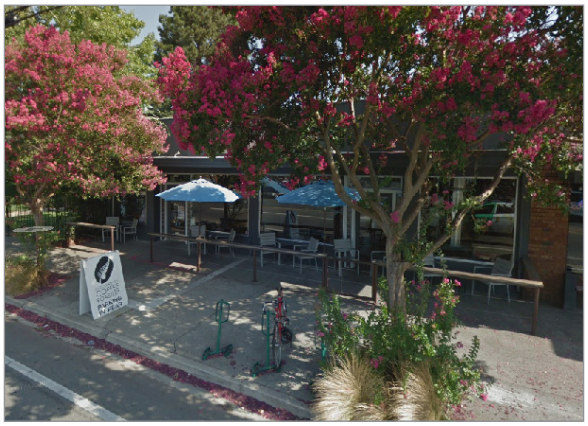
Citywide Commercial Design Guidelines (DRAFT)



Citywide Design Review Area
July 2018

City of SACRAMENTO
Community Development

Table of Contents

Citywide Commercial Design Guidelines

Introduction
Purpose of this Document 1
How to use this Document 2

Site Design. 4
1. Building and Site Organization. 5
2. Parking 7
3. Circulation of Cars and Trucks, Bicycles, and Pedestrians. 9
4. Site Amenities. 12
5. Landscape. 14
6. Equipment and Services. 17
7. Resource Conservation 20

Architectural Elements. 22
8. Building and Style Theme. 23
9. Scale / Mass / Articulation. 26
10. Materials 29
11. Additions 30
12. Roof Forms 31
13. Entry Features 32
14. Windows and Doors 33
15. Canopies, Awnings, and Arcades 34
16. Signage 36
17. Lighting 37
18. Sustainability 38
19. Equipment and Services 39
20. Building Security 40
21. Streetscapes and Pedestrian Edges 42
22. Nodes 44
23. Gateways, Districts, and Themes 45
24. Sidewalk Use and Function 46

* Mixed-Use Guidelines (See the Citywide Multi-Unit Residential Design Guidelines Document)

Appendices. 50
Appendix A - Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design. 51
Appendix B - References and Supporting Documents 53

Introduction

The Purpose of this Document

The Design Guidelines have been created to assist the City Council, Planning and Design Commission, Preservation Commission, City staff, developers, architects, and project planners involved by creating greater consistency in the design review process. They are intended to facilitate the design review process by helping applicants and staff identify and devise solutions for design issues early in the application process. In summary, these Design Guidelines are intended to:

- Create a sense of place and enhance community identity;
- Encourage high-quality development and creative design options;
- Provide clear and usable design direction to project applicants, developers, designers, and City planning staff;
- Facilitate a clear and expeditious project review process;
- Articulate a vision for future commercial development that is sustainable, functional and attractive;
- Promote the reuse and revitalization of existing commercial centers by encouraging new private investment;
- Promote mixed use development that includes residential, which will bring new customers and business opportunity;
- Promote quality development through project approval streamlining, flexible development standards, and a proactive design approach; and
- Ensure that all commercial projects within revitalization areas – such as streetscape improvements, new development, adaptive reuse and rehabilitation - meet standards for design quality, appropriate to the scale, scope, and location of the project.

Projects will be reviewed for compliance with the design principles identified in this document. Although it is understood that not all design principles will be applicable to all proposed projects, conformance with relevant principles is required. Overall, the Design Guidelines are intended to encourage consistent design while allowing for variety and innovation. City staff do not advocate a particular architectural style or styles, and will review all applications on the basis of this document.

How to Use this Document

Project proponents and their design team will use this document as an informational tool, since it outlines what will be required for project planning approval. It will also be useful for City Staff in determining if a project proposal meets the minimum design standards necessary as part of site plan and design review.

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

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

Alternative Design Approaches

Design Principles cannot be simplified to a “step by step’ cookbook approach. Each design challenge is in some way unique, with it’s own issues of context, constraints, objectives, challenges and opportunities.

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

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

Organization of this Document

Each subsection within the Design Guidelines is organized to include the following elements:

Design Principle

The design principles represent the overall concepts that are required/ mandatory. They are the underlying objectives of good project planning and design. They will be referenced by the City to determine compliance with this document.

Principles are broad in scope and allow for flexibility in approach and alternative design solutions.

Rationale

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

Design Guidelines

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

Graphics

Each section within the Design Guidelines is supplemented by drawings and photos that are intended to provide visual support for the principles and guidelines.

Special Planning Districts, Design Review Areas, and Overlay Zones

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

Existing Uses

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

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 of 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

SECTIONS

- Building Location and Site Organization
- Parking
- Circulation of Cars and Trucks, Bicycles and Pedestrians
- Site Amenities
- Landscape
- Equipment and Services
- Resource Conservation

1 Building Location and Site Organization

Design Principle

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

Rationale

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

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

Design Guidelines

1-1 Where pedestrian-oriented storefronts exist or should be established, the character of the street as a shopping area should be expressed by features such as display windows, individually of shop frontages, awning, canopies and signage.

1-2 Buildings should be arranged to create functional public and private outdoor spaces, including sidewalks, patios, entryways, and courtyards.

1-3 Locate structures to create continuity of frontage along the street face, by matching or reducing front and side setbacks in relation to adjacent structures.

1-4 Buildings and building entries should be oriented toward the primary nearby street. Deep setbacks behind large expanses of parking areas or vacant land should be avoided.

1-5 Pedestrian orientation, access and experience must be considered in site planning, including building size and placement, circulation, and open space design. Provide adequate walkways without obstructions to pedestrian movement (i.e., curbs and steps), but separated from traffic design. Provide adequate walkways without obstructions to pedestrian movement (i.e., curbs and steps), but separated from traffic.

1-6 Buildings should be oriented to provide for natural lighting opportunities within interior spaces. The ‘depth’ of interior office spaces should generally be no more than four times their width.

Preferred Setback

Discouraged Setback

Commercial

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

1-7 Buildings on corner lots should address both streets with windows, entryways, architectural detailing, and/or landscaping. If possible, corner projects should provide some architectural element to anchor the corner. This can be accomplished using a building feature element and/or strong landscaping features.

1-8 For projects where a large setback from the street exists, or is a functional requirement, provide elements to reduce the visual prominence of the parking from the street. Examples include greater landscaping, berms, architectural walls, 'micro-retail' spaces, etc.

1-9 For developments with frontages of 150 feet or more, monotonous facades should be avoided, this can be achieved by breaking up the building mass, in particular the roofline, and incorporating variety, articulation, vertical elements, color and material changes to add interest.

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

This project uses strong architectural elements to accentuate its corner location.

2 Parking

Design Principle

The visual prominence of parked vehicles shall be minimized where feasible. Vehicular circulation and parking must be designed to minimize potential pedestrian conflicts, and provide for simple and efficient vehicle movement. Parking paved areas should be minimized as is feasible.

Rationale

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

Design Guidelines

2-1 In urban and infill locations locate parking areas to the rear or side of the property or beneath buildings rather than along street frontages. Screening parking areas from views exterior to the site is encouraged.

2-2 Collective and shared parking areas are strongly encouraged.

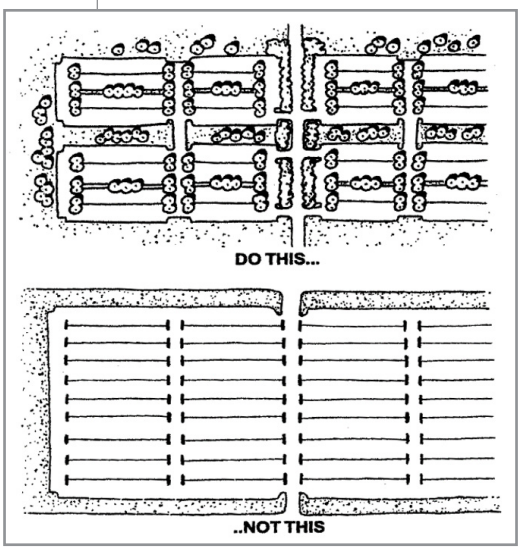
2-3 Parking lot access should be generally provided from side streets.

2-4 Landscaping and walkways should be provided between parking lots and public streets, right-of-ways, and pedestrian routes.

2-5 Parking should be provided to meet but not exceed expected demand, taking into account pedestrian and transit trips, ride-share programs, and shared parking agreements. Any parking provided that is above City Code minimum is to be justified by a description of need.

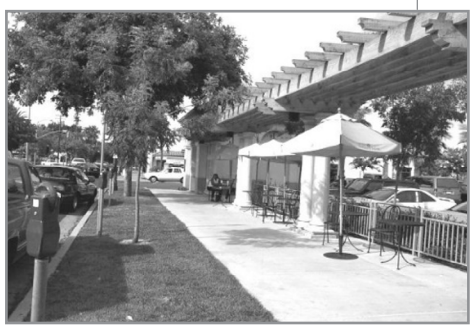
2-6 Lighting in parking areas is a key design component. Lighting should avoid glare that affects adjacent properties. The design of the fixture and its height should be compatible with the overall site and building design. See also the principles under site security.

2-7 Pedestrian circulation through parking areas should be treated with a priority to that of auto circulation. Devices such as trellises, pavement changes, etc that separate people and cars are encouraged. When large parking areas are required, a clearly defined pedestrian path inside the parking area that provides safe and easy access to and from buildings and sidewalks must be included in the design.



Example of preferred parking lot landscaping

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



A trellis and fence are used effectively as screening for parked cars.

2-8 Areas for extended parking (12 or more hours) of fleet, company, or service vehicles (excluding inventory) should be located at the rear of the property or in other low visibility areas, to avoid taking prime frontage and prime parking locations that could serve customers.

2-9 Parking areas visible from the street right-of-way should be screened from view with landscaping plants, berms, partial walls, or other types of architectural features such as colonnades and trellises.

2-10 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.

2-11 Parking structures should be designed with architectural features that complement existing commercial, office, and mixed use buildings in the vicinity.

2-12 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.

2-13 Parking structure entry/exit ramps should be mid-block or toward service areas rather than facing pedestrian streets.

This parking area is screened with landscaping and public art.

3 Circulation of Cars, Trucks, Pedestrians and Bicycles

Design Principle

Balanced circulation routes must be provided for both vehicular and pedestrian movement with a priority to pedestrians and bicyclists. Conflict between all modes of transportation should be minimized, and convenience to pedestrians should be maximized. Access and circulation should be clear and articulated to announce 'entry' or 'exit'. Prominent, attractive pedestrian routes must be provided from the public streetscape to each building or complex entrance.

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

Rationale

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

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

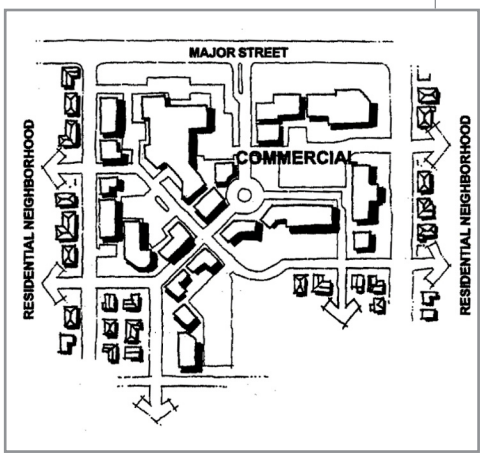
Attractive Bicycle Parking

Design Guidelines:

Pedestrian Circulation

3-1 Pedestrian planning should provide for easy access to public bicycle/pedestrian ways, nodes, neighborhood centers and transit stops. Pedestrian routes should be as obvious, direct, and simple as possible.

3-2 Pedestrian walkways should connect each primary entrance of a commercial building to adjacent parking lots, structures, or site amenities and public sidewalks. Pedestrian routes are required, by law, to be ADA accessible.



Many points of access to parking lots and connecting streets

3-3 Pedestrian and vehicular entries should be separate. For purposes of improving visibility and safety, pedestrian access may employ changes grade, texture, material, color and/or finish to differentiate from driveways.

3-4 Walking distances to transit services should be considered in project design. Pedestrian accessibility should be measured by the actual paths available.

3-5 Pedestrian routes should be designed to be as direct as possible to discourage landscape damaging shortcuts.

3-6 Bicycle parking should be located close to, and with direct access to buildings. Parked bicycles should be out of the travel paths. Screening for bicycles may be desirable, if they can still be visible for security.

3-7 Projects should be consistent with and supportive of the policies of the City's Pedestrian Master Plan and Bicycle Master Plan.

3-8 All facilities and amenities should be made accessible to people with disabilities.

Vehicle Circulation

3-9 Driveways, parking lots, and access routes should be consolidated whenever feasible to limit curb cuts, minimize development costs, and reduce auto/pedestrian conflicts. Minimizing curb cuts reduces impacts to pedestrians, cyclists and on-street parking.

3-10 Access to parking lots should be generally provided from side streets.

3-11 Parking lots with dead ends or that require backing out onto drives should be avoided whenever possible.

3-12 When possible, large parking lots (over 50 vehicles) should have more than one point of entry/exit.

3-13 If gates are used to secure vehicle or parking areas, they should be treated as a design element, and should meet the requirements of the public works department to avoid backing up of vehicles onto public streets.

3-14 Textures, patterns, and colors are encouraged in the design of paved parking areas or entries.

3-14 Textures, patterns, and colors are encouraged in the design of paved parking areas or entries.

3-15 Large monolithic areas of unbroken, single-color, untextured paving are discouraged. Use planting, site features, berms, etc to break up large areas.

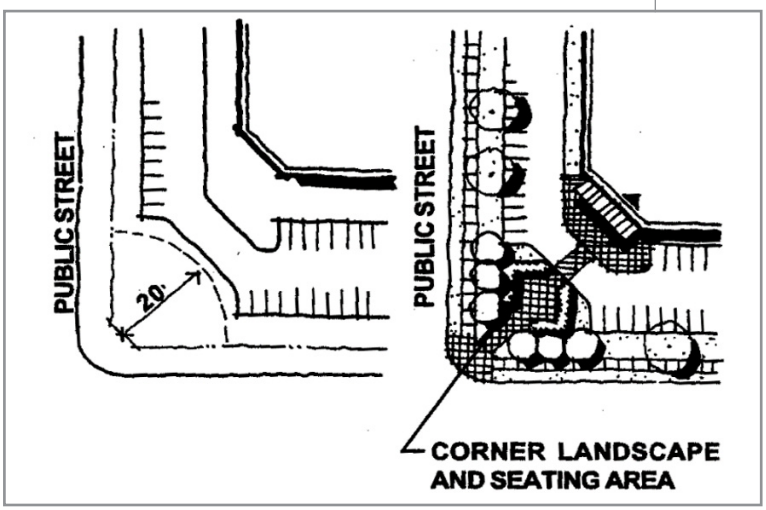
3-16 Where practicable and appropriate, connections between adjacent non-residential development should be provided, so that vehicles will not have to re-enter public streets. This reduces traffic conflict at entry/exit points.

3-17 Highlighting project entryways drives and parking court entries by using landscape or pavement features is generally encouraged to enhance the streetscape.

3-18 To the greatest extent feasible, common or shared service and delivery access should be provided for adjacent buildings. Locations for service access can be prone to greater potential conflict between trucks and cars and pedestrians, and be higher maintenance areas, so minimizing their occurrence can provide design and operation benefits.

3-19 Access points for service trucks and pick up of garbage and trash should be separated to the extent possible from cars. The heavier demands of trucks, particularly when lifting dumpsters, should be considered in the paving design (such as by using concrete in front of dumpster enclosures rather than asphalt).

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



Landscaping and a variety of paving types help break up large surface areas

4 Site Amenities

Pedestrian amenities can include such features as benches, drinking fountains, and trash containers.

The design of these items must consider security and durability. For example, benches with 'arms' do not make convenient 'couches'.

Design Principle

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

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

Rationale

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

Design Guidelines:

4-1 Transit stops (bus or light rail) should be distinguished from the surrounding context by changes in paving materials, larger sidewalk width, amenities, and shade/shelter structures. They should be considered a 'feature' of a site, and embraced in the overall site design. The design, site and location of transit shelters, bus stops, and bus stop seating areas must be coordinated with Sacramento Regional Transit.

4-2 Public areas should be visible from the street. See Site security.

4-3 Exterior site design and landscaping should provide functional social spaces and/or pedestrian amenities.

4-4 Site amenities provided by a commercial development project should be accessible from the sidewalk and/or public walkways. Site amenities that are 'fragile' or movable, or those that might serve as icons attracting vandalism, should be in secure areas of the site.

4-4 Materials used to construct any site amenity shall be at least of equal quality as the materials of the primary buildings and landscaping on the site.

4-5 Where architectural features of a building do not provide a focal point or anchor at a major street corner, site amenities such as public art/ sculpture, fountains or other water features, public plazas or open space, and landscape features, are strongly encouraged.

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

An accessible, functional, social space complements this store.

A decorative carrier makes these newspaper racks appear more uniform.

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

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

The clock tower provides a focal point for the project.

5 Landscaping

Design Principle

Landscape elements are key components of virtually every commercial property. Design applications include but are not limited to enhancing the appearance of structures, defining site functions and edges, screening undesirable views, and introducing color, texture, and softness.

This exposed valve is unattractive

Rationale

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

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

Pedestrian walkway buffered from parking by architectural elements and landscaping.

Design Guidelines

5-1 Where there are unattractive elements that need to be screened, dense landscaping of plants and/or landscape vertical elements can provide the needed visual separation. Examples of elements that often need such screening include but are not limited to unattractive views, storage areas, stand alone unfinished or untreated trash enclosures, mechanical equipment, transformers, backflow devices and other similar elements.

5-2 Appropriate landscaping usually includes a variety of trees, shrubs, and other plantings. Unpaved areas should be planted with irrigated plant materials. Unpaved areas where landscaping would be challenging should be mulched (including compacted decomposed granite) to minimize weed growth and improve appearance.

5-3 Landscaping compatible with building design is encouraged. Trellises, arbors, cascading landscaping, vines and perimeter garden walls are encouraged.

5-4 Landscaping should be in scale and compatible with the adjacent land uses.

5-5 Security issues should be considered in the landscape design of the site, including creation of barriers and screening. Openness and visibility can be maintained even with significant landscape coverage, with proper selection and maintenance of plant materials.

5-6 Landscape plans should avoid potential conflicts between landscaping, lighting and signage by proper plant material selection, placement, and maintenance. Plants must be selected with their ultimate height, width, density and pace of growth in mind.

5-7 Provide deciduous shade trees along south sides of structures whenever possible to help reduce cooling loads during the summer and allow solar gain during the winter months.

5-8 Streetscapes should incorporate a planter strip separating the sidewalk from the street (except where prohibited by the existing street cross section). Planting of trees within the planter strip is strongly encouraged for visual and shading benefits.

5-9 Retain existing mature trees in landscaping, site, and building plans whenever possible. Note that large trees may require city permission for removal or major pruning.

5-10 Landscaping must not impede access to hydrant connections or other essential services, but can be used in a good design to soften these elements and make them blend in.

5-11 Dead plants are visually worse than no plants at all, since they send a message that 'no one cares about this place'. Landscape areas bring with them a responsibility for maintenance, which includes watering, removing debris and litter, pruning and replacement of plants when necessary.

5-12 Where there is insufficient space for a typical planter, plants can still be used if carefully selected and trained.

5-13 Fences and low walls can create pleasing and functional definition of space. Particularly in conjunction with plants they can be an effective part of a landscape design.

5-14 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.

5-15 New planting strips located between the side walk and street should be a minimum of 6 feet wide to promote the health of shade trees.

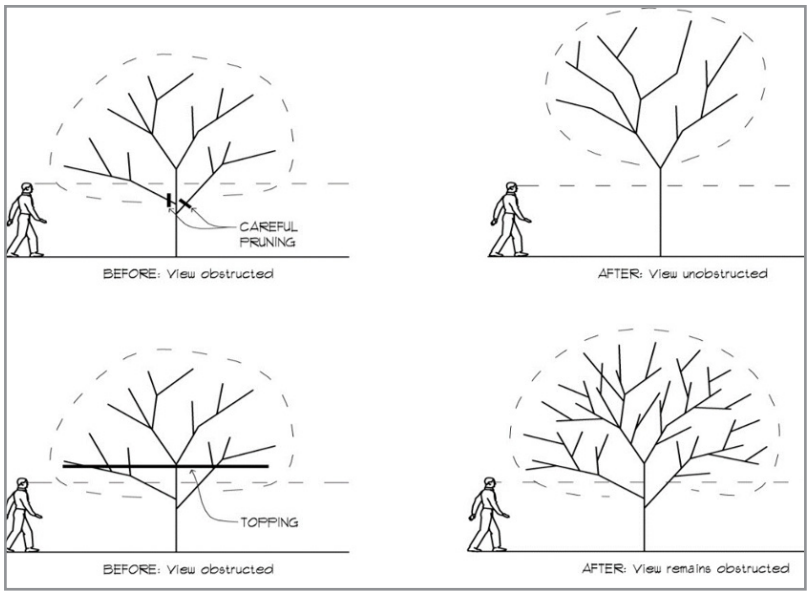
A planter strip along a street can provide shading and screening.

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

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

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

This wall and landscaping screen the parking behind.



Tree Canopy Heights

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

While commercial corridors rarely resemble parks, they do not have to be barren of landscape character and features to be functional.

6 Equipment, Services, and Accessory Structures

Design Principle

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

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

Rationale

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

Design Guidelines

<u>Accessory Structure/Storage</u>

6-1 The design of accessory structures should be consistent with the overall architectural design of the adjoining building. Roof pitches should match those of the main building roof. Exterior materials and colors should also be consistent with primary structures.

6-2 Prefabricated trailers, metal shipping containers, and other temporary structures create a negative and cluttered appearance and can foster an impression that the business is temporary or not committed to it's neighborhood. These types of elements are not permitted by City ordinances to be used as part of ongoing business operations or site design.

6-3 Storage areas should be integrated into the building design, including architectural treatments consistent with the primary building and similar design elements or accents.

6-4 Storage for inventory, equipment, or other materials should be fully enclosed. When visible from the street or active adjacent uses, these areas should be screened by a landscaped buffer. City ordinances restrict or prohibit using outside spaces as part of normal and ongoing business operations.

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

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

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

Enclosures

6-5 Trash enclosures should contain enough space to facilitate both waste disposal and recycling. Containers should not block each other and should be user friendly.

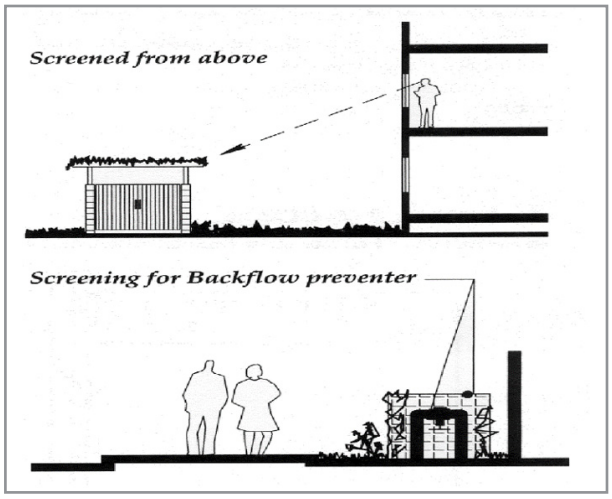
6-6 Trash enclosure design should address solid waste personnel safety. All enclosures should have access routes that allow solid waste personnel to easily access dumpsters for collection. Vertical curbs should be avoided, and materials for sidewalk or driveway access should be flat to prevent wheels from becoming stuck.

6-7 Views of trash storage areas should be minimized from public streets and be located to avoid impacting adjacent properties.

6-8 Trash enclosures are required to be constructed of split face block, brick, stucco over block or similar quality materials that are durable. Avoid the use of plain concrete block.

6-9 Landscaping should be incorporated around trash enclosures to provide for more effective screening.

6-10 The access route used to get to the trash enclosure must be considered in the site design. For example, large dumpsters require 'straight on' access for pick up, and are not feasible to be 'rolled out' manually on a regular basis. Large enclosures should be positioned so that service trucks can approach them straight on, with a concrete apron at the front and wash down provisions incorporated into the design.



Trash enclosure design should screen from public view.

Mechanical M / HVAC / Utility Equipment

6-11 Mechanical equipment (e.g., heating, cooling, antennas satellite dishes, air conditioners or similar mechanical devices) should be integrated into the architectural design of projects as much as possible. When integration is not possible, mechanical equipment should be screened from any street view.

6-12 Minimize the visibility of roof-top mechanical equipment by grouping plumbing vents, ducts, and equipment away from the public view. Adjust the form of the roof or add screening elements, so that the equipment does not create an unsightly visual element at the top of the building.

6-13 Screening elements should be a integral part of the overall building design.

6-14 Utility equipment such as transformers, electric and gas meters, electrical panels and junction boxes should be screened by walls and/or landscaping. Cluster utilities and services where feasible.

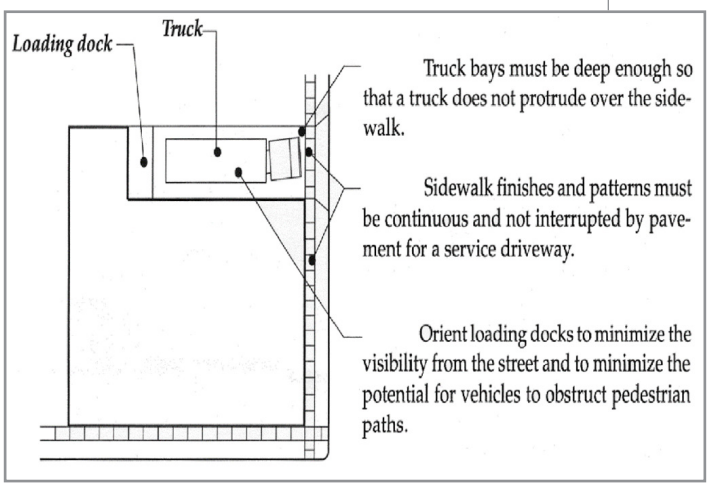
6-15 Mechanical equipment should be installed consistent with the Comprehensive Floodplain Management Plan.

6-16 Where possible, provide shade adjacent to mechanical equipment to reduce temperature at air intakes.

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

Loading Docks

6-17 Provide sufficient space for transport vehicles so they do not interfere with normal pedestrian and automobile circulation.



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

7 Resource Conservation

Design Principle

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

Rationale

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

This planter without curbs serves to catch runoff.

Design Guidelines

Drainage and Water Quality

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

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

Parking Lots

7-1 With early planning and design it is possible that areas required for tree planting can also be used to satisfy the City's requirement to provide on-site treatment of stormwater.

7-2 Parking lots which are part of new developments with 1 acre or more of impervious area are generally required to provide treatment control measures that capture and treat stormwater runoff through settling, filtration, and /or biodegradation.

7-3 Integrating treatment measures with areas used for tree shading may significantly reduce land requirements and costs.

Recycling and Waste Handling Areas

7-4 Provide covered and lockable trash and recycling containers. Consolidating them within a trash enclosure is encouraged to promote their use.

7-5 Reuse and recycling of materials, and selection of materials which are produced using sustainable methods such as plantation grown wood is encouraged.

7-6 Provide grades or slopes of paved areas which direct runoff toward a dead-end sump or a drain connected to the sanitary sewer. Do not locate storm drains in the immediate vicinity of waste handling areas where runoff is likely to be noxious.

Vehicle Wash Areas

7-7 Pave, berm and grade designated vehicle wash areas should drain into the sanitary sewer.

Solar Energy

7-8 Parking lot and building shading with deciduous trees can provide significant reductions in cooling requirements and reduce the urban heat island effect.

7-9 Integration of solar collection with other project elements like shading can provide multiple benefits.

Water Conservation

7-10 Landscape design should incorporate measures to conserve water, including plant selection and consideration of subsurface or drip irrigation.

This drainage way is both functional and attractive.

Integrated solar panels and shading provide multiple benefits.

Architectural Elements

Architectural design guidelines address the exterior of buildings, as well as the relationship of these buildings 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.

SECTIONS

- Building Style and Theme
- Scale / Massing / Articulation
- Materials
- Color
- Additions
- Roof Forms
- Entry Features
- Windows and Doors
- Canopies, Awnings, and Arcades
- Signage
- Lighting
- Sustainability
- Equipment and Services
- Building Security
- Streetscapes and Pedestrian Edges
- Nodes
- Gateways, Districts, and Themes
- Sidewalk Use and Function

8 Building Style and Theme

Design Principle

When a new building facade is created (either by new construction, or rehabilitation of existing buildings), it must be compatible with the context of it's location. In some locations, compatibility may suggest use of thematic elements that are already well established. In other areas, compatibility is measured by broader considerations of scale and character of the area as it is expected to be in the future.

Rationale

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

New investments in good design can encourage additional new investments.

Another approach to stylistic compatibility is to take the elements of a style and interpret them in a new and contemporary way. In the hands of a talented and experienced designer, this approach can be successful and create new and fresh motifs and interpretations. If handled poorly, however, this alternative approach can result in discontinuity and incongruous and conflicting buildings. That is why the review of a project which is attempting to use the latter approach, of developing new interpretations of a style, must be considered more carefully in a review process.

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

Commercial

Some of the issues that are to be considered in evaluating the broad concern of compatibility include historic and local architectural styles, the scale and character of the adjacent neighborhood and the trends as revitalization occurs, views, building scale in relation to the site, and the proximity to adjacent uses both present and those anticipated in the future. Projects within defined sub-districts should respect the character of the sub-district by either:

- Using appropriate period- or location-specific architectural styles or elements; or
- Using innovative interpretations of the classics motifs; this approach will require a much greater level of talent and experience on the part of the designer to be successful.

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

Design Guidelines

8-1 In commercial centers, there should be a stylistic or thematic expression that ties the individual storefronts and buildings together. This can be accomplished in one of two ways:

- Using a similar visual theme for all facades; or
- Using a more innovative interpretation of 'theme'; this approach will require a much greater level of talent and experience on the part of the designer to be successful.

8-2 Variety in architecture elements, and architectural style, is generally encouraged.

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

8-3 Buildings should not be simple boxes. Roof form, mass, changes in plane such as by furring, moldings, shapes and materials, etc. should be used to create variation and visual interest.

8-4 Projects should be designed to respect the privacy of surrounding uses. Upper story windows and terraces that provide privacy intruding views into adjacent yards are discouraged. Mitigation may include landscape elements, architectural screening elements, or limiting uses or windows on building sides which abut residential areas.

8-5 Provide clearly defined building entries that are in scale with the proposed project, and that relate directly to the street frontage wherever possible.

8-6 Corporate identity in the design theme should be secondary to consistency with the architecture of the surrounding neighborhood or community.

8-7 Awnings, trellises or canopies are encouraged above windows, doors, and entrances to provide shade and architectural relief from flat facades.

8-8 Provide illuminated addresses that are clearly readable from the street.

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

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

9 Scale/Massing/Articulation

Design Principle

Projects should relate to the surrounding existing or emerging context with respect to building scale, mass, setbacks, and articulation.

Rationale

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

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

Design Guidelines

9-1 Projects at defined nodes or gateways are encouraged to provide prominent visual landmarks such as a projecting tower, promenade, arcade, or other pedestrian-oriented feature. These types of 'signature' elements can help anchor a node and give it a unique identity and sense of place.

9-2 Long facades should be designed with sufficient building articulation and landscaping to break them up into smaller visual elements. Long expanses of uninterrupted wall area, unbroken roof forms, and box-like structures should be avoided.

9-3 Street elevations should contain appropriate features to provide visual interest, including posts or columns, wainscoting, decorative tiles, shutters, window boxes and other pedestrian level details.

9-4 Buildings should be stepped down at upper levels in areas with a relatively smaller-scale character. There should be a scale transition between intensified land uses and adjoining lower intensity land uses.

9-5 Shopping center types of projects should either have a unified and consistent theme, or it should be visually 'broken up' into separate visual elements. Even where the approach is a unified theme, units clustered into one structure should have some variation in setback, staggered roof planes, or other adjustments to avoid a monotonous or overpowering institutional appearance.

9-6 Articulation such as cornice detail, insets, windows, reveals, furring, score lines, and/or trim should be used to break up the visual massing of building facades. Elements should be chosen that are appropriate to the overall stylistic treatment. Unarticulated and windowless walls are discouraged. Landscape can also be used to soften walls where fire codes or other constraints eliminate or reduce allowable windows.

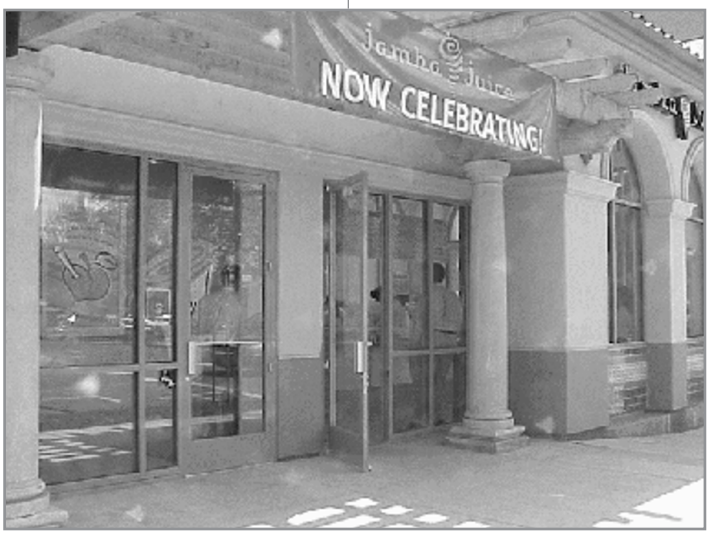
This building lacks any visual interest with its plain facade and flat roof pitch.

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

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

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

Commercial



These entryways are stepped back from the main facade, and emphasized with columns and shade structure.

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

What would otherwise be a flat facade is enlivened with the installation of a simple overhead trellis-work that also provides shade protection for pedestrians.

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

These entryways breakup the appearance of the building.

A pedestrian passageway cuts through the corner of this building.

10 Materials

Design Principle

Buildings should be constructed of durable 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

10-1 Use of materials commonly found in other commercial buildings on the street is recommended.

10-2 Durable, solid facing materials should be used.

10-3 Use of the following materials is not allowed:

- vinyl or grooved plywood siding
- sprayed-on, textured stucco
- raw, raised grain, or rough-sawn wood

10-4 Materials commonly found in commercial areas include brick, stucco, and ceramic tile, and their continued use in new construction is recommended.

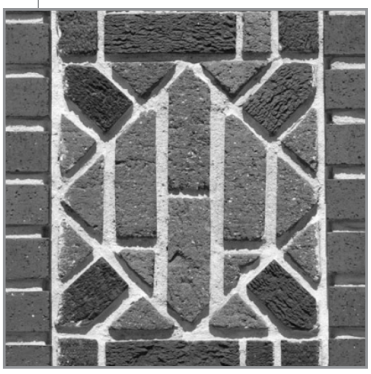
10-5 Wood should be milled, with a smooth, painted finish.

Stucco

Stucco, tile, and glass block

Ceramic Tile

Ceramic Tile



Brick of varied patterns and textures

11 Additions

Design Principle

Additions should either be consistent with established themes, or established new themes, consistent with the approach to context selected.

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

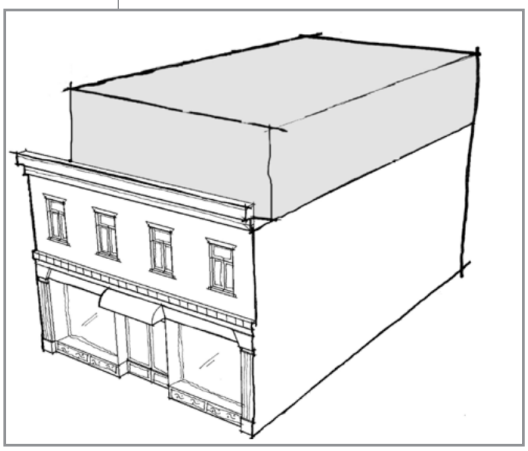
11-1 An addition should respect, but be subordinate to, the design of the original building, and should be designed so that the form of the original structure can still be recognized.

11-2 An addition should not alter or destroy the architecturally defining features of the building, such as original porches, columns, railings, stairs, windows, doors, and roof and eave forms.

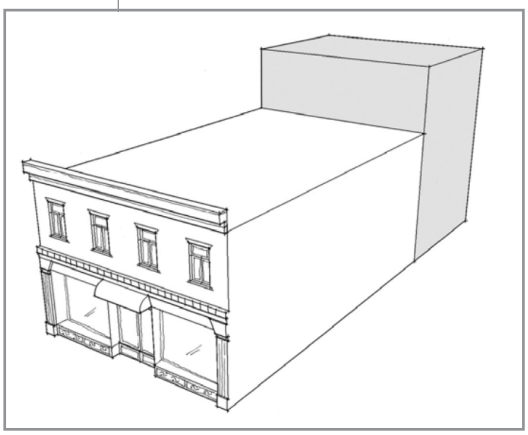
11-3 A large addition should be broken down into smaller, varied components that relate to the scale and massing of the original structure.

11-4 Additions should be compatible with the overall character of the property, block, and neighborhood.

11-5 An addition should be set back from the primary facade, especially if the additions are taller than the original building.

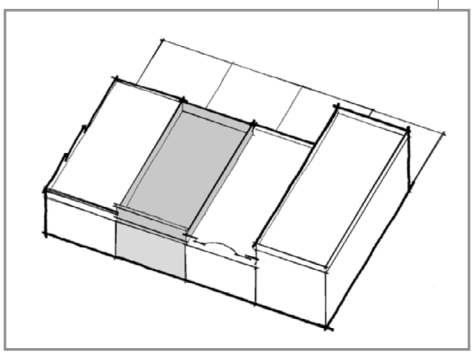


Addition to the top of the structure, with a second-story setback from the existing facade

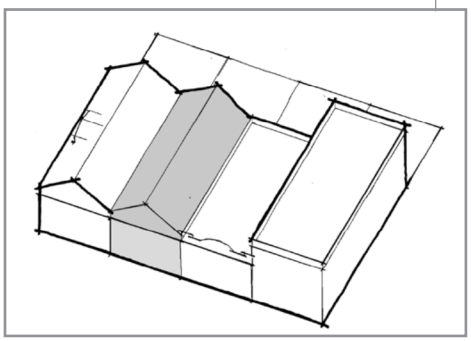


Addition at the rear of the original structure

12 Roof Forms



Infill project with a flat roof similar to other nearby structures



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

Typical flat commercial roof

Design Principle

The roof forms of new development should be integrated with the overall design.

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

12-1 Articulated facade surfaces with multiple roof-lines are encouraged for taller buildings to avoid an appearance of mass and to add interest.

12-2 Roof parapets may be used to add visual interest to flat roof lines.

12-3 One-story buildings should avoid the use of exaggerated, sloped roof forms.

12-4 Special roof forms on corner buildings are encouraged to help accentuate the corner location.

Sustainability Guidelines

12-5 The addition of photovoltaic solar panels is encouraged to reduce energy use.

12-6 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.

12-7 Roofing options that include recycled content are encouraged.

13 Entry Features

Design Principle

Entry features should be clearly visible to pedestrians, approaching from street and sidewalk.

Rationale

A recessed entry helps to break up the massing of a building and make 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

13-1 Primary entries should be located on major sidewalks to provide clearly visible pedestrian access.

13-2 The size of the entry should be proportional to the building.

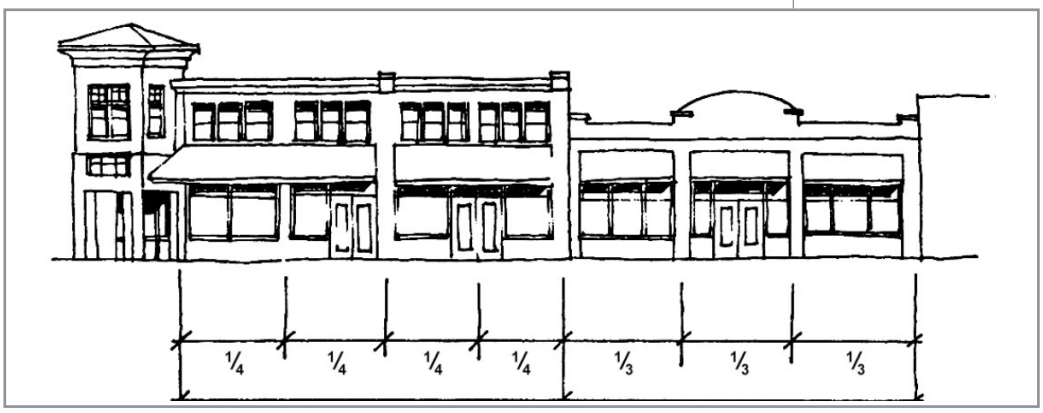
13-3 Secondary entries may be located at the side or rear of the building to provide access from parking areas.

13-4 Entries should be clearly defined with signage and architectural details.

13-5 In mixed-use buildings, the entrance to residential uses on the second story should be clearly defined and easily approachable from a public street or sidewalk.

A contemporary recessed entry

Even simple entries can be embellished with architectural detailing to improve their appearance. This building has decorative painted trim



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

14 Windows and Doors

A commercial facade lined with transparent glass is highly desirable

Design Principle

Windows and doors should be used as a design element, and provide 'eyes' on the surroundings to enhance both functional and implied security.

Rationale

The proper placement of windows and doors along a street frontage is one of the best methods of creating visual interest and reducing the appearance of mass. 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

14-1 Windows, entries, and doors should occupy most of the wall surface on the ground floor.

14-2 Building openings, such as windows and doors, should maintain the proportions and spacing of other openings on the block.

14-3 Headers, trim, and sills of windows of new buildings should be well articulated in design, dimensions, and profiles.

14-4 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.

14-5 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.

14-6 Security bars on the outside of commercial windows are highly discouraged.

Sustainability Guidelines

14-7 Skylights are encouraged to daylight the interior floor area, thus reducing energy use and creating a more pleasant retail/ commercial environment.

14-8 Prismatic glazing is encouraged to increase the energy efficiency of skylights.

14-9 Windows should be oriented to maximize controlled daylighting from the south and north.

14-10 The use of insulating glazing such as LoE2 is encouraged to increase energy efficiency.

15 Canopies, Awnings, and Arcades

Design Principle

When incorporated into a commercial building, canopies, awnings, and arcades should be durable components that complement the overall design.

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

15-1 Canopies, awnings, arcades, and overhangs are encouraged over window displays and entries along public sidewalks on the ground floor of commercial buildings.

15-2 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 Community Development Department for more information.

15-3 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.

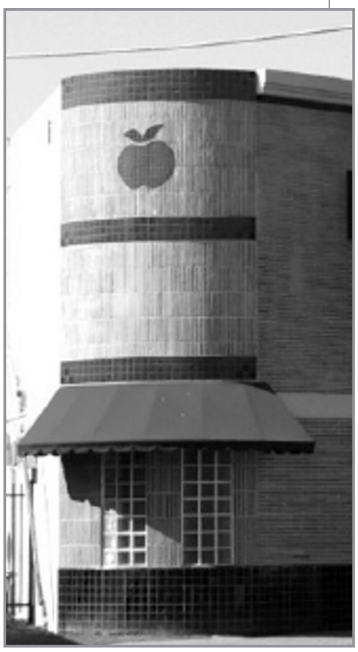
15-4 Canopies and awnings should fit within individual bays or structural divisions of the building facade rather than extending beyond a single bay, unless the building structure dictates an alternative placement.

15-5 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.

15-6 Self-supporting canopies and awnings are recommended.

Canvas awning

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



Corner Awning

15-7 A variety of solid and striped colored awnings may be considered.

15-8 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.

15-9 Canvas, fire-resistant acrylic, and metal are preferred materials for awnings. Vinyl, plastic, plasticized fabric, and fiberglass awnings are strongly discouraged.

15-10 Canvas awnings often fade and deteriorate over time. Canvas awnings will need regular maintenance and periodic replacement.

15-11 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.

15-12 Canopies and awnings should only be internally illuminated where appropriate to the architectural style of the building. Canopies and awnings should be designed to provide window shading to reduce energy use.

Steel Awnings

Steel Awnings

16 Signage

Design Principle

Building signage must be an integral part of the architectural design of every commercial establishment. Building signage must comply with the sign regulations in the city code.

Rationale

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

Design Guidelines

16-1 Signs should be integrated with the architecture of the facade, and constructed of quality weatherproof materials consistent with the design motif of the project.

16-2 Poles and “canned“ signs are strongly discouraged, as are signs made of simple non-dimensional sheets of painted plywood, plastic, or metal.

16-3 Signage should be designed for its effect both during the day, and at night. Sign lighting should be indirect to avoid glare and harshness.

16-4 Dimensional signs, such as signs that use individual letters or that are made of ‘raised panels and letters’ are generally preferable to flat ‘box signs’ since they are more integrated generally with architectural treatments.

16-5 Signage should be the minimum in size and number needed to do the job. Excess signage creates visual clutter and defeats the purpose of signage.

16-6 Signs that are painted on walls or panels are discouraged, and in most cases will not be permitted. Any painted signed must be professionally prepared and executed.

16-7 Addresses of buildings must be displayed in accordance with City of Sacramento ordinances.

16-8 Signs at building entries should be sized and designed to accommodate all future tenants and individual businesses served by that entrance.

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

Pedestrian-scaled bollard lighting

17 Lighting

Design Principle

Lighting fixtures and the light they disperse should be designed to complement and enhance the architectural style of the building and should be compatible with the character of the area. Lighting fixtures should also provide both functional service as well as design impact.

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 in streets, on 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

17-1 Building lighting should relate to the style and character of lighting on the whole site.

17-2 Use of neon, marquee lighting, and other specialized lighting is appropriate in some areas, and may be used for restaurants and entertainment uses.

17-3 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.

17-4 Specialized lighting is appropriate for building features, entries, building towers, and other architectural elements.

17-5 Lighting should provide even illumination. Flashing, pulsating, rotating, or otherwise moving light fixtures are not appropriate.

17-6 Lighting fixtures must not obscure major architectural features.

17-7 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.

18 Sustainability

Design Principle

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

Rationale

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

Design Guidelines

18-1 Energy consumption of buildings can be reduced through design choices. Examples include building orientation that minimizes sun exposure on glazing, use of shade trees to reduce solar gain, reducing interior volume, using light colored roofing materials such as 'cool roof' coating, etc.

18-2 Install energy efficient lighting in public and private areas where feasible.

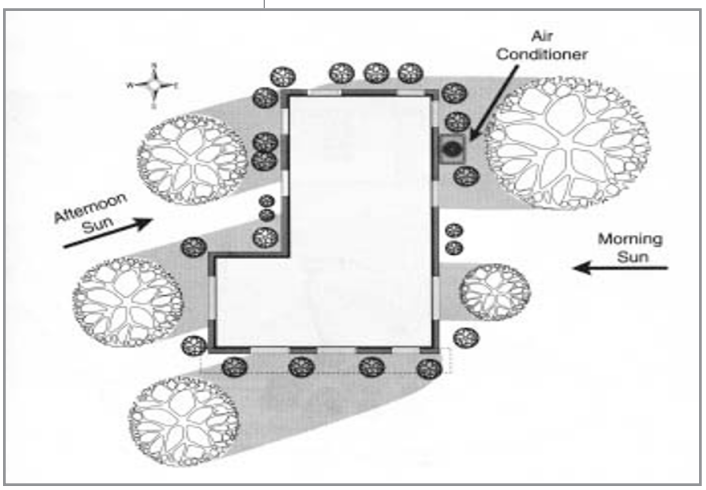
18-3 Install measures such as Energy Star rated roofs, strategically placed shade trees, shaded pavement and other landscaping to reduce site and building temperatures.

18-4 Where possible, include renewable energy measures such as photovoltaic roofs and ground source heat pumps.

18-5 Use recycled and sustainability harvested building materials wherever possible.

18-6 Use Drainage Swales to provide for surface water infiltration and groundwater recharge.

18-7 Use low voc paints and coatings when feasible, and avoid use of solvent and other materials that negatively impact air quality.



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

19 Equipment Services

Design Principle

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

Rationale

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

Design Guidelines

19-1 Roof-mounted equipment should be concealed behind parapets or screen walls. Where equipment cannot be fully concealed, it should be painted to match the visually adjoining surfaces. Any new equipment should be located in as unobtrusive a position as possible. Where screened walls are used, they should be integral to the building design.

19-2 Surface-run pipes and conduit, where visible from streets or portions of the property where customers circulate, should not be added. Any existing visible piping or conduit should be removed whenever it is in the vicinity of a proposed project. These types of exposed utilities are associated with low grade construction and detract from the character and visual appeal of a property. Their existence on one building tends to encourage their use on nearby buildings as a means to lower construction cost.

19-3 Additions to buildings that utilize prefabricated trailers, metal shipping containers, and other temporary structures create a negative and cluttered appearance and will not be approved. Where such additions exist, they should be removed when they are in the vicinity of proposed work.

19-4 Fire sprinkler valves and other required devices should be located as unobtrusively as possible.

19-5 Hose bibs that provide for washing the exterior of buildings should be provided for new construction and substantial remodels. They should be located in unobtrusive yet convenient locations.

19-6 Storage for garbage, if integrated in the building design, should be located in a position where the odors and debris associated with use will not detract from the overall building character.

20 Building Security

Design Principle

Building design must include architecturally integrated provisions for security appropriate to the use and location. CPTED standards as defined in Appendix A shall apply to for site planning, circulation, site, landscape and building lighting, visual barriers and landscaping.

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

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

Rationale

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

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

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

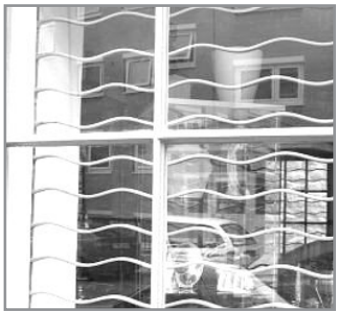
Design Guidelines

Lighting

20-1 Building lighting should be architecturally integrated with the building style, material and colors. Surface-mounted lights should be selected and located to not produce unwanted glare either on the property, to the street, or to adjoining properties. The typical 'wall-mounted box' security fixture is unattractive, produces significant glare, and adds no enhancement to the appearance of a building at night. These types of lighting solutions are discouraged. More architecturally-integrated solutions to building lighting include, placing fixtures in the landscape or on poles aimed at the building. The light source then is not seen; only the effect of the light illuminating the building.

20-2 Entries should get accent lighting that creates a focal point, such as by the use of recessed fixtures over the door locations.

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



These security grills are interesting and playful as well as functional

Window Grill

20-3 Window grills are a common element in many City commercial corridors. Simple tubular metal grills mounted on the exterior are discouraged, since they are generally unattractive and do not meet the intent of this section. Alternatives that are architecturally integrated include:

- Interior mounting of the grills
- Using grills that are decorative in character
- Using windows that by their size and geometry offer inherent protection from intrusion

20-4 In some cases, entire facades of a structure are desired to be secured, for example by pull down metal shutters. The appearance of these shutters, when closed, must be considered in a successful design to not create a fortress like effect. In general, full facade shutters are discouraged, as they can contribute to a visual 'no man's land' at night by eliminating the effect of windows as eyes on the street, and create a visual experience of bleakness and fear that encourages legitimate and desirable activity such as walking. Ultimately, buildings that fully shutter encourage adjoining properties to take similar measures, which can contribute to a downward spiral of disinvestments and visual blight.

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

21 Streetscape and Pedestrian Edges

The design of the streetscape should address the relationship between commercial buildings and the public realm. Elements that can contribute include but are not limited to street trees, street furniture, landscaping, and specialty paving. A successful streetscape should foster a sense of place and feelings of community pride and ownership, contribute to a walkable pedestrian-scaled environment, and 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.

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

Design Principle

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

Rationale

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

Design Guidelines

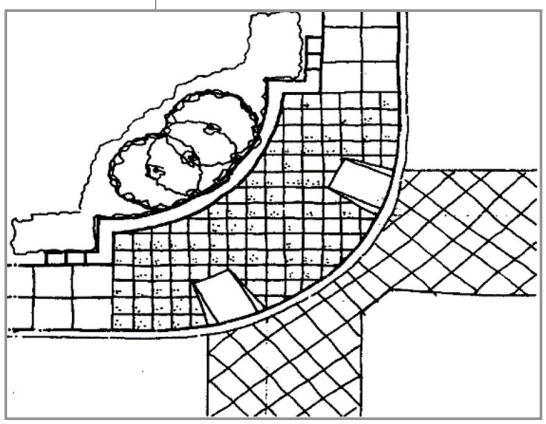
Landscaping

21-1 Landscaping is one of the most important elements in creating a streetscape and pedestrian edge. Provide a variety of trees and plantings along street frontages and in roadway medians.

Alternative Paving

21-2 A change in grade, texture, material, color, or finish of paved areas, particularly at crosswalks and other intersections of pedestrian and vehicle routes, can greatly improve visibility and safety, and enhance a design composition if handled well.

21-3 Variation without a purpose, however, can be a source of visual 'clutter'. Further, the design and composition of surface materials must be accomplished while meeting accessibility requirements.



Alternative paving at crosswalks and intersections can improve visibility and safety

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

Narrower or offset or curved travel lanes

21-4 Narrower travel lanes for arterial streets slow traffic and create safer pedestrian environments. Offsets and curves can also slow traffic where appropriate, on surface streets as well as within a project site.

Provide for Bicycles

21-5 Incorporate bike lanes into streetscapes. Provide places for bicycles to travel and park securely.

On Street Parking

21-6 Allow for on-street parking to serve commercial parking needs, particularly in infill areas where sites are limited in size and the potential for on site parking is limited.

Street Side Amenities

21-7 Provide amenities appropriate to the location such as pedestrian shelters, benches, or trash receptacles. Note that these elements need to be maintained to be a positive contribution to the streetscape.

Gateways

21-8 Some locations act as ‘entryways’ to a neighborhood or area. These locations should be highlighted as gateways, by providing a focal point such as special signage or identifying landscaping at the intersection. Establishing or confirming an identity can create a unique sense of place and community, and increase pride in the residents and businesses.

A prominent tower element anchors a mixed use corner

22 Nodes

Design Principle

Site planning and project density must be appropriate for the project location. Projects located in areas near major intersections (arterial & collector streets), transit stations, or activity centers such as high activity businesses are areas referred to as nodes. At these locations designs should support the higher density, pedestrian- and transit-friendly goals that are articulated in the general plan.

Rationale

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

Light rail

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

Design Guidelines:

<u>Corridor Nodes</u>

22-1 Projects located in corridor nodes should be designed to accommodate higher levels of pedestrian traffic and alternative modes of transportation such as light rail, bus, bicycle etc.

22-2 Where appropriate, projects located in corridor nodes should take advantage of any allowable flexibilities that may contribute to reinforcing the activity and density at the nodes. Examples include increased building height, reductions in parking, setback reductions, combining of uses such as locating office or residential over commercial, etc.

22-3 Projects accessible by bus or light rail should be designed to facilitate and encourage pedestrian access from the nearest transit stop.

22-4 Where appropriate, projects may incorporate a mix of uses, providing upper story residential or office uses that are compatible with ground floor retail, cultural, entertainment or office uses.

23 Gateways, Districts, and Themes

Gateway to a neighborhood

Building with gateway features

Design Principle

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

Rationale

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

Design Guidelines:

Gateways

23-1 Projects located at the edges of nodes and/or that anchor commercial corridors should reflect their role as part of an existing or potential gateway and should accentuate corners with the use of landscaping, architecture, public art, signage, etc.

Themed Districts

23-2 In districts identified to have a common theme or purpose, design elements of individual projects should be complimentary and supportive of the theme or purpose. This may include signage, facade treatment and awnings, colors, textures, signage, and landscaping. Good design allows for supporting a theme without simple repetition. Common elements, colors, or forms can be used to link designs together.

24 Sidewalk Use and Function

Design Principle

Sidewalks are the primary areas within the public street right-of-way that are reserved specifically for pedestrian use. The Pedestrian Realm's principle location is the sidewalk. Functionally it serves several purposes—circulation facility, social space, and amenity zone—and must accommodate numerous features and facilities to support these functions however the primary function being pedestrian circulation.

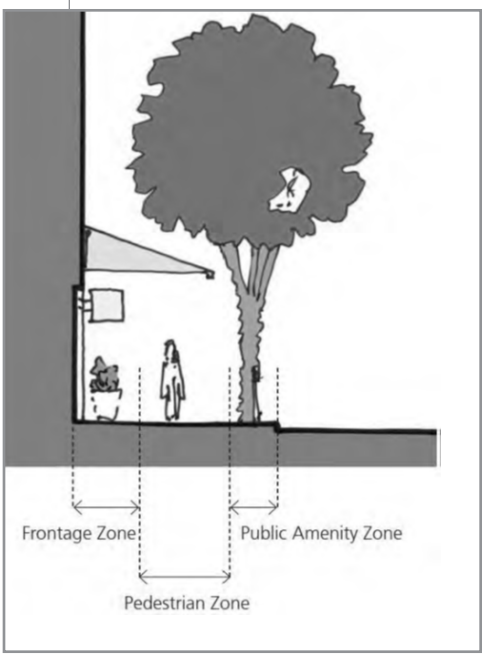
Rationale

As the transitional zone between the vehicular travelway and developed parcels, the public sidewalk serves several functions.

1. It provides for pedestrian circulation both parallel and perpendicular to building facades, accommodating movement from one end of the block to the other, as well as from on-street parking to storefronts.
2. Sidewalks also serve as an important social space for the community, where people meet, stroll together, window shop, sit and chat, dine in open air cafes, and people watch.
3. They also accommodate important public facilities such as transit stops, bicycle parking, directional signs, and street lights that support transit and bicycling as well as walking.

As a circulation facility, the public sidewalk needs to provide for ease of access and free flow of pedestrian traffic.

As a public space, the sidewalk needs to also provide a comfortable and attractive setting. To effectively accommodate active pedestrian use, the design of public sidewalk areas generally should be organized into three zones relating to their primary function: the frontage zone, the pedestrian zone, and the public amenities zone.



Sidewalk Layout

Frontage Zone

The frontage zone forms the outer edge of the public right-of-way and typically is defined by a building facade, landscaping, fence, wall, plaza, or park (or, in less desirable, interim conditions, a surface parking lot).

It functions as the interface between the public right-of-way and adjoining uses. As such, the design of this zone should be responsive to and support the adjoining use, which, depending on context, may mean providing a clear zone for store entrances, a “slow” zone for retail displays and window shopping, or a furnished zone for outdoor dining. As such, businesses are allowed to extend uses, displays, street furniture, and other elements into the frontage zone as a means of engaging passersby and activating the public streetscape.

Design Guidelines

24-1 Frontage Zone Width. The minimum frontage zone width is 1.5 feet. A frontage zone is not needed if the sidewalk corridor is adjacent to a landscaped space.

24-2 Constrained Frontage Zones. In the event there is insufficient right-of-way width, the frontage zone can be reduced to augment widths of the walkway and amenity zones. If there is insufficient frontage zone space to accommodate private uses such as cafes and sidewalk displays, additional area should be taken from the private realm rather than constrain the function or character of the walkway and amenity zones. In all cases, a direct path should be provided for pedestrians and the disabled.

Pedestrian Zone

The pedestrian zone is the middle section of the sidewalk, and is flanked by the frontage zone and the public amenity zone. Its primary function is to accommodate the efficient movement of pedestrians. As such, it needs to provide an unobstructed, linear sidewalk space that is free of street furniture, street trees, planters, and other vertical elements such as light poles, fire hydrants and transit facilities, and be wide enough to accommodate projected volumes of pedestrian traffic.

As a rule, sidewalk widths should be proportional to the level of activity and pedestrian use along a street. Similarly, the width of the pedestrian zone should be proportional to the amount of pedestrian traffic it needs to accommodate. High pedestrian activity locations such as the Central City should have wider sidewalks to ensure adequate walkway clearance and access and to allow for additional activities which support the intensity of land use.

Design Guidelines

24-3 Clearance. Ensure that a minimum sidewalk width for pedestrian through-traffic is not obstructed with street furniture, utility poles, traffic signs, trees, etc Streetscape amenities generally should be located in the Public Amenity Zone to maintain a clear walking zone.

24-4 Width Proportions. The Pedestrian Zone shall comprise at least 50% of the sidewalk width (i.e., 8 feet for the standard 16-foot sidewalk, where feasible), but never be less than 6 feet, whichever is greater.

Public Amenity Zone

The public amenity zone is the section of sidewalk that adjoins the street and buffers pedestrians from the adjacent roadway. This zone is the appropriate location for the majority of the public facilities and streetscape amenities that enhance and serve the pedestrian zone, including features such as street trees, landscaping, street lights, transit stops and shelters, parking meters, fire hydrants, benches, news racks, and other street furniture and amenities.

In addition to buffering pedestrians from vehicular traffic, amenities located in this zone provide comfort and interest for pedestrians, improve the visual appearance of the street, and add to its utility as a functional space.

Streetscape amenities that enhance and serve the pedestrian zone include features such as street trees, landscaping, seating, news racks, public art, and public restrooms.

Additional features such as streetlights with banners, informational signage, planters, etc. add color and festivity to the street and further enhance the pedestrian experience. The Public Amenity Zone is also the appropriate location for most utilities and service facilities, such as street lights, parking meters, fire hydrants, and transit facilities. If not appropriately sited, street furniture can clutter the sidewalk, interfering with travel, and stifling, rather than supporting, active street life. Keeping street furniture, such as newspaper stands, orderly and compact helps to increase the amount of space for pedestrian movement, especially on narrower sidewalks.

Design Guidelines

24-5 Width Proportions. The Public Amenity Zone should comprise at least 35% of the sidewalk width (i.e., 6.5 feet for the standard 16-foot sidewalk), but never be less than 30%, or 4 feet, whichever is greater.

24-6 Sidewalk Cafes. Sidewalk cafes are encouraged within the frontage zone as a use that activates and energizes the public realm. In certain situations, sidewalk cafés and other commercial activities may be allowed to extend into the amenity zone rather than the frontage zone, or where extra wide sidewalks occur in both the frontage and amenity zones. Such use will require special findings to ensure such use and facilities enhance the overall quality of the public realm and do not impede pedestrian traffic or conflict with access to on-street parking. Café seating in the Amenity Zone would require review and approval by Public Works, Urban Forest and Planning. Where café seating is provided in the Amenity Zone, it should be designed to avoid impact on, or require modification of street trees, be directly fronting the restaurant or café of which it is a part, and be clearly delineated, with removable stanchions, fencing or similar barriers to separate it from the Pedestrian Zone.

24-7 Delineating Sidewalk Cafes. Sidewalk cafes that have more formal dining facilities (i.e., offer waiter service to their tables) or more than a single row of tables should provide a decorative element, such as a railing, rope divider, etc., that delineates the café from pedestrian travel zone. (This is a State requirement for serving alcohol.) Such delineation is not required for less formal eateries such as cafes, coffee shops, and sandwich shops that have a single row of chairs and tables.

Appendices

Appendix A - Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design

Appendix B - References and Supporting Documents

Special Planning Districts
Overlay Zones
Urban Design Plans
Streetscape Plans

Appendix A

Appendix A - Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design

Principle

Crime prevention through environmental design (CPTED) is a multi-disciplinary approach to deterring criminal behavior through environmental design. CPTED strategies rely upon the ability to influence offender decisions that precede criminal acts.

Rationale

The theory of CPTED is based on the idea that crime results partly from opportunities presented in the physical environment. The following list of CPTED design guidelines can enhance safety and reduce both the incidence and the fear of crime.

Design Guidelines

A-1 Entrances to the property and buildings should be accentuated with architectural elements, lighting and/or landscaping so that it is clear where pedestrian traffic should go.

A-2 All exterior doors, alcoves, hallways, stairwells, parking areas, pedestrian walkways, and recessed areas should be illuminated.

A-3 Provide appropriate illumination to doorways that open to the outside and to sidewalks.

A-4 Provide lighting that enables pedestrians to see clearly and to identify potential threats at night. Exterior lights should be recessed or in full cutoff fixtures to avoid glare.

A-5 Select and install appropriate landscaping that will allow unobstructed views of vulnerable doors and windows from the street and other properties. Avoid landscaping that might create blind spots.

A-6 Maintain landscaping to achieve:

- Unobstructed views of vulnerable doors and windows from the street and other properties.
- Neat and orderly appearance, which provides social cues that emphasize ownership and reduce vandalism and crime (“broken window theory”).

A tall hedge can provide a good place for intruders to hide and should be avoided

A-7 Utilize plant material with thorns: Roses, holly, bougainvillea, pyracanthra, barberry bush, natal plum, holy grape, etc.

A-8 Define property lines and private areas with plantings, pavement treatments, or partially see-through fences. Make private areas distinguishable from public areas.

- *Windows at upper levels promote casual supervision of the street*
- *Clear building signage*
- *Exterior of building is well illuminated*
- *Large windows at-grade promote surveillance from the street*
- *Clearly defined private and public space*
- *Good pedestrian-scaled lighting on the street*

Appendix B - Reference and Supporting Documents and Plans

Special Planning District (SPD):

Broadway-Stockton Special Planning District
Northgate Boulevard Special Planning District
Alhambra Special Planning District
Del Paso Boulevard Special Planning District
Richards Boulevard Special Planning District
R Street Special Planning District

Overlay Zones:

Urban Neighborhood Overlay Zone
Neighborhood Corridor Overlay Zone
Midtown Commercial Overlay Zone
65th Street / Transit Overlay Zone

Urban Design Plans:

Fruitridge Road Revitalization Conceptual Master Plan
Marysville Boulevard Urban Design Plan
Franklin Boulevard Urban Design Plan
Broadway/Stockton Urban Design Plan

Streetscape Plans:

Broadway/Stockton Streetscape Master Plan
Freeport Boulevard Master Plan (Phase I)
Florin Road Streetscape Master Plan
Del Paso Boulevard (Uptown) Streetscape Master Plan