

C I T Y O F S A C R A M E N T O
C a l i f o r n i a

PRESERVATION AREA PLAN

Adopted in 1978

PRESERVATION AREA PLAN

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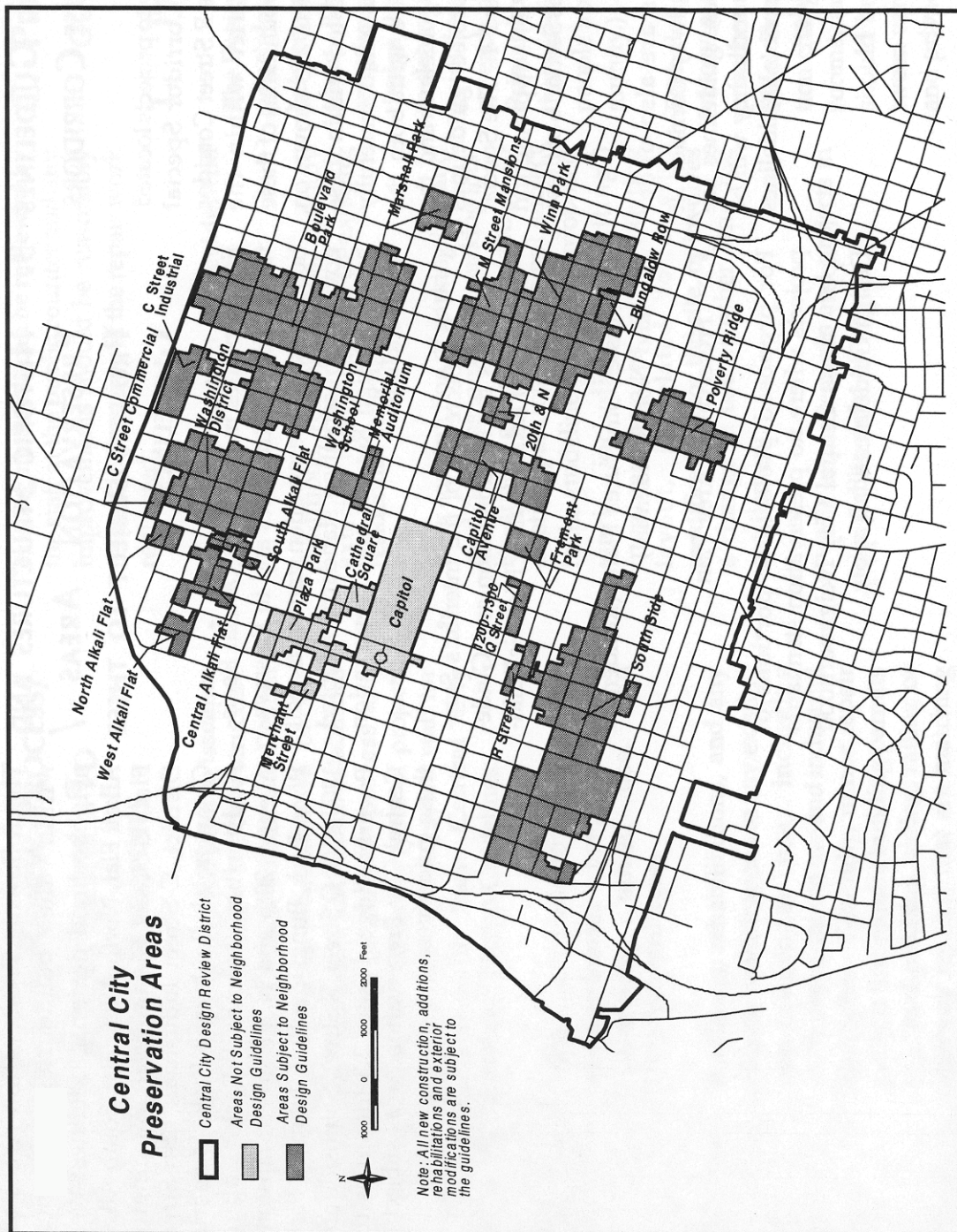
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I. MAP SHOWING BOUNDARIES OF AREAS



II. TO THE APPLICANT

If you own a structure or property within the boundaries of a Preservation Area and wish to do any of the following., you must prepare and submit an application and related plans to the Preservation Board for approval. Review and approval must be completed before you can be issued a building work permit.

Within Preservation Areas, the following actions require Preservation Board review and approval:

1. Demolishing of a structure
2. Any work affecting the exterior of a structure
3. Construction of a new structure
4. Relocation of a structure:
 - a. within a Preservation Area
 - b. out of a Preservation Area
 - c. into a Preservation Area

Guidelines for completing applications and related plans are contained in this document. (See Listed Structures Plan if altering, remodeling, repairing or adding to the exterior of a Listed Structure.) Please be aware that all actions must comply with existing ordinance and zoning laws.

III. INTRODUCTION

The Sacramento Preservation Program was formally established with the adoption of Ordinance 3469-4th Series (Chapter 32, City Code) on January 18, 1975. This ordinance created the Preservation Board as the public body responsible for the City's preservation efforts within the Central City, and established the City's policy of the protection and preservation of historically, architecturally and culturally significant structures and areas. The Preservation Board's initial responsibility was the development of the City's Official Register which identified significant pre-1920 residential buildings and Preservation Areas. Adoption of the Listed Structures Plan followed. The Listed Structures Plan explained policies and benefits to be derived from preservation, identified significant pre-1920 individual structures, and outlined the measures necessary to protect and preserve these structures. The present document, Preservation Area Plan, is another step to further the implementation of Sacramento's preservation objectives as established by Chapter 32, Fourth Series, of the Sacramento City Code. This plan has been developed to identify significant pre-1920 Preservation Areas and to delineate measures necessary to preserve and protect these areas. With the adoption of the Plan, the Preservation Board becomes responsible for reviewing all rehabilitation, relocation, demolition and new construction within Preservation Areas and evaluating each application in accordance with the standards and criteria listed in this plan and any applicable land use plans.

A. Purpose and Philosophy

The purpose of the preservation program at this time is to protect and maintain the character of architecturally, historically and culturally significant structures and areas within the City of Sacramento dating from 1848 through 1920. To ensure that all activities within Preservation Areas are directed toward the enhancement of these areas, the Preservation Board has been given the responsibility of reviewing all projects involving relocation, signage, demolition, new construction and exterior remodeling of buildings within Preservation Areas, prior to the issuance of appropriate permits. The Board seeks to maintain the area's scale and character through protection and preservation, while at the same time allowing for creative, yet appropriate rehabilitation and new construction. The intent of the Preservation Board is not to require new construction to be reproductions of older structures, but rather to insure that new construction be complementary to the Preservation Area in scale, bulk, height, design and general character.

B. Goals

The following goals are established to implement the City's Preservation Program and to comply with State and Federal regulations regarding the certification of such programs. In addition, these goals are directed toward achieving harmonious, integrated and compatible developments that enhance preservation areas and protect architectural and historic resources, values, investments, and the general welfare of the public within Preservation Areas of the Central City.

Specific goals include:

1. Buildings

- a. To encourage new construction, new design and rehabilitation that is integrated and compatible with the character of Preservation Areas.
- b. To encourage the on-site retention and protection of existing Supportive and Listed Structures.
- c. To insure that non-residential developments are designed so as to be compatible with the surrounding Preservation Area.
- d. To coordinate exterior building design on all elevations with regard to color, materials, architectural form, style and detailing to achieve design harmony and enhance the existing Preservation Area.
- e. To encourage preservation of existing historic structures while enhancing their value and economic life.

2. Landscaping

- a. To encourage historic landscaping practices and/or landscaping that harmonizes with the building design and that of the surrounding area.
- b. To encourage the retention and protection of existing trees in Preservation Areas in particular and in the Central City in general, and to encourage the planting of trees in parking areas, adjacent to structures, and on Central City streets.
- c. To encourage landscape screening of parking lots, trash areas, and mechanical equipment.
- d. To encourage innovative and compatible graphic design which properly identifies the project and complements the architecture of the project and the Preservation Area.

C. Definitions

1. Preservation Areas

A preservation area is an area or place having a special architectural character or special historical or aesthetic interest or value, comprised of contiguous sites or contiguous groups of structures relating harmoniously and compatibly, along with neighboring property, which taken together reflect a distinct and unified character.

"Neighboring property" does not necessarily mean contiguous property; rather it means the general area within which the contiguous sites or-groups of structures are located and which, as a whole, is exemplified by a special architectural character or special historical or aesthetic interest or value. The following criteria were utilized in the selection of Preservation Areas:

- a. Areas providing significant examples of architectural styles of the past or landmarks in the history of architecture.
- b. Areas serving as a reminder of past eras, events and persons important in local, state or national history, and illustrating past living styles for future generations to observe, study and inhabit.
- c. Areas containing historic and culturally significant grounds, gardens, and objects.

2. Listed Structures

Listed Structures are those buildings designated on the Official Register as Essential or Priority.

- a. Essential: those structures of irreplaceable architectural, cultural or historic significance.
- b. Priority: those structures whose significance is of a lesser degree but should remain unless unusual and compelling circumstances dictate removal.

3. Supportive Structures

Supportive Structures are those buildings whose basic characteristics and/or salient architectural details harmonize with their surroundings and help maintain the integrity of a Preservation Area.

Supportive structures may include, but are not limited to the following:

- a. Pre-World War II buildings that are not architecturally significant but provide visual harmony to the streetscape and area.

- b. Pre-1941 buildings that, though they continue to harmonize with their surroundings, have been altered to the point that they do not meet the criteria to be listed structures. If properly rehabilitated, they could possibly be eligible for individual inclusion on the Official Register.
- c. Post-1941 buildings that harmonize with the Area because of height and bulk.
- d. Commercial buildings, not yet identified on the Official Register, may also be supportive when they meet the criteria. --'

4. Retrievable Structures

Retrievable structures are those which date prior to 1941, but, because of "misguided improvements" or additions, are not at this time supportive to the Area or streetscape. A retrievable structure, if properly rehabilitated, might move up the Supportive or Listed status.

5. Non-Supportive Structures

Non-Supportive Structures are those dating after 1941 that have no architectural, cultural or historic significance, nor do they provide visual harmony to the streetscape in terms of height, bulk, setback and roof shape.

6. Historic Landscaping

Historic landscaping is that practice of making the open space surrounding a historic structure reflect the era of that structure and the Preservation Area as a whole. This would include planting vegetation and treating it in a manner that was popular at the time the structure was built.

IV. GUIDELINES FOR ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW

The following standards and criteria are intended to provide a frame of reference for the applicant as well as a method of review for the Board. The requirements are not inflexible, nor are they intended to discourage creativity, invention and innovation. Rather, they will ensure preservation of the character of structures and Areas while enhancing their value and economic life.

A. Rehabilitation of Listed Structures

See "Listed Structures Plan," available from the Preservation Director.

B. Rehabilitation of Supportive Structures and Retrievable Structures

The following sets forth criteria that should be followed in altering, remodeling, repairing or adding to the exterior of Supportive Structures and Retrievable Structures.

1. General Design Standards

A house should not be made to look either newer or older than as it appeared when built. Many Supportive Structures and all Retrievable Structures have been improperly altered and should be returned, wherever possible, to the original character and design of the house,

a. Exterior Materials

Renovations should utilize the original design character of the building. If because of alterations the original character or treatment of the building cannot be determined, renovations should follow existing dominant materials and textures of the adjacent structures.

Imitation materials or design elements for exterior walls should be avoided whenever possible. Types of material to be avoided are asphalt and asbestos shingles or siding, aluminum windows and doors, aluminum awnings and aluminum roofing.

b. Color Schemes

Although no specific color palette is required, colors used should contrast or blend harmoniously with neighboring structures. Extremely bright colors may be used sparingly for accent, but should be avoided when used as a primary color of the walls. For an effective color scheme, use of more than five colors should be avoided. Walls should utilize one major color with two or three colors used in the trim. Wall colors should be

c. Roofing

Roofing will generally constitute a major visual aspect of the structure and will consequently be considered part of the color scheme of the house. Color, texture, and material should not detract from the building; a neutral-toned material is generally preferable.

d. Height

To maintain a street's unity, structures should respect the height and scale of neighboring buildings, particularly the adjacent structures. A proposed upper floor addition which raises the height of a structure above that of its neighbors will generally not be approved. This may be permitted, however, if the addition is set back from the front facade of the structure so that it is not noticeable from the street. Structures may be raised (lifted) if appropriate to the building's proportions and the surrounding neighborhood.

e. Spacing

Uniform spaces between buildings lend a rhythm and harmony to the streetscape when viewed in sequence. A side or height addition to a structure which adversely alters such rhythm should not occur.

2. Architectural Details

Fences, roofs, chimneys, cornices, windows, entrances, awnings, porches, garage doors and other accoutrements should be appropriate to the style of the house they are a part of or with which they are associated. All architectural features, specifically included in the description of the structure set forth in the adopted survey card, for the structure shall be retained, except where alteration or removal is required by law or where there is no feasible alternative to the proposed alteration or removal.

Specifically, the following details should be kept in mind:

- a. Windows: Windows should be replaced only if rehabilitation of existing material is not functionally feasible. New windows should generally be of the same size, material, and type as the old ones and retain the same arrangement and proportion as the original fenestration. Metal awnings: metal sash windows, non-functional decorative shutters, and other modern types of window treatment usually detract from the original design and should be avoided, unless they are architecturally accurate.

- b. Doors: Original doors should be retained wherever Possible. Door treatment, including the installing of aluminum screens, not in keeping with the original architectural style should be avoided. The original arrangement and proportion of doors should be retained. if feasible.
- c. Entrances, Front Porches: Parts of the original design, front porches, entrance porticos and exterior stairways should be retained or restored if possible; if previously altered, they should be returned to the original design. Original materials should be retained or architecturally accurate replacements should be used in repairing or reconstructing porch posts and railings.

C. Rehabilitation of Non-Supportive Structures

The guidelines as outlined in Section D, "New Construction," will be used to evaluate proposals to alter, remodel, repair or add to all post-1941 construction within Preservation Areas. All changes should strive for a facade that is more harmonious with neighboring buildings.

D. New Construction in a Preservation Area

New construction within a Preservation Area should be compatible with and even enhance the character of the individual Area. Elements such as landscaping, site utilization, exterior features such as signs and lighting, as well as the design of the proposed structure itself, should all be developed to harmonize with the total Area. Good design, thoughtful selection of exterior treatment, and careful respect for neighbors will enable new construction to actually enhance the Area.

1. General Design Standards

All new construction should respect the scale and design of existing Listed and Supportive Structures within the area. It is not intended that new construction be a copy of pre-World War II structures, but that it be complementary in scale, bulk, rhythm, height, and general character of the Preservation Area.

a. Directional Expression

In Areas where the existing design tends to be strongly vertical, delicate and narrow, new construction should respect that style. On the other hand, in Areas where the existing design tends to be bulky and solid, new construction should respect this also. Roof lines should be compatible with adjacent roof styles or to the surrounding neighborhood character.

b. Height and Bulk

New construction should be harmonious with the height and bulk of its neighbors. Appropriate standards will vary from Area to Area. The bungalows of 20th and "N" Streets, Preservation Area 9, offer a different feeling of scale from the larger homes found on broad lots in Poverty Ridge/Sutter Terrace, Preservation Area 11.

c. Materials and Color

Exterior treatment of new construction should respect the treatment of existing Supportive and Listed Structure in terms of materials and textures. Colors should be harmonious with and enhance neighboring structures.

2. Site Utilization

Builders should be sensitive to the importance of setbacks and side yards as part of the total character of an Area. The front setback of a new development is particularly critical when it is located adjacent to a Listed Structure. New construction should be designed so as not to obscure an adjacent Listed Structure. Uniform spaces between buildings lend rhythm and harmony to the streetscape. Side setbacks of new construction should be compatible with existing structures in the area, particularly on block faces which present a "row" appearance due to the consistent spacing of already existing structures. Provisions for parking on the site and for housing of necessary utility and service equipment should be made in a manner harmonious with the total character of the area. See Section V., "Landscape and Site Treatment" for specific information.

E. Relocation of Structures Into, Out of, or Within Preservation Areas

It is the philosophy of the Preservation Board that whenever possible Listed, Supportive and Retrievable Structures should be rehabilitated in their original location. This conclusion is based on the following reasons:

1. The appearance of the original neighborhood may be damaged by the removal of one of its integral elements.
2. Relocation involves additional costs not involved in on-site rehabilitation, including temporary utility line relocation, moving expenses, additional building code requirements, tree trimming and traffic control.
3. City trees may need to be removed or may be damaged by a building move.
4. The structure may become damaged or weakened in transit

5. Building code requirements may be more stringent for relocated structures.

However, the Board recognizes that, under certain circumstances the relocation of a structure may be necessary. For example in the case of a Listed, Supportive or Retrievable Structure, relocation may be necessary to preserve the building. In the case of a Non-Supportive Structure, removal of the structure may enhance a Preservation Area. The Board therefore, will review all proposed relocations of Listed, Supportive and Retrievable structures both as to the site to which and the site from which the building is being moved. Such review shall be made regardless of whether the proposed relocation is being made into, out of, or within a Preservation Area, in order to preserve significant attributes of the structure and to protect the character of the Preservation Areas. Where a Listed, Supportive or Retrievable structure is to be moved from a Preservation Area to a site outside an Area, the proposed site will also be reviewed and will be approved only when the character of the new site and its surroundings are compatible with the structure.

Review of non-supportive structures shall be limited to relocations of such buildings into or within a Preservation Area. The relocation of a Non-Supportive Structure to a site outside of a Preservation Area would require the normal Architectural Review Board review and approval. ARB may request Preservation Board review and comment to assist in their determination.

In order to preserve the environmental significance, (the compatibility with which a building relates to surrounding structures and open space) of a Listed, Supportive or Retrievable Structure, and to protect the character of the Preservation Area, it is important that proposed relocation sites be evaluated with respect to both the quality of the area and the building itself. The relocation site within a neighborhood possessing an environment and buildings that are compatible to the relocated structure with respect to architectural style, height, bulk and setback, materials, landscaping and overall street scene are most desirable. Typically, the above stated criteria can best be met within the same Preservation Area in which the structure is presently located. However, proposed sites in other Preservation Areas and areas outside Preservation Areas will be approved should the above qualifications be met. The Preservation Board believes the above qualifications are best met within the Central City. Additionally; it is recognize that the removal of large numbers of Listed and Supportive Structure from the Central City would destroy the very qualities of the City that the Preservation Program has been working to preserve.

Such depletion of these structures would be contrary to the intention of the City Council in the adoption of Chapter 32 of the City Code which established the Preservation Program.

F. Demolition of Structures

The philosophy of the Board is to save as many Listed and Supportive Structures as possible, though the Board realizes that this is not always possible. The Board, when considering requests pertaining to Listed, Supportive and Retrievable Structures, encourages rehabilitation. When considering requests pertaining to Non-Supportive Structures, the Board generally approves demolition, when consistent with Chapter 32 of the City Code.

Because vacant, unimproved land will often become a blighting influence on an area, it is recommended that, when it is economically reasonable, no demolition application be made until plans for new construction have been submitted to the Board for review and approval. In the case of an Incompatible structure, plans for new construction will not be required at the time of the demolition permit.

1. Listed Structures on the Official Register (see Listed Structures Plan.)

2. Supportive Structures

Because the removal of supportive structures frequently damages the overall character and visual impact of a Preservation Area, their demolition should be avoided whenever possible. Rehabilitation of these structures is preferable to their demolition. The Board, when reviewing a demolition application, considers such factors as physical condition and rehabilitation costs, as well as the architectural character of the structure and the impact of its removal upon the character of the Preservation Area.

3. Retrievable Structures

Because, once restored, these buildings are potentially of Supportive or Listed status, rehabilitation is preferable to demolition. If, during review of a demolition application, the Board finds that a building has Supportive or Listed Structure potential, a demolition delay may be instituted.

4. New Construction

Developers may wish to consider the reuse of existing post-World War II structures as a more economic alternative to new construction. The Board does not insist on the reuse and rehabilitation of post-World War II buildings but will consider each case separately.

5. Demolition Delays

Under provisions of Chapter 32 of the City Code, the Board may delay the demolition of Supportive, Retrievable and Non-Supportive Structures up to 90 days and delay the demolition of a Listed Structure up to 180 days. Upon request of the Preservation Board, the City Council may invoke an additional 180-day delay. The purpose of a delay is to allow the owner and the City time to consider alternatives. if no alternatives are feasible, a permit would be granted without further delay.

V. LANDSCAPE AND SITE GUIDELINES

A. General Design Rules

The historic quality of a structure and a Preservation Area can be visually enhanced by a landscape that reflects the era of the structure and the Area. Wherever possible, existing older landscaping elements should be retained or duplicated if they do reflect the era of the Area. Therefore, such elements as trees, which are part of a street row, old camellias or harmonious "built elements" should be retained. Their repetition can identify and unify a neighborhood and enhance the structure by providing an appropriate setting. Disharmonious elements such as weedy or neglected plant life and unattractive fences, should be replaced with more compatible features.

Specifically:

1. Meandering sidewalks adjacent to public streets may be encouraged if needed to preserve existing trees within the public right-of-way.
2. Planting areas between the sidewalks and curb should be landscaped with plant material and maintained by the property owner, except for street trees which are planted and maintained by the City.
3. Landscaped areas should be utilized for the purpose of separating or screening parking, trash and storage areas from adjoining streets and building sites. In addition, landscape elements in the form of ground forms, rock groupings, water patterns, terraces and plazas may be considered in the articulation of open space if they enhance the project and the Preservation Area.

B. Specific Guidelines

The following set of guidelines for landscaping and exterior space treatment has been adopted from those established by the Architectural Review Board (ARB).

1. Landscaping

Landscaping should harmonize with the building design and that of the surrounding Preservation Area. The landscaping should be developed with regard for the aesthetic qualities of the existing terrain and landscaping in order to maintain existing trees, significant plant material and to minimize soil removal. Plant material on private property should be complementary to City landscaping of streets. Plant material should be selected for interest in its structure, texture and color and for its ultimate growth. Plantings should strengthen vistas and important areas, and provide shade in summer, sun in winter. Spectacular effects shall be

- a. Areas not utilized for parking and storage should be landscaped with plant materials. Where there are small areas between buildings and property lines, the use of climbers, vine and/or ground cover is recommended.
- b. Landscaping in setback areas should consist of effective combinations of plant materials, such as trees, shrubs and ground cover.
- c. In areas where general planting will not prosper, other material such as fences, walls and pavings of wood, brick, stone, gravel and cobbles shall be used. Carefully selected plants shall be combined with such material where possible.
- d. Plastic plant materials are not encouraged; however, the Preservation Board may approve the use of artificial turf in required four-foot planters for non-residential land uses.
- e. Grades of walks, parking spaces, terraces and other paved areas shall provide an inviting and stable appearance for walking and, if seating is provided, for sitting.
- f. Fences and landscaping to buffer non-residential uses and parking areas from adjacent residential uses are recommended.
- g. Parking areas adjacent to public streets should be screened with earth berms, shrubs, fences and/or walls. Landscaping shall be provided in front of the fences and/or walls.
- h. When parking areas are located adjacent to an alley, planting material should be provided between the parking area and the alley.
- i. Trees and planting areas shall be planted in parking lots in order to shade and cool parking areas and to make them more attractive. Shrubs are limited to three feet in height when located within 15 feet of the parking lot entrance/exit.
- j. Planters in parking lots should be protected with a six-inch raised concrete curb. Appropriately designed wood barriers may be used, upon approval of the Preservation Board, in locations where the City Zoning Ordinance does not require concrete curbs.

2. Parking and Circulation

Parking areas and the location and number of driveways to public streets are to be designed to reduce visual impact of cars and provide for the safety of the public. In addition, the design of parking areas should not have an impact on neighboring properties and should be designed to reduce noise and circulation to adjacent residential uses. The design of parking areas should be in conformance with the landscape criteria as outlined in the foregoing section.

The following criteria are established to guide the development of parking areas and driveways to the parking areas:

- a. Parking areas should be located to the rear or side of the property rather than in front of a development.
- b. All parking areas should be lighted adequately for safety and theft protection; however, the lighting shall reflect away from residential areas and public streets.
- c. Lighting fixtures in the parking area should be attractively designed to complement the architecture of the project. Decorative lighting in parking lots is encouraged.
- d. All driveways shall be reviewed and approved by the City Traffic Engineer. A driveway permit shall be obtained from the City Traffic Engineer.

3. Service Areas

The policy is to screen and locate storage areas, machinery¹, installation service areas, utility structures, trash areas and similar accessory structures so that those areas will be compatible with the structure and be attractive to the public view.

- a. Where feasible, service areas shall be located to the rear or side of the building and designed to be screened from public view and adjacent properties with plant material and/or by other screening devices, where feasible.
- b. The color of a wood fence or wall, when used for screening purposes, should be compatible with the color and texture of the building.

- c. Trash Areas should. be located away from residential uses to prevent noise, odor and provide sanitary conditions. At the same time, trash facilities must be accessible for the trash pick-up methods used by the City of Sacramento or private collecting firms. Trash enclosures shall be constructed with concrete or asphalt floor and designed so that they can be washed out and kept in a sanitary condition. The trash area should be enclosed by a five-foot fence and be surrounded by plant material.
- d. Utility Installations should be placed underground. Any installation remaining above ground, such as pad-mounted transformers, shall be integrated and compatible with the architecture and landscaping of the project. These installations shall be located in areas less visible but easily accessible for servicing and shall be screened with a fence or plant material.

4. Building and Site Lighting; Street Furniture

The policy is to prevent light glare or reflection while providing safety to the public.

- a. All exterior lighting shall be designed and located on the property or the building to reduce or prevent glare or reflection onto adjacent residential properties or public streets.
- b. All exterior lighting fixtures shall be compatible to the building, and the Preservation Area in color, material and design.
- c. Any other street furniture, i.e. fountains, bus benches, etc., shall also be compatible to the Preservation Area in design, color, material and size.

5. Signs and Other Advertising Features

All new signs and graphics shall be compatible with the design of the proposed buildings and/or structures as well as the surrounding properties.

- a. All signs shall conform to the Sacramento City Sign Ordinance. Signs located in any Redevelopment Area and/or special sign district shall conform to such regulations.
- b. An overall plan for signs and graphics shall be submitted to the Preservation Board for review when projects include several signs and graphics.

- c. It is recommended that information contained in any sign or group of signs should be limited so that it results in a clear, readable message and design. Message simplification using graphics, logos or symbols is encouraged.
- d. The height, location and size of signs and graphics shall not hinder the views from buildings or from streets.
- e. The design, color, texture and land size of signs shall be coordinated with the building color, material, size and style, and enhance the Preservation Area.
- f. External spot or floodlighting should be arranged so that the light source is screened from public view.