Chapter 2

Community Design

PURPOSE

Every individual development within the City contributes to the overall character, quality, and uniqueness of the community, either positively or negatively, based upon the mass, form, features, and function of the development. The City recognizes this fact and is establishing the following general design standards and guidelines for all new development and redevelopment within its boundaries.

The provisions of this section, as with all subsequent sections, implement the vision of the City General Plan and the four Citywide Design Goals listed below and described in the introduction chapter of this document:

THE CITYWIDE DESIGN GOALS

- The creation of an **Integrated Community Framework** based on the Building Block concepts of a system of neighborhoods, villages, and districts and a successful circulation system
- **Compact Mixed-Use Development** as a basis for community design and character with more dense and intense mixed-use development in specified core areas
- Establish **Project Identity** by respecting the existing environment and community history and designing projects to be smart, vibrant developments that contribute to the enhanced character of Rancho Cordova
- **Pedestrian-Oriented Development** that is successful and attractive to residents and visitors of the City

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 subcategory has one or more related design objectives. This design objective states what the community wants to achieve. Illustrations and photos provide visual examples of projects with the desired elements. Supporting the design objective is a series of design standards and design guidelines.

APPLICABILITY

The provisions of this chapter are applicable to all new development and the redevelopment of existing property within the City, regardless of development type. Subsequent chapters of these Guidelines include additional design provisions applicable only to that particular development type. For example, those provisions lend more detail and specificity to those provided herein.

SITE DESIGN

Intent – Create individual projects that help contribute to the overall dynamic and unique character of the City of Rancho Cordova through site design. Development, based upon the principles of the Building Blocks concept is organized on a modified grid street system that connects all areas of the City. Most buildings are located near the street or the sidewalk along the street, creating pedestrian-oriented streetscapes that are inviting places to live, work, and visit.

The Site Design section features the following categories:

- Sense of Place and Community Identity
- Connectivity and Circulation
- Building Placement and Orientation
- Public Spaces and Pedestrian Amenities
- Parks and Open Spaces
- Landscaping
- Streetscape
- Parking
- Screening and Service Areas
- SafeScape
- Sustainable Development
- Art in Public Places
- Lighting
- Signs

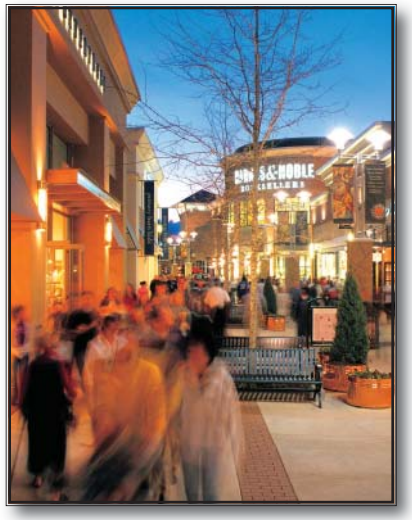
SITE DESIGN > SENSE OF PLACE AND COMMUNITY IDENTITY

DESIGN OBJECTIVE

The design of the site should contribute to an overall sense of place that the user can relate to and remember.

DESCRIPTION

Every individual site should be anchored into the greater context of the City. Each project should be designed with unique character that contributes to the formation of a new identity for the City of Rancho Cordova as a



Do This: *This commercial shopping area has a sense of place, with its light fixtures, banners, landscape treatments, and unique building design and architectural detailing (Courtesy LPA).*

Don't Do This: *Commercial center in Elk Grove, California. The site is developed with corporate architecture for its pad building that does not match with the overall style and character of the development. This does not help achieve a sense of place for the site.*

memorable place. Buildings should be designed to physically frame and define the street and public spaces with interesting, quality architecture. Establishing a new identity for the City is important to Rancho Cordova residents and other stakeholders. This can be achieved through the redevelopment of existing areas of the City and the development of new areas that both promote the idea of pedestrian oriented development, human scale, and placemaking within the overall framework for the community. Development should help establish Rancho Cordova as a premier **PLACE** within the greater region where people come to live, work, and play.

A plaza in Park City, Utah. The site includes a clock tower that acts as a landmark. The buildings frame the plaza space against the street and, along with the use of windows, open the site to the street and pedestrians walking by. The signage along the building is unique and does not detract from the architecture. A historical marker is included to connect the user to the site history.

DESIGN GUIDELINES

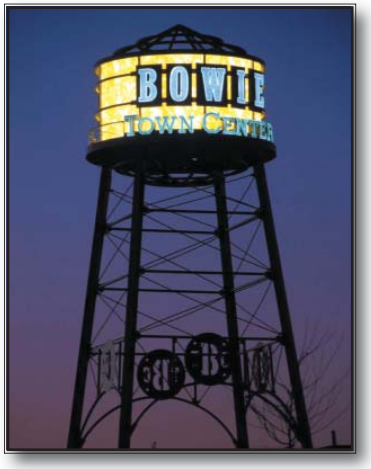
1. Design a formal structure for the site that implies a sense of order and orientation. Use building placement and orientation to create unique public spaces and clear patterns of circulation (wayfinding) within the site and connect to the surrounding community. Larger buildings should visually anchor smaller ones to the site.

2. Use proportions in building mass and detail elements (i.e. pedestrian features, landscaping, hardscape, etc.) to form the spaces between buildings.

3. Create a sense of meaning for the project through design that relates and contributes to the district and City. Establish project identity through the use of common architectural features, detailing and style, pedestrian/street furniture, lighting, signage, landscaping, or other such concepts. Use symbols, signs, public art, or architectural elements to create legibility for the site. Consider including a landmark as part of the project design (i.e. tower, water feature, public art, etc.). Projects should establish themes that build upon the significant history of the City, such as Folsom Boulevard, Mather Field, vineyards, aerospace, the gold rush, etc.

This sign from Fells Point, a waterfront development in Baltimore, Maryland, includes design features such as a boat and ocean waves that connect it to the waterfront. It also contains information that describes the history of the site. Ideas like this help to build project identity and link the development to the history of the site and community. (Courtesy LPA)

4. Build transparency (clear, uninterrupted views) from the public right-of-way and the inside of buildings onto the open areas of the site and other building interiors. Possible solutions include:
   - Siting buildings to create view sheds;
   - Using large, untinted windows to allow views into and out from buildings;
   - Other solutions as appropriate.



This water tower feature at the Bowie Town Center sets the theme of the character of the center. It also acts as a landmark for the surrounding community. (Courtesy LPA)

5. Project signage should not dominate the streetscape and shall be designed as follows:
   - For residential subdivisions (i.e. neighborhoods), sign design and materials used should relate to the residential character of the area and be integrated into a landscape area.
   - For non-residential and mixed-use projects, the signage should be in keeping with the architectural character of the project and should be integrated into the overall site design.

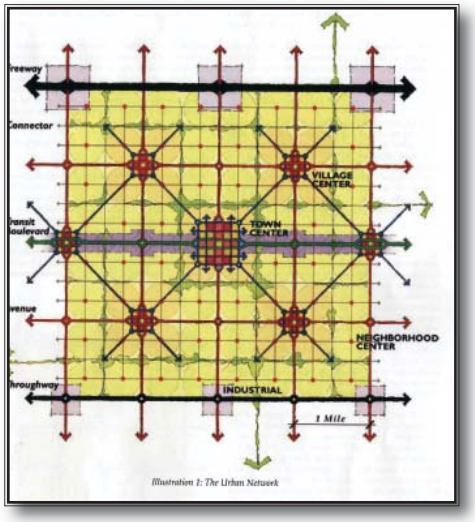
SITE DESIGN > CONNECTIVITY AND CIRCULATION

DESIGN OBJECTIVE

Develop pedestrian oriented communities that are connected by a vast, efficient, community-oriented circulation and transit system. Smart growth principles of a street network with a wide variety of street widths, rather than a few large or very large streets that neglect or ignore the pedestrian.

DESCRIPTION

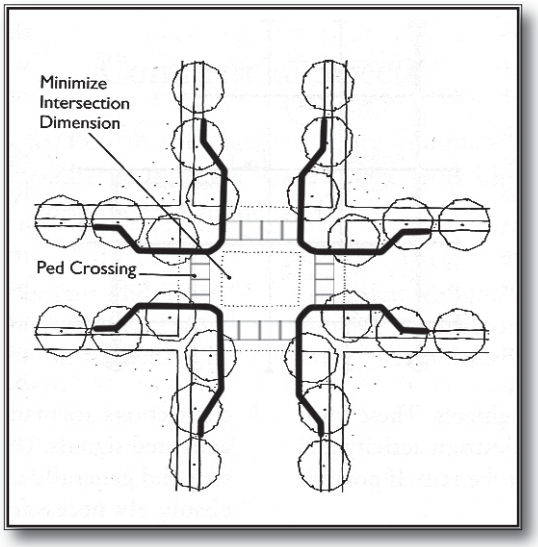
All development within the City shall be pedestrian friendly, but will allow for other forms of mobility that are efficient and connect to all parts of the community. This includes vehicular circulation, transit, and bike and walking trails. Public roadways will be scaled in width and capacity to meet their ultimate demand and satisfy the City's



Do This: *Conceptual illustration of the interrelationship and interconnectedness of neighborhood, village, and town centers. The community is based on a grid system the provides connectivity of uses, streets, and center. (Courtesy LPA)*

Don't Do This: *Conventional cul-de-sac development with a curvilinear street system that disconnects individual residents and prohibits easy navigation of the subdivision.*

preferred Level of Service standards. The overall City roadway system will be based on a modified grid system, as opposed to a standard, conventional curvilinear street system made up of winding streets and cul-de-sacs. The system of four-lane secondary roads spaced approximately a half mile apart (and two-lane connector roads spaced approximately one-quarter mile apart in urban areas) will provide more route options for drivers and reduce the number and frequency of major roadways. The intent is to provide adequate circulation capabilities for vehicular modes while still having roadways that are sized to be inviting to pedestrians. Neighborhoods should be designed with an interconnected street system that will blend well into the existing street system, diffuse traffic within the neighborhood, and improve vehicle circulation to and through the site (e.g. extension of the existing street separations and network minimizing barriers between neighborhoods, local hierarchy of roads). Public trails will connect developed areas together and with the natural environment. Additional modes of travel, such as transit, will be promoted and widely available to all residents and visitors.



Minimize the distance pedestrians must walk to cross streets by incorporating bulbouts or other features that narrow the length of the crosswalk and slow vehicles by tightening turning radius. (Courtesy LPA)

DESIGN GUIDELINES

1. If applicable, provide a hierarchy of streets consistent with the City's Circulation Plan that contribute to the idea of way finding.

2. New development should be based on a grid or a modified grid system. A modified grid system is one where streets are curved slightly to produce the illusion of varied setbacks while maintaining the integrated grid pattern. This also narrows the line-of-sight for drivers and encourages them to slow down.

3. The use of cul-de-sacs is highly discouraged and should only be considered where natural impediments prevent vehicular connections to be made. Where cul-de-sacs are used, they shall provide pedestrian connections to neighboring developments or the City's regional trail system.

4. The City discourages project design that includes new six lane roadways. Rather, the City encourages the spacing of major roadways at approximate one-mile increments and secondary (connector) roads at half-mile increments consistent with the City's Circulation Plan. The City also encourages local street networks to incorporate a system of two-lane connectors at approximately one-mile spacing for improved connectivity and livable connector roadway design.

5. Where new roadways are being developed, the preferred maximum block length is less than 600 feet. Between 600 and 800 feet in length is acceptable, but more than 800 feet is not acceptable. The City encourages the use of mid-block crossings where the block length is more than 600 feet.

6. Provide trails and other natural pedestrian corridors as integral parts of the development.

Example of a mid-block crossing in San Louis Obispo, California. The crossing features special paving, paint striping, a bulbing of the sidewalk to narrow the street, and special lighting in the street that flashes when pedestrians are in the crossing.

The Higgins Marketplace in Nevada County, California features a pedestrian trail that connects with both the site's internal circulation system and the crosswalks at the intersection. It promotes pedestrian activity in and around the village center.

7. Include dedicated bike paths for riders that allow them to travel around all developed areas of the City and connect to regional trail systems.

8. Consider including traffic calming devices as part of the overall circulation design, such as:
   - Bulb-outs at intersections;
   - Decreased turning radii at corners;
   - Traffic circles and roundabouts;
   - Raised crosswalks and/or crosswalks made of materials or colored differently than the roadway;
   - Landscaped medians for wider streets.

A mid-block crossing in the Pearl District of Portland, Oregon. The crosswalk leads to a park in the middle of the next block that draws pedestrians.

SITE DESIGN > CONNECTIVITY AND CIRCULATION > VEHICULAR

DESIGN OBJECTIVE

Develop an on-site vehicular circulation system that promotes efficient movement of vehicles in a clear and well-defined manner and creates environments that are safe for pedestrians, bicycles, and cars.

DESCRIPTION

Vehicles should be able to easily move about a site in a clear and orderly fashion. The design of access and circulation on project sites should blend well with the existing framework and the surrounding neighborhood.

Do This: *This Village Center in El Dorado County, California has a clear hierarchy of circulation. Vehicles can easily move from the street to the internal drive aisles, to the parking areas. Pedestrian areas are clearly separated and delineated from vehicular areas.*

Don't Do This: *At this commercial center, drive aisles and entrances are not clearly identifiable. This leads to poor circulation within the site and at places where it connects with the public right-of-way.*

Reduce the potential conflicts between vehicles and pedestrians and at points where vehicles enter or exit the public circulation system.

DESIGN GUIDELINES

1. Circulation systems shall be designed to avoid conflicts between vehicular, bicycle, and pedestrian traffic. Development should be based on the street grid "Main Street" concept that allows for on-street parking in front of buildings, provides meaningful pedestrian areas in front of shop fronts and businesses, and parking consolidated behind, under, or within the building.

2. Where parking fields are used, they shall be designed with features that buffer opposing modes from one another to create a safe environment, such as:
   - Pedestrian paths separated from the roadway by a change in grade and/or landscaping;
   - Changes in paving type and/or color;
   - Special signage directing traffic and alerting drivers to potential conflicts.

At Santana Row, San Jose, California, the internal circulation system is actually part of the City circulation system, functioning as a logical extension of the system. It includes on-street parking for easy access to shops and restaurants. Pedestrians are separated from the right-of-way by landscaping.

3. Service and loading functions shall be integrated into the circulation pattern in a manner that minimizes conflicts with vehicles and pedestrians.

4 Redundant circulation that unnecessarily reduces the amount of site available for landscaped areas shall be minimized.

5. Circulation routes shall focus upon primary points of ingress and egress.

6. Simplify and consolidate circulation systems by:
   - Consolidating access points serving adjoining sites;
   - Minimizing curb cuts along the public streets;
   - Providing connections between adjacent development; and
   - Accessing parking from alleys or common driveways.

7. Consider using a traditional street grid within projects; replicate and/or extend the street grid of adjacent developments and neighborhoods. A grid of public streets, driveways, and pedestrian connections should be designed to accomplish the following:
   - Create smaller blocks and more walkable projects;
   - Create active sidewalk environments along streets;
   - Orient buildings along streets and public sidewalks to create a more urban environment;
   - Provide proximity and linkages between different types of development in neighborhoods and mixed-use areas.

DESIGN STANDARDS

New driveways should be sited away from or immediately opposite street intersections and the number of driveways shall be minimized, consistent with the direction of the Public Works Director, for purposes of traffic safety.

AVOID

- Excessive curb-cuts
- Service and loading driveways/alleyways facing arterial streets
- Service or loading driveways accessed from local residential streets
- Dead-end aisles

SITE DESIGN > CONNECTIVITY AND CIRCULATION > PEDESTRIAN

DESIGN OBJECTIVE

Reduce and eliminate barriers and visual impairments to pedestrian movement, making the pedestrian a priority in the design of projects.

DESCRIPTION

Pedestrian routes to and through all non-residential and mixed-use sites shall be clear and easy to recognize. Sidewalks and walkways shall be designed for continuity with safety in mind. Major streets will feature separated sidewalks with landscaping that help define the pedestrian space. Overall street scaling will promote slower speeds that, while efficiently moving vehicles around the City, will aid in the perception of pedestrian safety.

Do This: *At the Natomas Marketplace in Sacramento, California, pedestrian pathways are provided from the parking areas to the commercial areas, protecting the pedestrians from potential conflicts with vehicles. The path is landscaped and lighted. Curbcuts are provided where pedestrians enter the parking field, allowing disabled people to easily navigate from the car to the pathway and store beyond.*

Don't Do This: *At this parking lot in Mountain View, California, the pedestrian path is at the same grade as the parking area, allowing cars to cross the pedestrian path. While the sidewalk appears ample in width and delineated with separate paving materials, this design may create a safety hazard and/or inhibit the mobility of the pedestrian.*

DESIGN GUIDELINES

1. Consider the use of traffic calming designs and features that reduce the length/distance of pedestrian street crossings (i.e. bulbouts, bollards, etc.).

2. In larger vehicular parking areas, include sidewalks between rows of parking for separated pedestrian circulation to and from the activity centers.

3. Sites shall be designed such that there are few conflicts with vehicular traffic. This may be done through the use of:
   - A change of paving and special signage and lighting that clearly delineates a pedestrian crossing;
   - A grade separation between the pedestrian and vehicular realm;
   - Separation through landscaping;
   - Bollards;
   - Other forms of separation that meet the intent of this guideline;
   - Building placement that provides direct access between the sidewalk and building entrance.

4. Emphasize pedestrian access points so they do not appear hidden or perceived as afterthoughts. On-site pedestrian connections should include design cues to help demarcate the transition between public and private spaces, such as changes in
   - Colors;
   - Materials;
   - Landscaping;
   - Dimensions of the space.

This photo shows a clearly identifiable mixing of pedestrians into the vehicular portion of the site at a development in Roseville, California. A change in color and texture are used to highlight the interaction of the two modes.

DESIGN STANDARDS

1. Per the Pedestrian Design Guidelines, all sidewalks shall be designed and maintained at a minimum width of:
   - 5 feet where the sidewalk is separated from the roadway
   - 7 feet where the sidewalk is not separated from the roadway
   - 8 feet in front of schools, universities, hospitals, and commercial and mixed-use development.
2. All walkways internal to the site (and not part of the public right-of-way) shall be a minimum of 6 feet in width.
3. Illumination of walkways shall be concentrated along the pedestrian paths leading to parking areas and in the specific areas where cars are parked.

5. Projects shall provide continuous sidewalks/walkway system through the following techniques:
   - Provide sidewalks/walkways along all perimeter and internal streets;
   - Connect to the public sidewalk system at multiple points along each street frontage
   - Continue the trail system to the property boundary to connect to existing development or to allow future connections when adjacent properties develop;
   - Provide a continuous path from the primary entrance of all buildings to the public sidewalk system;
   - Provide minor pedestrian pathways through buildings (covered or uncovered).

6. Create natural, easy to utilize connections between residential neighborhoods and neighborhood/village centers.

7. Provide pedestrian amenities that increase safety and comfort as follows:
   - Include area for people to sit, relax, and watch the goings-on of the area;
   - 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 along buildings and along primary walkways to building entrances (awnings, building overhangs, free-standing shelters, canopy trees over walkways, etc.).

8. The City encourages the use of "urban sidewalks" along intense development (i.e. commercial uses, portions of the Downtown, etc.). The minimum width for such sidewalks is 10 to 12 feet, given the constraints of the site. Where restaurant uses provide seating along the sidewalk, the minimum width should be 15 feet to ensure adequate space for pedestrian circulation and enable comfortable seating. "Urban sidewalks" include street trees with grills between the roadway and the buildings to help define the street edge; however the sidewalk is not separated from the roadway by a planter strip.

AVOID

Obstructions that block or narrow the pedestrian way.

The pedestrian sidewalk of State Street in Santa Barbara, California. The street is an interesting and dynamic place to walk, with wide sidewalks, changes in paving texture and color, landscaping, street furniture (benches, trash cans, light fixtures, tables and chairs), and buildings that come right up to the back of the sidewalk.

The City encourages the use of urban sidewalks along intense development, such as in these examples from Ft. Collins and Denver Colorado. The sidewalks are wide to accommodate pedestrian traffic, bench seating for passers-by, and seating for sidewalk cafes. The streets are lined with trees to help create a sense of enclosure and define the street edge.

SITE DESIGN > CONNECTIVITY AND CIRCULATION > BICYCLE

DESIGN OBJECTIVE

Provide on-site amenities that promote bicycle travel into and around the site and connect the site in a clear and well-defined manner to the City's bicycle and trail system.

DESCRIPTION

Bicycle travel is a clean, efficient, healthy alternative to vehicular transportation and on-site amenities shall be provided for bicycle users that promote their use of the site. Bicycle riders should be able to ride from their homes in the surrounding neighborhoods to their *Village Center*, park, purchase the goods they need, and ride home without any significant hassle.

Do This: *This street in Folsom, California includes an area specifically designated for bicycle users. It alerts drives to the potential for cyclists sharing the roadway with vehicles, adding a layer of safety to the roadway.*

Don't Do This: *This street in Beaverton, Oregon has not been designed with the bicycle user in mind. Consequently, it presents an unsafe environment for the bicycle user.*

DESIGN GUIDELINES

1. For new subdivisions, master planned communities, and specific plan areas, incorporate bicycle routes into the overall design of the community through the use of both on- and off-street routes and trails.

2. The project site should be connected to the Citywide bikeway system.

3. Provide a linked system of bicycle paths throughout the project site by:
   - Provide direct connections to regional bicycle system (streets with bike lanes, open spaces with bike paths, etc.);
   - Bicycle routes shall continue to the property boundary to connect to existing systems on adjacent development or to allow future connections when adjacent properties develop;
   - Provide bicycle facilities as part of roadways/driveways with painted lanes and signage or provide a separate bicycle path system.

4. Bicycle racks shall be located conveniently for the user in proximity to entrances and shall no obstruct the pedestrian right-of-way.

Bike parking area in Davis, California. The bike racks are located close to the street and next to the stores and offices for easy access. There is plenty of separation between the racks so that riders can maneuver their bikes around the parking area. Lighting is included for night access.

Bicycle parking at Orenco Station. The racks are just outside of the pedestrian path, yet close to the stores, residents, and right of way. The street lighting covers the parking area, helping with safety.

SITE DESIGN > CONNECTIVITY AND CIRCULATION > TRANSIT

DESIGN OBJECTIVE

Provide on-site facilities to accommodate transit riders and provide clear and well-defined on-site access to transit services.

DESCRIPTION

For some members of the community, transit ridership is the only mode of travel available to them. For others, it is a welcome alternative to other vehicular modes. Clean, recognizable, safe, and efficient on-site connections to transit shall be provided at all convenient locations throughout the City.

ALSO SEE
COMMERCIAL AND COMMERCIAL MIXED USE CIRCULATION PROVISIONS

Do This: This residential mixed use project in Beaverton, Oregon is integrated with the light rail stop, promoting a high level of connectivity between the uses and encouraging transit ridership. The station is lighted and landscaped to create a pleasing, safe environment.

Don't Do This: Bus shelter along a suburban road. There is no sidewalk or other pedestrian connection from the stop to the street or any adjacent uses.

DESIGN GUIDELINES

1. Increase the convenience of transit use by incorporating the following site design techniques:
   - Consider bringing public transit into project sites for convenient drop-off of clients;
   - Place transit facilities and supportive commercial uses (coffee house, news stand, etc.) in close proximity whenever possible;
   - Where possible, incorporate transit stops into attractive public spaces that act as a node between the project and the stop;
   - Provide easy access from transit stops to the front door of buildings;
   - Provide a separate loading area for facilities that have a high number of transit users (e.g. schools). Conflict with pedestrians arriving to sites should be minimized.

2. The City recommends the following amenities for transit stops:
   - Consider transit stops with covered and lighted shelters;
   - Develop attractive and readable signage;
   - Consider lighted transit stops and shelters for safety.

3. Transit stops shall be distinguished from the surrounding context to help create project identity or contribute to Citywide or area-wide theme and identity. This can be achieved by changes in:
   - Paving materials;
   - Larger sidewalk widths;
   - Amenities;
   - And/or shade/shelter structures.

The Fruitvale BART station and Transit Oriented Development in Oakland, California. The BART station and bus stop are integrated into the overall design of the TOD, with commercial and residential uses addressing the transit rider.

SITE DESIGN > CONNECTIVITY AND CIRCULATION > BETWEEN USES

DESIGN OBJECTIVE

Promote connections between uses that are inviting and useable by pedestrians, vehicles, bicycles, and transit users.

DESCRIPTION

Individual uses should be connected through trails, parkways, natural open spaces, and pedestrian corridors that allow people to interact on a personal level with the built environment. These paths will help develop an overall sense of place and connect the individual neighborhoods with their villages and districts. Connections will not be

Do This: *An ADA-compliant path in Folsom, California that connects a single-family residential neighborhood with the adjacent commercial center. It includes lighting and landscaping that makes it safe and pleasant to walk along.*

Don't Do This: *The residential area is separated from the commercial project by the fence. The uses back up to each other, precluding opportunities for synergistic connections between them. The developments are located in Sacramento, California.*

edges that will define community boundaries. Rather, they will be safe, convenient community assets that link uses and weave the City's urban framework together.

DESIGN GUIDELINES

1. Include on-site pedestrian access to open space, parks, and neighboring residential and non-residential uses through the use of trails and other connectors.

2. Development should minimize the use of walls or other barriers that limit the connections between uses.

3. Create meaningful public spaces and buildings that form a dialogue between uses and promote interactions.

The pedestrian pathway connects the pedestrian pathways of the neighborhood to those of the major roadway while still limiting vehicular access. The entryway is accented with architectural features such as the stone work and trellis. Landscaping softens the corners to make them more attractive.

SITE DESIGN > CONNECTIVITY AND CIRCULATION > OPEN SPACE AND TRAILS

DESIGN OBJECTIVE

Establish a system of contiguous open space and trails throughout the City connecting to the American River Parkway and other regional trail systems.

DESCRIPTION

Contiguous open space corridors with walking, running, and bike trails will connect all areas of development within the City and will connect with the greater regional trails system. Open spaces may be improved park sites or areas of natural preservation that will preserve habitat for the many forms of wildlife that share the community. Trails will be safe, integral parts of all developed areas. Projects should be designed to embrace the open space.

Do This: *This trail connects developments together. These two projects would normally be separated by the creek that runs below the bridges. (Courtesy MIG)*

Don't Do This: *Trails should connect together to create an unending path of travel for pedestrians and bicyclists.*

DESIGN GUIDELINES

1. Projects shall connect to the City's trail and open space system in meaningful ways.

2. Where a parks district will be operating and maintaining the facilities, work with the district to establish a cohesive overall design that meets the needs of City residents while still manageable and efficient to operate.

3. All parks and trails shall be accessible to emergency personnel. Work with emergency service providers to ensure site safety.

4. To help promote safety, neighboring development should be able to view the site while still maintaining the overall natural elements, viewsheds, and feel of the parks, open spaces, and trails.

Where ever possible, development should front onto open spaces, promoting the idea of "eyes on activity," as seen at left from a development in North Natomas, Sacramento, California. When this is not feasible, development should include design solutions that allow and promote views into open spaces, such as the example at right, where the top half of the wall is wrought-iron, allowing views into the public spaces while still respecting the private spaces of the homes and yards.

5. All pedestrian walkways and trails shall be a minimum of 12 feet wide to allow public safety vehicles direct access to the walkway.

6. Pedestrian walkways and trails shall be open to the public. They may not be closed off with gates. Bollards or other similar device may be utilized, provided it meets the operational standards of emergency service providers to respond to areas along the pathway.

7. Entrances to pedestrian pathways and trails shall be clearly marked and identifiable. Where the trailhead empties onto a street, a standard vertical curb shall be used to separate the trail from the street. Parking is not allowed in front of the trailhead.

8. Landscaping along pathways and trails should be used to discourage loitering and minimize opportunities for suspects to "lie in wait" for potential victims. Consider using native plantings that, when properly maintained, provide a pleasant environment for pedestrians while still creating a safe place to visit.

9. Lighting shall be maintained along the pathway of "urban trails" (i.e. those between buildings and in dense areas of the City) at a level sufficient to make the trail and abutting landscaping visible and safer at night while not detracting from the physical and aesthetic aspects of the trail and spilling onto abutting residential uses. Light fixtures should be vandal resistant.

SITE DESIGN > BUILDING PLACEMENT AND ORIENTATION

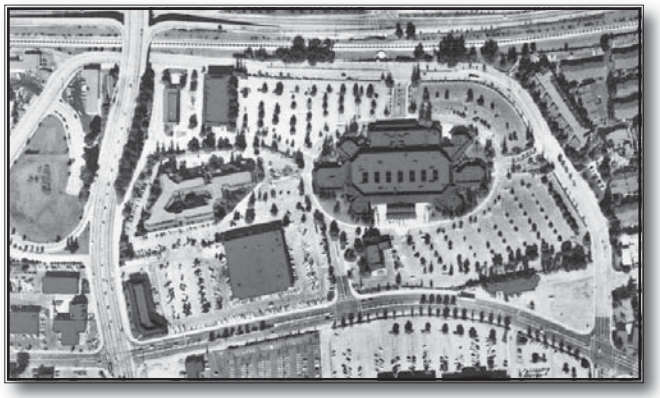
DESIGN OBJECTIVE

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

DESCRIPTION

Residential and non-residential 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

Do This: *Santana Row in San Jose, California is located at the intersection of Stevens Creek Blvd. and S. Winchester Blvd., just off Interstate 880. Many of the buildings take advantage of the roadway intersections to create dynamic spaces, such as at this book store. Parking for the site is provided through on-street parking spaces or with parking structures.*



Don't Do This: *The original development in Mountain View, California known as The Crossings. The site was originally developed as a conventional suburban shopping mall that was set back from the roadway with a vast sea of parking around it. The site was later transformed into a mixed use residential neighborhood with connections to a regional transit system. (Courtesy CNU)*

face the street. Buildings should be sited to create outdoor spaces with amenities for the pedestrian user. On corner sites, building entrances should face the intersection and "communicate" with the neighboring properties. "Main Street" site plans or development are encouraged for larger centers.

Major activity centers (such as *Village Centers*, *Town Centers*, and Commercial and Office Mixed Use) will function better along the major corridors of the City, while less intensive uses (such as single-family homes, schools, and parks) are better suited to smaller streets in a neighborhood setting. These different activity/use types should be distributed throughout the City, in both existing and undeveloped areas. This idea is a primary tenant of the Building Blocks concept – where *Neighborhood Centers* serve an area of about 200 acres, *Village Centers* are spaced 1 ½ to 2 miles apart serving approximately 10,000 to 15,000 people, and *Town Centers* serve larger areas with populations between 35,000 and 45,000 people.

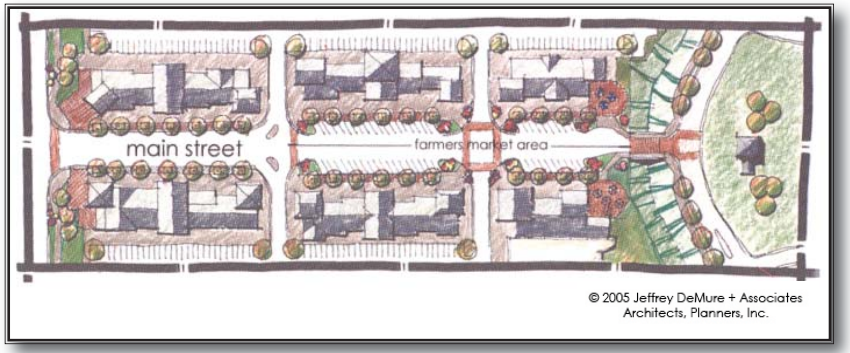


Illustration of a commercial center built close to the street in a main-street design. Parking is provided on the street and behind the buildings. Sidewalks are wide and well landscaped, providing a comfortable atmosphere for pedestrians. (Courtesy JDA)

DESIGN GUIDELINES

1. Major activity centers should be located along major corridors and near transit centers around the City. Less intensive uses, such as single family residential, should be separated or buffered from major roadways.

2. Do not place the backs of buildings along a street frontage. Include entrances or public views into the site or building. If the rear of the building must be located along a street because of site constraints, then architectural detailing shall be included that provides the illusion of being a front to the building.

Example of corner treatment of buildings in the Pearl District of Portland, Oregon. The buildings are angled to relate to the intersection or have slightly modified setbacks. In any case, the buildings are close to the street.

3. Buildings at the corners of intersections should relate to the corner and invite people to cross the street and visit the site. This can be done by:
   - Angling or rounding the corner of the corner building;
   - Modifying the setback of the building at the corner to be different than the other buildings on the site;
   - Placing a park or plaza at the corner;
   - Other methods that meet the intent of this guideline.

AVOID

- Expansive parking areas between public right-of-way and buildings.
- Buildings oriented exclusively toward parking lots.
- Building orientation that "turns its back to" or creates a physical barrier between the site and adjacent neighborhood.
- Excessive front setbacks.
- Storage in front of building façade.
- Driveways that separate the front door of buildings from the public sidewalk.

SITE DESIGN > PUBLIC SPACES AND PEDESTRIAN AMENITIES

DESIGN OBJECTIVE

Provide safe, comfortable places (public realm) where people can stop, sit, rest, meet, and visit with each other and enjoy their surroundings.

DESCRIPTION

Effective design of the public realm creates the "memorable places" that the City desires throughout the City. They should function as public staging areas for creating communities and relate the user to the site and the

Do This: *This plaza has been designed as an attractive feature of a commercial shopping area. It incorporates a water feature for children to play in, various seating opportunities, shaded and unshaded areas, and works well as a public gathering area. (Courtesy LPA)*

Don't Do This: *This plaza in a shopping center in Elk Grove, California provides moveable seating and connects to the businesses; however it lacks appropriate landscaping for the climate. Few other amenities are provided. There is no visual interest or focus for the plaza.*

surroundings. Public spaces and pedestrian features within individual projects are the living rooms of the City – dynamic places where people gather, socialize, and live. They contribute to the quality of life in the community and are an asset for all who use the site.

DESIGN GUIDELINES

1. Every project shall be designed with one or more outdoor gathering places. The size and scale of such places shall be appropriate to the type and use of each particular development and could include the following:
   - Outdoor seating and public plazas;
   - Amphitheatre;
   - Interactive water feature;
   - Community garden;
   - Other features that meet the intent of this provision.

City Place, in Southern California, features a large pedestrian area with restaurants, water features, seating areas, pedestrian scaled lighting, and an overall attractive night life.

Protection from the elements is provided through the use of overhangs and awnings like these.

2. Pedestrian areas should include a variety of sun and shading options (i.e. canopies, trees, umbrellas, etc.) that allow the user to choose how they want to use the site and connect with it.

3. Outdoor spaces and plazas should be visible from the adjoining buildings to help promote site safety.

DESIGN STANDARDS

Every commercial, office, public/quasi public, and mixed-use development shall be designed with at least one public gathering place.

Outdoor area in Downtown Pasadena, California. The patio includes seating with shading options, landscaping, and decorative paving and lighting. It is an attractive, active, pedestrian area that complements the built environment.

This walkway in San Luis Obispo, California connects two streets through the middle of the block. It also creates an intimate pedestrian oriented plaza where shops face each other, creating a dialogue between the store openings. Additionally, restaurants have outdoor seating within the public realm, making them more inviting.

AVOID

Areas that are uninviting/meaningless to pedestrians.

SITE DESIGN > PARKS AND OPEN SPACES

DESIGN OBJECTIVE

Provide connected parks and open spaces with a strong sense of place and desirability throughout all new development within the community.

DESCRIPTION

Parks and other open spaces are critical elements of the City. They promote personal health and human development, provide quality of life in a community, build healthy, livable communities, and ensure ecological survival. Parks and open spaces provide relief from the elements, create opportunities to relax and escape form urban overload, foster community life and fulfill social needs that include stimulation of being with other people, provide active recreation, create opportunities for discovery and new experiences, and provide opportunities for pure fun and joy. In all, parks and open spaces are the "*pulse points*" of the community.

Do This: *This pocket park in Morro Bay, California includes several picnic tables and a life-size chess table. It is located in within the major commercial corridor of the City*

DESIGN GUIDELINES

1. Develop parks that meet the design and locational requirements of the City and Parks District. The City encourages the co-location of parks with schools and other public facilities.

2. Maximize the visual and functional benefits of community open space by locating them in proximity to homes, centers, and other development and designing them as alternative pedestrian and bicycle trailways.

3. Program parks and open spaces with a variety of opportunities for:
   - Sitting and relaxing with a multitude of options and locations;
   - Recreating;
   - Meeting and interacting with neighbors and friends;
   - Nodes along trails and corridor.

DESIGN STANDARDS

1. Provide parks at a rate of at least 7 acres per 1,000 persons.

2. At a minimum, ten percent of all new residential development is set aside as open space that is accessible.

The amphitheatre at Laguna West in Elk Grove, California is a well used facility that promotes community involvement and interaction. The facility is part of the community's larger parks system, which includes soccer fields, lakes, and pocket parks.

The San Luis Obispo Creek in downtown San Luis Obispo, California has been restored and turned into a unique pedestrian environment. Restaurants, businesses, and historic sites (such as the old Mission) front onto the creek with plazas and patio seating.

SITE DESIGN > LANDSCAPING

DESIGN OBJECTIVE

Provide landscaping that accents and complements the built form, establish project identity, and helps establish the development as a vibrant, inviting place for pedestrian users.

DESCRIPTION

Landscaping should soften the built environment and make places attractive to visit. Landscaping should work to relieve the overall mass and scale of the structures, frame outdoor spaces, and create a strong sense of place.

Do This: *Landscaped pedestrian area within the street median at Santana Row, San Jose, California. The landscaping includes shrubs, trees, and vines on trelliswork. Plants are located in planters and pots, made of a variety of textures. Pedestrians are able to sit under the shade of the landscaping and enjoy their site visit.*

Don't Do This: *The shade trees at this parking lot in Mountain View, California are not protected from the movement of cars and are too small to accommodate the growth of the tree.*

It should also be used to reduce the heat-island effect caused by paved surfaces. The use of on-site landscaping helps to create visual interest and promotes and nurtures the concept of an "urban forest."

DESIGN GUIDELINES

1. Landscaping should be provided along/against building facades facing the parking lot, street, or public plaza as a way of anchoring it to the surrounding environment, to soften the appearance of the structure, and to reduce the overall scale and massing of the structure. This can be done through the use of intermittent planter areas, potted plants, climbing vines along planters and building with shrubs at the base, and/or in-ground plantings.

2. Landscaping treatments should help anchor the corner of buildings, enhance the pedestrian environment, and establish continuity along landscaping corridors. Done well, attention to landscape design and detail will establish project identity.

3. Parking lot shade shall be provided in accordance with the City's Zoning standards. Planters shall be designed sufficient to accommodate projected growth of the shade trees. The City encourages planter rows with pedestrian walkways in larger parking areas.

Landscaping along and against a building can soften its appearance and make it more attractive to pedestrians, as shown in this example from Sorrano in El Dorado Hills, California.

Landscaping of an industrial project. It includes a water feature, stonework, and a variety of plantings.

4. Site and street trees used for shading and screening purposes should be broad branching, with mature canopy spread of 40 feet and a high canopy to allow visibility of buildings.

5. For security purposes, openings should be incorporated into the landscape design to provide clear views into the site. Landscaping should not create a solid, uninterrupted barrier, visually or physically, as this can become a safety hazard for pedestrians.

6. A well colored, varied, complementing pallet of native plantings shall be used within the site.

DESIGN STANDARDS

1. All landscaping shall be irrigated and maintained in good condition. The design and placement of irrigation systems should minimize the potential spray-over onto paths, driveways, and other *hardscapes*.

2. Landscaped areas, including trees and other plantings, as well as paving and walls, shall be regularly maintained.

At this mixed use project in Concord, California landscaping is used extensively throughout the site to soften the hardscape and create a more interesting and inviting pedestrian area.

SITE DESIGN > STREETSCAPE

DESIGN OBJECTIVE

Develop attractive, pedestrian-oriented streets and integrate the built environment with the City's circulation system.

DESCRIPTION

While streets provide the needed circulation paths for vehicular circulation around the City, they should also be visually attractive and promote pedestrian activity. The look and feel of a streetscape helps to contribute to the identity and character of an area or district. Landscaping along streets can complement the architecture of the

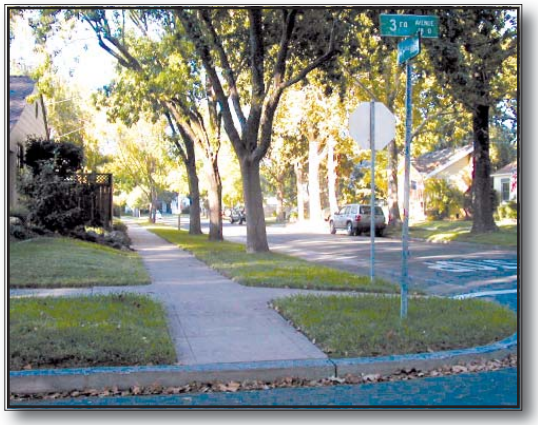
ALSO SEE
CIRCULATION

ALSO SEE
APPENDIX C: STREET FURNITURE DESIGN CONCECPTS

Do This: *Main street development at Orenco Station in Portland, Oregon. The sidewalk is wide and includes simple landscaping, pedestrian scaled lighting, and street furniture, such as the tables and chairs, waste receptacles, bulbouts with bollards at the corners, and awnings/overhangs and signs that integrate with the architecture of the building and reflect the pedestrian natures of the development. On-street parking is provided in conjunction with a narrow right-of-way, slowing traffic.*

Don't Do This: *The existing streetscape of Folsom Boulevard in Rancho Cordova, California. The street is not an inviting place for pedestrians. The sidewalk is too narrow for heavy use, is only on one side of the street, and does not adequately connect to all uses along the corridor. There is also a lack of landscaping and other softscape elements.*

built environment and create a "moving landscape" that helps "pull" the pedestrian along the street. Additionally, the use of visual elements, such as special paving, landscaping, or other roadway elements and effects (i.e. chicanes, bulbouts, medians, on-street parking, etc.) can help slow the overall speed of traffic. Slower vehicular traffic speeds help to encourage pedestrian activity along the street frontage.



A residential street in Sacramento, California. The sidewalk is separated from the roadway by a planter strip. The roadway is just wide enough to accommodate parking on both sides of the street and still allow cars to pass each other.

DESIGN GUIDELINES

1. Major streets should be designed with a consistent landscape theme with lush, broad branching shade trees to form a canopy across the City's roadways. *Accent trees* should be used to help establish an area or district theme and create identity

2. Landscaped medians should be implemented on wider, busier streets to create visual interest, a more intimate roadway scale, and a place for pedestrians to take refuge while crossing wider streets. Medians (minimum 5-foot wide inside dimension) should be wide enough to support trees with wide canopies.

3. Planting strips between the curb and separated sidewalks along the City's roadways should be wide enough to accommodate shade trees. The minimum width for planting strips is 5 feet (inside dimension) where trees are placed.

Example of a creative streetscape feature that doubles as a bike rack. The structure, which resembles a bridge, helps define the character of the street and create project and/or district identity. (Pearl District, Portland, Oregon)

4. Incorporate appropriate street furniture and accessories, such as benches, trash receptacles, newspaper vending machines, sidewalk displays, etc, into the design of major and secondary roads to promote pedestrian activity, such as at near primary building entries with space for outdoor seating or bus waiting areas. City encourages use of specific street furniture designs throughout a corridor and/or district for identity.

5. Provide street lighting that is scaled for the pedestrian while still meeting vehicular needs. On local streets and within project sites, fixtures should be primarily oriented towards pedestrian's needs. On major streets, light fixtures serve to both illuminate pedestrian areas and roadways. Consider the location and intended audience when choosing a light fixture for a project.

Conceptual illustration of a streetscape where buildings are close to the street, there are wide sidewalks, on-street parking is provided, street trees soften the look and feel of the street, and there are a multitude of opportunities for pedestrian interaction. Street crossings are called out with special pavement. (Courtesy LPA)

6. The City encourages the use of curb extension bulbouts at intersections or mid-block pedestrian crossings, or to divide on-street parking spaces. This shortens the distance a pedestrian needs to cross, providing safety and pedestrian comfort. Such bulbouts should include shade trees and other landscaping.

7. Crosswalks should be delineated with a change in paving, surface type, or color and be clearly identifiable to pedestrians and motorists. The city encourages paving to be thematic in design and detail to help establish corridor and/or district identity.

8. The City encourages the undergrounding of all utilities (i.e. electricity, gas, water, sewer, telephone, and cable television). Where it is determined to be infeasible or impracticable to do so, such utilities shall be placed and screened to minimize their appearance from the public right-of-way.

9. Utility boxes shall be screened from public view either through the use of landscaping, painting, or other method.

10. Soundwalls are highly discouraged and may only be used where the impact to residential development from roadway noise cannot be otherwise successfully mitigated. Soundwalls shall be articulated to include cutouts or other openings that allow pedestrians to pass from the development to the public right-of-way. Landscaping that softens the visual impact of the wall shall be provided between the soundwall and the sidewalk.

AVOID

- Streets with no sidewalks
- Utility poles placed within the sidewalk area or pedestrian realm
- Lack of landscaping buffer between the street and sidewalk along major roadways/thoroughfares
- Visually disjointed streetscape environments with random composite of elements (e.g. multiple signs, different light standards, newspaper racks, etc.)
- Narrow, curb-tight sidewalks along busy street
- Light and telephone poles, sign posts and other streetscape elements that block the sidewalk

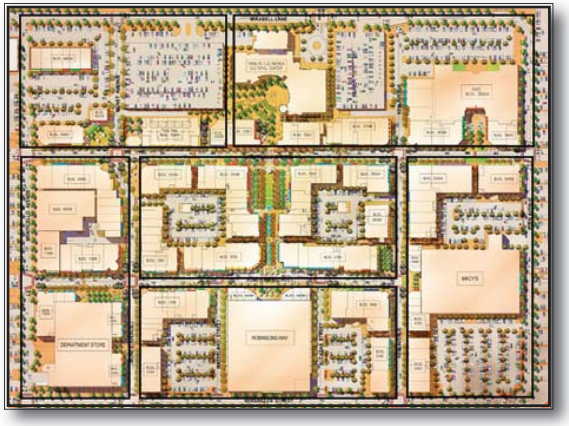
SITE DESIGN > PARKING

DESIGN OBJECTIVE

Create functional parking areas that minimize physical barriers for pedestrians and avoid over-parking the site. Design parking areas as an integral part of the project and visually screen parking from surrounding public streets and neighborhoods.

DESCRIPTION

Large parking fields can create a hostile environment suitable only for vehicles. Large fields of parking can also create an unpleasant obstacle for a person arriving by transit, by bicycle or by foot to cross to reach building entries. Avoid and/or mitigate through design large expanses of parking, especially surface parking lots. Provide direct, safe pedestrian access through parking lots and landscaping that improves visual and environmental quality. Parking areas have the potential to be a source of noise, light, as well as vehicle exhaust that could have negative consequences for adjacent uses.



Do This: *Site plan for a large commercial development with several major retailers and a movie complex. The design breaks the parking areas up by siting the buildings to create a main street design. To accommodate all of the parking needs, at least two parking structures are included. (Courtesy LPA)*

Don't Do This: *This shopping center has an over abundance of parking into a single parking field, the spaces are not connected to the stores with pedestrian paths, and there is no landscaping.*

DESIGN GUIDELINES

1. Parking areas should not create a separation between adjoining land uses/buildings with symbiotic relationship to the proposed development. Pedestrians should have the opportunity to freely move between adjacent projects without having to cross large parking fields.

2. Building placement/orientation and parking design should maximize opportunities for pedestrian and vehicular circulation between adjacent sites, such as joint access easements and common driveways and reduce potential conflicts. Accomplish this by:
   - Sharing driveways between adjoining sites;
   - Connecting to a driveway of an adjoining site where available;
   - Continuing internal driveway to the shared property line of the adjoining site to allow future development the opportunity for shared access and circulation.

3. All surface parking areas should be divided into smaller units dispersed throughout the site to decrease visual impacts associated with large expanses of pavement and vehicles, and to facilitate safe and efficient pedestrian movement between parking and development. Pedestrian connections between the parking areas and buildings of the project shall be included. The City strongly discourages parking that faces/abuts a public street intersection. Small parking field design can be accomplished by:
   - Designing primary driveways as "streets" with sidewalks, landscaping, building edges, lighting and other streetscape elements to create a street grid through the project;
   - Locating parking lots to the rear or side of buildings and avoid placing parking areas at street corners;
   - Minimizing the expanse of continuous uninterrupted parking spaces, and mitigate with planted areas of trees and other landscaping;
   - Providing direct, convenient and pleasant pedestrian pathways within parking areas and clearly linking the bulk of parking spaces to building entries, streets and transit stops;
   - Considering placing buildings at or close to the street right-of-way to maximize convenience of pedestrian and transit users.

4. On-street parking is encouraged as a way to meet project parking demand.

5. Residential uses should not be negatively impacted by commercial activities. Buffer residential units from parking lot by:
   - Providing a landscaped screen with a minimum height of 3 feet (berm, hedge, wall or other);
   - Providing a minimum ten foot width landscaped area between paved areas and residential units with access points as appropriate for circulation.

6. Consider the following alternatives for traditional surface parking lots on project sites:
   - Provide on-street parallel or diagonal parking along "Main Street" style roads;
   - Parking structures;
   - Tuck-under or underground parking;
   - Shared parking between users with different peak parking needs;
   - Transit access, which reduces parking need;
   - Parking credits to reduce the overall scale of a project's parking needs.

Providing on-street parking is a viable alternative to having massive off-street parking fields, such as at Orenco station in Hillsboro, Oregon.

On-street parking in downtown Mountain View, California. The parking area is separated from the roadway, uses trees with protective grating for protection, and is divided from the pedestrian path by grade separation.

7. The use of parking structures is encouraged for large developments. Parking structures may also be used to consolidate all of the parking needs between a group of sites that are interconnected with pedestrian pathways and access. When parking structures are developed, the City encourages first floor retail incorporated into the garage along the street. Where no ground floor uses are incorporated, the parking structure shall be setback a minimum of ten feet from the street and screened from view with dense landscaping.

AVOID

- Uninterrupted rows of parking spaces without landscaping
- Large parking fields and parking between streets and buildings
- The appearance of massive seas of parking

Example of a parking structure from Sacramento, California. The building meets the parking structure helps to meet the parking demands of the surrounding businesses and include ground-level retail uses, such as a restaurant at the corner.

SITE DESIGN > SCREENING AND SERVICE AREAS

DESIGN OBJECTIVE

Screen on-site activities that detract from the overall visual appearance of the site or otherwise create undesirable noise.

DESCRIPTION

Activities such as refuge collection, loading areas, outdoor storage areas, mechanical equipment, etc, are necessary to the function and operation of commercial, residential, or office uses. These activities detract from the overall

Do This: *Screening wall at a WalMart in Ft. Collins, Colorado designed to match the architectural and material characteristics of the building. Landscaping is also provided to soften the general appearance of the wall.*

Don't Do This: *Commercial Project in Rancho Cordova, California. The loading area is on the side of the building and is completely visible from the street.*

visual appearance of the site and are often sources of undesirable noise (i.e. garbage trucks). Areas of the site devoted to these activities should be screened from public view and otherwise mitigated in positive ways that complement the site architecture and landscaping.

DESIGN GUIDELINES

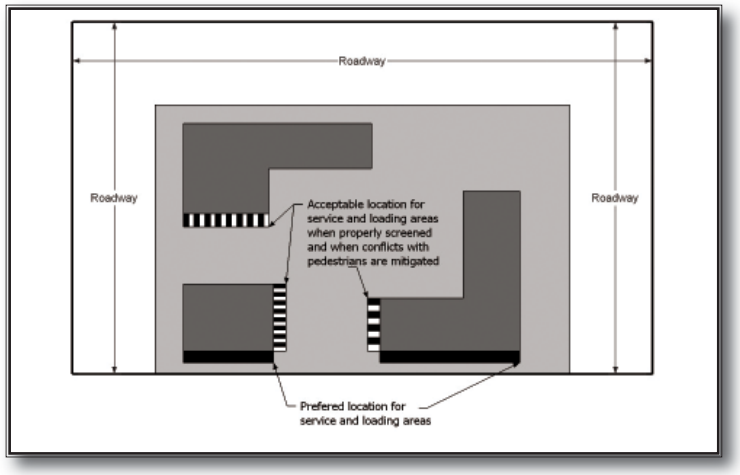
1. Appropriate locations for loading, outdoor storage, and trash collection areas include behind the buildings or in other areas that are not designed to be used by pedestrians or as primary vehicular circulation routes through the site. They should not be visible from abutting streets. However, when it becomes necessary to place them along a street frontage, they shall be screened in a way that is architecturally consistent with the overall design of the structure.

Screening wall at the Safeway in downtown Sacramento, California. While the sidewalk is too narrow and the landscaping treatment is minimal, the use of color, texture, and reliefs on both the wall and the building help disguise the loading area. Additionally, the lighting fixtures on the wall are in keeping with those in the surrounding neighborhood. The corner of the wall is protected from vehicular movements by bollards.

This performing arts school building in Downtown Los Angeles incorporates unique rooftop equipment screening structures to shield views from adjoining streets and buildings. The screening structures are compatible with the architecture and contribute to the character and form of the building.

2. Screening of service functions shall be incorporated into the overall design of the building and the landscaping so that the visual and acoustic impacts of these functions are fully contained and out of view from adjacent properties and public streets. Acceptable screening devices include landscaping that completely conceals at all times of the year or screening walls that are made of the same material and contain the same architectural elements as the buildings. Walls should include landscaping along their outer face to help break up their massing and scale.

3. Rooftop equipment shall be entirely screened from public view.



This illustration shows the preferred and acceptable locations for loading and service areas on a multi-building site, so as to screen them from the public right-of-way and from pedestrian areas of the site.

The service area at Santana Row, San Jose, California. Landscaping is used to soften the built form. The walls of the building include design features and murals that make the surface pleasing to look at. Large trash receptacles are contained within a fully enclosed structure to hide them from public view.

SITE DESIGN > SAFESCAPE

DESIGN OBJECTIVE

Create safe, inviting, pedestrian places that incorporate crime prevention design elements and emphasize linkages and surveillance between the buildings and the street.

DESCRIPTION

Sites that are designed with safety in mind are places that attract people. Safe design, or SafeScape, contributes to the livability, character, longevity, and quality of development. The term SafeScape has been adopted from the book SafeScape by Den Brennan and Al Zelinka. Projects should be safe places for people to visit and potentially live.

Do This: *The Safeway center in downtown Sacramento, California has may windows along the street front and at the upper levels that look out onto the parking lot and the surrounding street frontages. This facilitates eyes-on activities, helping to promote safety on and around the site.*

Don't Do This: *This building lacks windows and other visibility onto the street. The light fixtures are small and are not directed to the pedestrian areas. The number of areas of the building that have been repainted signal a problem with graffiti and vandalism. (Portland, Oregon)*

DESIGN GUIDELINES

1. Pedestrians should have a sense of ownership over the public realm portions of the site through their access to the site elements.

2. Include directional/directory maps on site to orient and direct the pedestrian around the site.

3. Provide pedestrian amenities along the streetscape to promote pedestrian activity and use of the area.

4. The development should be designed with eyes on the plazas and open spaces. Provide access to all public sides of a building and include adequate lighting and security surveillance, preferably windows that look out onto the pedestrian areas.

5. Minimize the depth of architectural projections through the use of planters. Deep projections can create ideal hiding places.

6. Indoor activities should take advantage of and have a relationship with the outdoor spaces at their entrances (i.e. sidewalk cafes).

7. Limit the overall use of blank walls. They contribute to voids of activity and provide a canvas for graffiti and other vandalism or illegal activities.

8. Consider the use of transparent or rounded building corners lined with active storefronts.

9. Night lighting should be used to illuminate passageways and building entrances.

SITE DESIGN > SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT > URBAN RUNOFF

DESIGN OBJECTIVE

Contain urban run-off and limit its impacts on the natural and built environment.

DESCRIPTION

Urban run-off can contribute to degradation of the natural environment. The impact that this run-off has on the environment shall be limited. Storm water that could run-off into the natural environment should be captured and purified on-site before being released.

Do This: *This drainage basin in North Natomas, Sacramento, California has been designed and landscaped to appear as a natural feature of the development. It includes pedestrian trails and seating areas that make it an inviting passive open space amenity for the community.*

Don't Do This: *The Los Angeles River in Southern California. The riverbed has been paved with concrete. There are no pedestrian amenities or landscaping, despite its attempted usage as an open space amenity.*

DESIGN GUIDELINES

1. The amount of impervious surface on each site should be minimized. The City encourages the use of permeable and semi-preamble paving surfaces, landscaping, rooftop gardens, etc, on areas not occupied by buildings or other hard surfaces.

2. Paving in pedestrian areas should be slightly sloped into landscaped areas that are large enough to absorb the run-off from the paved areas and any building runoff that flows onto them. Run-off from buildings (i.e. gutters/ downspouts) should flow directly into landscaping (i.e. rain gardens).

3. Run-off from parking and other vehicular areas of the site should be filtered or otherwise purified to prevent contamination of the natural environment (i.e. groundwater).

4. Irrigation of landscaping should only be directed onto the landscaping. Spillover onto *hardscape* shall be minimized to the maximum extent feasible.

5. Detention basins and drainage channels shall be designed as integral components of the development that appear natural in formation. They should, at the minimum, be passive open space features that can be accessed by the public (i.e. small lake or pond). Consider working with the parks provider to incorporate drainage features into the design of active open space areas (i.e. soccer fields), overflow parking areas, or other innovative use of these facilities that are wet for a few months of the year.

A bioswale around a drain inlet. The design allows for rainwater and irrigation runoff to be filtered before entering the storm drain system, helping to keep area rivers and creeks clean and safe.

SITE DESIGN > SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT > SOLAR ACCESS, ENERGY EFFICIENCY, AND GREEN BUILDINGS

DESIGN OBJECTIVE

Promote development that conserves energy and minimizes impacts on natural resources.

DESCRIPTION

Projects should be designed to take advantage of solar heating opportunities. Amenities should also be provided for pedestrians to shade them from solar heat and glare, including umbrellas, awnings, canopies, and shade trees. These elements should be carefully integrated into the overall design so as not to appear "tacked on." Overhead landscape canopies can serve to filter sunlight and reduce glare, making pedestrian activity more pleasant, and are encouraged. Development should limit its effects on the environment by reducing its ecological footprint. Irrigation water should come from recycled (or grey) water generated by rain or wastewater found on the site. Heat islands should be reduced with the use of *green roofs* and shading throughout the site.

Do This: *The headquarters/customer service center of the Sacramento Municipal Utility District in Sacramento, California is a good example of a building that incorporates green building techniques, including using solar lighting, special HVAC systems, and other techniques.*

DESIGN GUIDELINES

1. Orient the design of the site to take advantage of solar access. For optimum solar conditions, the longest side of a building should face south (within 20 degrees of due south) and have relatively clear access to the sun.

2. Plazas and other pedestrian *hardscape* should be shaded with trees and other pedestrian shading devices (i.e. canopies, awnings, umbrellas).

3. Building windows, especially those above the second floor and facing southern and westerly directions, should be treated or otherwise designed to increase energy efficiency for the building while still maintaining the architectural integrity of the building and quality design of the site. Ground floor windows and those facing onto pedestrian walkways shall still allow pedestrians to view inside the building with relative ease.

4. The City encourages the use of solar arrays or other types of solar-based energy generation into all new roofing structures. Consider the pitch of roofs and orientation of the building when designing the project so as to maximize solar energy generation.

5. Consider the use of *green roofs* or other innovative methods of reducing impervious areas and heat islands on project sites.

6. Consider using LEED, LEEP, or similar standards and thresholds to improve overall site and building quality in terms of energy efficiency and renewable resources.

This trelliswork allows some light to flow to the building windows, but filters the overall amount. The intended results include reducing the impact of solar heating on the building, thereby reducing overall cooling costs. It is also an attractive architectural feature of the building (Courtesy LPA)

SITE DESIGN > SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT > NATURAL FEATURES OF THE ENVIRONMENT

DESIGN OBJECTIVE

Preserve and protect the natural features of the environment.

DESCRIPTION

In some areas of the City, new development is not only likely, but certain. In all cases, existing significant features of the natural environment should be preserved and integrated into the project. This may take the form of large areas of preservation, open space corridors and trails, or even neighborhood parks. These are vital components of the community that are essential towards creating a City Identity and a sense of place.

Do This: *Walking/bike trail that includes natural landscaping and drainage features. (Courtesy LPA)*

Don't Do This: *New development that ignores the existing natural features of a site.*

DESIGN GUIDELINES

1. Significant natural features from the environment shall be included in all new development. This can include the use of native plantings and restoration and protection of creeks, swales, and vernal pools.

2. Consider incorporating features into a project that reflect the history of the City. Establish project identity in terms of monuments, signage, public art, etc.

This residential project in Folsom, California respects the natural features of the environment by retaining and preserving features such as this oak tree.

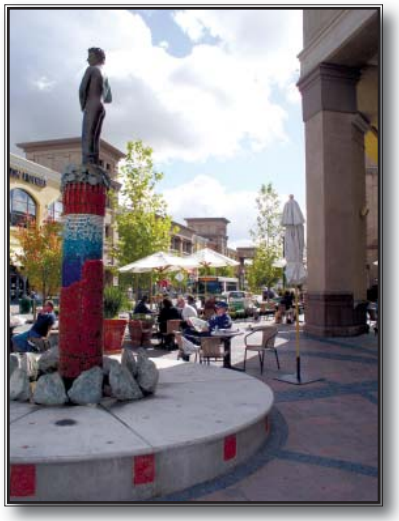
SITE DESIGN > ART IN PUBLIC PLACES

DESIGN OBJECTIVE

Provide meaningful public art that contributes to the overall character of the site and enhances the quality of life in Rancho Cordova.

DESCRIPTION

Public art can enhance the landscape and provide focus within public spaces. When integrated into the project design it can help create an identity and character for both the project and the City. Public art improves the visual environment for all residents, while strengthening community identity and boosting community pride. The City appreciates the livability and beauty that public art adds to shared spaces where people live, work, visit, and recreate.



Do This: *A sculpture integrated into the design of a public plaza. The base of the sculpture doubles as a seating area in front of Andronico's Market in Walnut Creek, California. The artwork adds character and warmth to the site and attracts visitors. (Courtesy LPA)*

DESIGN GUIDELINES

1. Art or other aesthetic improvements should be designed in context with the development around it.

2. Exterior artwork should be adequately lit so as to be clearly visible from sidewalks during evening hours.

3. Artwork should be a permanent part of the development and must remain in place for the life of the development. Works may be portable or fixed as long as the artwork is always located at or adjacent to the site and is accessible to the public.

4. Buildings can also be designed as "public art" through their articulation, architectural style/features, and lighting. The City encourages the incorporation of lighting fixtures to highlight civic buildings, non-residential and mixed-use projects with nighttime activity, and/or decorative features inherent to the architecture of the building.

Public art, such as the egg heads at the University of California at Davis, can serve as a discussion piece.

Art can be used to screen or enhance structures, such as this totem pole in the Pearl District of Portland, Oregon. It is covering a pole that supports the overhead power lines for the streetcar line.

SITE DESIGN > LIGHTING

DESIGN OBJECTIVE

Lighting shall contribute to site safety and security and complement the built form while not detracting from the overall quality of the site or surrounding uses and activities.

DESCRIPTION

Primary purpose of site lighting is to provide minimum lighting levels for security purposes in pedestrian and parking areas. Centers are places with daytime and often nighttime activities. Site lighting should not detract from the overall appearance of the site. It should not contribute to "light pollution" and should not negatively

Do This: *The El Dorado Town Center, in El Dorado County, California uses a variety of light fixtures both on and off the building that integrate with the architectural style of the structures. Fixtures are oriented to accentuate the architecture of the building or to light the pedestrian path. While maintaining the visual integrity of the fixture, tall fixtures are capped or muted at the top to reduce light pollution.*

Don't Do This: *This light fixture is very tall and oriented to light only the parking area. It is out of scale with the rest of the development.*

affect surrounding uses. Lighting should be designed to satisfy both functional and decorative needs and should relate to the pedestrian user. Storefront lighting should complement to architectural style of the building while providing illumination of building facades and entrances.

The lighting at this shopping center in Pasadena, California accentuates the architecture without contributing to light pollution.

DESIGN GUIDELINES

1. Exterior lighting shall be designed as an integral part of the building and landscape design. Lighting fixtures shall be architecturally consistent with the overall site design and character. Creativity in fixture design is encouraged.

2. Lighting in parking areas shall be limited in scale (height) and shall be of a design that is consistent with the overall site architecture and style.

3. Limit the amount of site lighting to reduce overall light pollution generated by the project. Shield or screen lighting fixtures to direct the light downward and prevent light spill on adjacent properties.

4. In general, the location of lighting should respond to the anticipated use and not exceed the amount of illumination required by users, such as:
   - Pedestrian-scaled lighting along walkways through parking lots;
   - Fixtures concealed or integrated into the design of buildings and site landscaping, walls and stairs;
   - Regular and consistent spacing of compatible lighting fixtures to reinforce visual order.

This lighting fixture on the side of an industrial building in Rancho Cordova, California is compatible with the architecture of the building and is shielded

5. Building lighting shall be directed onto the façade, entrance areas of buildings, or onto pedestrian pathways only as a way to increase site safety and accentuate the architecture of the building without creating or otherwise contributing to light pollution.

6. Light fixtures taller than six feet should be separated from trees that have canopies between 20 and 30 feet by a minimum distance of 20 feet. This is intended to reduce potential damage to the light fixture and minimize the need to prune the tree in order to maintain adequate down lighting from the fixture. The City is willing to consider other design solutions that meet the intent of this guideline.

DESIGN STANDARDS

1. In order to minimize light trespass on residential properties directly abutting a multi-family site, illumination measured at the nearest residential property line shall not exceed the moon's potential ambient illumination of one-tenth foot-candle.

2. The maximum height for all freestanding light fixtures on private property shall be 18 feet from finish grade.

3. The following types of lighting are prohibited:
   - Overly bright or excessive lighting
   - Lighting which spills into residential areas or onto adjacent street rights-of-way
   - Light poles that obstruct pedestrian traffic
   - Security spotlight (except in loading areas and building entrances)
   - Moving, flashing, or animated lighting

SITE DESIGN > SIGNS

DESIGN OBJECTIVE

Promote the use of Uniform Sign Programs for Centers with multiple uses and/or buildings to ensure design compatibility of all project signage.

DESCRIPTION

Signs should enhance the built environment and should not contribute to visual clutter. The primary purpose of signs is for business identity. Signs should be simple and easy to read and architecturally integrated into the overall building design. Signs should be scaled to the pedestrian user. Signs also help orient the user within the project and direct them to activities.

Do This: *The North Natomas plaza in Sacramento, California has both building-attached and freestanding signage. Both respect the scale of the primary buildings and the site user.*

Don't Do This: *Store in Idaho Springs, Idaho. There is excessive signage that leads to visual clutter and detracts from the overall quality of the project.*

DESIGN GUIDELINES

1. The City encourages the incorporation of unique project identification signs that establish or otherwise reinforce the character, branding, and identity of the project as part of a Uniform Sign Program. This includes the use of banners, portico, awning, blade/bracket, canopy signs, etc., but not the use of temporary advertisement signs or attention getters that bear no relation to project character, except as expressly permitted by the Zoning Code. Additionally, projects may establish or participate in district signage programs that help to create district identity (i.e. banners, gateway signs, etc.)

2. Signs should be simple and easy to read.

3. On-site directional or directory signs should be provided to help orient and direct the pedestrian around the site.

DESIGN STANDARDS

For *integrated development*, a Uniform Sign Program is required as part of an overall proposed design as a way to ensure sign compatibility within a project and help establish a sense of place.

Example of unique business signage that adds character and quality to a development (The Villages, Florida).

The signage at the Rancho Motorcycle Dismantling in Rancho Cordova, California is integrated with the building style and scale and does not visually detract from the site.

ARCHITECTURE

Intent – Promote architectural design that enhances the character of Rancho Cordova. Allow a wide variety of architectural styles to be used with an overall effect of quality design, project identity, and pleasant built environment as a result.

The Architecture section features the following categories:

- Massing, Scale, and Form
- Style and Design Details
- Building Materials and Colors
- Compatibility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ARCHITECTURE > MASSING, SCALE, AND FORM

DESIGN OBJECTIVE

Design buildings at a human scale to ensure a desirable pedestrian environment with variety and visual richness that enhances the public realm and the pedestrian experience.

DESCRIPTION

Large buildings should be broken up into components that relate more easily to the human scale. Building mass should be compatible with buildings in the surrounding vicinity. Buildings should utilize smaller-scale elements and useable outdoor spaces, such as plazas or seating areas, to appear less massive and fit more appropriately on

Do This: *The North Natomas Town Center in Sacramento California uses recesses, variation in roofline, vertical and horizontal changes, and fenestration to reduce the apparent massing of the structure.*

Don't Do This: *Office development in El Dorado, California. The façade of the building is too massive and daunting. Some trim is provided around the windows, but not nearly enough to provide any relief to the stark, vertical, walls.*

their sites. The use of open spaces to control the overall scale of the project will allow it to relate back to the surrounding environmental context and help ground the site. Building entrances and primary facades should be visible from the public right-of-way. They should encourage pedestrian participation and activity on the site.

DESIGN GUIDELINES

1. Large building volume should be broken into a number of smaller components to decrease its apparent mass and volume, and thus reduce its visual impact.

2. For multi-story or tall single-story buildings, changes in vertical mass should be used in an architecturally appropriate way to add interest and reduce the appearance of building height and bulk. Variation in vertical mass may be achieved in the following ways:
   - Buildings should have 3 distinct components that establish a human scale and promote a relationship to people using the site: a base, a middle, and a cap, which can be achieved for any architectural style or building type. The base should relate to the human scale and anchor the building to the ground;
   - The appearance of mass should be broken up through the use of various forms/architectural features (i.e. roof form), materials and colors used either at regular intervals or intermittently with focal elements;
   - Moldings should be provided to accentuate various floors or levels;
   - Use façade elements, such as windows, shade structures, and lighting elements to create visual interest.

This residential mixed-use project in Oakland, California illustrates the concept of base-middle-top. Each segment of the building (ground floor, middle, top floor) is characterized by a change in materials, color, or architectural detailing, breaking up the building mass vertically. Additionally, the varying roof lines and projections/recesses of the façade break up the building horizontally.

DESIGN STANDARDS

Blank, windowless walls are prohibited when facing a public street.

3. Large buildings should tier or taper to reduce their scale along the edges of the site. The intent is to taper the building along the edges and create a pedestrian frontage that relates to the user while still providing an overall vertical mass.

4. Provide an appropriate transition between new buildings and existing adjacent buildings through the use of similar massing, height, or setback.

This church in Davis, California complements the surrounding residential developments by utilizing a similar mass and scale as the surrounding multi-family development.

This multi-family development in Roseville, California places the taller parts of the buildings at the center and tiers the height down towards the outer edges. This helps to reduce the mass and scale of the buiding.

AVOID

- Large, unarticulated, blank facades
- Build massing out of proportion with the surrounding built environment
- Lack of design detail and visual appeal

ARCHITECTURE > STYLE AND DESIGN DETAILS

DESIGN OBJECTIVE

Development shall have an architectural style or theme that establishes a clear, interesting project identity that will contribute to an enhanced character of Rancho Cordova. The architectural style should be timeless and the style shall be evident on all elevations of all buildings.

DESCRIPTION

Architectural styling and detailing adds character to a site. It integrates it 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 diversity of architectural styles while

Do This: *The architecture of the Broadstone project in Folsom, California has timeless features like stone work representative of the Mediterranean style of architecture, iron work, and clay-tile roofs.*

Don't Do This: *A store in Rancho Cordova, California. This street-side elevation lacks detailing and design features that add visual interest to the building. The façade appears flat and univiting.*

taking the built and natural context and surroundings into consideration. Whatever style is chosen for a particular development, the result should be a timeless look that incorporates materials that will withstand the years and make for a lasting project.

DESIGN GUIDELINES

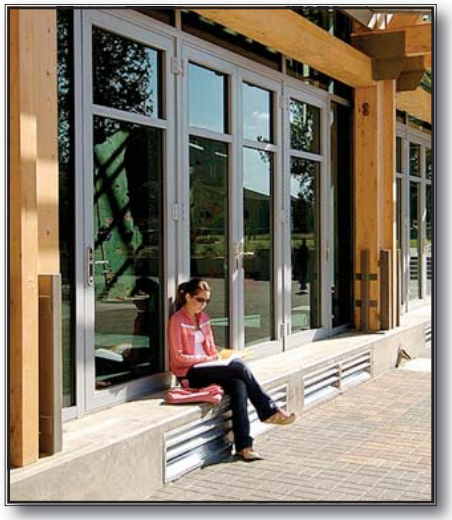
1. Projects shall include quality, timeless architecture that incorporates an identifiable architectural style. That style is reflected in the form, features, and finishes on all building elevations and all sides of the building shall feature consistent architectural detailing and features. No side of the building shall be ignored. Architectural treatments for multi-story buildings shall be provided to help break the massing and communicate uses a difference in uses between the floors. Building massing, orientation, setbacks, and design details of project buildings should reinforce street "edges" adjacent and internal to the site, and establish a street "grid."

2. The form, design, and materials of the roof shall be architecturally consistent with the overall site design and shall reflect and be proportionate to the overall building mass and style.

3. Multi-story buildings shall have a clearly defined base and roof edge so that the façade has a distinct base, middle, and top at a scale that relates to an individual person.

4. Storefronts should promote a sense of entry into the structure as well as provide a sense of shelter. This can be achieved by incorporating elements such as
   - Overhangs;
   - Canopies;
   - Awnings;
   - Recesses;
   - Transparent surfaces that a pedestrian can easily look through (i.e. windows with at least 80 percent light transmission that are framed with trim).

5. 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. Entryways should be accentuated from the overall building façade by:
   - Differentiated roof, awning, or portico;
   - Use trim details to accentuate the opening;
   - Project or recess entries from their surrounding building façades;
   - Detailed doors and doorway with: ornate hardware, transoms, sidelights, trim details, and framing;
   - The use of windows within entry doorways equivalent in size to 50 percent of door surface area is encouraged;
   - Providing decorative nighttime lighting.



This commercial/office development includes extensive architectural detailing, such as the wood headers and trim around the windows. (Courtesy LPA)

6. The use of security grills at windows and doors is highly discouraged. Where used, they should be hidden or otherwise concealed from public view.

7. Buildings have more than one or two sides. All sides of the building shall be addressed with architectural and façade elements. This includes the use of awnings, bulbouts, reliefs, and fenestrations to add distinction to the façade of the structure.

This multi-family project in Davis, California includes detailing at all levels of the building (i.e. window accents, roof overhangs) and is an excellent illustration of the base, middle, cap concept, with the base being brick, the middle being stucco, and the cap being siding.

8. Roofing should be unique and add character and style to the building.

AVOID

- False fronts, applied mansard forms, and other artificial rooflines
- Dark tinted glass and mirror-like films (other than spandrel or similar technique)

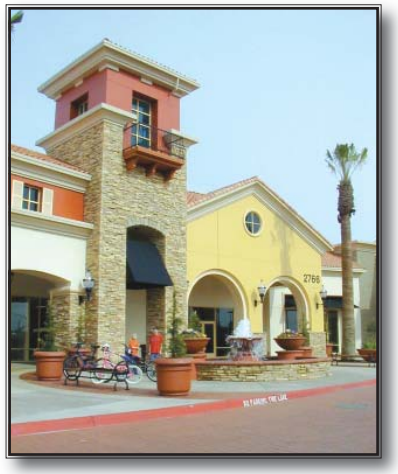
ARCHITECTURE > BUILDING MATERIALS AND COLORS

DESIGN OBJECTIVE

Use color and materials that add visual interest and appeal, and are compatible with the desired community character.

DESCRIPTION

Exterior building materials and colors comprise a significant part of the visual impact of a building. Therefore, they should be aesthetically pleasing and compatible with materials and colors used in adjoining and nearby developments. They should, however, still provide a variety and combination of building materials that add character



Do This: *The Broadstone project in Folsom, California has at least three colors and several building materials that work in concert to create an attractive center.*

Don't Do This: *A commercial project in Rancho Cordova, California. The entire building – from the walls to the doors to the roof – is painted the same shade of blue. The building lacks visual interest.*

and distinctiveness to the site and help create a sense of place. Color should be used to enhance architectural elements. Color is intended to act as a primary theme-conveying element. Quality wall materials provide a sense of permanence and should be applied to create a sense of substance and mass. Façade materials should have a human scale, preferably with modular materials such as stone, brick, or wood siding.

This development includes brick, concrete, steel, and other materials. They integrate into the overall design and style of the development. (Emeryville, California, Courtesy LPA)

DESIGN GUIDELINES

1. Exterior finish materials should be appropriate for an architectural style or theme of the building and should contribute towards a high quality image. Exterior materials and architectural details should relate to each other in ways that are traditional and logical. For example, heavy materials should appear to support lighter ones. Materials should be varied to provide architectural interest.

2. Use quality wall materials to establish a single clearly dominant material and finish. The following materials are preferred:
   - Plaster;
   - Brick;
   - Stone;
   - Tile;
   - Wood or hard-board siding (shiplap or board-and-batten). Shiplap should be installed without visible joints of underlying board materials;
   - Additional materials, such as architectural metal siding, may be used provided they are used creatively.

3. Changes in material should occur at interior corners or at a change in horizontal plane.

4. Colors should be used in a meaningful way to illustrate and accent depth and detail in the architectural elements. Buildings shall include a minimum of two colors per elevation. Color accents may vary throughout the project but should be complementary. Exposed downspouts shall be colored to match the surface to which they are attached to complement such surface.

5. Roof materials should convey a sense of quality and durability.

Example of distinctive colors that complement each other and create a visually attractive atmosphere. (Seattle, Washington)

AVOID

- Fluorescent colors

An apartment complex in North Natomas, Sacramento, California. The project includes several different yet complementary colors and materials that help enhance the project.

ARCHITECTURE > COMPATIBILITY

DESIGN OBJECTIVE

Promote compatibility of architectural forms between neighboring developments. Preserve the historically important heritage of the City while promoting redevelopment along the City's distressed corridors.

DESCRIPTION

Rancho Cordova is a historically important place in the region and the nation. It was part of the national defense system for 50 years, has roots in agrarian activities, and was a key location along the transcontinental railroad. The City recognizes the value in preserving these features of the community as they help to establish a City Identity

Do This: *This mixed use is compatible with the scale of the adjacent residential neighborhood, making it look like a natural continuation of the community.*

Don't Do This: *A single-family residence next to a very tall multi-family development. The scale of these two structures next to each other are incompatible and out of character with the neighborhood.*

and a sense of place, calling it out from the rest of the Region. However, many existing areas of the City fall short of meeting the Vision of the community and do not help contribute to the City Identity and the overall sense of place. The City welcomes dramatic change in these areas that are in keeping with the City Vision, General Plan, and these Design Guidelines. The City recognizes that some change will happen slowly, even incrementally.

Individual projects should be architecturally compatible with their neighbors. Not all neighboring sites exhibit positive architectural features and in some areas special review may be necessary, however overall harmony should be achieved. This promotes interaction between individual sites and helps to blur the line/separation between uses, producing a more diverse and extensive community.

In North Natomas, Sacramento, California, single-family residential harmoniously coexists next to a multifamily development. The two projects have similar massing and streetscape elements.

New development should be compatible with desirable development in the surrounding areas that also meets the intent of these Design Guidelines. New development should relate to surrounding architecture by using common elements of scale, color, rhythm, and proportions to strengthen and contribute to the character and identity of the City.

DESIGN GUIDELINES

1. New development or the redevelopment of existing sites shall be compatible with neighboring projects, particularly where those projects are in keeping with the City's Vision. Compatibility is based on massing and scale of structures, building siting and orientation, architectural character, landscaping language, and other features that help define the site. These features shall be complemented from one project to another.

2. Where a desirable streetscape has been established, new development and qualifying redevelopment shall be compatible with the established streetscape.

3. Pad buildings should be designed to be compatible with and reflect the planned architectural style or theme of the center. While not precluding corporate architecture, the City wishes to ensure that the overall design theme is consistent with the rest of the center.

4. New development and the rehabilitation of existing development shall contribute positively to the overall City image.

5. Consider including architectural elements and site features that help relate the site back to the individual or Citywide historic activities and natural environment. Historically significant sites and people within the community should be identified and prominently displayed.

6. Incorporate design themes, architectural detailing, pedestrian amenities, or other elements that relate to the history of Rancho Cordova.

7. Additions to buildings should not deform or adversely affect the positive composition of the façade or be out of scale with the building.