

CHAPTER 4

OFFICE AND OFFICE MIXED USE

PURPOSE	4:1
ORGANIZATION	4:1
APPLICABILITY AND USE TYPES	4:2
SITE DESIGN	4:3
• Circulation	4:4
• Public Spaces and Pedestrian Amenities.....	4:8
• Building Placement and Orientation	4:10
• Parking.....	4:12
ARCHITECTURE	4:14
• Style and Design Details	4:16



PURPOSE

The City of Rancho Cordova encourages new office development to provide employment opportunities in proximity to places where people live, shop, recreate, and pursue other daily activities. The City encourages office developments that are combined with residential, commercial, and other uses, as well as stand-alone office projects. The purpose of the design standards and guidelines contained within this section is to ensure that office and office mixed use projects are well designed, compatible with adjacent land uses, and contribute to the character of the community. Projects should not be designed in isolation, but rather integrated within the context of the surrounding community.

ORGANIZATION

The standards and guidelines provided in this chapter are divided into two sections; Site Design and Architecture. The Site and Architecture sections are organized into subcategories (i.e. Site > Circulation). Each section has one or more related design objective. This design objective states what the community wants to achieve. Illustrations provide visual examples of projects with the desired elements. Supporting the design objective is a series of design standards and design guidelines.

APPLICABILITY AND USE TYPES

Guidelines contained within this section apply to projects consisting of entirely office development as well as projects that contain a mix of uses in conjunction with the predominant office use. The scale of projects can range from a single office building, a collection of buildings within an office park, to several mixed-use office buildings with commercial and/or residential components. Guidelines contained within this section are supplemental to guidelines provided in Chapter 2, Community Design, which are applicable to all projects within the community.

This chapter is applicable to projects with all or a majority of the building square footage allocated for office uses. The remainder may include commercial (retail and/or service) and/or residential, integrated vertically or horizontally. An example of a vertically integrated building would be retail shops on the ground floor with office on the upper levels. Horizontal integration would be an office park adjacent to commercial and/or residential buildings. Property designated for office and office mixed use designations may be developed entirely with business and professional offices but the City encourages an integration of supporting and compatible uses that contribute to a walkable, livable community.



Office building (Rancho Cordova, California)



Mixed-use office building with retail at ground level (Davis, California)



Office buildings designed connect to adjacent residential neighborhood (Fairview, Oregon)

SITE DESIGN

Intent – Create office development projects that integrate into the adjacent community and create vibrant, interesting places – not just places to drive to work and then drive home again after work. Development should be of a high quality and visually appealing from adjacent streets and surrounding neighborhoods with an emphasis on building placement and orientation, site landscape and open space, and pedestrian oriented plazas and circulation systems. The guidelines provided in this chapter are intended to work in conjunction with the site design guidelines provided in Chapter 2, Community Design.

The Site Design section features design provisions in the following categories for office and office mixed use projects:

- Circulation
- Public Spaces/Pedestrian Amenities
- Building Placement & Orientation
- Parking

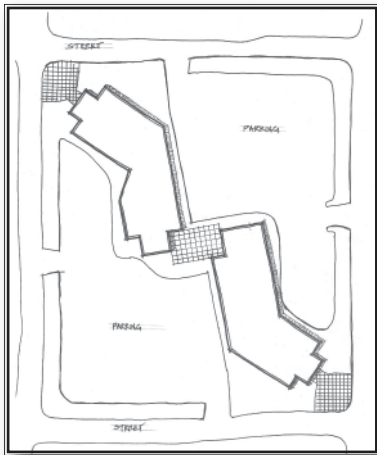
SITE DESIGN > CIRCULATION

DESIGN OBJECTIVE

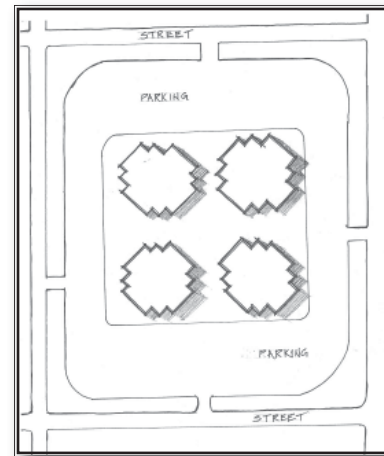
Develop an on-site circulation system that ties office development into the community transportation network and promotes all forms of transportation, including vehicles, bicycles, pedestrians and transit.

DESCRIPTION

Office development projects should facilitate all forms of transportation to the site to encourage a variety of commuting methods and to allow persons to walk to and from adjacent properties. Walking, safety and convenience should be ensured by designing a clear and comfortable separation between vehicles and pedestrians and convenient



Do This: Design office developments to integrate buildings into the surrounding neighborhood and promote connections to the public street system for vehicles and pedestrians.



Don't Do This: Office buildings isolated from surrounding properties and public street system by large parking lots.

access from site buildings to the public sidewalk system, open space, parking areas, and adjacent land use areas. On-site amenities should be provided for bicycle and transit users that promote their use of the site. Bicycle riders should be able to ride from their homes in the surrounding neighborhoods to their place of work. Pedestrian circulation patterns should be designed to help guide users to and from transit stops and bike parking areas.

DESIGN GUIDELINES

1. Where possible, place the primary entrance of office buildings at the building setback with an entry from the public sidewalk to help define the “street edge” and encourage pedestrian access.



This office mixed use building provides a passage between a public plaza with a transit stop and a parking area – serving multiple transportation choices (Beaverton, Oregon).



Sidewalk along right-of-way too narrow; there is no dedicated bike lane; and no pedestrian connection to the public sidewalk or the adjacent office building (Folsom, California)

2. Provide pedestrian amenities that increase safety and comfort as follows:

- Provide a direct connection between the public sidewalk and the front entrance to all site buildings;
- Illuminate walkways leading to parking areas;
- Identify pedestrian routes with grade-separated pathways, use of special pavers, scored surfaces, planter strips and/or bollards;
- Provide additional sidewalk width at building entries;
- Provide weather protection over sidewalks (awnings, building overhangs, free-standing shelters, canopy trees over walkways, etc.);
- Integrate transit stops into the development and provide direct access from the transit stop to the primary building entrance.

3. On-site bicycle parking and/or storage facilities shall be:

- Provided in well-lit, visible areas;
- In proximity to building entries;
- Integrated into the design of the projects.



Good Sidewalk connection provided to front entrance of office building (Rancho Cordova, California).



This building represents a preferred design by providing direct access from the public sidewalk in an elegant and attractive manner (Mission Viejo, California).



This photo represents an acceptable, but not preferred entry design by providing direct access from public sidewalk (ADA access provided by not pictured). (Rancho Cordova, California)



A designated bicycle parking area in a highly visible location (Beaverton, OR).



Bicycle parking provided close to building entries .

SITE DESIGN > PUBLIC SPACES AND PEDESTRIAN AMENITIES

DESIGN OBJECTIVE

Provide usable public spaces and gathering spaces oriented towards employees and visitors to the site.

DESCRIPTION

Development should be pedestrian-oriented, featuring design components and pedestrian amenities. Public spaces, including gathering spaces should be provided for visitors and employee break areas. Outdoor areas should be aesthetically pleasing and include street furniture appropriate to the space.



Do This: Plaza with an interesting design creating a pleasant gathering area with water feature, seating and decorative plants and fencing (Courtesy LPA).



Don't Do This: Employee break area created as a design "after-thought" in a secluded remote location (Rancho Cordova, California).

DESIGN GUIDELINE

1. Large office developments should feature plazas, central greens, and/or gardens which link office buildings together and provide a place for workers to gather. Public spaces shall be meaningful places that contribute to the overall sense of place and site identity.
2. Landscape outdoor areas with visually stimulating *softscape* and *hardscape* that helps to identify the site.
3. Office buildings should help define and enhance street corners and street edges with buildings placements, entrances, public plazas, or small parks that tie the building to the public street. Special attention is paid to the design of project and building corners as an opportunity to create visual interest and provide easy access to adjacent properties, for the pedestrian.



This office building curves around a park area and creates a link to the public sidewalk system (Courtesy LPA).

SITE DESIGN > BUILDING PLACEMENT AND ORIENTATION

DESIGN OBJECTIVE

Design and construct buildings to create safe, pleasant and active environments.

DESCRIPTION

Buildings should be sited and oriented close to the street with inviting and detailed elevations to strengthen the desired image for the area. Only active building elevations with public access should face the street. On corner sites, building entrances should face the intersection and “communicate” with the neighboring properties.



Do This: This office building provides direct access from the public sidewalk as well as the vehicular parking area with an architectural feature used to identify the primary building entrance (Davis, California).



Don't Do This: This site is designed primarily for vehicular access and does not provide a safe way for pedestrians to reach the front door from the public sidewalk system (Rancho Cordova, California).

DESIGN GUIDELINES

1. Place office buildings to accommodate the pedestrian user, relate to the public street and provide connection to adjacent properties by:
 - Orienting front doors of office buildings to public streets;
 - Use the area between the right-of-way and building to create a plaza court, planter area, bicycle parking, or another amenity (storage and utilities prohibited);
 - Avoid excessive setbacks that create gaps or voids along the street's architectural edge;
 - Frontages and entries detailed with architectural elements for improved way-finding.



Office building does a good job of “anchoring” a corner location and providing attractive landscaping. The design could have been improved by adding a direct connection to the public sidewalk (El Dorado Hills, California).



Office mixed-use building with a corner entry that serves to anchor the corner of site and provide easy access to the pedestrian user and identify the building entrance to visitors.

SITE DESIGN > PARKING

DESIGN OBJECTIVE

Create functional parking areas that minimize physical barriers for pedestrians.

DESCRIPTION

Office development should be oriented towards the pedestrian user, not parking areas. Shared parking between several projects is encouraged, especially in parking structures. Pedestrian pathways should connect the parking areas to the rest of the development and protect the pedestrian from vehicular conflicts.



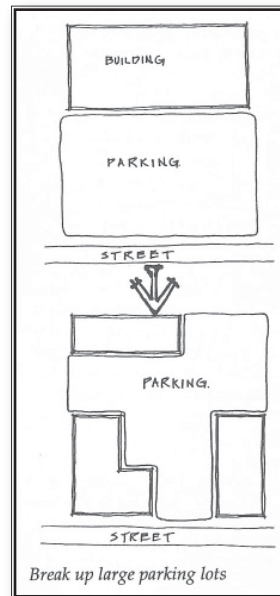
Do This: A protected pathway is provided through this parking lot flanked by landscape.



Don't Do This: Parking field with little landscaping and unsafe conditions for the pedestrian (Rancho Cordova, California).

DESIGN GUIDELINES

1. Parking lots shall be designed to facilitate safe and efficient pedestrian movement between parking and buildings. Parking should not be the predominant aesthetic facing public street intersections. Accomplish this by:
 - Large parking areas should be broken up into smaller areas and separated with landscaping, buildings and driveway.
 - Locating parking lots to the rear or side of buildings and avoid placing parking areas at street corners.
 - Designing primary driveways as “streets” with sidewalks, landscaping, building edges, lighting and other streetscape elements to create a street grid through the project.
 - Consider placing buildings at or close to the street right-of-way to maximize convenience of pedestrian and transit users.



Large parking areas should be broken into smaller areas to reduce their scale and massing, making them more navigable for the pedestrian.



Avoid isolated landscape islands that are too small for a tree to grow to sufficient size (Rancho Cordova, California).



ARCHITECTURE

Intent – Promote architectural design that establishes project identity and enhances the character of Rancho Cordova. Allow various architectural styles to be used with an overall effect of cohesiveness and pleasant built environment as a result. The guidelines provided in this section are intended to work in conjunction with the architecture design guidelines provided in Chapter 2, Community Design.

- Style and Design Details





ARCHITECTURE > STYLE AND DESIGN DETAILS

DESIGN OBJECTIVE

Use an architectural style or theme that establishes a clear, interesting project identity for office parks with multiple buildings as well as individual office structures. The architectural style shall be evident on all elevations of all buildings.

DESCRIPTION

Architectural styling and detailing adds character to a site, integrates the project into the urban framework and helps to create a sense of place and belonging for the development. While the City is not advocating a single predominant architectural style to be used throughout the City, the goal is to celebrate variety of architectural styles while taking the built and natural context and surroundings into consideration.



Do This: Multi-level office building with visually interesting façade. This building also includes retail on the ground floor with additional architectural interest (Hillsboro, Oregon).



Don't Do This: Window style and flat surface provide little visual interest to this facade. High windows on the ground floor are not inviting to the pedestrian (Portland, Oregon)

DESIGN GUIDELINES

1. Design all sides of the building with consistent architectural and façade elements:
 - Break up the roofline silhouette through the use of large cornices, changes in parapet heights or other techniques;
 - Use relief, windows, structural articulation, building off-set and other techniques to add distinction to the façade of the structure.



Although somewhat monotonous, this building uses quality materials and structural articulation effectively (Folsom, California).

2. Design entries to be clearly visible from the street and provide visual interest, as follows:
- Main building entries shall be accented with strong architectural definition to attract pedestrians;
 - Secondary entrances should have minor detailing that adds architectural distinction to that portion of the façade. Space entries in larger buildings at appropriate intervals for the pedestrian;
 - Accentuated entries from the overall building façade by with differentiated roof, awning or portico, trim details, recessed entries, doors and doorway with design details, decorative lighting or other technique.



Well designed entry (Folsom, California)



Entryway of this office building is open and inviting. The architectural and plaza design work together with common design themes and use of materials.