



# REPORT TO PLANNING COMMISSION City of Sacramento

# 4

915 I Street, Sacramento, CA 95814-2671

**PUBLIC HEARING**  
January 08, 2009

**To:** Members of the Planning Commission

**Subject:** Recommendation to Amend Sacramento City Code Relating to the Design Guidelines to the Central Business District Special Planning District (M05-084)

**Location/Council District:** Central City (Districts 1, 3 and 4)

**Contact:** Gregory B. Taylor, AIA, Senior Urban Designer, (916) 808-5268;  
William Crouch, Urban Design Manager (916) 808-8013;  
David Kwong, Current Planning Manager (916) 808-2691.

**Recommendation:**

Staff requests the Planning Commission make a recommendation on the proposed amendment of Chapter 17.96, the Central Business District – Special Planning District. The amendment of this chapter proposes to strike the reference to the 1987 architectural and streetscape design guidelines, while retaining reference to the 1987 “urban design plan,” which is entitled the Framework Plan. The new CCUDG design guidelines will apply to development within the CBD-C3 zone. The “urban design plan” is the land use plan document that is to be revised and the Planning Commission will continue have purview to make amendments to that plan.

**Summary:** Staff presented the Commission with a Final Draft version of the Central City Design Guidelines on December 18, 2008 for Review and Comment. Staff had also intended the Commission make a recommendation on the proposed amendment, however, the noticing was not properly executed and staff is now presenting the amendment for recommendation to City Council.

The focus of the 1987 Urban Design Plan and Guidelines followed the existing Central Business District, the revised document will propose the expansion of the downtown boundary, naming it as the Central Core Design Review District, and the CCUDG will apply to projects within this district. To be as comprehensive as possible and for ease of reference and future amendments, the Central City Urban Design Guidelines and Plan, Part One has will been supplemented to include sections for each specific Central City design review district so that we have one reference document for the entire Central City, excluding (for now) Old Sacramento and Sutter’s Landing and the forth coming Docks Area Design

Guidelines. To achieve this goal, the Central City Urban Design Guidelines and Plan, Part One, staff are proposing a new Central City Design Review District Map (see attachment) with the altered boundaries for the existing Central City/Central City Design Review District and including all of the other existing areas with design review requirements under the respective special planning district zoning (R Street, Alhambra Corridor and Richards Boulevard). Supplemental Sections will refer to the following Central City design review districts:

- SECTION 1 - Central Core
- SECTION 2 - Midtown Neighborhoods
- SECTION 3 - Sacramento Railyards
- SECTION 4 – Richards Boulevard Area Plan (RBAP)

Once the Central Core Design Review District boundaries are adopted and approval of the Central City Urban Design Guidelines and Plan, Part One, these new guidelines will apply to the expanded Central Core area. The other district boundaries and their specific applicable design guidelines will remain unchanged. In the future as a district's design guidelines are revised, then we can adopt those new design guidelines and delete/amend the design review provisions in the Special Planning Districts if they refer to old guidelines or otherwise conflict with Chapter 132.

At this time, only the Central Business District Special Planning District (CBD or C-3 zone) design guideline references need to be amended. This action has been initiated by the Planning Manager, is subject to Planning Commission review and recommendation, and would be approved by the City Council simultaneously with final adoption of the Guidelines.

This will complete Part One of the study comprising the newly updated Central City Urban Design Guidelines and represents the cumulative effort of the Mayor and City Council, City Commissions, Steering Committee members, community and focus groups, business and professional groups, involved citizens, the Consultant Team and staff.

Part Two of the study will continue to be developed by staff comprising the Central City Urban Design Plan, including the strategy for the Central Core/Central Business District zone development standards in regards to building height zones, transitional height zones to the CBD edge, as well as potential "Urban Core Impact Fee" assessments based on Floor Area Ratios for CBD projects, and with an actual urban design plan which implements the established guidelines from Part One. The Central City Urban Design Plan, Part Two will incorporate a Programmatic EIR for Central Core development as part of an Development Strategy for the City's future growth in the Central Core area.

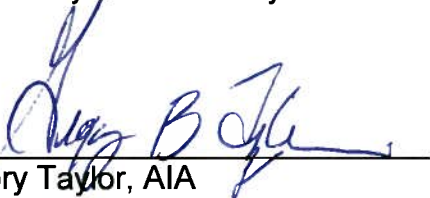
**Environmental Considerations:** Under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) guidelines, administrative activities do not constitute a project and are therefore exempt from environmental review. The Central City Urban Design Guidelines and Plan, Part One is considered exempt under CEQA Section 15061(b) (3), because the Design Guidelines do not change existing development standards in the CBD zone.

**Policy Considerations:** The Central City Urban Design Guidelines and Plan, Part One is being considered in conjunction with General Plan Update and is consistent with the City's Strategic Plan, three-year goal, to achieve sustainability and livability in the City of Sacramento.

**Sustainability Considerations:** The Central City Urban Design Guidelines and Plan, Part One is consistent with the City's Sustainability Master Plan Goals. The Council's initiative to develop a safe, livable, and vibrant Central City promotes responsible use of energy resources by encouraging energy-efficient construction and by reducing energy consumption through responsible design of the built environment.

**Staff Recommendations to Commission:** Staff requests the Planning Commission make a recommendation on the proposed amendment of Chapter 17.96, the Central Business District – Special Planning District. The amendment of this chapter proposes to strike the reference to “urban design guidelines” and replace with a reference to “urban design plan” as the document that the Planning Commission will have purview to make amendments.

Respectfully Submitted by:



Gregory Taylor, AIA  
Senior Urban Designer

Approved by:



William Crouch, AIA, FRAIA, NCARB  
Urban Design Manager

**Attachments:**

- Attachment 1 Statement of Initiation – Amendment of Chapter 17.96 of the Zoning Code Central Business District Special Planning District.
- Attachment 2 Proposed Central Core Design Review District map.
- Attachment 3 Proposed Ordinance change amending Section 17.96.020, amending Title 17 of the Sacramento City Code relating to Design Guidelines applicable to the Central Business District Special Planning District.

## STATEMENT OF INITIATION

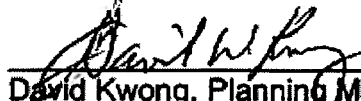
### Amendment to Chapter 17.96 of the Zoning Code Central Business District Special Planning District

In accordance with the procedures for zoning amendments as set out in Section 17.208.010 of Title 17 (Zoning Code) of the Sacramento City Code, the Planning Manager of the City of Sacramento Department of Development Services hereby initiates an amendment to Section 17.96.020 to replace references to the 1987 architectural design and streetscape design guidelines and instead refer to the 2008 Central City Urban Design Guidelines and Plan. Section 17.96.020 currently reads as follows:

#### **"17.96.020 Urban design, architectural design and streetscape design guidelines—Procedure.**

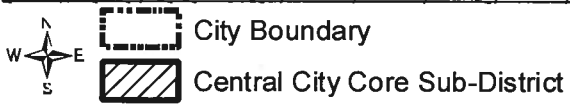
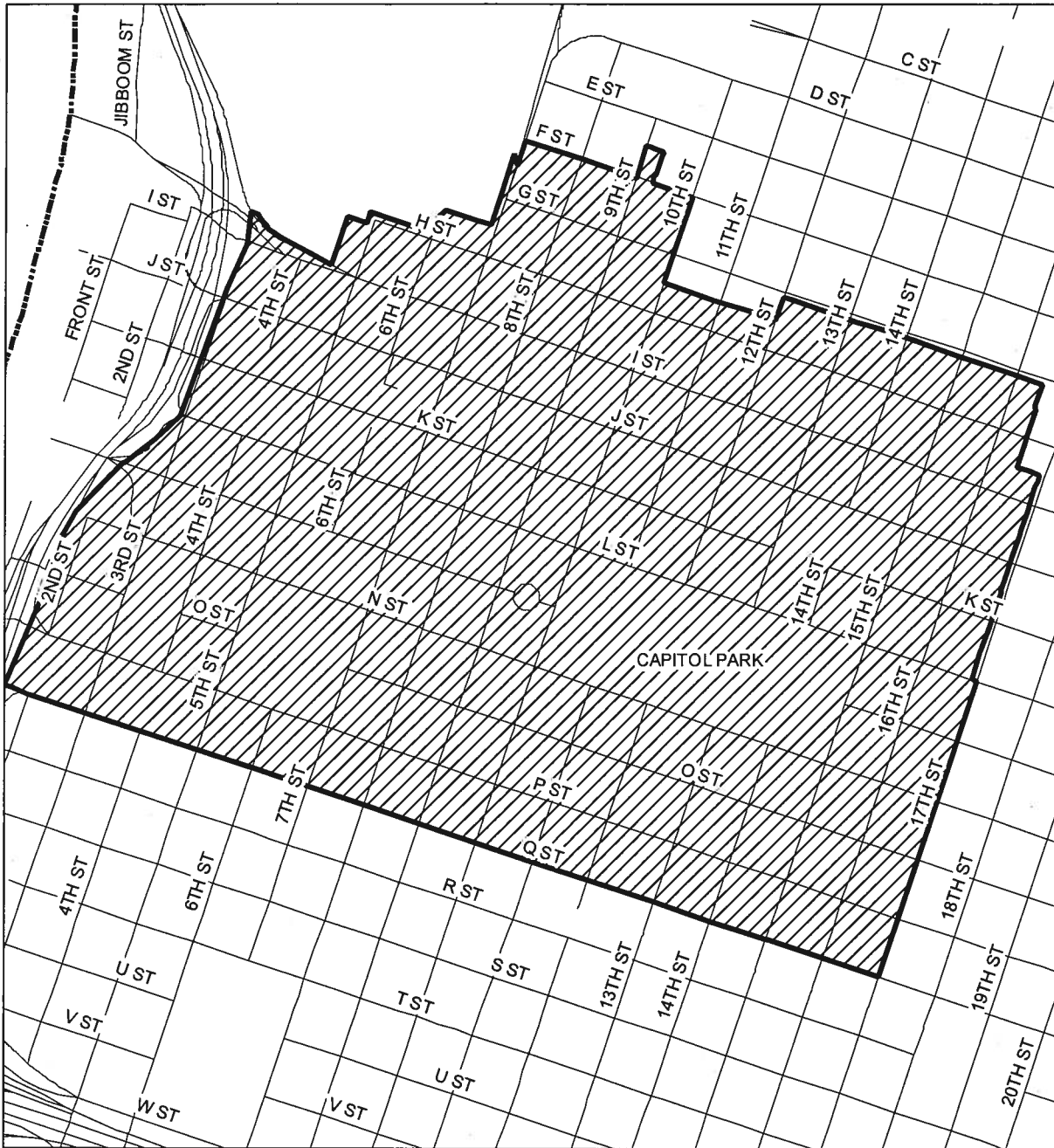
The CBD-SPD (C-3) zone design guidelines consisting of the urban design, architectural design and streetscape design guidelines, are adopted for the CBD-SPD zone. The planning commission, Sacramento housing and redevelopment commission, design commission, preservation commission, the design director, the preservation director, and the city and Sacramento housing and redevelopment agency staffs, shall use the aforementioned guidelines in the evaluation of development projects within the CBD-SPD (C-3) zone. The design commission, preservation commission, planning commission and city council shall have the authority to waive individual guideline provisions for specific projects. These waivers may occur where it is found on the basis of substantial evidence that such waiver is necessary or appropriate to accomplish the policies for downtown design more than would strict application of the guidelines. The city planning commission may amend the design guidelines where such amendment will aid in the accomplishment of the policies for downtown design." (emphasis added) (Ord. 2006-065 § 17: Ord. 99-015 § 5-1.1-B)

After approval of this Statement of Initiation by the Planning Manager, a public hearing shall be noticed and held by the Planning Commission to consider the proposed amendment of Chapter 17.96, the Central Business District - Special Planning District, in accordance with the procedures specified in Section 17.208.010.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
David Kwong, Planning Manager

Date: 2/8/08

**(M05-084) Central City Urban Design Guidelines:  
Central City Core Sub-District**



October 22, 2008

**ORDINANCE NO. 2009- \_\_\_\_\_**

Adopted by the Sacramento City Council

**AMENDING SECTION 17.96.020 OF TITLE 17 OF THE SACRAMENTO CITY  
CODE (THE ZONING CODE) RELATING TO DESIGN GUIDELINES  
APPLICABLE TO THE CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT  
SPECIAL PLANNING DISTRICT**

**BE IT ENACTED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SACRAMENTO:**

Section 1. Section 17.96.020 of Title 17 of the Sacramento City Code (the Zoning Code) is amended to read as follows:

**17.96.020 Urban design, architectural design and streetscape design  
guidelines—Procedure.**

The CBD-SPD (C-3) zone design guidelines consisting of the 1987 Central Business District Framework Plan (urban design plan) and the 2009 Central City Core Design Guidelines regarding architectural design and streetscape design guidelines, are adopted for the CBD-SPD zone. The planning commission, Sacramento housing and redevelopment commission, design commission, preservation commission, the design director, the preservation director, and the city and Sacramento housing and redevelopment agency staffs, shall use the aforementioned guidelines in the evaluation of development projects within the CBD-SPD (C-3) zone. The design commission, preservation commission, planning commission and city council shall have the authority to waive individual guideline provisions for specific projects. These waivers may occur where it is found on the basis of substantial evidence that such waiver is necessary or appropriate to accomplish the policies for downtown design more than would strict application of the guidelines. The city planning commission may amend the urban design guidelines plan where such amendment will aid in the accomplishment of the policies for downtown design.