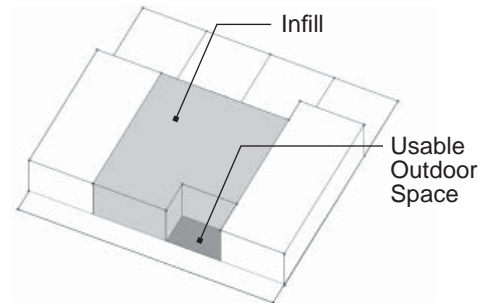
- 50-1 Buildings should be constructed to the front of the property line and from side property line to side property line.
- 50-2 Facades that front onto a public street should be built parallel or nearly parallel to the public right-of-way.
- 50-3 A portion of the front setback may be increased by as much as 15 feet, if that setback is used as public space, such as outdoor restaurant seating or a courtyard with public access. A minimum of 60% of the front facade should be constructed up to the front setback.
- 50-4 Buildings at corners may be set back to create corner entries or “chamfered” entries in order to actively address both streets with pedestrian friendly entries.
- 50-5 New buildings should provide an appropriate setback to allow rear- and side-yard facing windows on existing buildings to have access to light, air, and usable space between buildings.



A chamfered entry that addresses both streets.



New construction and additions should be built to the back of the sidewalk or at the front of the property line.



New construction and additions may increase a portion of the front setback if designed as usable outdoor space.



Many buildings on Del Paso Boulevard are built to the property line.

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- 50-6 The ground floor of buildings within or near transit-oriented development areas should be oriented toward the street, adjacent plazas, or parks.
- 50-7 Orient buildings such that the primary active building facades and key pedestrian entries of the buildings face the street.
- 50-9 Encourage maximum building edges and open spaces, such as front yards and outdoor restaurant seating, to front on to sidewalks to encourage pedestrian activity.
- 50-10 Orient new buildings to minimize solar heat gain.
- 50-11 Individual residential units should have access to sun and air on at least two sides to encourage adequate light and ventilation.
- 50-12 Incorporate pedestrian friendly elements including balconies and front porches within front setbacks.

51 Parking

Design Principle

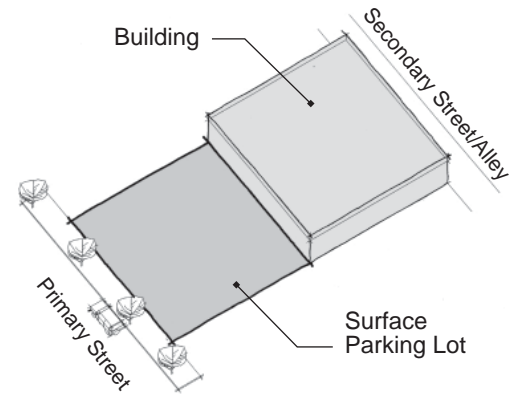
Parking areas should provide vehicular access without compromising pedestrian accessibility and the character of the public realm on primary commercial streets. Parking lots should be placed at the rear of the building, when feasible, to not obstruct views of the building's front facade from the street.

Rationale

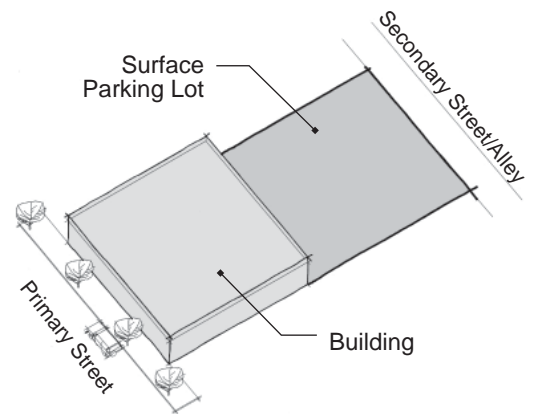
Adequate and accessible parking areas are important to the viability of commercial districts. However, large surface parking lots fronting the street can create the appearance of a vacant and uninviting area that detracts from the visual continuity of the commercial streetwall and impedes and discourages pedestrian traffic. Smaller parking lots located at the rear or sides of commercial buildings are a recommended alternative.

Design Guidelines

- 51-1 Parking lots should be located behind the commercial frontage on Del Paso Boulevard, which is the major pedestrian street in North Sacramento. Where parking at the rear of the building is not possible, it may be located in an interior side lot. Parking at the front of the building or corner lots is highly discouraged.
- 51-2 Large surface parking lots should be avoided in favor of several smaller parking lots.
- 51-3 A portion of a project's parking requirements may be satisfied by on-street parking, as permitted by the City.
- 51-4 Driveways into parking lots should be located on side streets, where feasible. Access to parking on major pedestrian streets should be minimized.
- 51-5 Parking lots should include signage and well-designed locations for ingress and egress that reduce conflicts with pedestrian movement.
- 51-6 Access to commercial buildings from rear or side parking lots or alleys should be well maintained and kept clear of obstructions.
- 51-7 Parking lots, driveways, and walkways should be connected with those of neighboring sites to consolidate traffic and minimize conflicts with pedestrian and automobile circulation.
- 51-8 Shared parking for such uses as retail, office, entertainment and housing is strongly encouraged, especially near the transit centers.



Avoid placing parking in the front of the building.



Parking should be unobtrusive to encourage an active street life and a comfortable pedestrian environment. Parking should be placed behind, under, or on the side of buildings.

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The facade of this parking structure has been designed to complement the adjoining commercial building.

- 51-9 Provide convenient on-street motorcycle parking to encourage motorcycle and scooter use. Parking bays should be striped perpendicular to the sidewalk in the on-street vehicular parking zone.
- 51-10 Easily visible and accessible bicycle parking should be provided near Del Paso Boulevard, El Camino Avenue, and Arden Way.

Parking Structure Design Guidelines

- 51-11 Parking structures are encouraged, where financially feasible, particularly near transit centers. Surface parking should be avoided in close proximity to transit centers.
- 51-12 Parking structures that are located on primary commercial streets should be designed with retail, office, or other uses at the street level to avoid monotonous blank walls.
- 51-13 Parking structures should be designed with architectural features that complement existing commercial, office, and mixed use buildings in the vicinity.
- 51-14 Parking structures should be designed to incorporate passive safety design features to create a secure facility. The use of glass for pedestrian stairways and adequate interior lighting are encouraged.
- 51-15 Automobile entry and exit ramps should be located mid-block or toward service areas rather than facing primary pedestrian streets.
- 51-16 Pedestrian entry and exit features should be clearly marked and open onto primary pedestrian streets and routes.

ARCHITECTURAL ELEMENTS

Architectural design guidelines address the exterior of buildings and their relationship to the surrounding built context. It is paramount to ensure that the design of the building complements the community setting and character and contributes to the public realm. Architectural design should promote commercial buildings that are:

- visually welcoming from the primary pedestrian street;
- similar in mass and scale to other commercial buildings in the area; and
- constructed of high-quality materials that will contribute to the longevity of the building.

Respect the past Art Moderne and Streamline Moderne architectural style along Del Paso Boulevard by not replicating or imitating the architecture, but continuing its essence, which was inspired by technology and the emerging love affair America had with machines. Simple and functional architecture that highlights the juxtaposition of strong architectural elements, such as contrasting strong horizontal and vertical lines with curving forms and complimenting subdued earthy base building colors with bright and dark colored trims.

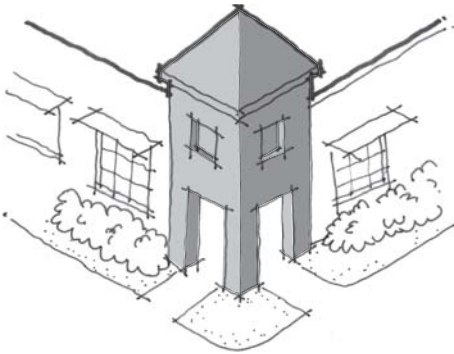
Creative design that does not specifically reflect past achitectoral styles in the area are acceptalbe as long as the character and form of the design is complementary to surrounding architecture.



High quality materials and creative design on the Plaza del Paso building



This retail store references traditional local architectural elements with its small round windows and entry feature, while the building's signage and sculptures display cutting-edge architectural design.



Building entries at corners should address both sides.

52 Building Height, Massing, and Scale

Design Principle

The size and scale of commercial buildings should be compatible with existing development in commercial districts.

Rationale

To ensure compatibility with existing development, new development should appear similar in massing and scale, and the heights of new buildings should generally fall within the height range of existing buildings on the block. Corner sites offer a special opportunity for providing additional building height and can serve as anchor sites for a block.

Design Guidelines

- 52-1 New, higher buildings can reinforce the established building heights along a block by stepping back upper floors that are above the average building height along the street.
- 52-2 A building that is larger than the average of buildings on the same block should break up the mass of the structure with articulation of the structure into smaller components and the creation of multiple surfaces.

Commercial

- 52-3 Appropriately scaled doors, windows, awnings, and detailing can reduce the appearance of mass.
- 52-4 Buildings on corner lots provide an opportunity for structures that exceed the average height on the block and can serve as anchor points.
- 52-5 Building heights should not block important view corridors in the neighborhood.
- 52-6 The floor-to-floor height used in older, established buildings should be maintained in new construction.
- 52-7 Encourage larger scale buildings along major arterial roads like Del Paso Boulevard and Arden Way to transition to lower scale buildings along local streets such as Canterbury Road and Boxwood.
- 52-8 Respect the adjoining residential developments with the massing and scale of new developments.

Sustainability Guidelines

- 52-9 Massing design should provide opportunities for daylighting and solar panels. Glazing should be located predominantly on the north and south sides of the structure, with glazing on the west side of the structure minimized unless the west side is the street side.



New construction and additions that deviate from the typical proportions of height, width, and depth may appear out of scale with existing buildings.



New construction and additions should respect the typical proportions of height, width, and depth.

Commercial

53 Building Facades

Design Principle

Building facades should be designed to create visually interesting buildings that offer variety along the commercial street.

Rationale

Building facades provide the interface between the built environment and the public realm. Historically, commercial districts have consisted of buildings that are one or two stories in height and cover entire lots. This pattern creates a regular rhythm of building mass and streetwalls. A streetwall of varied building facades is visually appealing and enhances the pedestrian environment. Blank walls at the ground floor level are unattractive and uninviting and should be avoided. Instead, elements should be used to create visual interest, including windows, doors, awnings and canopies, trellises, detailed parapets, or arcades.

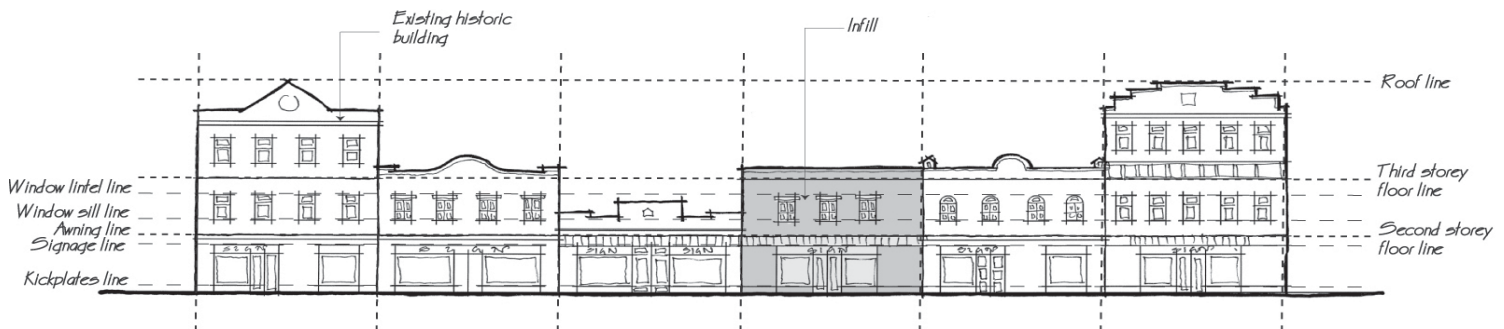
In recent decades, new buildings have increased in size and scale, creating greater challenges to creating human-scaled commercial environments. Therefore, appropriate architectural elements, such as window openings, commercial displays, frequent building entries, ornamentation, awnings and canopies, contribute to a pleasant urban streetscape.

Design Guidelines

- 53-1 Doors, windows, floor heights, cornice lines, signage, and awnings should be appropriately scaled to reduce the mass of buildings as they are experienced at the street level.
- 53-2 The primary facade of a building must face a public street and include an entry that is accessible from that street.
- 53-3 The main entrance of a building without street edge facades should open directly onto a publicly accessible walkway. This walkway should connect directly to an adjacent street sidewalk.



Avoid expansive blank walls along streets.



New construction, additions, and alterations should draw from existing architectural features.

Commercial

- 53-4 Building facades facing streets should be lined with windows, entries, and openings that provide indoor and outdoor views to the public rights-of-way and sidewalks. Continuous blank wall surfaces are not allowed.
- 53-5 Architectural features, such as display windows, pilasters, lattices, and alcoves for product display, can provide visual relief on buildings that cannot achieve continuous openings along the street and sidewalk.
- 53-6 Facades can also be articulated with insets, partial setbacks, and small pedestrian plazas, (see Section 39, "Building Orientation").
- 53-7 Solid roll-down security grates should not be used on the exterior of the building; however, they may be placed on the interior of storefront glazing or entry doors.
- 53-8 Highly reflective or dark tinted glass should be avoided.
- 53-9 Street facades of commercial buildings in areas of predominantly older buildings must have a ground floor base of a durable material, such as stone, tile, or certain types of finished concrete, where feasible.



Renovated corner entry on Del Paso Boulevard



This commercial structure is a contemporary interpretation of traditional design.

Commercial

53-10 Building facades should be designed to create a recognizable “base” and “top.” Building bases and tops can be created with variations in:

building wall thickness;

- use of special materials;
- changes in colors and materials on window trim;
- cornice treatments;
- roof overhangs with brackets; and
- use of ornamental building lines.

53-11 Utilize building elements such as cornices, lintels, sills, balconies, awnings, porches, stoops, etc to enhance building facades.

53-12 Incorporate vertical and horizontal architectural elements to mitigate long unbroken building facades.

53-13 When windows face southwest and west, frame windows with protruding vertical and horizontal shading elements such as lintels, sills, etc to provide required protection from glare and heat load.

53-14 Interpret key signature elements of the Art/ Streamline moderne style in modern 21st Century building context, to create extremely pedestrian friendly and visually interesting building facades, by grouping windows to create strong horizontal lines, using doors made of large plate glass, and incorporating materials in innovative ways.

53-15 Reduce the mass of some of the long and larger commercial buildings with architectural design including vertical elements and minor setbacks.

53-16 If possible, provide opportunities for seating and gathering within the building façade, minor building setback and sidewalks adjacent to the building.



New construction and additions are encouraged to use horizontal elements to create a “top” and “base” that give definition to the building and break down its elements to a more human scale.

54 Additions

Design Principle

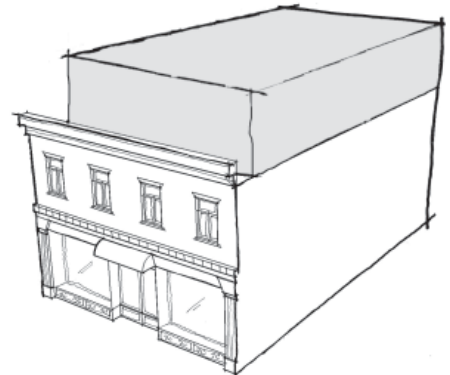
Additions should be consistent with and not disrupt the architectural style, massing, proportions, and scale of the existing building.

Rationale

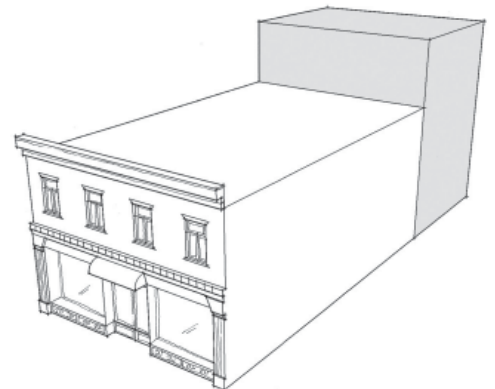
Additions should be designed as an adjunct that does not visually interfere with the original structure. The architectural details on the addition should be designed to reflect those on the original building.

Design Guidelines

- 54-1 An addition should respect, but be subordinate to, the design of the original building, and should be designed so that the form of the original structure can still be recognized.
- 54-2 An additions should not alter or destroy the architecturally defining features of the original building, such as porches, columns, railings, stairs, windows, doors, and roof and eave forms.
- 54-3 A large addition should be broken down into smaller, varied components that relate to the scale and massing of the original structure.
- 54-4 An addition should be compatible with the overall character of the property, block, and neighborhood.
- 54-5 An addition should be set back from the primary facade, especially if the addition is taller than the original building.



Addition to the top of the structure, with a second-story setback from the existing facade



Addition at the rear of the original structure

55 Roof Forms

Design Principle

The roof forms of new development should reflect the rooflines of established commercial structures.

Rationale

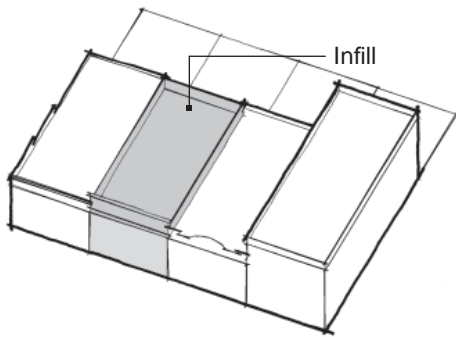
Flat rooflines are typical of much established commercial development. New commercial development should try to emulate this existing form to maintain the character of the neighborhood. However, variation in roof shapes can be desirable if compatible with existing buildings on the block.

Design Guidelines

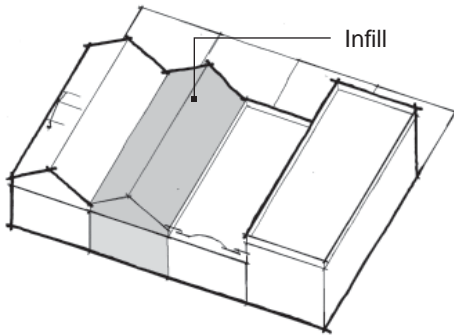
- 55-1 Articulated facade surfaces with multiple rooflines are encouraged for taller buildings to avoid an appearance of mass and to add interest.
- 55-2 Roof parapets may be used to add visual interest to flat roof lines.
- 55-3 One-story buildings should avoid the use of exaggerated, sloped roof forms.
- 55-4 Special roof forms on corner buildings are encouraged to help accentuate the corner location.

Sustainability Guidelines

- 55-5 The addition of photovoltaic solar panels is encouraged to reduce energy use.
- 55-6 The use of “cool roof” materials and or “green” roofs is encouraged to reduce energy use, heat transmission, and stormwater runoff and improve the water quality of stormwater runoff.
- 55-7 Roofing options that include recycled content are encouraged.



Infill project with a flat roof similar to other nearby existing structures.



An infill project with a pitched roof in areas where nearby buildings have pitched roofs is acceptable.



Typical flat commercial roof

56 Entry Features

Design Principle

Entry features of commercial buildings should be clearly visible to pedestrians, with a defined relationship to the street and sidewalk.

Rationale

A recessed entry helps to break up the massing of a building and makes the threshold immediately apparent to pedestrians. Decorative features, such as awnings, canopies, lighting, and signage, can also be used to clearly define and articulate an entryway.

Design Guidelines

- 56-1 Primary entries should be located on major sidewalks to provide clearly visible pedestrian access.
- 56-2 The size of the entry should be proportional to the building.
- 56-3 Secondary entries may be located at the side or rear of the building to provide access from parking areas.
- 56-4 Entries should be clearly defined with signage and architectural details.
- 56-5 In mixed-use buildings, the entrance to residential uses on the second story should be clearly defined and easily accessible.
- 56-6 Buildings near transit centers should provide clear pedestrian access and entry features oriented toward the transit center.
- 56-7 Maximize the building entries along the primary street façade. Emphasize the primary entry of buildings.



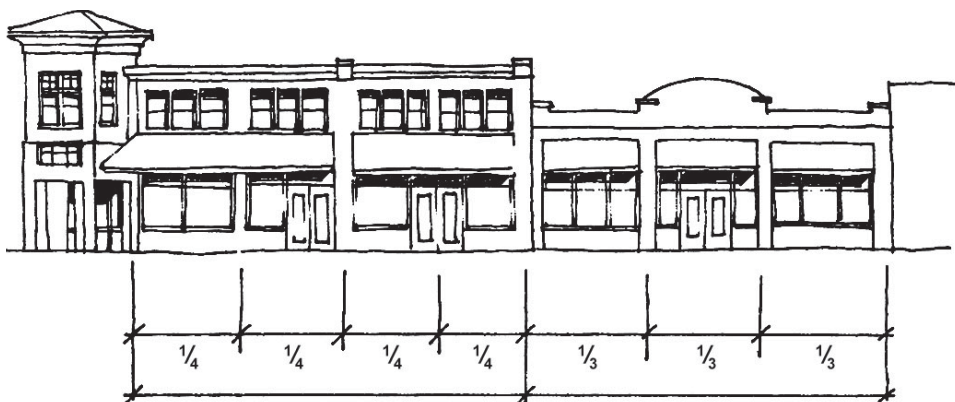
This recessed entry on the public library is typical of many older buildings on Del Paso Boulevard.



The Supper Club has a more contemporary recessed entry and door.



New Faze on Del Paso Boulevard has a dramatic corner feature with a street level entry opening onto the pedestrian way.



Building openings should maintain the proportions and spacing of other openings on the block.



A commercial facade lined with transparent glass is highly desirable.



Commercial doors should primarily be constructed of transparent glass.

57 Windows and Doors

Design Principle

The proper placement and design of windows and doors should be used to create visual interest in commercial buildings and contribute to the stylistic coherence of development along the street.

Rationale

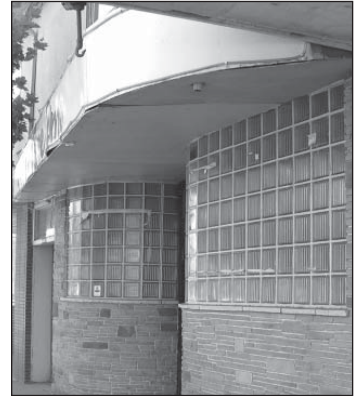
The proper placement of windows and doors along a street frontage is one of the best methods of creating visual interest into a building. Storefront windows at the street level can be used to allow pedestrians to see into the structure, and individuals inside the building to view the street, improving visual surveillance of the area outside the building and increasing security.

Design Guidelines

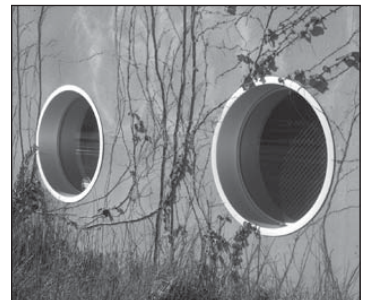
- 57-1 Windows, entries, and doors should occupy most of the wall surface on the ground floor.
- 57-2 Building openings, such as windows and doors, should maintain the proportions and spacing of other openings on the block.
- 57-3 Headers, trim, and sills of windows of new buildings should be well articulated in design, dimensions, and profiles.
- 57-4 Windows should be made of clear glass to allow pedestrians to see into the structure. Use of mirrored or dark tinted glass is not allowed.
- 57-5 Windows with authentic mullions that contain true divided lights are encouraged.
- 57-6 Doors should primarily be constructed of transparent materials, such as panels with glass, full-light glass, or glass panes in a wood or metal frame.
- 57-7 Security bars on the outside of commercial windows are highly discouraged.
- 57-8 Glass block is a construction material common to Streamline Moderne construction that allows illumination while maintaining privacy. It can be found in North Sacramento, and is suitable as a decorative element, provided that it does not significantly obscure the overall visibility into the front facade.
- 57-9 The spacing of windows must follow the facade patterns of older buildings on the block, where feasible.

Sustainability Guidelines

- 57-10 Skylights are encouraged to daylight the interior floor area, thus reducing energy use and creating a more pleasant retail/commercial environment.
- 57-11 Prismatic glazing is encouraged to increase the energy efficiency of skylights.
- 57-12 Windows should be oriented to maximize controlled daylighting from the south and north.
- 57-13 The use of insulating glazing such as LoE² is encouraged to increase energy efficiency.



Glass block can be found in some older buildings in North Sacramento, and may be used in small amounts in infill and renovations.



Round windows have been used on some contemporary buildings in North Sacramento, referencing windows of local Streamline Moderne structures.

58 Color

Design Principle

Color should be used in a way that complements the surrounding structures and adds to the liveliness and character of commercial districts.

Rationale

The use of pre-approved colors can lead to a repetitive streetscape that is lacking in distinction and interest. Matching existing color schemes can also lead to blocks, or an entire district, in one repetitive color. In general, the major design principle in the selection of building colors is to be compatible with, but not identical to, surrounding development.

Design Guidelines

- 58-1 Colors should be compatible with those of the neighboring buildings.
- 58-2 Creative use of colors is encouraged. Unique or unusual color schemes will be considered on a case-by-case basis during the design review process.
- 58-3 Building colors that complement natural materials, such as brick, stone, tile, and terra cotta, are encouraged as a primary building color. Building colors should avoid more intense colors as a primary design element.
- 58-4 Contrasting accent colors are encouraged for architectural details, awnings, and entrances.
- 58-5 Colors should be selected with consideration for the orientation of buildings. Colors on south- and west-facing facades will often appear warmer, due to sun exposure, than the same colors on the north or east sides.
- 58-6 Fluorescent, neon, or “dayglo” colors are strongly discouraged as the primary color.

59 Materials

Design Principle

Buildings should be constructed of high-quality materials that will promote the longevity of the structure and provide a pleasing appearance as the materials age.

Rationale

High-quality finish materials promote the longevity of a building and add to its character, particularly on the ground floor, where people are most likely to come in contact with the building and can easily see and touch the materials.

Design Guidelines

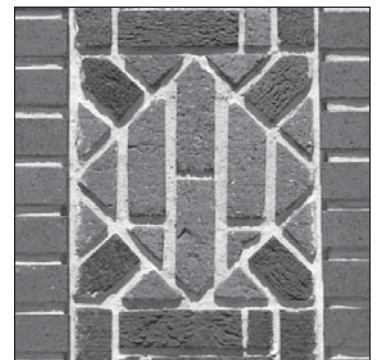
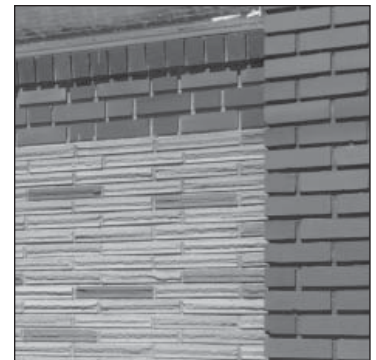
- 59-1 Use of materials commonly found on other commercial buildings in North Sacramento is recommended, including brick, stucco, stone, terra cotta, ceramic tile, glass, and steel.
 - 59-2 Durable, solid facing materials should be used.
 - 59-3 Use of the following materials is not allowed:
 - vinyl or grooved plywood siding
 - sprayed-on, textured stucco
 - raw, raised grain, or rough-sawn wood
 - 59-4 Materials for new buildings should be selected from the established range of exterior wall materials used in older buildings in the area.
 - 59-5 Wood should be milled, with a smooth, painted finish.
- Sustainability Guidelines**
- 59-6 The use of materials that include recycled content is encouraged to reduce waste.



Stucco



Stucco, tile, and glass block



Brick of varied textures and patterns



Ceramic tile



Commercial



Canvas awning

60 Canopies, Awnings, and Arcades

Design Principle

When incorporated into a commercial building, canopies, awnings, and arcades should be made of high-quality components that complement the overall design, colors, and materials of the building.

Rationale

Canopies, awnings, arcades, and overhangs are traditional commercial design elements that articulate the building facade and create variety and interest at the street level. They also serve the practical purposes of providing space for signage of commercial uses, shading windows during the summer to reduce energy use, and providing shade and weather protection for pedestrians, encouraging walking instead of auto use.

Design Guidelines

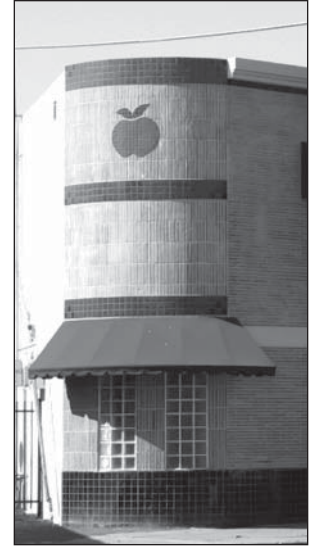
- 60-1 Canopies, awnings, arcades, and overhangs are encouraged over window displays and entries along public sidewalks on the ground floor of commercial buildings.
- 60-2 Canopies, awnings, and overhangs that project into the public right-of-way are subject to a City revocable encroachment permit. Contact the Building Division of the City Development Services Department for more information.
- 60-3 Canopies, awnings, and arcades should be designed with respect for the proportions of the building in terms of size, shape, and placement unless a unique architectural style encourages something different.
- 60-4 Canopies and awnings should fit within individual bays or structural divisions of the building facade rather than extending beyond a single bay, unless the building structure dictates an alternative placement.



Steel overhangs help to articulate commercial entries, offer shade, and add architectural interest to the building.

Commercial

- 60-5 Use of a continuous awning for the windows in the upper floors is discouraged. Each window should be articulated with an individual canopy or awning, with awnings extending no more than halfway down the window. The color and style should complement ground-level awnings and canopies on the same building.
- 60-6 Self-supporting canopies and awnings are recommended.
- 60-7 A variety of solid and striped colored awnings may be considered.
- 60-8 Brightly colored awnings should be compatible with the colors used on the main building. Uncolored or light-colored canvas awnings may be appropriate for dark and north facing facades to allow daylight to filter through to storefronts and second-story windows.
- 60-9 Canvas, fire-resistant acrylic, and metal are preferred materials for awnings. Vinyl, plastic, plasticized fabric, and fiberglass awnings are strongly discouraged.
- 60-10 Canvas awnings often fade and deteriorate over time. Canvas awnings will need regular maintenance and periodic replacement.
- 60-11 Awnings, decorative roofs, and miscellaneous entry features may project into the front public right-of-way, provided that they are not less than 8 feet above the sidewalk.
- 60-12 Canopies and awnings should only be internally illuminated where appropriate to the architectural style of the building.
- 60-13 Canopies and awnings should be designed to provide window shading to reduce energy use.
- 60-14 Canopies and awnings must not cover historical decorative ornaments, cornices, transoms, or other architectural elements of the facade.



A corner awning



Steel awnings



Commercial



Signage applied to a glass window

61 Signage and Graphics

Design Principle

Building identification signs and graphics should enhance the appearance of the building and contribute to the overall character of the street, while minimizing the appearance of clutter.

Rationale

Attractive, artistic, well-proportioned, and carefully located signs can enhance the character of commercial districts. Signage should be used for information, direction, and wayfinding, and not for advertising specific products. Signage should enhance the character of existing older buildings, and can help new development to be compatible with existing development.

Design Guidelines

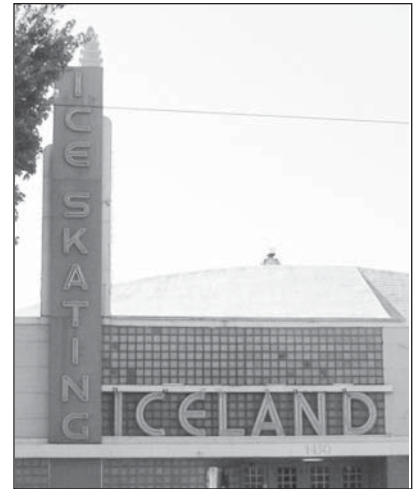
- 61-1 All commercial signage is subject to a City sign permit. Contact the Building Permits Division of the City Development Services Department for more information.
- 61-2 Signage can be wall-mounted, projecting, combined with awnings, or placed on windows. Hanging signs with projecting lettering are encouraged.



Lettering affixed to the facade of the building is common on buildings on Del Paso Boulevard. Enotria's signage consists of raised letters with a directional arrow to show the location of the front entry.

Commercial

- 61-3 Cabinet and pole signage are discouraged.
- 61-4 Materials and colors of signage should be compatible with those of the building as well as adjoining buildings.
- 61-5 Signage should be modest in scale and appearance, and should complement, not overpower, the building.
- 61-6 Signage must not obscure important architectural elements, such as windows, cornices, or decorative details.
- 61-7 Individual shop signs in a single storefront should relate to each other in design, size, color, lettering style, and placement on the building.
- 61-8 Buildings with multiple tenants should have a common signage program and include a multiple directory.



Older signage, such as Iceland's original neon signs, can contribute to the established character of the commercial district, and should be retained when appropriate.



Limn's unique signage is suspended from the overhang and throws a shadow against the building's wall.

Commercial



Pedestrian pole lighting with a solid top eliminates light spillover and glare.

62 Lighting

Design Principle

Lighting fixtures should be designed to complement and enhance the architectural style of the building and should be compatible with the character of the area.

Rationale

Lighting on buildings and sites can have a dramatic effect on the mood, quality, and character of commercial districts. The color, intensity, and types of lighting used on streets and buildings and in landscaping contributes to the character of commercial areas.

Adequate and carefully placed lighting can improve the safety and security of a site, adjacent streets, and surrounding properties. Visibility at intersections and pedestrian crossings can also be enhanced with appropriate lighting.

Design Guidelines

- 62-1 Building lighting should relate to the style and character of lighting on the whole site.
- 62-2 Use of neon, marquee lighting, and other specialized lighting is appropriate in some areas, and may be used for restaurants and entertainment uses.



Pedestrian-scaled bollard lighting

- 62-3 Specialized lighting is appropriate for building features, entries, building towers, and architectural elements.
- 62-4 Lighting should provide even illumination. Flashing, pulsating, rotating, or otherwise moving light fixtures are not appropriate.
- 62-5 Lighting fixtures must not obscure major architectural features.
- 62-6 Lighting should not direct unwanted glare toward adjacent residential or other sensitive areas. Downlighting and specialized fixtures that reduce sky-lighting and glare are encouraged.
- 62-7 Pedestrian areas should be lighted by pole- or bollard-type fixtures that are not more than 14 feet in height for pole lighting, or 3 feet in height for bollards.
- 62-8 Neon lighting is encouraged along Del Paso Boulevard.

Sustainability Guidelines

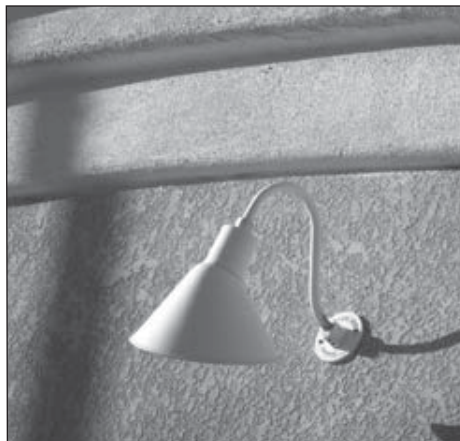
- 62-9 Compact fluorescent bulbs and photocell sensors are encouraged to achieve energy efficiency.



Contemporary lighting



Contemporary lighting



Gooseneck lighting

Commercial

63 Services and Utilities

Design Principle

Service and utility areas, including loading docks, storage areas, mechanical systems, and trash bins, should be screened from view and integrated into the design of the project.

Rationale

Although necessary and functional aspects of commercial districts, service areas, loading docks, delivery areas, and mechanical equipment can be unsightly and noisy and may detract from the quality of the urban environment. Functional service areas of buildings should receive the same design attention and consideration as more public spaces and should be carefully placed and screened to reduce noise and visual blight.

Design Guidelines

Service Areas and Loading Areas

- 63-1 Service areas, including loading docks, storage areas, and trash bins, should be screened from adjoining walkways.
- 63-2 To the extent feasible, loading areas should be located and designed to minimize their visibility from public areas and adjacent properties. Loading areas should be accessible from side streets, interior parking garages, or the rear of buildings rather than from the fronts of buildings.
- 63-3 Landscaping and decorative walls and fences should be used to screen mechanical equipment, loading areas, and other service areas.
- 63-4 Where feasible, loading areas should be functionally separated from parking and pedestrian walkways for safety and to provide convenient access for delivery trucks.



The rear of this commercial building has been carefully screened.

Mechanical Systems

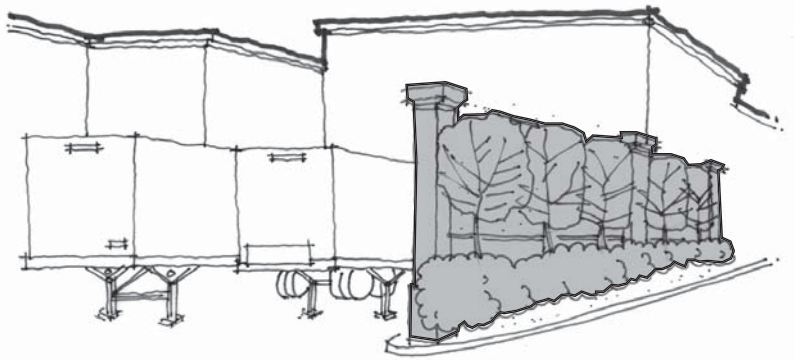
- 63-5 Mechanical equipment, such as air conditioning units, pipes, ducts, vents, access doors, meters, transformers, and other building systems equipment that produce noise, exhaust, or visual unsightliness, should be located away from pedestrian ways.
- 63-6 All such equipment should be screened or hidden from public view in a manner consistent with the character of the building and the surrounding district.
- 63-7 Rooftop and ground mounted mechanical equipment and trash storage areas should be screened from view from adjoining properties and public rights-of-way.

Trash Enclosures

- 63-8 All outdoor trash and garbage containers should be located at the rear of lots away from public view and screened with solid, decorative walls that match the design of the primary structure. Where possible, trash enclosures should not be located along the pedestrian ways and streets.

Sustainability Guidelines

- 63-9 Where feasible, heating, ventilation, and air conditioning units should be placed on the north side of the building (if not the street side) to shade the units and minimize energy consumption.



Service/loading and trash areas should be screened from view with landscaping, walls, or other structures.

Commercial

STREETSCAPE GUIDELINES

The design of the streetscape should address the relationship between commercial buildings and the public realm by providing such amenities as street trees, street furniture, landscaping, and paving. A successful streetscape should foster a sense of place and feelings of community pride and ownership. It can also enhance the value of commercial properties. Elements such as street trees and street furniture should contribute to a walkable, pedestrian-scaled environment. The streetscape design in the neighborhood should also support public social interaction and enhance the vitality of the commercial district.



Street trees soften the appearance of a commercial building on Del Paso Boulevard.

64 Parking Lot Design

Design Principle

Parking lots should be screened from the street and nearby sidewalks and provide shade to parked automobiles.

Rationale

Parking lots should be adequately screened with fences, walls, and landscaping. Trees and landscaped areas incorporated into parking lots can help to soften paved areas, reduce heat during the summer months by providing shade, and filter pollutants from the air.

Design Guidelines

- 64-1 Surface parking lots adjacent to public sidewalks should be screened with appropriate design elements, such as fences, walls, and landscaping.
- 64-2 Screening materials should not block views of the parking lot from passing cars to promote visual surveillance of the lot.
- 64-3 Pedestrian routes through parking lots should be clearly designated with paving and landscaping.
- 64-4 Use of a trellis-style structure attached above a wall or fence can help maintain the character of the streetwall and improve the pedestrian environment along the street.



Landscaping should screen parking lots from the street while still allowing some visibility to promote safety.



This landscaped walkway allows pedestrian access to local businesses.

Commercial



Alternative surfaces such as grass pavers keep stormwater runoff on-site and reduce heat production.



Modular pavers are another attractive alternative that helps to keep stormwater runoff on-site.



Bio-swales collect stormwater runoff and improve run-off water quality.

64-5 Parking lots shall be planted with trees to provide a minimum of 50% shading after 15 years in conformance with City Municipal Code Section 17.68, "Landscaping and Paving Regulations." Shading should be calculated by using the expected diameter of the tree at 15 years. A link to the City of Sacramento Parking Lot Tree Shading Design and Maintenance Guidelines is available at:

cityofsacramento.org/parksandrecreation/urbanforest/#right

64-6 Trees planted in parking lots should be protected with curbs, bollards or tree grates, or located on landscaped walkways.

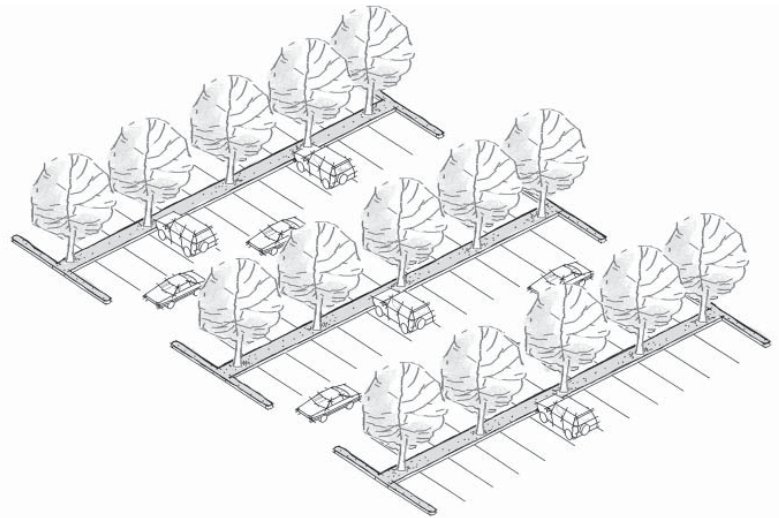
64-7 Use of permeable materials, such as permeable asphalt, grasscrete, and modular pavers, are encouraged to reduce stormwater runoff. Where possible, drainage should be directed into planting areas to increase percolation of water runoff.

Sustainability Guidelines

64-8 All planting areas, including those designed to accommodate the 2-foot overhang on parking spaces, should be landscaped with groundcover or other planting materials to reduce stormwater runoff.

64-9 The use of bio-swales is encouraged to reduce stormwater runoff.

64-10 Light colored paving materials should be considered for use as primary paving materials to reduce heat transmission.



Parking lots should be designed to provide 50% shading after 15 years.

65 Street Trees

Design Principle

Street trees should be planted on all streets to provide a visual frame to the street and shade and comfort to visitors to commercial districts.

Rationale

Street trees soften the appearance of the commercial streetscape, and make it more comfortable for pedestrians by providing essential shade during the summer months.

Design Guidelines

- 65-1 Street trees should be spaced no further than 30 feet on center, and should be located in either a 6-foot wide planting strip between the curb and sidewalk, or within a metal-grated tree planter area of 4 feet by 4 feet minimum adjacent to the curb.
- 65-2 Street trees that are not planted and maintained by the City of Sacramento, and that project into the public right-of-way, are subject to a City of Sacramento revocable encroachment permit. Contact the Building Division of the Development Services Department for more information.
- 65-3 Street trees should be easy to maintain, reduce sidewalk damage, and provide a sufficiently large, wide canopy to shade the sidewalks.
- 65-4 Street trees must be pruned to provide a clear space between the lower branches and the sidewalk and roadway to prevent damage and provide a clear view of building signage, ground floor windows, and doors.
- 65-5 Street trees within the public right-of-way must not be trimmed or removed without consulting the City Department of Parks and Recreation Urban Forest Services at 916-433-6345.
- 65-6 Tree species should be suitable for the Sacramento climate, and should be selected for water conservation. Refer to the following lists for recommended species:

Sacramento Tree Foundation

www.sactree.com/trees/shade_trees.htm#large

Sacramento Municipal Utility District (SMUD)

www.smud.org/residential/saving/trees/choices.html

City of Sacramento

Department of Parks and Recreation

www.cityofsacramento.org/parksandrecreation/trees/#guide



Street trees provide welcome shade for pedestrians.



Landscaped areas add to the beauty of commercial districts.

66 Landscape Elements

Design Principle

Landscape elements should be used to foster an attractive and comfortable commercial environment.

Rationale

Parks, plazas, and town squares should be developed as the focus of commercial areas, with commercial development opening directly onto these spaces. Parks, plazas and town squares should include landscape elements, such as ornamental plants and water features, to create visual interest and an attractive, appealing environment.

Design Guidelines

- 66-1 Landscaping shall conform to all relevant City of Sacramento regulations and guidelines, including the City of Sacramento Municipal Code, "Landscaping and Paving Regulations," Chapter 124.625.
- 66-2 Plant species should be suitable for the Sacramento climate. Low-water landscaping materials are encouraged.
- 66-3 High-maintenance annuals and perennials should be used only as smaller landscape elements.
- 66-4 Anticipate the full growth of landscaping materials so that trees and shrubs do not conflict with lighting and roofs.
- 66-5 Landscaped areas are preferred over impermeable paved surfaces.
- 66-6 An automatic irrigation system must be installed to provide consistent coverage of all landscaped areas. Automatic controllers with rain shut-off valves will allow for greater water conservation. Irrigation controls should be screened from view by landscaping or other attractive site materials.
- 66-7 Turf and groundcover are more effectively irrigated with a conventional spray system. Head-to-head spray coverage is recommended. Avoid overspray onto adjacent areas.
- 66-8 A drip irrigation system is recommended for shrubs and trees to provide deeper, more even watering. Drip irrigation permits greater water conservation than a conventional spray system.
- 66-9 Bare soil should be planted or mulched to minimize run-off.
- 66-10 Include tree planting along the alley to screen and soften the impact of new development to create a more pedestrian-friendly environment along alleyways.

Sustainability Guidelines

- 66-11 Deciduous shade trees and shrubs should be planted, where appropriate, to shade the west and south sides of buildings and all paved areas to reduce heat transmission.
- 66-12 New planting strips located between the sidewalk and street should be a minimum of 6 feet wide to promote the health of shade trees.

67 Hardscape Elements and Street Furniture

Design Principle

Hardscape elements and street furniture should be selected and installed so as to increase opportunities for people to congregate and interact, and should complement the surrounding architecture.

Rationale

Hardscape elements and street furniture, such as pedestrian kiosks, benches, transit shelters, newspaper racks, trash cans, and café tables, encourage strolling and window shopping and increase opportunities for casual social interaction. This informal interaction can enhance the appeal and vitality of commercial districts.

Design Guidelines

- 67-1 Street furniture should be consistent with the character of existing businesses.
- 67-2 Street furniture should be attractive, functional, easy to maintain, high-quality, and vandal resistant.
- 67-3 Street furniture must not block the sidewalk or access to parking.
- 67-4 Seating is highly encouraged. A variety of seating alternatives, such as benches, seat walls, and café tables are possible.
- 67-5 Public art incorporated into site and building design is encouraged.
- 67-6 The pattern and texture of ground paving materials should fit the context of the district. Use of high-quality brick, stone, textured concrete, terrazzo tile, or other decorative pavers is encouraged.
- 67-7 Hardscape materials that can endure Sacramento's intense weather conditions should be selected.

Sustainability Guidelines

- 67-8 Pervious concrete should be used, when feasible, because it has better reflectivity, reducing heat transmission and stormwater runoff.
- 67-9 The use of recycled paving materials is encouraged.



Seating can consist of conventional benches.



Trash receptacles should be provided at regular intervals



Seating can even be combined with public art.

Mixed-Use Development

Mixed-use development combines commercial with other uses, such as office and residential. When mixed-use development is vertical in form, the commercial and office professional uses should be on the first story, with residential above. The first story should be designed with a large percentage of windows, doors, and other transparent surfaces. Upper stories should have a larger percentage of opaque surface, which can be articulated with windows, balconies, and patios.

Additional design guidelines from the multifamily and commercial chapters should be referenced as well.

Sustainability Guidelines

For mixed-use development, please reference the Sustainable Design Practices Section on page 121.



Mixed-use building with ground floor retail and residential above, Orenco Station, Oregon



This mixed use building has a strong corner treatment, a clearly defined base, and an articulated facade.

Mixed-Use Development

68 Orientation & Layout

Design Principle

Mixed-Use buildings should be constructed to the property line behind the sidewalk, with allowable variation in the setback to provide public amenities.

Rationale

Mixed-Use buildings in urban areas have typically been built to the front of the property line behind the sidewalk, creating a line of buildings with a consistent “streetwall” that supports a strong relationship between the building, and the public realm. This streetwall should be reinforced by new construction and additions. The streetwall may be varied to create usable public spaces such as outdoor café dining and small plazas with seating.

Design Guidelines

- 68-1 Create a strong building edge along the street to maximize visibility of the commercial uses, which in turn provides eyes on the street.
- 68-2 Provide parking in the rear of the lot, preferably accessed by side roads, and existing alleys and new minimum 20 feet wide driveways.
- 68-3 Articulate driveways and parking lots with special paving and trees.



Mixed-use building built to the street edge with ground floor retail and residential above.

Mixed-Use Development

69 Massing & Setbacks

Design Principle

The size and scale of mixed-use buildings should be complement existing development in commercial districts.

Rationale

New mixed-use development should respect the scale and massing of existing surrounding development. Corner sites offer a special opportunity for providing additional building height and mass can serve as an anchor for the block.

Design Guidelines

- 69-1 Locate the majority of the building façade and commercial building uses along the edge of sidewalk.
- 69-2 Step back the massing of the building development such that it is at its highest intensity along major streets, and at its lowest when adjacent to existing smaller scale residential development.



Mixed-use building with varied setbacks and massing .

Mixed-Use Development



Ground floor commercial uses should have larger windows to engage the public realm and differentiate from the residential above.

70 Building Articulation

Design Principle

Buildings should include ground floor transparency, design details and features that provide a significant contribution to the streetwall and overall pedestrian experience.

Rationale

Public access and greater visibility will promote successful development.

Design Guidelines

- 70-1 Maximize the number of building entries, especially of office and retail businesses, along the façade fronting the major street. Emphasize primary entry of buildings (e.g. entrance lobby) with vertical elements.
- 70-2 Where possible, locate pedestrian-oriented entries of the upper floor residential units along the street facing façade.
- 70-3 Articulate the front facades with rhythm of windows, both along the ground floor and upper residential floors.
- 70-4 Ensure that ground floor is as transparent as possible to connect the pedestrians and the building users.



This mixed-use building has a clearly defined base, and a well articulated facade.

71 Private Realm

Design Principle

The “private realm” refers to the buildings and land that are on privately-owned lots and parcels. The private realm should consist of private and semi-private transitional spaces between the public realm and buildings, that serve to enhance the vitality of the community.

Rationale

The design of the private realm will have a significant impact on the quality of the public realm, as private buildings provide the edges to streets and open spaces. These guidelines serve to guide those aspects of the private realm that have a direct affect on the surrounding public context.

Design Guidelines

- 59-1 The use of residential balconies and commercial awnings which extend into the public realm is encouraged.
- 59-2 Landscape front setbacks of the street facing ground floor residential component of the mixed-use buildings.
- 59-3 Provide privacy for first floor office and residential units by allowing them to be three feet above the sidewalk level.

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