SAN DIEGO DOWNTOWN DESIGN GUIDELINES

Centre City Development Corporation

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ATTACHMENT A

CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTION 9

Overview 11
1.1 Scope and Organization 14
1.2 Consistency with Other Plans 15
1.3 How to Use This Document 15

2. URBAN DESIGN FRAMEWORK 17

Overview 19
2.1 Goals for Downtown 21
2.2 Urban Design Framework 27

3. STREET CORRIDORS 33

Overview 35
3.1 Street Corridors 36
3.2 Streets in General 38
3.3 Street Landscape 45
3.4 Boulevards 56
3.5 Principal Couplets 64
3.6 Special Streets 67
3.7 Green Streets 72
3.8 Main Streets 76
3.9 Residential Streets 80
3.10 Multifunction Streets 85

4. BLOCKS AND BUILDINGS 89

Overview 91
4.1 Key Principles 92
4.2 Structure of the Guidelines 93
4.3 Block Edges and Building Placement 94
4.4 Block Modulation and Building Massing 96
4.5 Building Design 103
4.6 Extending the Public Realm 117
4.7 Sustainability 121
4.8 Lighting Design Principles 123

5. PUBLIC ART 125

Overview 127
5.1 Public Art Defined 128
5.2 Public Art Framework 130
5.3 Types of Public Art 130
5.4 Placement Guidelines 136

GLOSSARY 137

AUTHORS 145

FIGURES

1. INTRODUCTION 9

Figure 1.1 Downtown Districts of San Diego 13

2. URBAN DESIGN FRAMEWORK 17

Figure 2.1 Urban Design Framework 30
Figure 2.2 Neighborhood Main Streets & Open Space Network 31
Figure 2.3 Street Typologies 32

3. STREET CORRIDORS 33

Figure 3.1 Public and private realms 36
Figure 3.2 Street Types 37
Figure 3.3 Existing Typical Street Section 38
Figure 3.4 Pedestrian Realm Section 40
Figure 3.5 Sidewalk Extensions 44
Figure 3.6 Street Landscape by Typology 46
Figure 3.7 Typical Section of Market Street 59
Figure 3.8 Park Boulevard - F Street-G Street 62
Figure 3.9 Park Boulevard - G Street-Market Street 63
Figure 3.10 Park Boulevard - Market Street-Island Avenue 63
Figure 3.11 Principal Couplet - Option 1 65
Figure 3.12 Principal Couplet - Option 2 66
Figure 3.13 Designated Green Streets 72
Figure 3.14 The Green Street Section 73
Figure 3.15 Green Street Examples 73
Figure 3.16 Green Street Right-Of-Way- Option 1 74
Figure 3.17 Green Street Right-Of-Way- Option 2 75
Figure 3.18 Main Street- Option 1 78
Figure 3.19 Main Street- Option 2 79
Figure 3.20 Residential Street - Option 1 82
Figure 3.21 Residential Street - Option 2 83
Figure 3.22 Residential Street - Option 3 84
Figure 3.23 Multi-Function Street- Option 1 86

Figure 3.24 Multi-Function Street- Option 2 87

4. BLOCKS AND BUILDINGS 89

Figure 4.1 Public, semi-private and the private realms 93
Figure 4.2 Street Characteristics 94
Figure 4.3 Downtown Block Edge Conditions 95
Figure 4.4 Building Massing Options - FAR 6.5 97
Figure 4.5 Building Massing Options - FAR 8.0 98
Figure 4.6 Building Massing Options - FAR 10.0 99
Figure 4.7 Tower Configurations 100
Examples of Commercial Office Buildings 101
Figure 4.8 Street Wall 102
Figure 4.9 Commercial Ground Floor Section 104
Figure 4.10 Backflow-Prevention Devices 114
Figure 4.11 Residential Block Composition 117
Figure 4.12 Centre City Green Document 120
Figure 4.13 Sustainability Indicators 120
Figure 4.14 Green Building Checklist 120
Figure 4.15 PDO Bulk Model 122

5. PUBLIC ART 125

Figure 5.1 Public Art Framework 131

1 INTRODUCTION

Overview 11

1.1 Scope and Organization 14
1.1.1 Urban Design Framework 14
1.1.2 Street Corridor Guidelines 14
1.1.3 Blocks and Buildings Guidelines 14
1.1.4 Public Art Guidelines 14

1.2 Consistency with Other Plans 15

1.3 How to Use This Document 15

Overview

Great cities are exciting, memorable and enriching. They offer places for living, working, learning, recreating, shopping and socializing. Their downtowns are civic, economic and cultural destinations that afford opportunities for engaging in governance, business and a variety of social activities.

Downtown San Diego enjoys a temperate climate, a beautiful bay-side setting, a walkable grid street pattern, historic architecture, vibrant mixed-use districts, including Little Italy, Gaslamp District and East Village/Ballpark, and notable landmarks such as the County Administration Center building and Santa Fe Depot. Many new buildings downtown are well-proportioned and -articulated, address the street well, conceal parking and enhance the pedestrian experience.

Downtown San Diego fronts left, San Diego Bay and is adjacent to upper right, Balboa Park.

SAN DIEGO DOWNTOWN DESIGN GUIDELINES

The 2006 Downtown Community Plan (Community Plan) established a vision for downtown San Diego's future, one with a civic, cultural and commercial core surrounded by distinct neighborhoods interconnected by a network of pedestrian-oriented green streets. The vision celebrates and respects two of San Diego's most beloved natural and manmade features: San Diego Bay and Balboa Park.

Based on the Community Plan and the Guiding Principles outlined in its introduction, the Downtown Design Guidelines (Guidelines) are intended to provide guidance that will further enhance the natural beauty, physical character and livability of downtown San Diego. The Guidelines, when utilized in conjunction with neighborhood-specific guidelines and the three existing downtown Planned District Ordinances (PDOs), will help achieve the vision and guiding principles of the Community Plan, resulting in San Diego's continued prominence as a distinctive, world-class downtown.

India Street, an active Main Street in Little Italy

Broadway, the spine of Downtown San Diego

Recent successful developments in East Village

Figure 1.1 Downtown Districts of San Diego

1.1 Scope and Organization

The Downtown Design Guidelines are composed of four major sections.

1.1.1
Urban Design Framework

The urban design framework presents overarching principles and a foundation for public and private improvements in downtown San Diego. It establishes an interconnected network and hierarchy of street corridors, public open spaces, building forms and public art, with emphasis on the location and character of public and private improvements in downtown.

1.1.2
Street Corridor Guidelines

The street corridor guidelines focus on public-realm improvements. They encompass the whole of the street corridor: street, sidewalk, building frontage and any interface with parks and plazas.

1.1.3
Blocks and Buildings Guidelines

The blocks and building guidelines focus on private-realm improvements. They provide guidance on the form of buildings as well as their relationship to the public realm as envisioned herein. Specific guidelines are provided that address a building's ground-floor configuration, street-wall scale and texture and overall massing.

1.1.4
Public Art Guidelines

The public art guidelines support the role of public art in achieving the urban design framework in downtown San Diego. They establish public art framework, define various types of public art and address placement of art in the public realm.

Santa Fe Train Depot, a landmark, and PETCO Park and Gaslamp, two active districts, give downtown an identity and sense of place.

1.2 Consistency with Other Plans

The urban design chapter of the Community Plan (*Chapter 5.0 – Urban Design*, p. 5-1) provides the overarching framework for creating guidelines. It establishes the importance of high standards of design excellence, the essential influence of urban design in establishing and maintaining neighborhood character and the high value of citizen involvement.

In addition to the Community Plan, the Guidelines, which are recommendations, not regulations, work in conjunction with other plans and guidelines affecting downtown San Diego. Listed below, these documents reinforce the Guidelines' urban design framework.

- City of San Diego 2008 General Plan Update
- City of San Diego Municipal Code
- Centre City Planned District Ordinance (PDO)
- Marina District Planned District Ordinance (PDO)
- Gaslamp District Planned District Ordinance (PDO)
- City of San Diego Street Design Manual
- Centre City Streetscape Manual
- Centre City Redevelopment Plan
- Neighborhood Design Guidelines
- Centre City Development Corporation (CCDC) Downtown Focus Plans
- Comprehensive Parking Plan for Downtown San Diego
- Downtown Sustainability Master Plan and Guidelines
- Downtown Exterior Lighting Master Plan and Guidelines
- City of San Diego Public Art Master Plan
- Downtown Wayfinding Signage Program
- Façade Improvement Program

1.3 How to Use This Document

These Guidelines shall be used in the design review process for development within the Downtown Community Plan area, except in the Gaslamp Quarter Planned District which is subject to the Gaslamp Quarter Design Guidelines as adopted by the City of San Diego City Council. These Guidelines shall not be regulatory, but should be evaluated by staff and decision-making bodies in the review of new development proposals to ensure that new construction incorporates the appropriate goals, policies, and principals of this document. While each project need not follow each and every guideline within this document, any significant deviations from these guidelines should be carefully evaluated in the review process and the project should only be approved when the design of the project is determined to meet the overall intent of these guidelines. Prospective users are advised to review all relevant documents (sample compilation):

- City of San Diego 2008 General Plan Update
- San Diego 2006 Downtown Community Plan
- Downtown Design Guidelines ← **current document**
- Relevant Planned District Ordinance (based on project locations)
- Neighborhood Design Guidelines
- City of San Diego Street Design Manual
- Centre City Streetscape Manual

2

URBAN DESIGN FRAMEWORK

Overview 19

2.1 Goals for Downtown 21
2.1.1 Enhance Downtown's Overall Image and Legibility 21
2.1.2 Enhance and Increase Public-Realm Spaces 22
2.1.3 Create High-Quality Pedestrian Pathways and Linkages 23
2.1.4 Enhance the Public/Private Interface 24
2.1.5 Promote Fine-Grain Character 25
2.1.6 Articulate the Skyline to Create Image and Legibility 26

2.2 Urban Design Framework 27
2.2.1 Downtown Image and Hierarchy of Streets 28
2.2.2 Boulevards: Principal Gateway and High Image Streets 28
2.2.3 Principal Freeway Couplets: Primary Gateway and High-Linkage Streets 28
2.2.4 Special Streets: High-Image Streets 28
2.2.5 Broadway Spine and Civic Center 29
2.2.6 Neighborhood Main Streets and Community Centers 29
2.2.7 Green Street Neighborhood Connections 29
2.2.8 Open Space Network and Green Loop 29

Overview

The urban design framework comprises overarching principles and a framework for public and private improvements in downtown San Diego. It establishes an interconnected network and hierarchy of street corridors, public open spaces, building forms and public art, and emphasizes the location and character of public and private improvements in downtown.

Chapter 5.0 – Urban Design in the 2006 Downtown Community Plan presents the policy framework for creating guidelines and contains a number of goals that address important urban design considerations. The following goals and elements of the Urban Design Framework enhance those found in the Urban Design chapter of the Plan. They are devised to elicit the highest standards of design excellence as projects move through design review.

Urban Design Goals for Downtown San Diego

Six key goals form the foundation of the Urban Design Framework and associated guidelines.

1. Enhance downtown's overall image and legibility.

2. Add and enhance public-realm spaces.

3. Create high-quality pedestrian pathways and linkages.

4. Enhance the public/private interface.

5. Promote fine-grain character.

6. Articulate the skyline to create interest and legibility.

Urban Design Framework Elements for Downtown San Diego

The Urban Design Framework comprises several fundamental elements:

- Downtown image and hierarchy of streets
- Boulevards: principal gateway and high-image streets
- Principal freeway couplets: primary gateway and high-linkage streets
- Special streets: high-image streets and citywide main streets
- Broadway spine and Civic Center
- Neighborhood main streets and community centers
- Green-street neighborhood connections
- Open space network and green loop

2.1 Goals for Downtown

Great downtowns are memorable, with landmarks and a clear hierarchy of districts, streets, and open spaces. Top, San Francisco, CA; bottom, Paris, France.

2.1.1 Enhance Downtown's Overall Image and Legibility

A great downtown has an impressive, often immediately recognizable image, which commonly is defined by its geographic setting, street patterns and architectural and landscape-architectural character manifested in iconic buildings and memorable parks and open spaces.

Great downtowns also enjoy a high degree of legibility, which can be described as the character of a downtown that allows visitors to immediately understand their surroundings through physical orientation and easily-recognized features and places. Legibility is derived from landmark buildings and features in the landscape, a hierarchy of streets, parks and plazas, and an area's sense of place.

Downtown San Diego features a number of landmark buildings and distinct districts. Its bayside setting is beautiful and memorable. The goal of the Urban Design Framework, as set out in these Guidelines, is to further enhance both image and legibility within the entire downtown, especially where the prevailing grid street pattern and standard 80-foot street sections offer particular challenges. Additionally, this goal includes encouraging maximum streetscape improvements and establishing recognizable patterns through streetscape design, public-realm improvements and art placement.

2.1.2
Enhance and Increase Public-Realm Spaces

Great downtowns have great public-realm spaces, composed of streets, parks, plazas and the appurtenant facilities found there, including areas for passive and active recreation, community functions, and organized programming of markets, entertainment and festivals.

Many downtown areas already support the public realm in form and function; however, as the downtown grows in population, visitation and employment, every opportunity to enhance the public realm should be embraced. Creative solutions based on design, spatial opportunity and collaboration among public, private and quasi-public/private entities must be considered during the design review process. The Guidelines establish principles and parameters intended to enable and enhance creative opportunities for public realm improvements.

Great downtowns offer welcoming places for public gathering and civic life. Top, Bryant Park, New York; middle, Millenium Park, Chicago, bottom, Pioneer Square, Portland.

Great downtowns are pedestrian-oriented, emphasizing pedestrian movement and accommodation. Top, New York, NY; middle, MLK Promenade, San Diego; bottom, San Jose, CA.

2.1.3
Create High-Quality Pedestrian Pathways and Linkages

Great downtowns have high-quality, inviting pedestrian pathways and linkages that support healthy civic and social life. The pathways are safe and convenient, and they may be buffered by vegetation. They are linked to such key downtown features as parks, plazas, retail and cultural opportunities. They also link districts with one another, thereby offering residents, workers and visitors easy access to homes, workplaces and points of interest.

Compared with large-grid, curvilinear or radial street patterns, downtown San Diego's relatively small blocks (200 feet by 300 feet) provide a welcoming pedestrian scale. The Martin Luther King, Jr., Promenade, the planned North Embarcadero Esplanade and improvements in the PETCO Park area offer visually-interesting, safe places to walk and socialize.

However, many downtown sidewalks remain awkward and unimproved, often obstructed by utility boxes and other obstacles. In several areas, bayfront access is limited and hard to find. Opportunities abound for improved pathways and linkages; the Guidelines focus both on enhancing existing connections and developing new pedestrian pathways by encouraging widened and landscaped sidewalks to connect key open spaces and points of interest.

2.1.4
Enhance the Public/Private Interface

Great downtowns include great buildings that frame and activate the public realm, enlivening it with ground-floor uses and improving safety with "eyes on the street." Buildings often are connected to the public realm by plazas, courtyards and patios which, although privately owned, are open to the public and effectively extend the public realm. Referred to as Privately Owned, Publicly Occupied (POPO) spaces, they enhance the "fine-grain" character of the city at street level. The Guidelines emphasize development and utilization of interfacing spaces wherever possible.

Several notable examples of POPOs exist, such as the all-seasons plaza at the base of the NBC building at Horton Square, where an ice skating rink is constructed during the winter holiday season and a farmer's market is held during the summer; similar opportunities exist in numerous locations throughout every downtown neighborhood. Little Italy and the Gaslamp District offer exemplary models of POPO uses. Similar, creative new opportunities for enhancing such interfaces should be developed at neighborhood centers and along main street corridors, as designated in the Plan.

The Guidelines emphasize variation in ground-floor designs, where the greatest opportunity exists for public/private interface. Small courtyards, pathways that accommodate earthquake fault lines and other similar opportunities should be developed in conjunction with building massing wherever practical as a means to achieve this goal.

Great downtowns have buildings that engage the street, affording additional places for public life and activity. Top, San Diego, CA; middle, Portland, OR; bottom, New York, NY.

Great downtowns have buildings with an architectural richness that breaks down building scale and enhances the city fabric. Top, San Diego, CA; middle, Berkeley, CA; bottom, San Diego, CA.

2.1.5 Promote Fine-Grain Character

Great downtowns are characterized by a fine-grain texture that embraces human scale and simultaneously enhances the composition of the public/private realm. When buildings reflect distinctive, individual tenant uses, they contribute to visual interest and variety at the street. These visual cues improve the overall pedestrian experience.

Fine-grain experience of a city often relates to historic parceling. Many buildings reveal downtown San Diego's original 25- and 50-foot-wide parceling, which promotes a certain cadence and rhythm. This is particularly true in both the Gaslamp District and Little Italy, where a critical mass of smaller buildings, many historic, supports a fine-grain richness and vitalizes the neighborhoods as centers of pedestrian interest and activity. A significant number of San Diego's newer projects are large, however, and the scale of these sometimes full-block developments is problematic to design while matching the appeal of the projects' fine-grain predecessors. The Guidelines are intended to promote fine-grain articulation, modulation and massing of downtown buildings.

2.1.6
Articulate the Skyline to Create Image and Legibility

Great downtowns showcase tall buildings that punctuate the skyline—recognizable landmarks that enhance the city's image and legibility. High-quality architecture, when appropriately articulated, adds elegance to the cityscape and, when thoughtfully designed, allows light and air to reach into the fine-grain of the public/private realm at street level and affords pedestrians a view of the sky.

Downtown San Diego recently experienced a prosperous period of building and many new residential towers are creatively articulated. The Guidelines discourage projects that contain large upper-story floor plates, which add to a building's bulk, lack a fine-grain texture at street level and reduce light and air movement. Rather, the Guidelines encourage varied building massing and creative tower configuration for well-proportioned buildings, smaller floor-plate sizes, and appropriate tower placement.

Tall buildings in great downtowns add to the image and legibility of the city. Top left, Philadelphia, PA; Top right, San Francisco, CA; bottom, Vancouver, BC.

2.2 Urban Design Framework

Based on the 2006 Downtown Community Plan, the urban design framework establishes an image for downtown San Diego by emphasizing a legible hierarchy of street corridors and pathways and a clear network of linkages between downtown districts and neighborhoods. The Urban Design Framework focuses on the public realm, comprising the streets, sidewalks, parks and plazas where public life takes place. It also sets the stage for buildings to frame and activate the public realm through building setbacks, ground floor treatments and publicly-accessible plazas and open spaces, as described in Section 4.

The Urban Design Framework gives form to and informs the guidelines for public and private improvements as presented in subsequent sections. The elements of the Urban Design Framework are:

- Downtown image and hierarchy of streets
- Boulevards: principal gateway and high-image streets
- Principal freeway couplets: primary gateway and high-linkage streets
- Special streets: high-image streets and citywide main streets
- Broadway spine and Civic Center
- Neighborhood main streets and community centers
- Green-street neighborhood connections
- Open space network and green loop

This section presents three figures to illustrate the interrelated core elements of the Urban Design Framework. The Primary Urban Design Framework (Figure 2.1) brings together boulevards, principal couplets, and special streets. Figure 2.2 shows neighborhood main streets, green streets and the open space network. Figure 2.3 illustrates street typologies as described in the 2006 Downtown Community Plan. The first two figures serve as "overlays" on the third, the street typologies figure. The user of this document should look initially to the first two figures, then to the third figure to understand the urban design intent for any given street corridor.

2.2.1
Downtown Image and Hierarchy of Streets

The Urban Design Framework features boulevards, principal freeway couplets, special streets, green streets and main streets as major form-giving corridors in downtown San Diego. All help to establish an image and hierarchy for downtown and help orient visitors to the area. They provide a critical network of connections to key places and neighborhoods and reinforce district or neighborhood identity.

2.2.2
Boulevards: Principal Gateway and High Image Streets

Boulevards, comprising Harbor Drive, Pacific Highway, Broadway, Market Street and Park Boulevard, are major downtown gateways and public spaces. Wider than downtown's typical 80-foot street section, boulevards are ceremonial with high-quality treatments and a grand, civic scale. They are lined with a mix of civic, commercial, and residential buildings, and they play a key role in defining the image and identity of downtown.

2.2.3
Principal Freeway Couplets: Primary Gateway and High-Linkage Streets

Principal freeway couplets serve an important function in providing convenient vehicular access into and out of downtown. They are major downtown gateways and they contribute to the image and identity of downtown, particularly for motorists. As primary routes in downtown, principal freeway couplets have a consistent character, including a consistent streetscape treatment and a well-defined street edge, defined as buildings with a minimum setback that line and frame the street.

2.2.4
Special Streets: High-Image Streets

Special streets, in particular C Street, Fifth Avenue, India Street (in Little Italy) and North Harbor Drive, are unique in downtown San Diego in terms of their character, historical significance and visibility. These streets are widely known by residents and by visitors from throughout the region and beyond, and thus play a significant role in defining the image of downtown and showcasing its history.

C Street is a major light-rail transit corridor serving downtown San Diego and the civic/core district. Future planned improvements for C Street must enhance the image, identity, and viability of the street. Fifth Avenue is the main street of the Gaslamp District, the historic core of the city. Lined with an abundance of historic buildings, the street has a strong identity and image. India Street in Little Italy, between Beech and Hawthorne streets, likewise has an established main-street character and is a popular destination for dining and shopping. North Harbor Drive between Grape Street and Pacific Highway is slated to undergo a major transformation, with a bayside esplanade serving as the city's "front porch."

The character of a special street is more formal, with consistent pedestrian-scale streetscape treatment and buildings that line, frame and activate the street to create a well-defined street edge.

2.2.5
Broadway Spine and Civic Center

Broadway is the primary gateway and ceremonial street into downtown San Diego, with the greatest impact on the image of the city. It functions as a spine and seam through the heart of downtown, tying together the various districts and activities north and south of the boulevard. These districts, in turn, have a presence on Broadway, including the city's civic center. The character of Broadway is grander and more civic in scale, with vertical trees, high-quality buildings, a consistent building edge and wide sidewalks defining the street at its western end.

2.2.6
Neighborhood Main Streets and Community Centers

Neighborhood main streets serve as centers of activity and create identity for downtown's various neighborhoods. They are strongly oriented toward pedestrians, with major emphasis given to shopping, dining and other commercial activities. Buildings on main streets have a minimum setback and frame the street, and their ground floors are lined with commercial and retail uses.

2.2.7
Green Street Neighborhood Connections

Green streets make up the connective network that links downtown districts and neighborhood centers to each other, the bayfront, and Balboa Park. As a downtownwide network of streets, they complement the role of boulevards in linking key places and neighborhoods. Green streets generally have slow traffic, a determined pedestrian orientation and enhanced planting. In some cases, green streets are pedestrian/bicyclist pathways only, aligned with streets already closed to traffic.

2.2.8
Open Space Network and Green Loop

Parks and plazas are critical to the civic, social and recreational life of downtown. They provide places for civic activities and passive recreation, and they reinforce neighborhood identity. Key downtown-serving open space amenities include two major promenades, the MLK Promenade and the planned North Embarcadero Esplanade. Pedestrian-oriented green streets, part of the open space network, connect parks to one another. Adjacent buildings should frame and activate the parks with ground-floor retail and restaurant uses.

The open space network affords an opportunity to create a green loop around downtown San Diego, offering another way to experience downtown. Its expanded network of parks, promenades and green streets, supported by directional signage, invites the pedestrian to circulate along some of downtown's more significant and interesting open spaces, including the MLK Promenade, the North Embarcadero Esplanade, historic Cedar Street, Park Boulevard and the parks and interior "fault line" open spaces of the East Village.

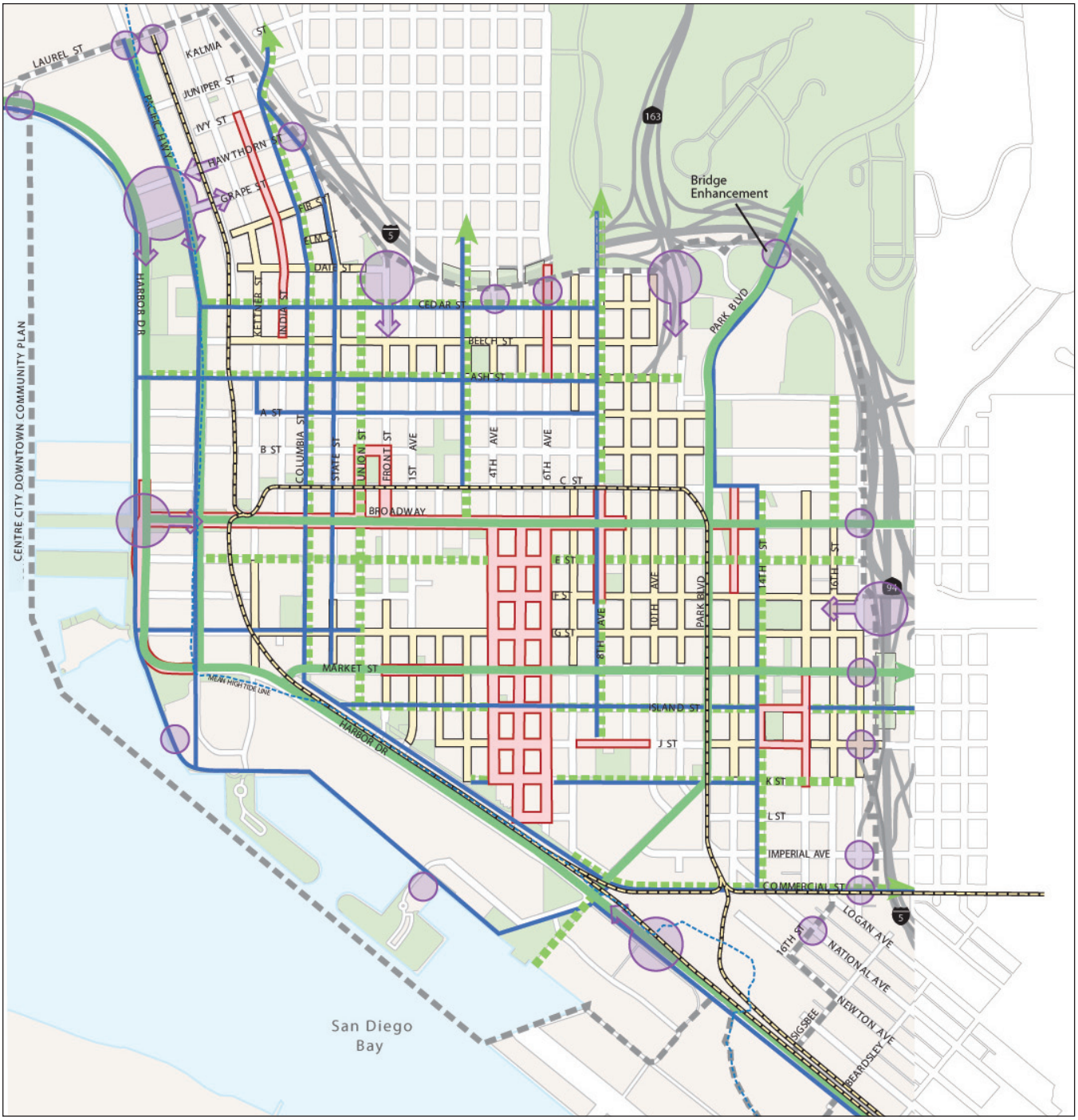
Figure 2.1 Urban Design Framework

- Boulevards
- Principal Couplets
- Special Streets
- Trolley
- Waterfront Promenade
- Public Parks and Open Spaces (Existing and Proposed)
- District Boundary
- Downtown Boundary
- Selected Downtown Landmarks

Figure 2.2 Neighborhood Main Streets & Open Space Network

- Broadway
- Green Street
- Green Street - Pedestrian Only
- Neighborhood Center/Main Street
- Trolley
- Existing Public Parks and Open Spaces
- Proposed/Planned Public Parks and Open Spaces
- Downtown Green Loop
- Waterfront Promenade
- Selected Downtown Landmarks

Figure 2.3 Street Typologies



from San Diego Downtown Community Plan, Dyett and Bhatia, 2006.

- Boulevard
- Main Street
- Green Streets
- Bike Facilities (paths and lanes)
- Residential Streets
- Multi-function Streets
- Parks/Open Space
- Trolley
- Major Gateway
- Minor Gateway

STREET CORRIDORS

3

Overview	35
3.1 Street Corridors	36
3.2 Streets in General	38
3.3 Street Landscape	45
3.4 Boulevards	56
3.5 Principal Couplets	64
3.6 Special Streets	67
3.7 Green Streets	72
3.8 Main Streets	76
3.9 Residential Streets	80
3.10 Multifunction Streets	85

Overview

Streets, parks and plazas support the life of downtown San Diego. Streets accommodate access, serve commerce and provide venues for civic life. The best streets complement and serve their adjacent uses; they balance the needs of pedestrians, cyclists, transit riders and motorists. Parks and plazas also support the social life of downtown and its neighborhoods, providing places for sitting, gathering and playing.

This section focuses on street corridors, which consist of the roadway and public sidewalks, and the interface between streets and adjoining parks, plazas, and public and private development. Enhancement of street corridors, particularly public sidewalks, is essential to downtown San Diego's success as an inviting and vibrant place.

Information in these pages supplies direction for public agencies and private entities responsible for implementing public improvements and adjacent private and public development. This section should be considered in concert with other sections of this document, and with more detailed standards and guidelines in other policy and guideline documents, including the Downtown Neighborhood Design Guidelines, Downtown Streetscape Manual and the City of San Diego Street Design Manual.

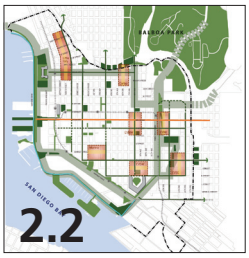
3.1 Street Corridors

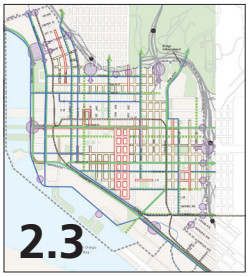
Street corridors consist of the public realm—the roadway and sidewalks—together with the adjacent private realm (see Figure 3.1). Their character and success are largely determined by the quality of public improvements and the interface between the public and private realms.

The Downtown Design Guidelines establish principles, guidelines and concepts for the streets and public sidewalks. The guidelines focus on those streets and street characteristics that should remain consistent throughout downtown. Other street characteristics may vary by neighborhood, consistent with individual Downtown Neighborhood Design Guidelines.

The guidelines for streets reinforce the Urban Design Framework in Section 2, establishing a clear hierarchy of streets in downtown San Diego. The Downtown Design Guidelines lay out principles, guidelines and concepts pertaining to these designations:

- Boulevards
- Principal couplets
- Special streets
- Green streets
- Main streets
- Residential streets
- Multifunction streets





See Figures 2.1-2.3

Urban Design Framework

Neighborhood Main Streets & Open Space Network

Street Typologies

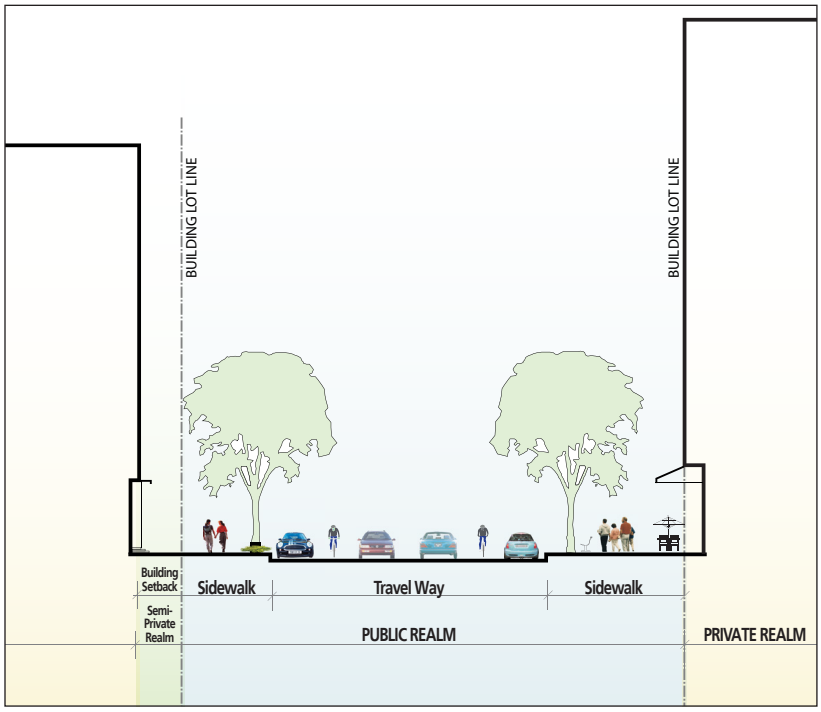


Figure 3.1 Public and private realms

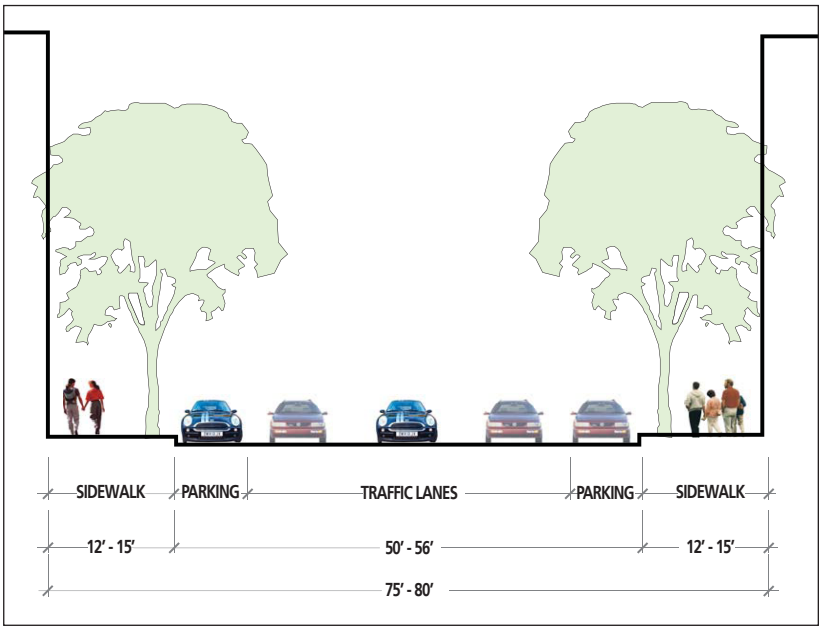
Figure 3.2 Street Types

	Street Character				Building Edge	
Street or Street Typology	**Focus**	**Traffic**	**Traffic Lanes**	**Trees**	**Street Wall**	**Recommended Setback (DDG)**
Boulevard	Gateway, Civic, Iconic	High	4 to 6	Consistent Tree Palette	Hold Street Wall; Plazas OK	0 - 65 feet on Broadway; 0 feet on all others
Principal Couplet	Gateway, Vehicular	High	3	Consistent Tree Palette	Hold Street Wall	0 - 5 feet
Special Street						
India Street (Hawthorne Street to Beech Street)	Active, Retail	Slow	2	Consistent Tree Palette	Hold Street Wall	0 feet
C Street (India Street to Park Boulevard)	Transit	Slow	0 to 1	Consistent Tree Palette	Hold Street Wall	0 feet
Fifth Avenue (C Street to South Harbor Drive)	Historic	Slow	2 to 3	Consistent Tree Palette	Hold Street Wall	0 feet
North Harbor Drive (Grape Street to Pacific Highway)	Bayfront	Slow	2 to 3	Consistent Tree Palette	Hold Street Wall, Plazas OK	0 feet
Green Street	Pedestrian/ Bike	Slow	Typically 2	Variable/ Maximum Planting	Modulate Street Wall, Porosity Encouraged	0 - 10 feet
Main Street	Active, Retail	Slow	2 or 3	Consistent Tree Palette within District	Hold Street Wall; Plazas OK	0 feet
Residential Street	Pedestrian	Slow	2 or 3	Variable	Modulate Street Wall, Porosity OK	3 - 10 feet
Multi-Function Street	Mixed	Medium	2 or 3	Variable	Hold Street Wall	0 - 5 feet

3.2 Streets in General

The Downtown Design Guidelines clarify broad principles and guidelines for street improvements in downtown San Diego appropriate for the prevalent 80-foot-wide street section and consistent with outcomes reported in Downtown San Diego Complete Community/Complete Mobility. These outcomes prioritize downtown modes of transport in the following order: pedestrian, cycling, public transit and automobile.

Figure 3.3 Existing Typical Street Section



Example of a typical 80-foot wide street section in downtown San Diego.

Streets in downtown San Diego should be safe and welcoming for pedestrians. Above, Little Italy, San Diego, CA.

3.2.1
Streets in General

All streets in downtown San Diego should be safe and welcoming for pedestrians while accommodating bicycles, public transit, and vehicular use commensurate with the street's function and adjacent uses.

Guidelines

All streets should incorporate the following:

- **3.2.1.A** Safe and welcoming pedestrian environments (see 3.2.2 Pedestrian Realm).
- **3.2.1.B** Sidewalk extensions/bulb-outs, as appropriate for vehicular movement, to slow traffic and enhance pedestrian comfort, safety, and wayfinding.
- **3.2.1.C** On-street parking on most streets to calm traffic and serve adjacent uses, excluding some boulevards and special streets (e.g., C Street). In some instances, diagonal parking may be preferred, consistent with the street concepts discussed later in this section. In these cases, back-in diagonal parking could be considered instead of front-in parking, as such a configuration provides better visibility to drivers when pulling out.
- **3.2.1.D** Street trees along all streets to improve air quality, narrow apparent street width and provide shade.
- **3.2.1.E** Complementary light fixtures and site furnishings throughout downtown, selected from an approved family of choices, which enhance the street environment while allowing for some variation among select streets and different downtown neighborhoods.
- **3.2.1.F** Sidewalk and landscape design should complement, and enhance the economic vitality of adjacent commercial businesses.

3.2.2
Pedestrian Realm

Great downtowns have a safe, attractive, and inviting pedestrian realm consisting of sidewalks and pathways. The pedestrian realm serves several functions—access and circulation, social places, and space for street furnishings such as street lamps, benches and utility boxes. The qualities of the pedestrian realm may vary, depending on the role of the street and its proximate uses, but all should exhibit certain characteristics, including an edge zone, furnishings zone, throughway zone and, where possible, a frontage zone, consistent with the current edition of the San Diego Street Design Manual.

Edge Zone

The edge zone, sometimes referred to as the curb zone, is the interface between the roadway and the sidewalk.

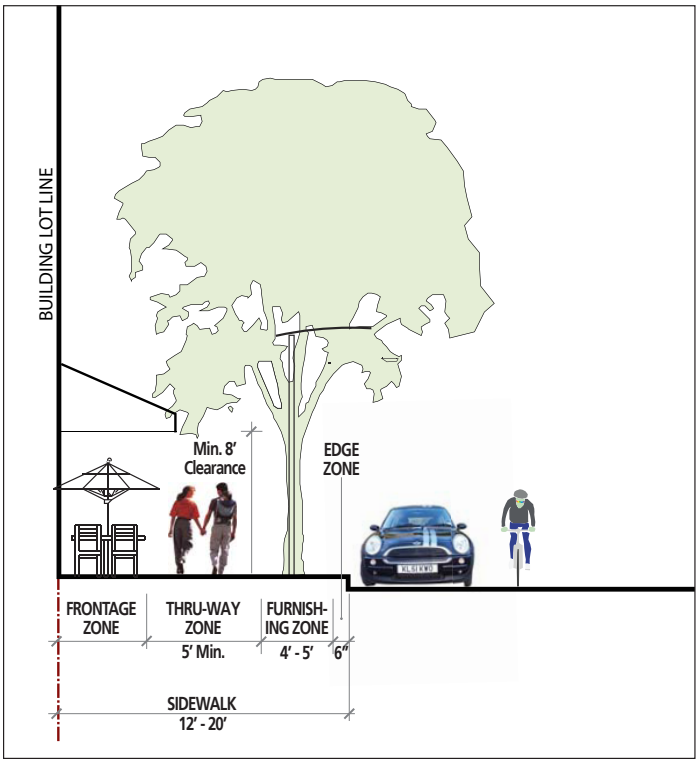
Furnishings Zone

The furnishings zone serves as the buffer between the active pedestrian-walking area throughway zone and street traffic. The furnishings zone accommodates public amenities such as street trees, street lamps, benches, bike racks, news racks, mailboxes, transit shelters, utility poles and utility boxes. In some cases, the furnishings zone can be used for outdoor seating and dining by shops, cafés and restaurants.

Throughway Zone

Located between the furnishings zone and the frontage zone, the throughway zone allows for unimpeded pedestrian circulation. It is free of all obstruction, including utility boxes and railings for outdoor dining.

Figure 3.4 Pedestrian Realm Section



The qualities of the pedestrian realm may vary, but all should exhibit certain characteristics, including an Edge Zone, Furnishings Zone, Throughway Zone, and Frontage Zone (where possible).

The throughway zone is free of all obstruction and allows for unimpeded pedestrian circulation. Above, San Diego, CA.

The Frontage Zone is the location for movable outdoor sitting and dining, as well as non-permanent fixtures such as planters. Above left, San Francisco, CA; right, San Diego, CA.

Utility boxes should be placed underground or in the furnishing zone, rather than in the throughway or frontage zones. Above left, San Francisco, CA; right, San Diego, CA

Frontage Zone

The frontage zone lies between the throughway zone and adjacent building or property line, assuming the sidewalk dimensions accommodate it. Movable outdoor seating and dining may be situated here as appropriate.

Guidelines

- **3.2.2.A** All sidewalks should consist of an edge zone, furnishings zone, throughway zone, and, where appropriate, a frontage zone.
- **3.2.2.B** The throughway zone should be a minimum of five feet wide.
- **3.2.2.C** Outdoor seating, either general-purpose or restaurant/café seating, is encouraged in the frontage zone, particularly in heavily trafficked pedestrian areas such as main streets.
- **3.2.2.D** Open seating areas without railings are encouraged wherever possible, but if required, should be as open and unobtrusive as possible.
- **3.2.2.E** Newspaper kiosks, to be located in the furnishings zone, should be consolidated to minimize visual clutter.
- **3.2.2.F** If there is an insufficient frontage zone to accommodate private uses such as cafés, any additional area should be taken from the private realm rather than encroaching on the throughway zone.
- **3.2.2.G** If possible, all utility boxes should be placed underground. If placing utility boxes underground is not an option, then all utility boxes should be placed in the furnishings zone, or as a last resort, in the frontage zone (if one exists).

3.2.3
Sidewalk Extensions

One of the primary ways to improve the pedestrian experience is through sidewalk extensions—widening the sidewalk the length of the block or creating bulb-outs at street intersections and/or mid-block. Sidewalk extensions allow for additional seating areas and planting and effectively slow auto traffic. They can also support transit use, as discussed below (see 3.2.5 Transit).

Guidelines

- **3.2.3.A** When improving streets, sidewalks should be widened where appropriate, consistent with the street corridor concepts discussed below.
- **3.2.3.B** Recognizing that street improvements can be expensive to implement, sidewalks should be widened on at least one side of the street rather than necessarily on both sides, assuming a standard sidewalk exists on the unimproved side.
- **3.2.3.C** When widening the sidewalks on one side, preference should be given to widening the east or north sides of the street to maximize sun exposure.
- **3.2.3.D** Bulb-outs should be provided on streets with heavy pedestrian activity or where there is a need to slow traffic.

Sidewalk extensions improve the pedestrian realm by allowing for additional sitting areas and planting, and by slowing traffic. Top, San Francisco, CA; bottom, San Diego, CA.

Bicycle lanes or bicycle routes, where space allows, should be established for streets designated for bicycle circulation, such as on green streets.

Bicycle corrals and sharrows should be encouraged where appropriate.

3.2.4
Bicycle Circulation

The Downtown Design Guidelines support bicycle circulation, consistent with established bicycle routes in the Downtown Community Plan. In many cases, a designated bicycle lane cannot be accommodated within San Diego's standard 80-foot right-of-way if minimum 14-foot sidewalks and standard lane-width dimensions are maintained (see Street Corridor Concepts below). In these circumstances, a bicycle route might be considered.

Guidelines

- **3.2.4.A** Bicycle lanes, where space allows, or bicycle routes, should be established on streets designated for bicycle circulation, per the Downtown Community Plan. Bicycle lanes accommodate bicycle travel in a one-way striped lane on a street. On bicycle routes, marked only with signs, bicycles share the road with pedestrian and motor vehicle traffic.

- **3.2.4.B** Marked bike lanes may be appropriate on some downtown streets, but are often not feasible or appropriate due to dimensional constraints or other street characteristics. Marked bike routes and sharrow lanes are appropriate alternatives on most streets in the downtown area.

- **3.2.4.C** Bicycle corrals, when appropriate, should be located in the roadway in lieu of an on-street parking space or adjacent to a painted curb zone and should be typically located in areas of high volume daytime business activity. Corrals provide additional bicycle parking while minimizing the amount of bicycle racks within the sidewalk area.

- **3.2.4.D** Sharrows, as defined by the Manual for Traffic Control Devices, as a shared lane pavement marking that is placed in the roadway lane to indicate that motorists should share the lane with bicycles, should be encouraged where appropriate. Unlike bicycle lanes, they do not designate a particular part of the roadway for the exclusive use of bicycles.

• 3.2.5

Transit

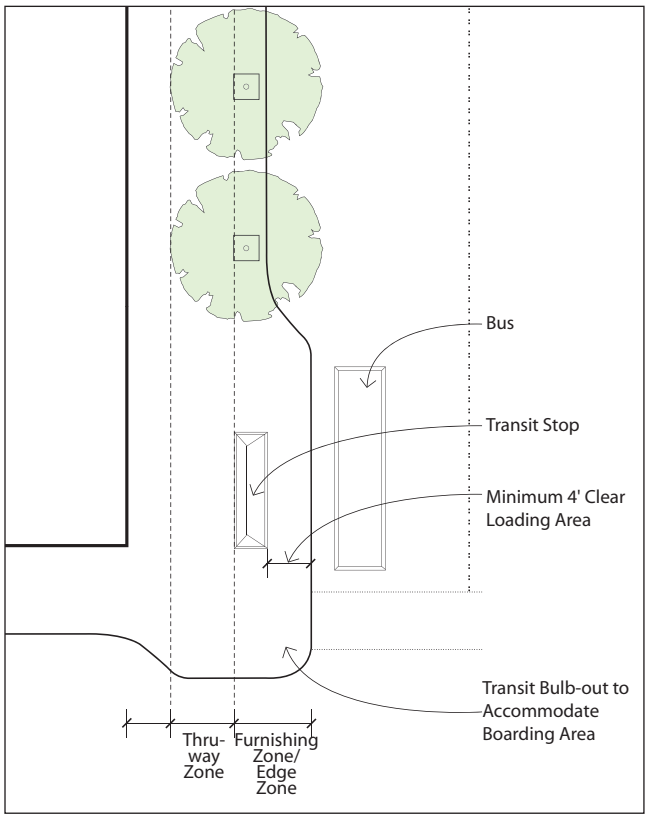
The Downtown Design Guidelines supports transit use consistent with the Downtown Community Plan and other relevant documents. One of the primary ways to support transit use is through sidewalk extensions (i.e., bulb-outs), either at street intersections or mid-block.

In some cases, where there are single lanes of traffic movement (e.g., two-lane, two-way streets), sidewalk extensions could impede the flow of traffic. In addition, sidewalk extensions deter drivers' use of parking lanes as traffic lanes during peak hours in the future. Therefore, improvements to street sections should be carefully checked against potential traffic flow patterns before implementation.

Guidelines

- **3.2.5.A** Streets may incorporate a sidewalk extension in place of parking at transit stops downtown (designated boulevards excepted) to better accommodate bus traffic and reinforce transit use, except when sidewalk extensions might have an adverse effect on traffic flow or the ability to use a parking lane as a traffic lane during peak hours.

Figure 3.5 Sidewalk Extensions



Sidewalk extensions can be used for additional open space and seating and/or a transit stop.

A sidewalk exstention can accommodate a transit stop and boarding area. Above, Portland, OR.

Street tree selection should reflect the hierarchy of the street; the more significant the street, the more stately the tree. Top, San Francisco, CA; middle, San Francisco, CA; bottom left and right, San Diego, CA.

3.3 Street Landscape

Landscape treatment, consisting of planting, paving materials, lighting, pedestrian barriers, furnishings and signage, adds to street character and pedestrian comfort and reinforces the urban design framework.

Guidelines for landscape treatment address the following:

- Consistency of street landscape
- Tree hierarchy, form and texture
- Tree location
- Tree health/tree grate
- Planting strips
- Shrubs and perennials
- Sustainability of plant materials
- Paving
- Pedestrian barriers
- Furnishings
- Gateway treatment
- Park edge

3.3.1 Consistency of Street Landscape

Consistent landscape treatment, with some select variation, contributes to the image, legibility, character and vitality of downtown.

Guidelines

- **3.3.1.A** The landscape treatment should reflect consistency and variation as set forth in Figure 3.6. In general, elements of the street that may vary by neighborhood, as reflected in the Neighborhood Design Guidelines, include paving materials for neighborhood main streets and planting materials and, in particular, accent plantings and public art (see Section 5).

Figure 3.6 Street Landscape by Typology

Street/Street Typology	Trees	Planting Strips	Paving	Lighting	Furnishings
Broadway	Consistent Tree Palette	Optional West of Third Avenue	Optional Special Paving	Special Lighting	Special Furnishings
Other Boulevards	Consistent Tree Palette by Street	Optional	Optional Special Paving	Special Lighting	Special Furnishings
Principal Couplet	Consistent Tree Palette by Street		Downtown Standard	Special Lighting	Downtown Standard
Special Street					
India Street (Hawthorne Street to Beech Street)	Active, Retail		Special Paving Pattern	Special Lighting	Downtown Standard
C Street (India Street to Park Boulevard)	Consistent Tree Palette		Special Paving	Special Lighting	Downtown Standard
Fifth Avenue (C Street to South Harbor Drive)	Consistent Tree Palette		Special Paving (Brick)	Special Lighting	Downtown Standard
North Harbor Drive (Grape Street to Pacific Highway)	Consistent Tree Palette		North Embarcadero	Special Lighting	Special Furnishings
Green Street	Consistent by Street	Optional	Downtown Standard	Downtown Standard	Downtown Standard
Main Street	Consistent within District	Optional	Optional Special Paving	Downtown Standard	Downtown Standard
Residential Street	Variable	Optional	Downtown Standard	Downtown Standard	Downtown Standard
Multi-Function Street	Variable		Downtown Standard	Downtown Standard	Downtown Standard

3.3.2
Tree Hierarchy, Form and Texture

Taller, more open forms of trees are encouraged in retail environments where storefront visibility is important. Above, Scottsdale, AZ.

Trees with showy flowering seasons can accent residential neighborhoods and neighborhood centers. Above, San Diego, CA.

Guidelines: Height, Width and Form

- **3.3.2.A** Street tree selection should reflect the street hierarchy: the more significant the street, the more stately the tree. Degrees of stateliness can be defined by maximizing both height and breadth. Streets deemed significant include designated boulevards and primary couplets.
- **3.3.2.B** Street trees with a wider spread (such as tree canopy or breadth) should be located where sidewalks are wider.
- **3.3.2.C** In a retail environment (such as a main street) where storefront visibility is important, taller, more open forms of trees are encouraged.
- **3.3.2.D** In retail environments, lower branches should be trimmed to provide a minimum vertical clearance of 15 feet to allow for maximum visual access to storefronts. Likewise, street trees should be spaced a minimum of 20 feet apart.

Guidelines: Texture

- **3.3.2.E** In general, trees with an open canopy should be maximized on streets to allow partial shade for pedestrians.
- **3.3.2.F** If evergreen trees, or trees with broad deciduous leaves are used as street trees, they should be located on streets that run in a north-south direction, as each side of the street is typically in sun during a portion of the day. On streets that run in an east-west direction, evergreen trees or trees with broad deciduous leaves should be minimized, as these streets tend to be in perpetual shade.
- **3.3.2.G** The height of buildings along the street corridor should be considered when selecting street trees, as very tall buildings can obscure the sunlight that reaches the street. In general, trees with an open canopy should be considered for streets that are more shaded by buildings.
- **3.3.2.H** Trees with showy flowering seasons should be maximized within residential neighborhoods and in neighborhood centers. This does not preclude the use of trees with flowers elsewhere.

3.3.3
Tree Location

Guidelines

- **3.3.3.A** Street trees should be located an adequate distance from the street and adjacent buildings to maximize the trees' long-term health.
- **3.3.3.B** Street trees should be planted a minimum distance of two-and-a-half feet (2.5') from the street curb edge.
- **3.3.3.C** Street trees should be planted a minimum distance of eight feet (8') from a building face, although a greater distance may be desirable, depending on the tree species.

The long-term health of trees benefits by providing adequate distance between the tree and adjacent streets and buildings. Above, San Diego, CA.

3.3.4
Tree Health/Tree Grate

Street trees' health is benefitted when they are protected from foot traffic and surrounded by a pervious surface. Adequately sized tree grates and planting strips (discussed in 3.3.5) protect trees while maintaining roots' access to water and oxygen.

Guidelines

- **3.3.4.A** Tree grates or planting strips should be used throughout downtown, consistent with Fig. 3.6.
- **3.3.4.B** Street trees should be planted in adequately sized tree wells to contribute to the long-term health of the trees and to accommodate root balls large enough to replace a dead tree with a relatively mature one.
- **3.3.4.C** Street grates should cover a minimum area of 24 square feet (e.g., 4' x 6').

Street trees should be surrounded by permeable surfaces or planted in adequate-size tree wells for long-term health benefits. Above, San Francisco, CA.

Planting strips should be planted with low-growing, drought tolerant plant materials with low water and maintenance requirements. Above, Rancho Cucumongo, CA.

Planting strips could be slightly raised and bordered with a low protective edge to a create separation from foot traffic. Above, New York, NY.

3.3.5
Planting Strips

The pedestrian realm may be enhanced through planting strips in a sidewalk's furnishings zone.

Guidelines

- **3.3.5.A** Planting strips should be considered for Broadway (west of Third Avenue), Park Boulevard, green streets and residential streets, consistent with Fig. 3.6. On those streets, planting strips should not be located where pedestrian traffic is high or where the strips would otherwise impede pedestrian flow. Planting strips should not be provided on other streets downtown.

- **3.3.5.B** Planting strips should be located in the furnishings zone only.

- **3.3.5.C** Planting strips should be planted with low-growing, native and/or drought tolerant plant materials with low water and maintenance requirements. Planting strips should not be planted with grass or other plant materials requiring heavier water use and maintenance.

- **3.3.5.D** Planting strips could be slightly raised and bordered with a low protective edge to create separation from foot traffic. To curb dog use, planting strips could be surrounded by a low fence—often referred to as an ornamental street tree fence—integrated into the planting strip.

- **3.3.5.E** Planting strips should have a minimum width of three feet, six inches (3'6").

3.3.6
Shrubs and Perennials

Shrubs and perennials should have limited but deliberate use.

Guidelines

- **3.3.6.A** Shrubs could be used to define and identify outdoor plazas or used to screen items such as temporary parking lots.

- **3.3.6.B** Perennials could be used in neighborhoods to reinforce a sense of identity within that neighborhood. There are several ways to incorporate perennial plantings, for instance, in planting strips, around the bases of trees and as baskets. Such plantings also can be incorporated into setbacks on residential streets. The Neighborhood Design Guidelines can address the use of perennials within a neighborhood.

Planting strips can be incorporated into the setbacks on residential streets. Above, San Diego, CA.

3.3.7
Sustainability of Plant Materials

Sustainability of plant material requires conservation of resources (materials and people) and employment of strategies to maximize the longevity of plant material. To be successful, one must consider plants, soils, water and maintenance.

Guidelines

- **3.3.7.A** Drought tolerant plants should be specified when possible. If supplemental plants are needed, the choice should be based on their ability to thrive in the local climate without intense or extended periods of irrigation. Plants should be sourced locally to minimize transportation.

- **3.3.7.B** Tree trenches are to be contiguous and sufficient in scale to support the ultimate height and breadth of the tree, consistent with the Downtown Streetscape Manual and landscape architecture standards. Soils should be specified to maximize growth of trees, to compact in such a way that oxygen and drainage are not inhibited, and to be capable of supporting pavement.

- **3.3.7.C** Prior to committing to the selection of tree species, shrubs or perennial plants at sidewalk level, or the incorporation of baskets with perennial plants, a report on the maintenance requirements should be submitted along with the proposed selections. Maintenance requirements reports should address frequency and extent of: watering, pruning, leaf- and/or flower-drop cleanup and feeding. Reports should further declare as to which entity will be responsible for the maintenance of the plant material.

Baskets are one of several ways to incorporate perennial plantings along streets. Above, Denver, CO.

Drought tolerant perennials can be incorporated on wide boulevards, such as Broadway, to visually enliven the street. Above, Chicago, IL.

Poured-in place paving materials should be applied consistently throughout downtown. Special paving can be applied in selected streets and districts. Left, San Francisco, CA; right, San Diego, CA.

3.3.8
Paving

The careful selection and use of paving materials provides a durable low-maintenance walking surface and a clean, consistent look.

Guidelines

- **3.3.8.A** Paving materials should be applied consistently throughout downtown within selected streets and districts, consistent with Fig. 3.6. Concrete surfaces may be enhanced by scoring patterns, textures, or additive elements that reflect light.

- **3.3.8.B** Poured-in-place paving material should be used throughout downtown. Possible exceptions include boulevards, main streets and sidewalks in the civic center and historic districts, where special paving materials may be applied (see Fig. 3.6). These exceptions could include concrete, stone, and brick pavers, and may be used for the entire pathway, as accent bands or within furnishings zones.

Permanent railings and other partitions may be used on sidewalks with heavy foot traffic, but open table seating without enclosures should be promoted. Left, San Francisco, CA; right, San Diego, CA.

3.3.9
Pedestrian Barriers

Pedestrian barriers, typically fences, are sometimes used to separate outdoor areas for drinking and dining from pedestrian circulation routes. Permanent barriers can have the unintended effect of cluttering sidewalks and impinging on pedestrian movement.

Guidelines

- **3.3.9.A** Permanent railings and other partitions around sidewalk cafes are necessary in some locations due to high pedestrian volumes and potential conflicts, but open table seating without barriers should be encouraged when feasible to create a more attractive and informal pedestrian environment.

3.3.10
Furnishings

The careful selection and use of street furnishings enhances the street environment, provides a clean, consistent look and makes ongoing maintenance easier and less expensive. Street furnishings include benches, containers, bike racks and drinking fountains. They can also include utility boxes.

Guidelines

- **3.3.10.A** Street furnishings should be located in the furnishings zone.
- **3.3.10.B** A family of complementary light fixtures and street furnishings should be used throughout downtown, with the exception of boulevards and special streets. Such elements should remain consistent throughout downtown, although individual neighborhoods can contain unique colors and other features.
- **3.3.10.C** Furnishings for Broadway, other boulevards and special streets (India Street, C Street, Fifth Avenue and North Harbor Drive) may be distinct and of higher quality to denote the standout nature of those streets in downtown. Other elements could be considered for such streets, such as maps and information kiosks.
- **3.3.10.D** Newspaper racks should be consolidated in one dispenser near intersections.
- **3.3.11.E** Utility boxes should be painted with a color consistent with the family of street furnishings to downplay visibility.

Newspaper kiosks should be consolidated to minimize visual clutter and, along with utility boxes, should be painted a consistent color to downplay their visibility. Above, San Francisco, CA.

3.3.11
Gateway Treatment

Special treatments at downtown gateways function to welcome and provide visual cues to visitors to the area, particularly motorists (see gateway locations marked in Fig. 2.3).

Guidelines

- **3.3.11.A** Gateways should be treated with a cohesive system of planting, furnishings and public art, as appropriate (see Section 5). They may be treated with brighter lighting and more-extensive signage and public art (see Section 5).

Special treatment of downtown gateways provide visual cues to welcome visitors into a particular area. Above, Philadelphia, PA.

Principal access points to parks shall meet the adjoining street line at the elevation of the adjoining sidewalk. Parks and plazas should be designed to allow for clear views in, out, and through. Top, Portland, OR; bottom, Philadelphia, PA.

Parks and plazas should interface the sidewalk as seamless extensions. Above, San Francisco, CA

3.3.12 Street/Park Interface: Visibility and Access

The most-successful urban parks are highly visible and accessible from adjacent streets and sidewalks. The ability to see into parks and plazas is vital to creating defensible space. Visible, accessible and well-maintained access points and circulation paths make public spaces welcoming.

Guidelines

- **3.3.12.A** Parks and plazas should be designed to allow for clear views in, out and through them.
- **3.3.12.B** Publicly accessible open space should include principal access points to the surrounding street network, preferably at street intersections.
- **3.3.12.C** Principal access points should remain unimpeded by walls, steps, or other barriers; they should act as seamless extensions of the sidewalk.
- **3.3.12.D** Principal access points should meet the adjoining street line at the elevation of the adjoining sidewalk.
- **3.3.12.E** Significant grade changes, requiring steps, walls, or ramps, at the edges of parks (at property line) should be minimized.
- **3.3.12.F** Fencing and walls at the edges of parks should be minimized,.
- **3.3.12.G** Where steps and ramps are needed, these should be gradual and generous.
- **3.3.12.H** Major walkways should be of a smooth, durable material, which may include stone, concrete or brick pavers, asphalt unit pavers, decomposed granite paving, and/or wood decking. An additional zone on either side of this walkway may be provided to accommodate trees and seating, which may have textured paving such as cobblestone or crushed stone..
- **3.3.12.I** The minimum tread depth for steps should be 15 inches. The riser height should be between four and five inches (4”-5”).

3.3.13
Street/Park Edge: Underground Parking Entrances

To ensure high visibility, accessibility and public safety, and to minimize impact on park utility, particular attention should be paid to the careful placement and location of ventilation shafts and pedestrian and vehicular entrances and exits to parking garages beneath parks and plazas.

Guidelines: Pedestrian Entrances

- **3.3.13.A** Pedestrian entrances to underground parking structures should be visible, accessible, inviting and safe, and should minimize impact to park utility.

- **3.3.13.B** Where possible, pedestrian entrances to underground parking structures should be incorporated into the base of adjacent buildings (optimal approach).

- **3.3.13.C** Where the pedestrian entrance is required within the footprint of the park, the pedestrian entrance should be housed in a small structure or pavilion incorporating both elevator(s) and stairs. The pavilion could also house other site amenities such as restrooms, food concessions, bicycle stations and information centers.

- **3.3.13..D** The pedestrian entrance pavilion should be:

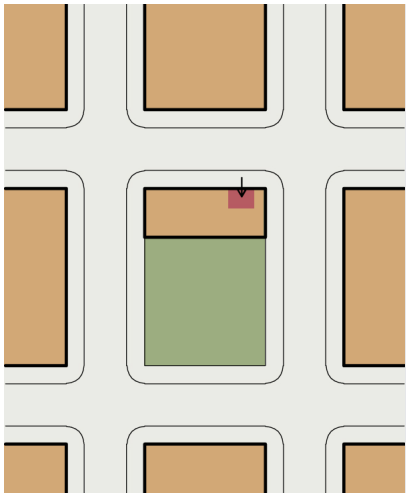
  Well-lit and highly visible from the street, to enhance access and safety.

  Placed along a primary pedestrian path near a principal access point.

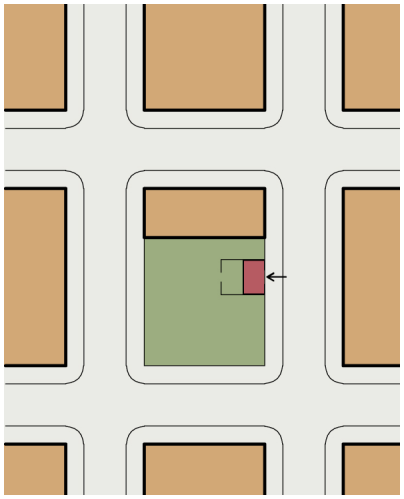
  Placed outside the bounds of any expansive open space or green where informal play and recreation may take place, so that the pavilion and staircase do not bisect the public open space.

  Designed and located as an integral part of the overall design of the park.

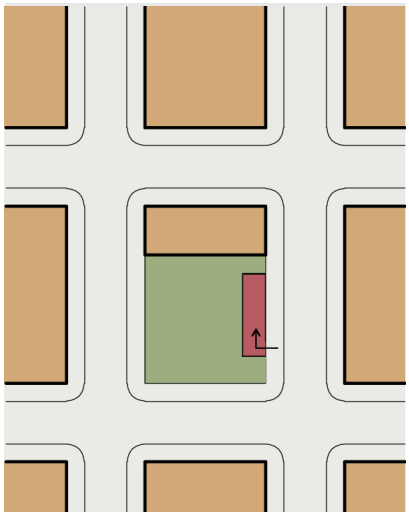
Underground parking structure should be designed to accommodate future planting opportunities without having to create raised planters, such as in Post Office Square. Above, Boston, MA.



Optimal - Parking entrance at base of adjacent building



Good - Parking entrance perpendicular to street



Undesirable - Parking entrance parallel to street

Guidelines: Vehicular Entrances

- **3.3.13..F** Vehicular entrances to underground parking structures should be carefully designed to maximize visibility and access from adjacent streets and to minimize impact to park utility.
- **3.3.13.G** Where possible, vehicular parking entrances to underground parking structures should be incorporated into the base of adjacent buildings (optimal approach).
- **3.3.13.H** Where the parking entrance ramp is required within the footprint of the park, the ramp should be perpendicular to the street to minimize separating the park from the adjacent street. The vehicular parking entrances should be located mid-block instead of at corners, and they should be clear of main pedestrian circulation desire-lines.
- **3.3.13.I** The slope of the parking entrance ramp should be maximized to minimize the footprint on the park.

3.4 Boulevards

3.4.1
Typical Boulevard

Boulevards in downtown San Diego are primary streets and major public spaces. Wider than downtown's typical 80-foot street section, boulevards are ceremonial with a civic scale. They orient the visitor and play a key role in defining the image and identity of downtown. Commensurate with the importance of this function, boulevards are endowed with a higher quality of street lamps, street furniture, plantings and paving material than are other downtown streets. They are lined with a variety of civic, commercial and residential buildings.

Boulevards are ceremonial with a civic scale. Above, San Diego, CA.

Goal

Achieve a consistent, distinctive, and high quality streetscape treatment along the length of the corridor that recognizes boulevards as primary public spaces, gateways, connectors and high-image streets.

Streetscape Principles

- Iconic, "imageable"
- Grand, civic scale
- Transit emphasis
- Higher traffic volume
- Maximum sidewalk dimensions
- Consistent streetscape treatment (e.g., consistent street trees, street furniture, plantings, and paving material)
- Well-defined street edge (e.g., buildings with a minimum setback that line and frame the street)
- Maximum investment

Distinctive Streetscape Character

Large/tall "space-defining" trees, such as palms; rhythmic placement and incorporation of canopy trees should be considered to achieve shade and pedestrian scale

Double row of trees (space permitting)

Wide sidewalks

High-quality specialty paving and site furnishings, including lighting

Consistent trees, planting, paving, and furnishings, including lighting

Consistent building setbacks

Adjacent Uses

High-intensity commercial, hotel, civic, institutional, residential and mixed use

Building lobbies, public space and retail frontage encouraged

Circulation Emphasis

Multimodal with an emphasis on public transit

Emphasis on pedestrian realm and safe crossings

Building Edge/Massing

Heights along boulevards that support skyline definition and create landmarks along primary public spaces

Hold street wall and street frontage

Commitment to architectural excellence

Public Art

Iconic public artwork at gateways

Points of interest public artwork on Market Street and Park Boulevard

Temporary public art installation on Broadway

3.4.2
Broadway

Broadway is the primary ceremonial street and a primary bus transit corridor for downtown San Diego, with the greatest impact on the image of the city. The western end of Broadway (west of Third Avenue) is particularly wide, with a street section of 125 feet and setbacks varying from 15 feet to 65 feet as it approaches North Harbor Drive. As downtown's foremost street, Broadway connects neighborhoods east of downtown with the bay. Along its length, it ties together the various districts and activities north and south of the boulevard.

Distinctive Streetscape Character

Re-visioning Broadway's streetscape will be a future project.

Adjacent Uses

High-intensity commercial, hotel, civic, institutional, residential and mixed use, with a greater emphasis on residential east of Eighth Avenue

Retail frontage encouraged, particularly between Third and Eighth avenues.

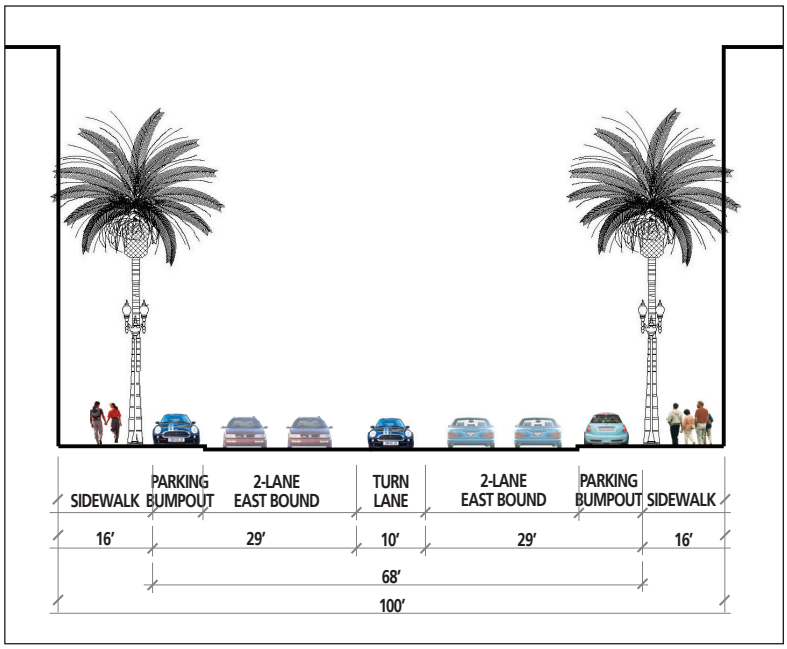
Public Art

Iconic public artwork at gateways (North Harbor Drive, Park Boulevard, and 16th Street)

Temporary and permanent public art installations should be explored along the length of Broadway.

Market Street as it exists today

Figure 3.7 Typical Section of Market Street



3.4.3 Market Street

Market Street is a major east-west boulevard connecting neighborhoods to the east of downtown with Harbor Drive and the bay. It is a commercial and residential street with a strong emphasis on pedestrian comfort. At 100 feet in width, Market Street has a civic scale that enhances the image of downtown. From certain vantage points, the view down Market Street terminates at the historic tower of the U.S. Naval Air Station Administrative Building on Coronado Island. Two bus lines link Market Street to surrounding neighborhoods.

Distinctive Streetscape Character

Specialty furnishings and lighting demonstrate street status

Adjacent Uses

Commercial, residential, and mixed use

Retail frontage encouraged in the Marina neighborhood, particularly between Front Street and Third Avenue (Marina neighborhood's main street)

Public Art

Iconic public artwork at gateways to downtown (Columbia Street and 16th Street)

Points-of-interest public artwork along the street

3.4.4
Park Boulevard

Contributing to downtown's image and legibility, Park Boulevard is a key north-south boulevard, the "Park-to-Bay Link", connecting San Diego Bay with Balboa Park. A large portion of the street is a transit corridor, and it transitions from open space and the City College campus on the north to higher-density residential and mixed-use development south of C Street. The wider street section accommodates a generous pedestrian realm and amenities. Many improvements are in place from C Street to North Harbor Drive.

Park Boulevard as it exists today

Distinctive Streetscape Character

Consistent double-row street trees within asymmetric section (south of C Street)

Wide sidewalks on one side of street

Street furniture, including seating

Color and vibrancy augmented with "accent" planting materials

Adjacent Uses

Institutional, residential and mixed use

Commercial frontage and retail encouraged, particularly at transit stops

Circulation Emphasis

Multimodal boulevard, with light-rail service between C Street and K Street

Building Edge/Massing

Density and heights necessary to support transit along corridor are encouraged

Consider boulevard "elbows" (e.g., Park at Ash and Park at K) as important focal points for placement and treatment of towers

Possible porosity (break in street wall) in limited areas, such as East Village, to address transition from corridor to fine grain of neighborhood

Residential balconies looking out onto street

Public Art

Iconic public artwork at gateways (Interstate 5, Broadway, Market Street and Harbor Drive)

Points-of-interest public artwork along boulevard to enhance character and identity; wide sidewalk on east side could accommodate public art

Consider boulevard "elbows" for special artwork opportunities

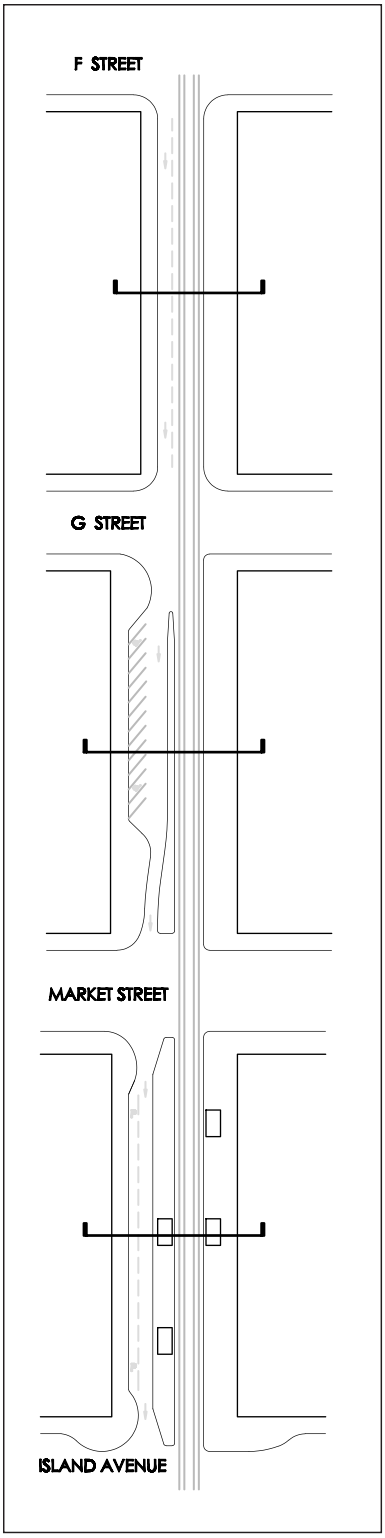
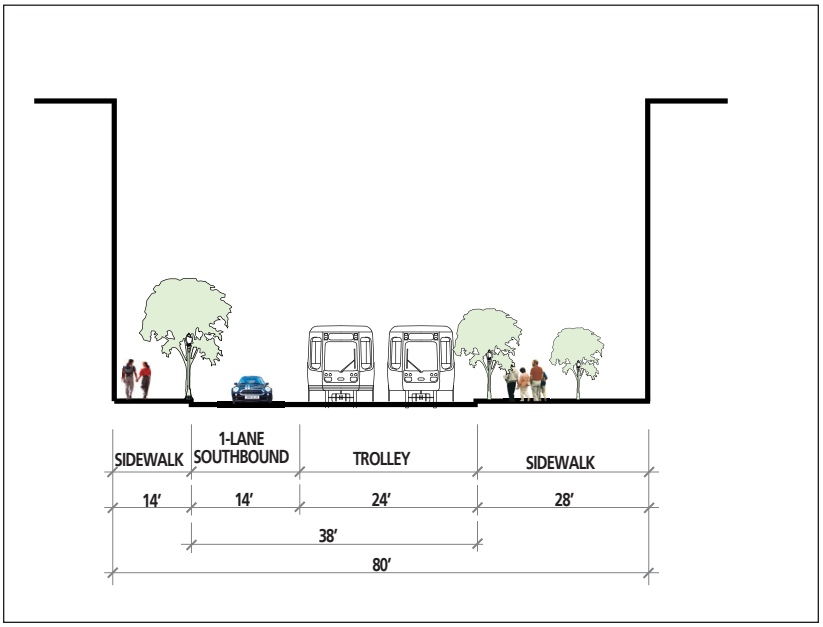
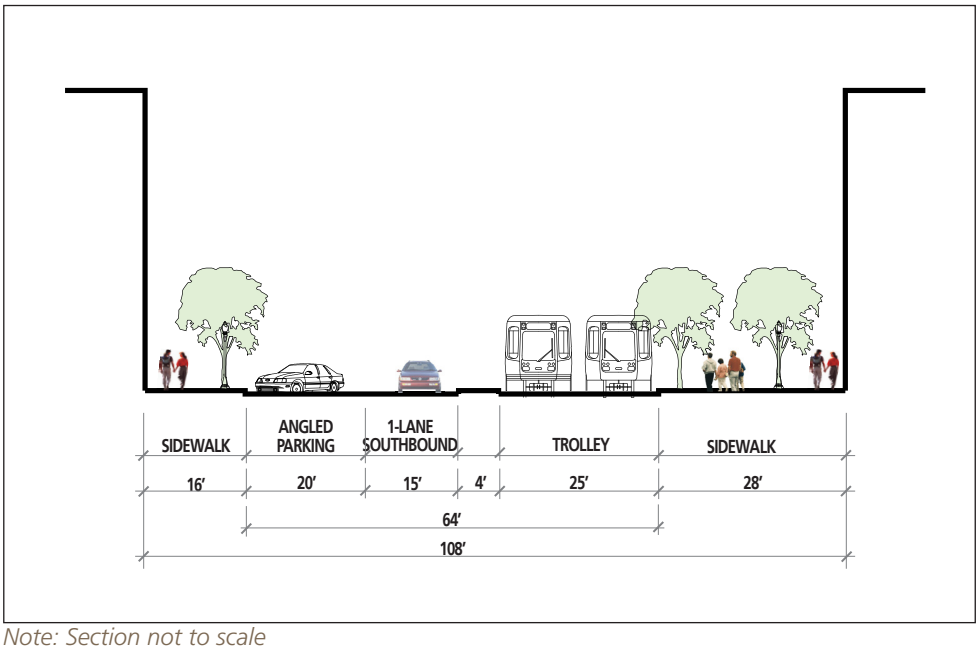


Figure 3.8 Park Boulevard - F Street-G Street



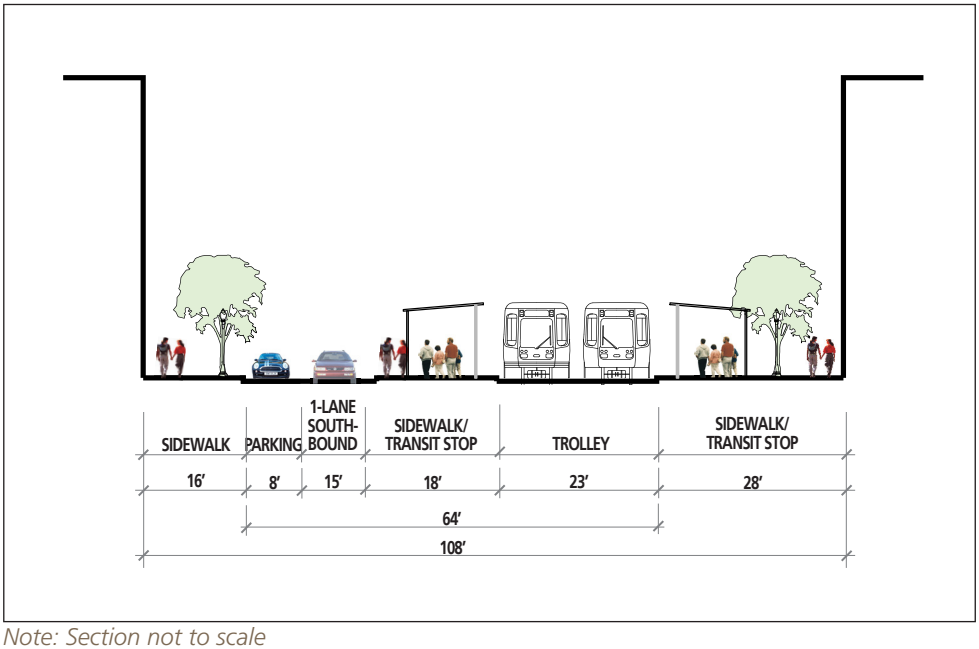
Note: Section not to scale

Figure 3.9 Park Boulevard - G Street-Market Street



Note: Section not to scale

Figure 3.10 Park Boulevard - Market Street-Island Avenue



Note: Section not to scale

3.5 Principal Couplets

3.5.1
Typical Principal Couplet

Principal freeway couplets are major downtown gateways providing convenient vehicular access into and out of downtown, and they contribute greatly to the image and identity of downtown, particularly for motorists. As primary routes in downtown, principal freeway couplets have a consistent character, including a consistent streetscape treatment and a well-defined street edge with buildings that line and frame the street.

Ash Street, a principal couplet, as it exists today

Goal

Achieve a consistent and distinctive streetscape treatment along the length of each corridor that recognizes principal couplets as primary gateways, connectors and high-image streets.

Streetscape Principles

- Higher traffic volume/easy traffic flow
- Consistent streetscape treatment (e.g., consistent street trees, street furniture, plantings, and paving material)
- Well-defined street edge (e.g., buildings with a minimum setback that line and frame the street)

Distinctive Streetscape Character

Typically three lanes of traffic

Consistent trees, planting, paving, and furnishings, including lighting

Consistent building setback

Adjacent Uses

Mix of uses

Circulation Emphasis

Possible high traffic volume

Comfortable pedestrian movements and safe crossings

Accommodation of transit use

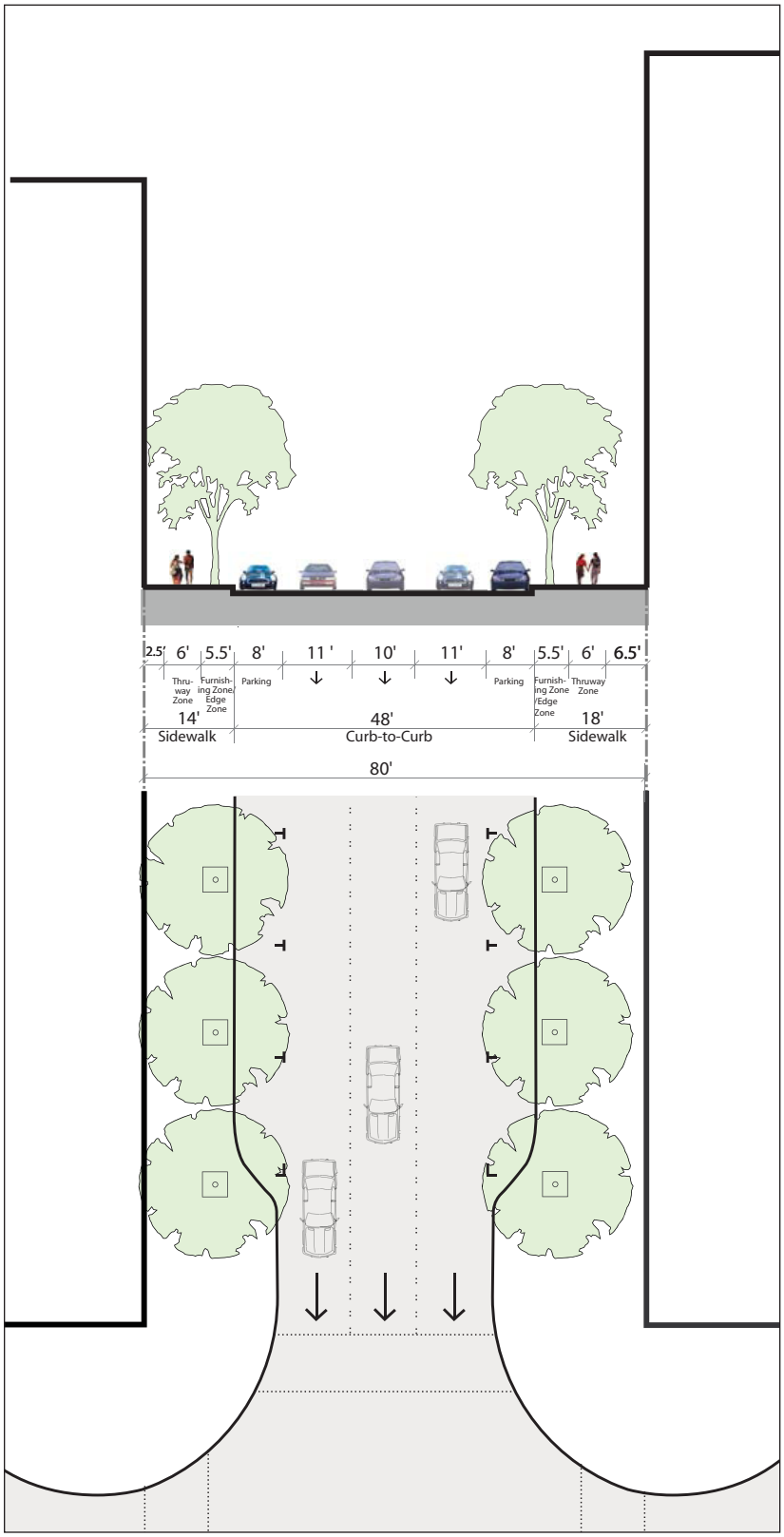
Building Edge/Massing

Generally hold street wall and street frontage

Public Art

Not a priority, except at gateways (see Section 5 Public Art Framework)

Figure 3.11 Principal Couplet - Option 1



*Numbers reflect minimum dimensions

3.5.2
Principal Couplet – Option 1

This option replaces one curb and has bulb-out curbs

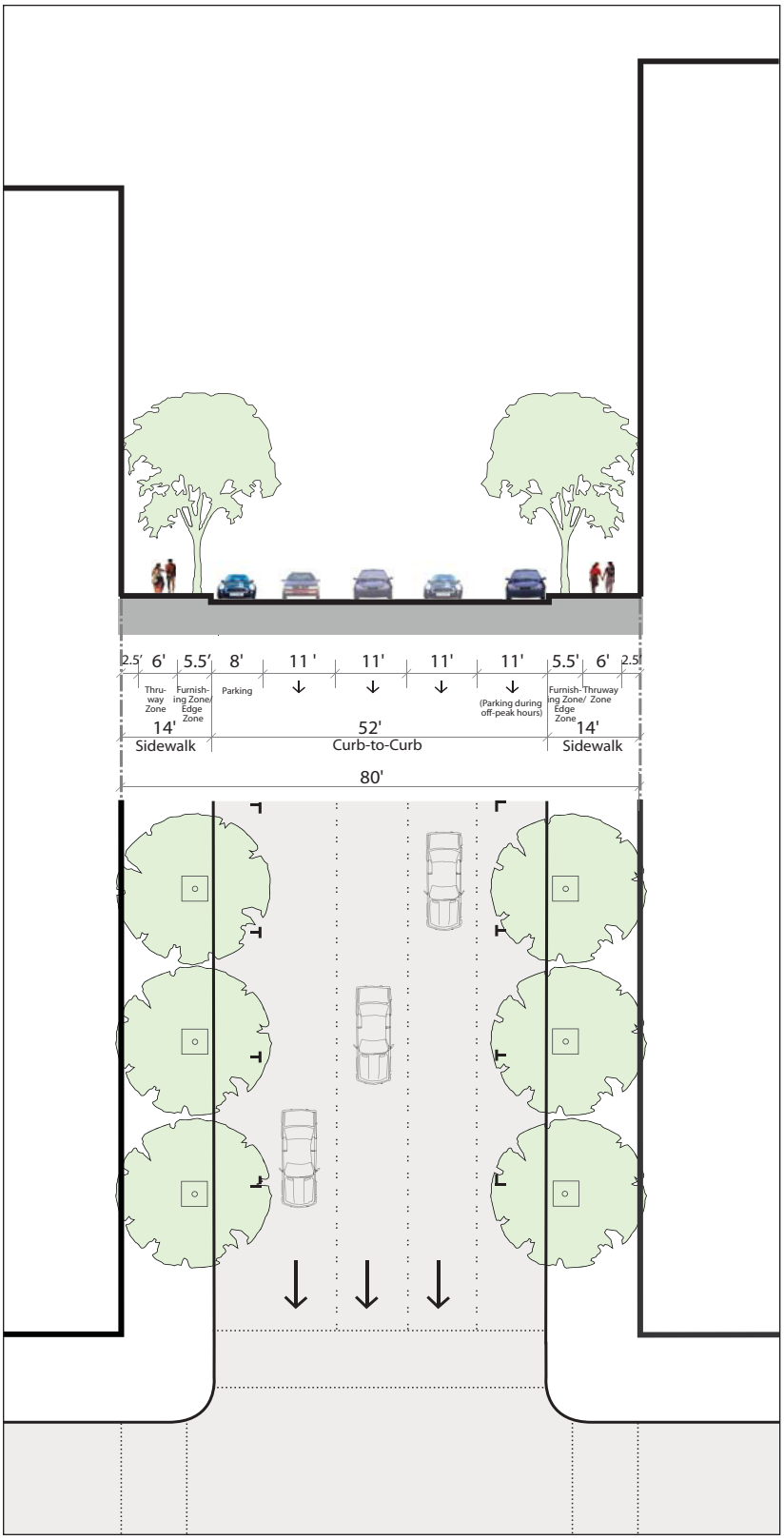
- One-way, three-lane street
- Replaces one of the existing curbs
- Parallel parking on both sides
- Bulb-outs at intersections
- One 4-foot-widebike lane could be accommodated by reducing the 18-foot wide sidewalk to 14 feet

3.5.3
Principal Couplet – Option 2

This option retains existing curbs.

- One-way, three-lane street
- Parallel parking on both sides
- No bulb-outs at intersections (for faster traffic movement)
- The 11-foot parking lane accommodates parking at off-hours and traffic at peak hours. Alternatively, the 11-foot parking lane could be reduced in width to 8 feet, accommodating a wider sidewalk

Figure 3.12 Principal Couplet - Option 2



*Numbers reflect minimum dimensions

C Street as it exists today

3.6 Special Streets

Special streets, C Street, Fifth Avenue, India Street and North Harbor Drive in particular, are unique streets in downtown San Diego in terms of their role, historical significance and visibility. Like boulevards, these streets are known citywide and convey an image of downtown. The character of special streets is more formal, with consistent pedestrian-scale streetscape treatment and a well-defined street edge.

3.6.1 C Street

C Street between India Street and Park Boulevard is designated as a special street due to its role as a major light-rail transit corridor serving downtown San Diego. Planned improvements for C Street enhance the image, identity and visibility of the street.

Distinctive Streetscape Character

Consistent specialty paving to enhance transit corridor

Consistent furnishings and lighting

Good visibility

Adjacent Uses

Civic/public use

Commercial use

Retail frontage

Circulation Emphasis

Transit emphasis, light-rail service

Building Edge/Massing

Generally hold street wall and street frontage

Public Art

Wayfinding artwork at Front Street and at First, Second and Fifth Avenues to orient people to the Civic Center area and nearby Broadway and to the Gaslamp Quarter (via Fifth Avenue)

3.6.2
Fifth Avenue

Fifth Avenue between Broadway and South Harbor Drive is the special street of the Gaslamp District, the historic core of the city. Lined with historic buildings, the street has a strong identity and image. Improvements to Fifth Avenue should retain the historic character and reinforce retail activity at the ground floor.

5th Avenue as it exists today

Distinctive Streetscape Character

Specialty brick paving to enhance historic character of district

Maximum sidewalk dimensions to support retail/sidewalk cafe activity and accommodate heavy pedestrian traffic

Parallel parking (both sides) to support retail activity

Ample public seating

Adjacent Uses

Commercial/mixed-use focus

Retail frontage required

Circulation Emphasis

Circulation and on-street parking tailored to support retail activity

Safe and pleasant pedestrian crossings

Building Edge/Massing

Generally hold street wall and street frontage

Public Art

Wayfinding public artwork at C Street and Market Street

India Street as it exists today

3.6.3
India Street

India Street between Beech and Ivy streets is a vibrant and successful main street in Little Italy. It conveys a small-town character, with many small-scale one-, two- and three-story buildings and an active retail street frontage. Visitors from throughout the city and beyond frequent its many shops and restaurants.

Distinctive Streetscape Character

Consistent with main street character (see Section 3.8 Main Streets)

Adjacent Uses

Commercial/mixed-use focus

Retail frontage required

Circulation Emphasis

Circulation and on-street parking tailored to support retail activity

Safe and pleasant pedestrian crossings

Building Edge/Massing

Generally hold street wall and street frontage

Public Art

Neighborhood-identity public artwork

3.6.4
North Harbor Drive

North Harbor Drive between Grape Street and Pacific Highway is destined to be a pedestrian-oriented bayside roadway with slow-moving traffic and ample parking. The roadway provides access to the planned expansive bayside esplanade.

North Harbor Drive as it exists today

Proposed North Harbor Drive

Distinctive Streetscape Character

Large/tall "space-defining" trees

Maximum sidewalk dimensions to support retail activity and accommodate heavy pedestrian traffic

Parallel and future diagonal parking to support retail activity and access to bayside esplanade

Circulation Emphasis

Circulation and on-street parking tailored to support retail activity and esplanade access

Safe and pleasant pedestrian crossings

Adjacent Uses

Commercial/mixed-use focus and retail frontage on eastern side

Bayfront esplanade on western side

Building Edge/Massing

Generally hold street wall and street frontage on eastern side

Public Art

Points-of-interest public artwork in esplanade but not on street

3.7 Green Streets

3.7.1
Green Streets

The Downtown Community Plan (DCP) emphasizes "public realm" enhancement that includes designated Green Streets envisioned as an essential element and integral to the open space system – as connectors to the waterfront, Balboa Park, downtown activity centers proposed parks and plazas, and as continuous recreational bicycle paths. Centre City Green, downtown's sustainability plan, defines Green Streets as employing sustainable landscape elements, such as energy efficient street lights, storm water management, multi-modal transportation choices, and widened sidewalks bordering tree-lined open spaces. (See Figure 3-13 for locations of designated DCP green streets)

Goal

To enhance pedestrian comfort and safety, encourage pedestrian activity, and provide environmental benefits.

Streetscape Principles

- Sidewalk and street design to prioritize and enhance the experience of pedestrians and bicyclists
- Abundant vegetation to provide shade, clean stormwater runoff, and improve air quality
- Facilities and furnishings to foster use of the sidewalk as a community space and a marketplace
- Material and fixture selection with preference to items with reduced environmental impacts, increased efficiency or local sources

Distinctive Streetscape Character

Two lanes of traffic

Bike lanes

Widen sidewalks

Planting in building setbacks

Open Space

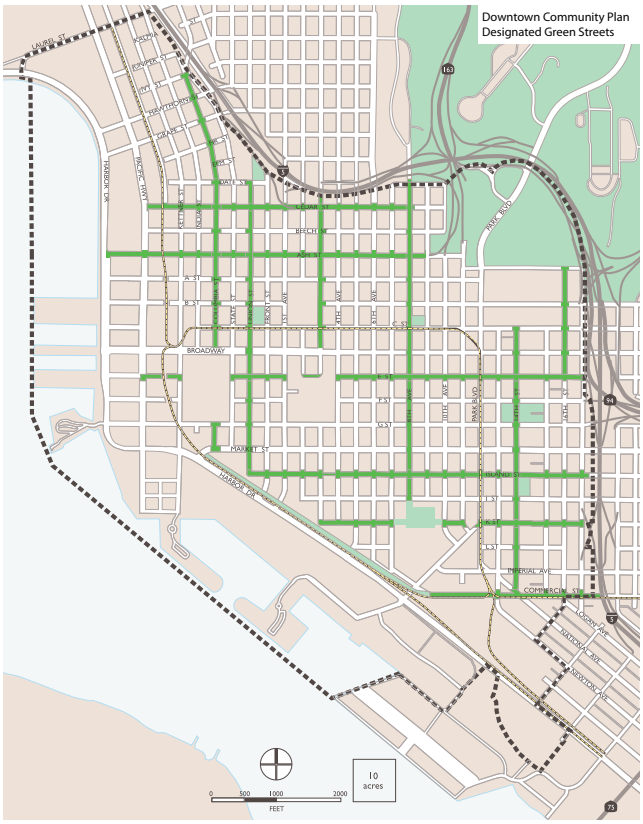
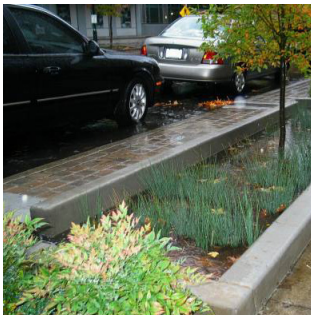


Figure 3.13 Designated Green Streets. See Plan Figure 7.1

Streetscape Principles:



Water Conservation - Storm-water

Traffic Calming: Sidewalk bulb-outs with planting

Transit Alternatives: Striped Bicycle Lanes

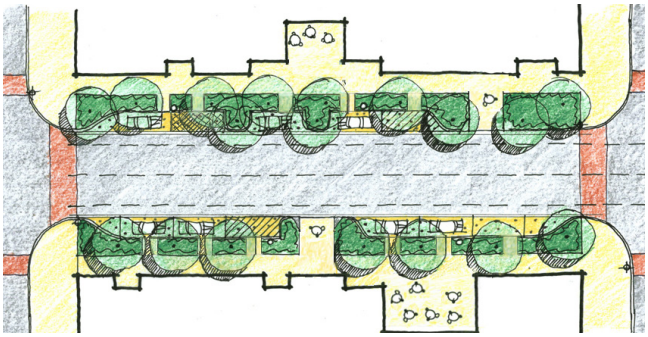
Public Health: Widened Sidewalks with Canopy Trees

Open space

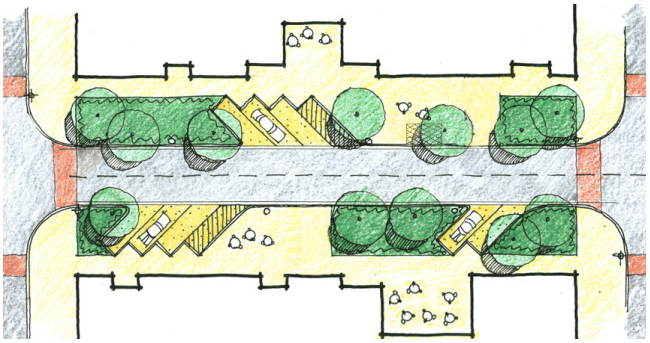
Outdoor Cafes

Figure 3.14 The Green Street Section

Figure 3.15 Green Street Examples:



Option A: Dedicated bicycle lanes, small pockets of asymmetrical placed landscaping and safe pedestrian crossings



Option B: Asymmetrical placed "park like" landscaping, street trees and angled parking provide larger expanses of pedestrian and active use areas

Adjacent Uses

Residential and mixed-use focus

Other uses, such as cultural and educational uses and open space, are encouraged to create variety and enrich the street experience

Retail encouraged in active areas Retail encouraged in active areas

Circulation Emphasis

Low traffic volume and slow speed

Emphasize bicycle movements, pedestrian movements and safe crossings

Building Edge/Massing

Modulate street wall and frontage

Porosity encouraged to extend public realm through blocks and increase visual interest

Reinforce pedestrian experience with richer development grain and ground-floor uses

Encourage multi-development block

Discourage long tower faces along street edge

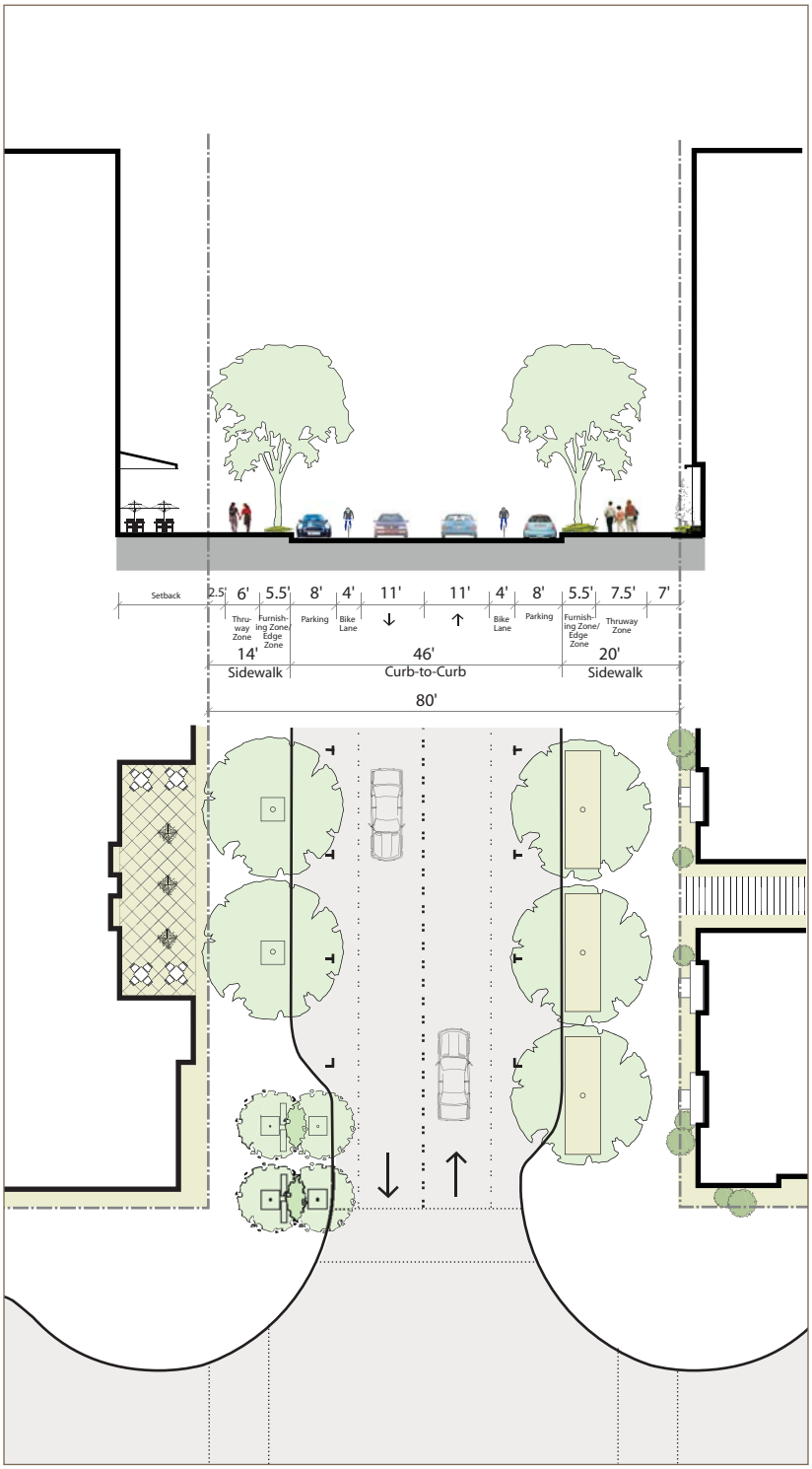
Public Art

Secondary points-of-interest public artwork (see Section 5.2.2 Green Streets in the Public Art Framework)

Consider some streetscape-furniture proposals for public artwork expression

Consider public artwork to enhance identity of neighborhoods

Figure 3.16 Green Street Right-of-Way - Option 1



3.7.2
Centre City Green - Green Streets Program

Centre City Green defines street right-of-way options for designated Green Streets in the Plan for the purpose of future CCDC capital improvements. A base plan option would involve the reconfiguration of the typical 80 foot right-of-way with the reduction of one lane of vehicular traffic (from three to two lanes), allowing for a wider sidewalk and a striped bicycle lane. Figures 3-16 and 3-17 provide examples of one or two-way traffic scenarios.

Private Development - Green Street Elements:

Private development located along designated Green Streets will be required to install green street elements, which involve enhancements to the sidewalk . A menu of green street elements are located in Centre City Green and will eventually become part of the next Streetscape Manual update.

Figure 3-15 provides examples of variation of the green street street right-of-way configuration and sidewalk enhancements that can compliment adjacent developments. See Centre City Green, Green Streets Program for more details.

3.7.3
Green Streets: ROW Option 1

This option replaces one curb and has bulb-outs, with an asymmetrical street section with two different sidewalk widths

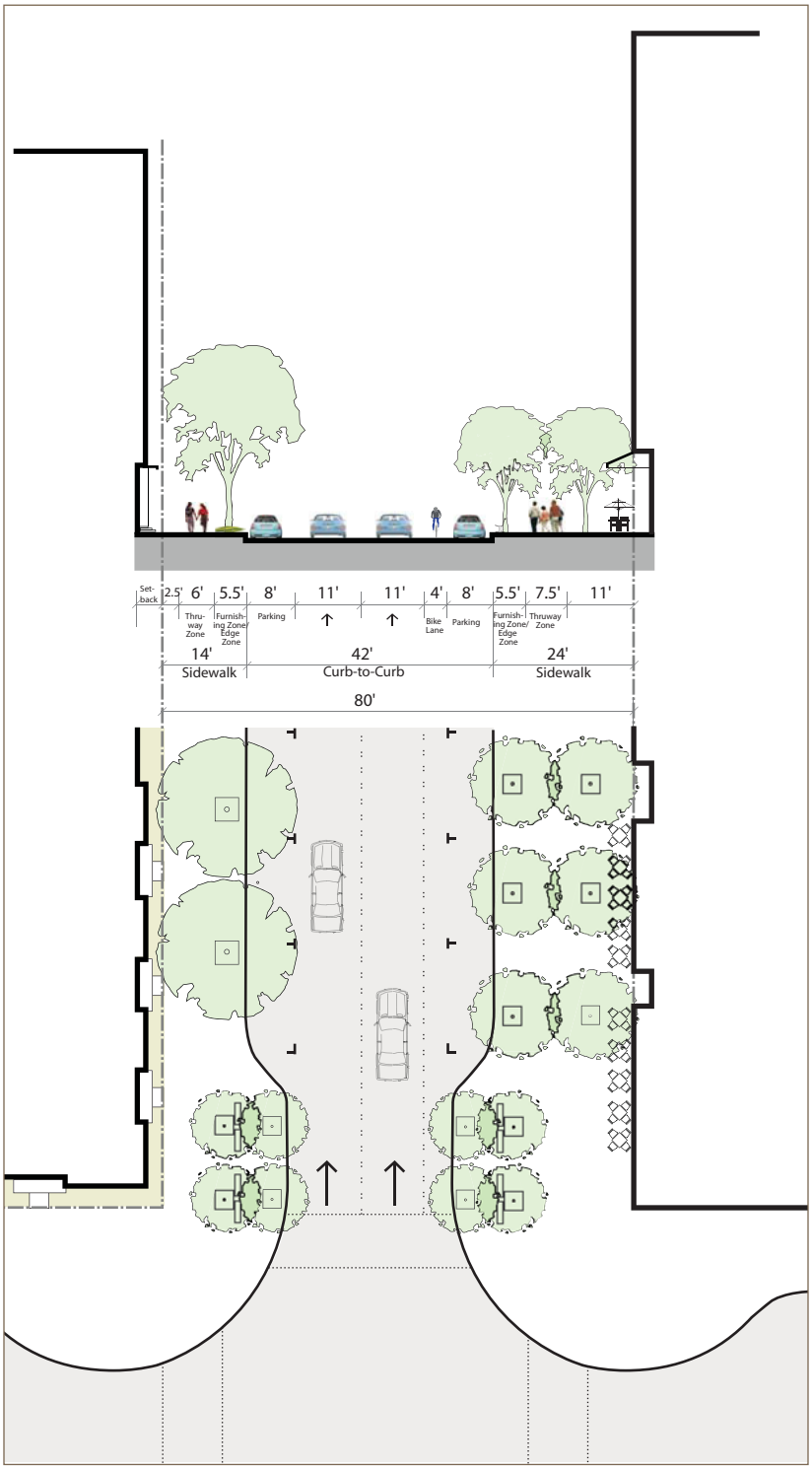
- Two-way, two-lane street
- Replaces one of the existing curbs to accommodate the reduction of three to two lanes of traffic
- Parallel parking on both sides
- Striped bicycle lane

3.7.4
Green Street: ROW Option 2

This option replaces one curb and has bulb-outs, with a double row of trees on a wide sidewalk on one side of the street

- One-way, two-lane street
- Replaces on of the existing curbs
- Parallel parking on both sides
- Asymmetrical street section with two different sidewalk widths
- Replaced sidewalk to accommodate double row of trees on either side of clear pedestrian zone for a promenade-like pedestrian experience
- Existing sidewalk improved to add long bulb-outs at intersections and introduce second row of trees

Figure 3.17 Green Street Right-of-Way - Option 2



Main Streets are active with a clear pedestrian pathway. Top, San Jose, CA; bottom, Emeryville.

3.8 Main Streets

3.8.1
Typical Main Street

Main streets serve as centers of activity and create identity for downtown and its various neighborhoods. They have a strong pedestrian orientation with a major emphasis on shopping, dining and other commercial activities. They also offer places to stroll and rest. Buildings create a well-defined street edge, and ground floors are lined with commercial and retail uses. Ample parking along the street supports commercial activities.

Goal

Achieve a distinctive and high-quality treatment that recognizes main streets as downtown and neighborhood centers, supports ground-floor retail activity and reflects neighborhood identity

Streetscape Principles

- Slow traffic
- Minimal traffic lanes
- Maximum parking
- Maximum sidewalk dimensions
- Active sidewalks
- Accentuate district identity

Main Street retail supported by angled parking, Above, Scottsdale, AZ.

Distinctive Streetscape Character

Typically two lanes of traffic

Angle parking in some places

Wide sidewalks

Tree species consistent by district

Furnishings and lighting fixtures consistent by district

Specialty planting initiatives (e.g., planters, baskets)

Encourage banners, advertising, flags, and so on

Restaurant/café outdoor seating, sidewalk width permitting

Adjacent Uses

Commercial/mixed-use focus

Retail frontage required

Circulation Emphasis

Medium traffic and slow speed

Circulation and on-street parking tailored to support retail activity

Safe and pleasant pedestrian crossings

Building Edge/Massing

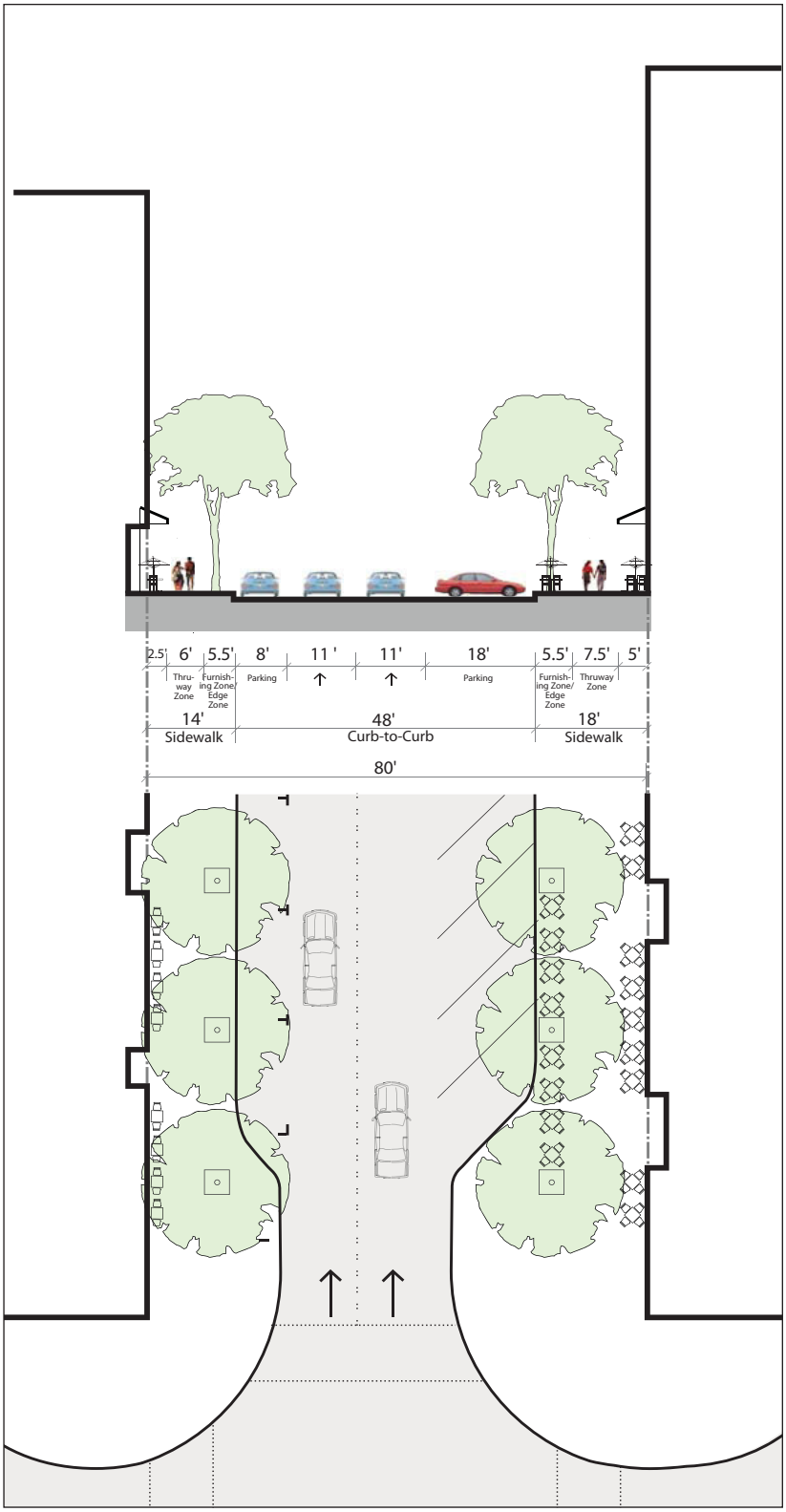
Hold street wall with zero-foot setback, with recesses/setbacks permitted for entries and spill-out plaza space

High quality of ground floor treatment with pedestrian-oriented details such as awnings, storefront transparency, and distinct and frequent entries

Public Art

Neighborhood-identity public artwork

Figure 3.18 Main Street - Option 1



*Numbers reflect minimum dimensions

3.8.2
Main Street – Option 1

This option replaces one street curb and has bulb-outs, with sidewalks that accommodate cafe seating and/or benches

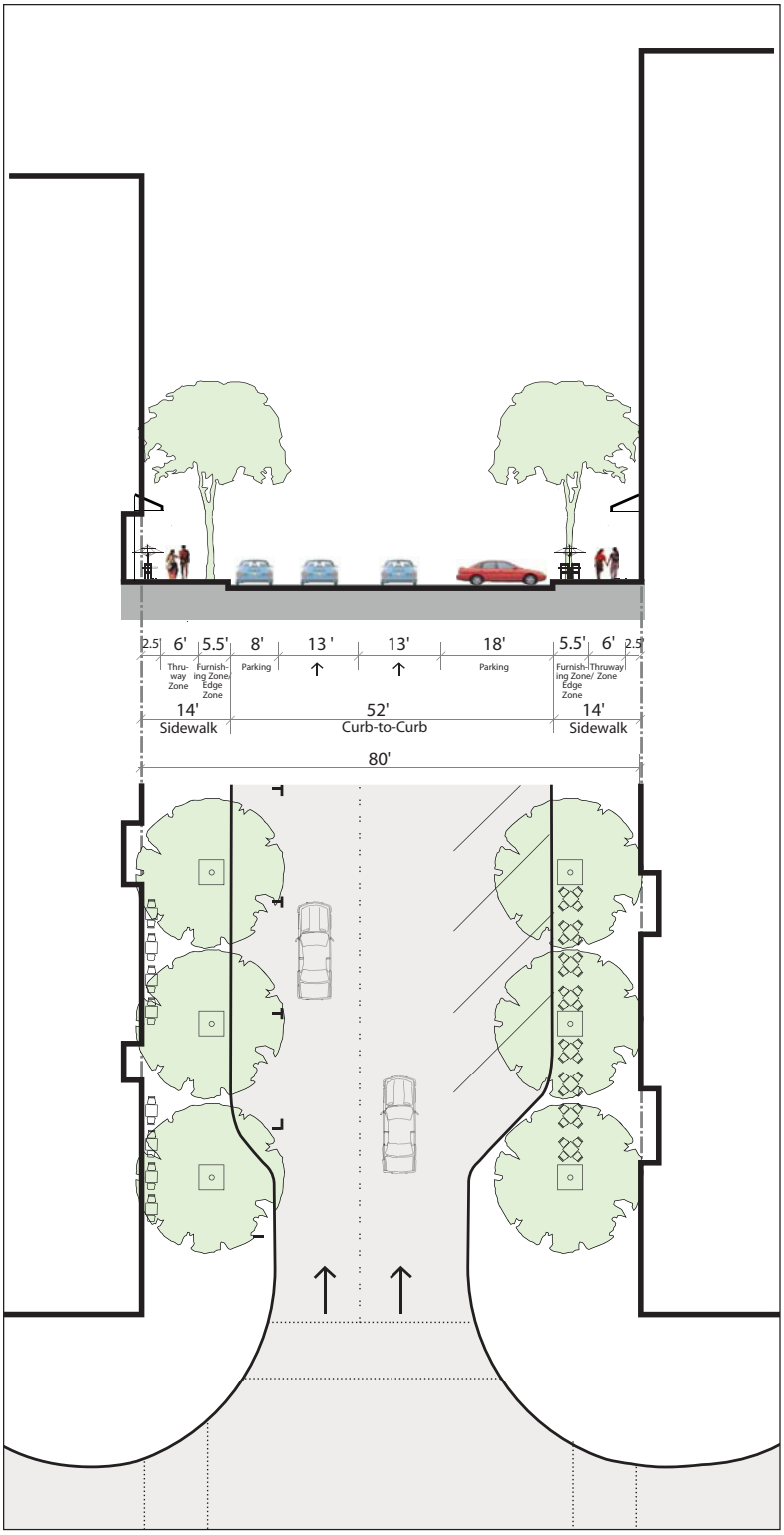
- One-way or two-way, two-lane street
- Replaces one of the existing curbs
- Diagonal parking to increase capacity
- Sidewalks accommodate restaurant/café seating and/or benches in the furnishings zone and the building zone
- Trees pruned to provide maximum storefront visibility
- Bulb-outs at intersections

3.8.3
Main Street – Option 2

This option retains existing street curbs and has bulb-outs, with sidewalks that accommodate cafe seating and/or benches

- One-way, two-lane street
- Retains existing curbs
- Diagonal parking to increase capacity
- Sidewalks accommodate restaurant/café seating and/or benches in the furnishings zone and the building zone.
- Trees pruned to provide maximum storefront visibility
- Bulb-outs at intersections

Figure 3.19 Main Street - Option 2



Numbers reflect minimum dimensions

3.9 Residential Streets

3.9.1 Typical Residential Street

Residential streets contribute to the character and quality of residential neighborhoods, providing both ample parking and a comfortable pedestrian environment.

Planting buffer on either side of building fence ensures privacy for ground floor residential use. Top and bottom, San Diego, CA.

Streetscape Principles

Low traffic volume and slow speed

Minimal traffic lanes

Maximum parking

Maximum planting/setback planting

Distinctive Streetscape Character

Two or three lanes of traffic

Angled parking in some places

Variable tree species

Flowering trees encouraged

Double row of trees (space permitting)

Varied, textured character in planting and furnishings; regional character

Lush planting in building setbacks, balconies

Personalization of the public realm where appropriate through sidewalk planting, balcony planters

Dimmer light than boulevards and main streets

Adjacent Uses

Primarily residential with some retail/ commercial frontage

Circulation Emphasis

Low traffic volume and slow speed

On-street parking

Comfortable pedestrian movements and safe crossings

Building Edge/Massing

Street wall and street frontage modulation acceptable

Porosity, multi-development block encouraged to add to residential character

Slender towers to minimize shadows and preserve views

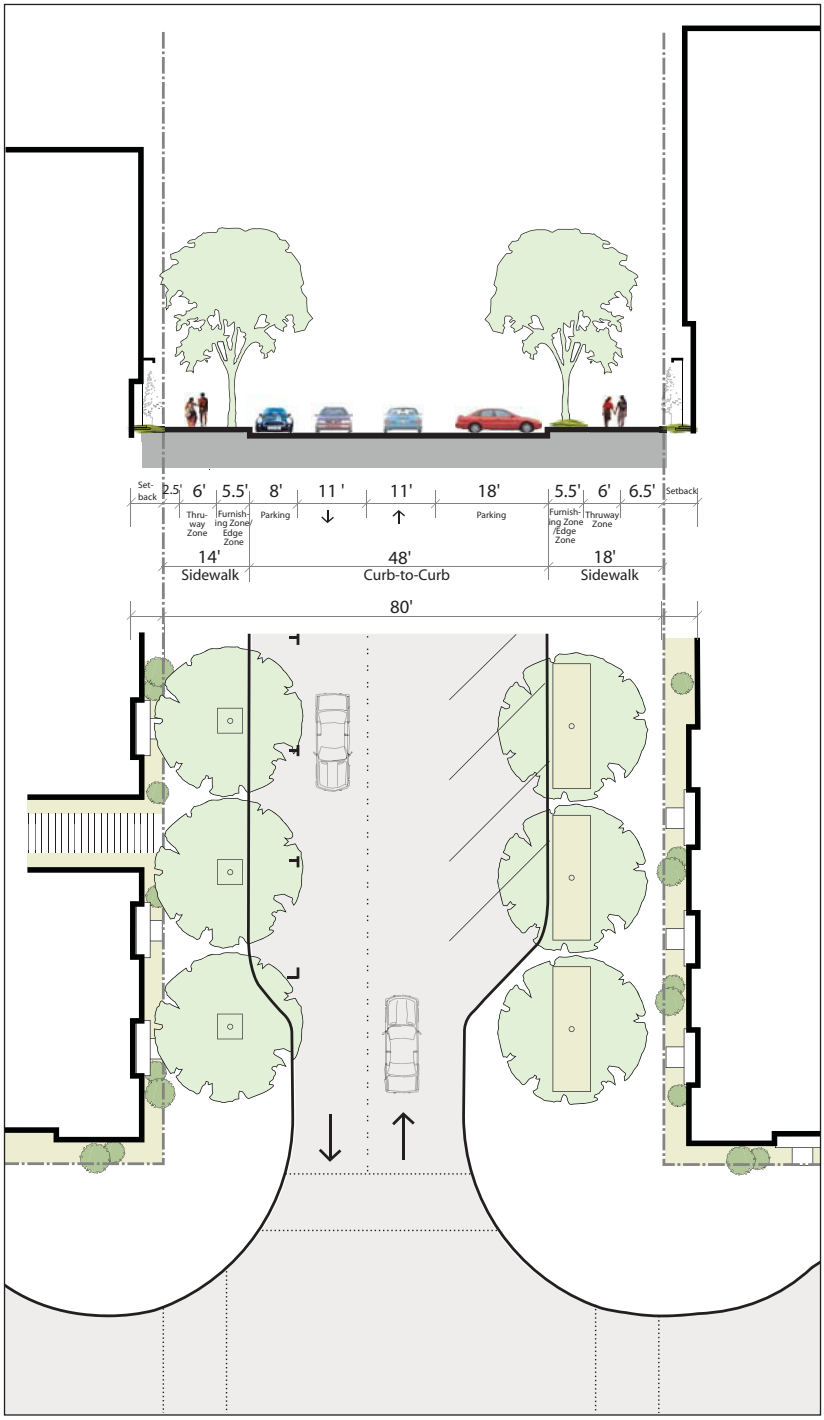
Balconies on buildings look out onto street

Public Art

Not a priority

Residential Street building edge, with angled parking Above, San Diego, CA.

Figure 3.20 Residential Street - Option 1



*Numbers reflect minimum dimensions

3.9.2
Residential Street – Option 1

This two-lane option replaces one street curb and has bulb-outs, with angled parking on one side of the street, and parallel parking on the other

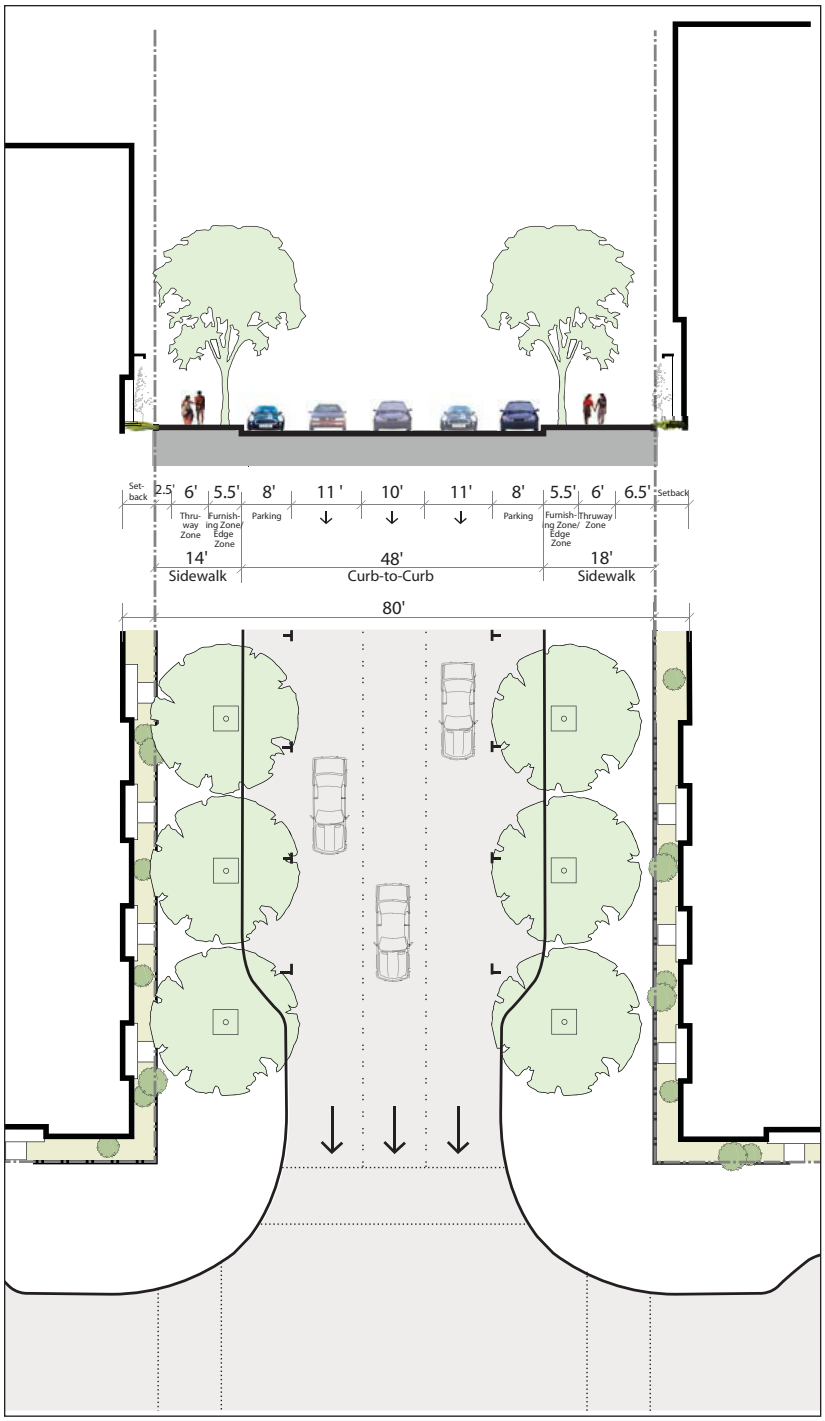
- Two-way or one-way, two-lane street
- Replaces one of the existing curbs
- Sidewalks accommodate wide planters below single row of trees
- Diagonal parking to increase capacity
- Bulb-outs at intersections
- One 4-foot-wide bike lane could be accommodated by reducing the 18-foot-wide sidewalk to 14 feet

3.9.3
Residential Street – Option 2

This three-lane option replaces one street curb and has bulb-outs, with parallel parking on both sides of the street.

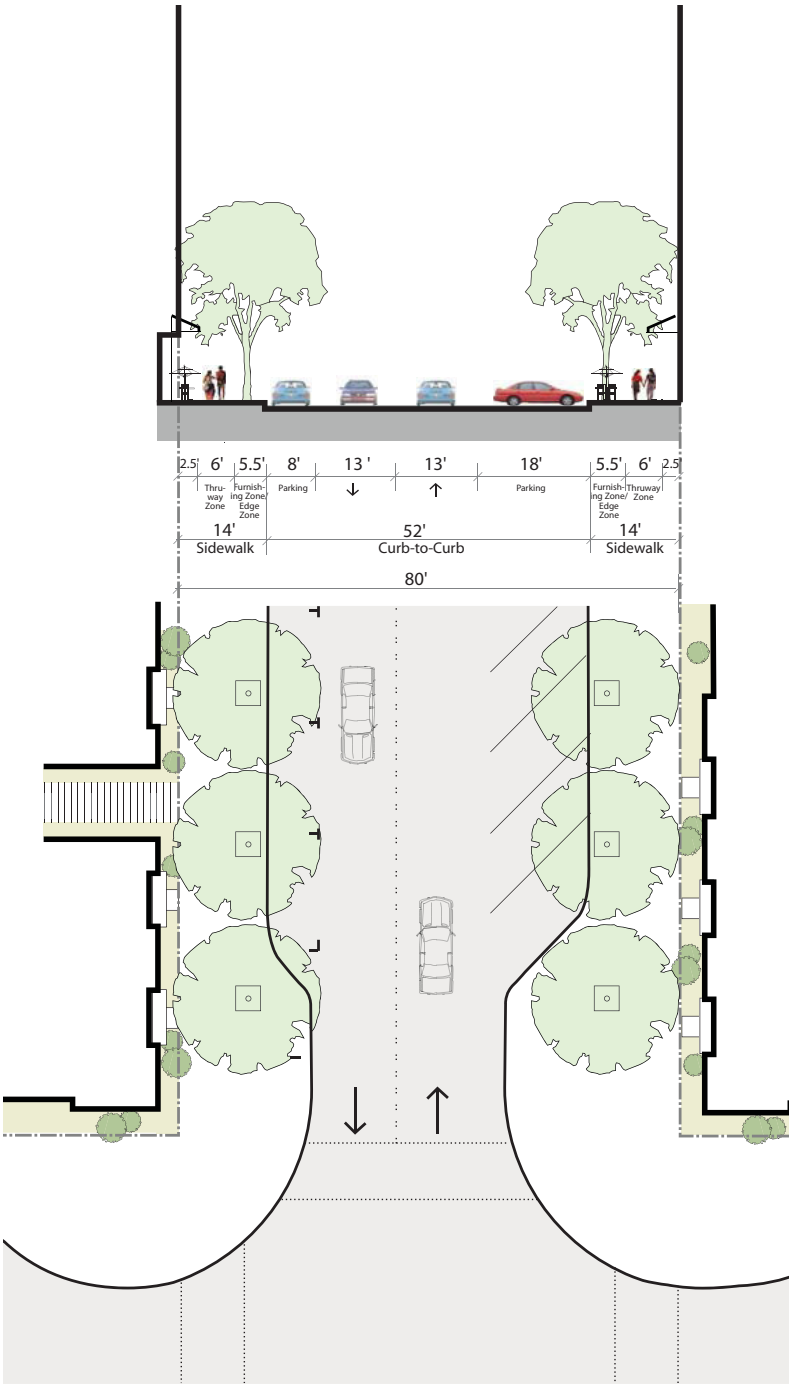
- One-way, three-lane street
- Replaces one of the existing curbs
- Parallel parking on both sides
- Bulb-outs at intersections
- One four-foot-wide (4') bike lane could be accommodated by reducing the 18-foot-wide sidewalk to 14 feet

Figure 3.21 Residential Street - Option 2



Numbers reflect minimum dimensions

Figure 3.22 Residential Street - Option 3



*Numbers reflect minimum dimensions

3.9.4
Residential Street – Option 3

This two-lane option retains both street curbs and has bulb-outs, with angled parking on one side of the street, and parallel parking on the other.

- One-way, three-lane street
- Replaces one of the existing curbs
- Diagonal parking to increase capacity
- Bulb-outs at intersections
- One 4-foot-wide bike lane could be accommodated by reducing the 18-foot-wide sidewalk to 14 feet

Multi-Function Streets with varied uses and a consistent street wall. Above, San Diego, CA

3.10 Multifunction Streets

3.10.1 Typical Multifunction Street

Multifunction streets serve many purposes and may be lined with a variety of mixed-use, commercial and residential buildings. Multifunction streets should achieve a minimum level of consistency and definition.

Streetscape Principles

Slow traffic

Distinctive Streetscape Character

Two or three lanes of traffic

Variable tree species

Adjacent Uses

Mix of uses

Circulation Emphasis

Low traffic volume and slow speed

On-street parking

Comfortable pedestrian movements and safe crossings

Transit

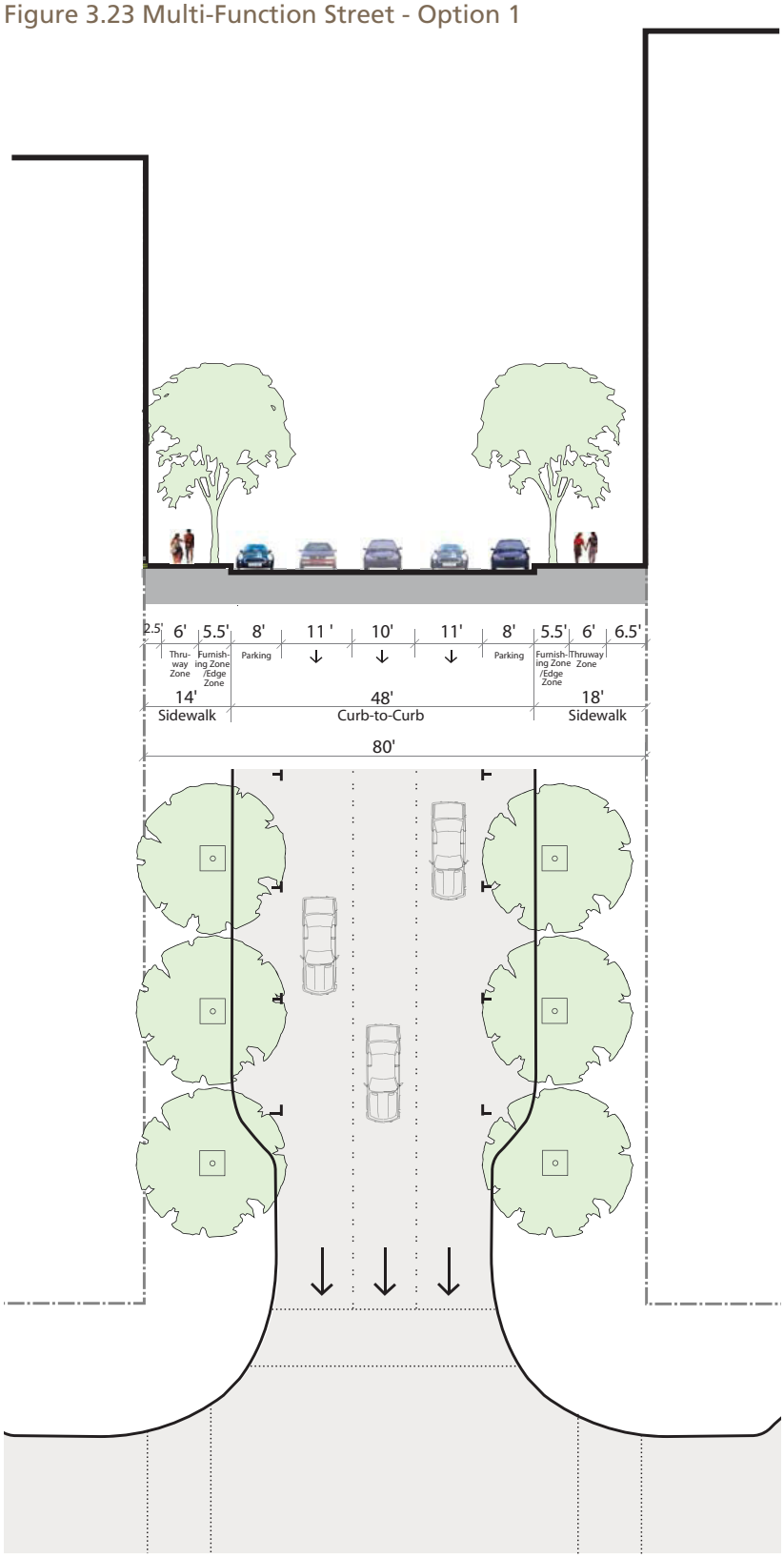
Building Edge/Massing

Generally hold street wall and street frontage

Public Art

Not a priority

Figure 3.23 Multi-Function Street - Option 1



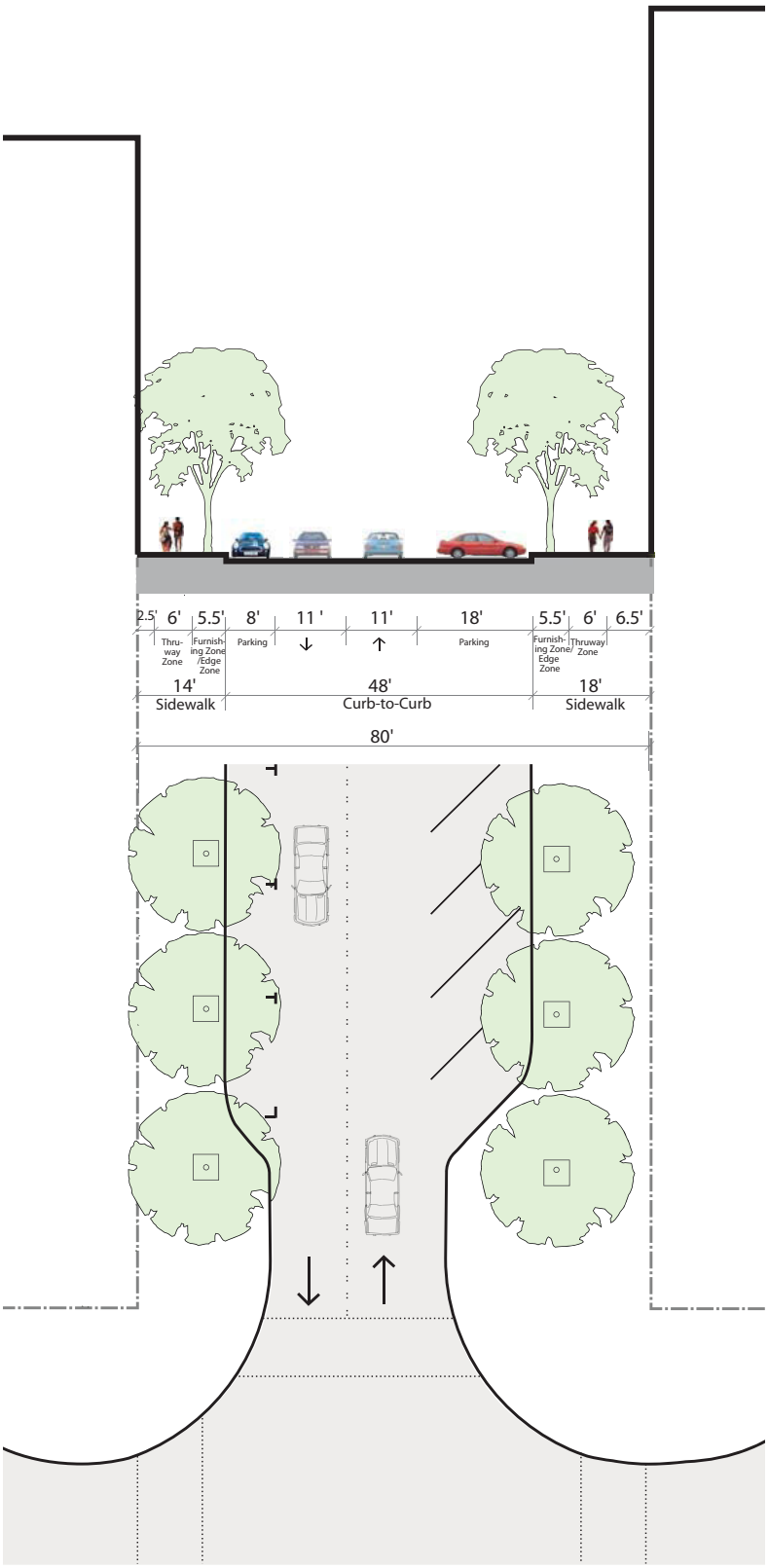
*Numbers reflect minimum dimensions

3.10.2 Multifunction Street – Option 1

This three-lane option replaces one street curb and has bulb-outs, with parallel parking on both sides of the street.

- One-way, three-lane street
- Replaces one of the existing curbs
- Parallel parking on both sides
- Bulb-outs at intersections
- One four-foot-wide (4') bike lane could be accommodated by reducing the 18-foot-wide sidewalk to 14 feet

Figure 3.24 Multi-Function Street - Option 2



*Numbers reflect minimum dimensions

3.10.3 Multifunction Street – Option 2

This two-lane option retains both street curbs and has bulb-outs, with angled parking on one side of the street and parallel parking on the other.

- Two-way or one-way, two-lane street
- Replaces one of the existing curbs
- Diagonal parking to increase capacity
- Bulb-outs at intersections
- One 4-foot-wide bike lane could be accommodated by reducing the 18-foot-wide sidewalk to 14 feet

4 BLOCKS AND BUILDINGS

Overview	91
4.1 Key Principles	92
4.2 Structure of the Guidelines	93
4.3 Block Edges and Building Placement	94
4.4 Block Modulation and Building Massing	96
4.5 Building Design	103
4.6 Extending the Public Realm	117
4.7 Sustainability	121
4.8 Lighting Design Principles	123

Overview

The arrangement of buildings contributes significantly to the experience of the public realm. Buildings—through the appropriate treatment of building setback, street wall, massing and ground floor—can and should enhance the character and quality of life of San Diego's downtown districts and neighborhoods. This chapter focuses on the ways in which form, scale, visual character and experiential quality of the private and semiprivate realms can help make San Diego's downtown memorable and livable.

Ground floor uses activate and engage the public realm. Above, Denver, CO.

4.1 Key Principles

Section 2 Urban Design Framework presents an overall vision for downtown and recognizes key existing urban design features of downtown San Diego. Reinforcing the urban design framework, the building guidelines in this chapter focus on the design of individual buildings to address street hierarchy, to frame, define and activate the pedestrian realm along streets and public spaces, and to develop memorable neighborhoods with individual character while addressing overall urban form.

Focusing on how buildings and the spaces between them are consciously designed and integrated, the following design guidelines and standards are intended to create a distinct urban character for the Centre City Planned District. They aim to ensure that development is pedestrian-oriented and fosters a vital and active street life.

In some downtown neighborhoods, the fine-grain character is defined by human-scale buildings that offer a variety in texture, form, scale, color and material. Well-articulated and detailed ground-floor treatment, with frequent entrances, plenty of transparency and well-landscaped setbacks, further enrich the feeling of fine grain. These qualities are desired in new commercial and residential developments to avoid the impression of a heavy-handed single development. Half- or full-block developments in particular can look monolithic in mass and form. It is critical to achieve a fine-grain feel in such developments to ensure a pleasant, human-scale urban experience.

In summary, the design of blocks and buildings should respond to the following key guiding principles:

- Reinforce the urban design framework
- Enhance and extend the public realm
- Frame and define the street
- Express a fine-grain character
- Enhance and punctuate the skyline
- Address and activate the street at the ground floor
- Incorporate principles of sustainability.

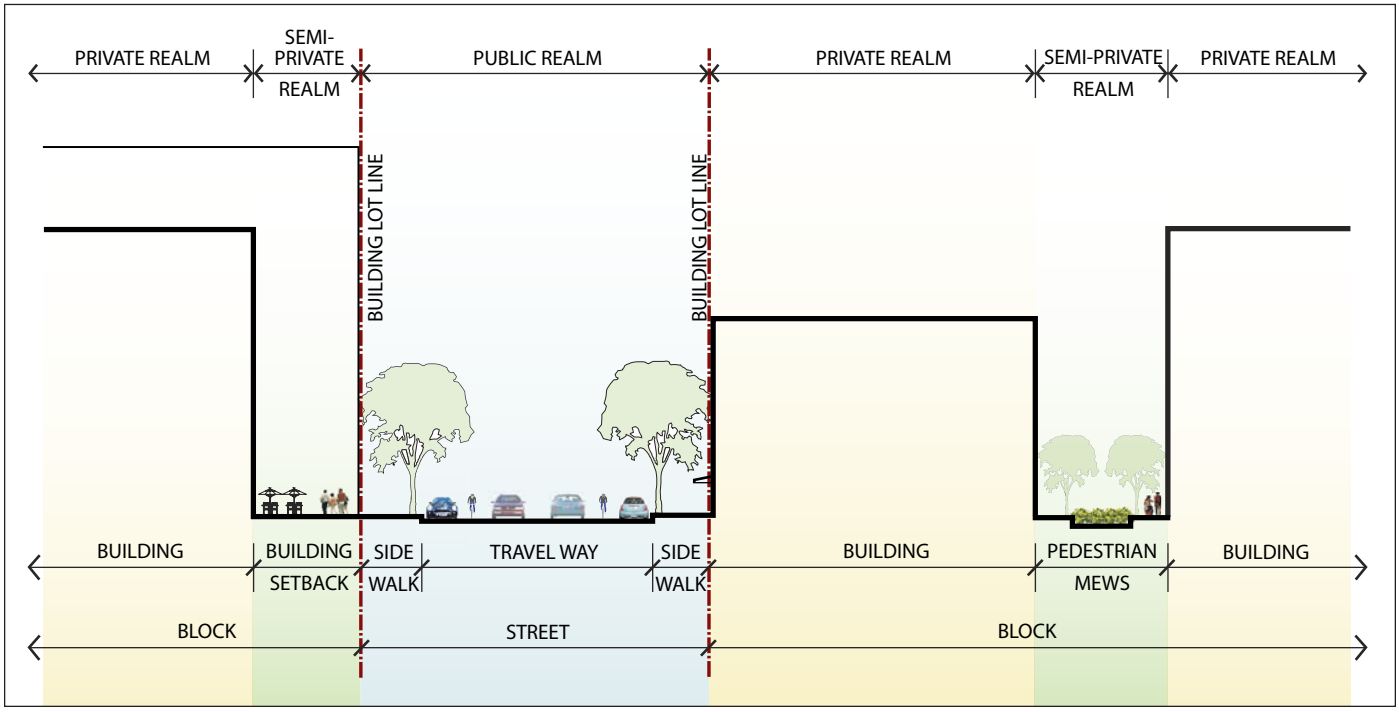
While the following Guidelines provide best practice solutions for the design of urban buildings, the City of San Diego and CCDC encourage the continued innovation in the design of buildings and spaces. A truly great building and/or space may significantly deviate from these Guidelines, and the Centre City PDO design review process should continue to provide for the approval of such deviations if a unique and superior design is supported through the design review process. Every city and downtown needs both well-designed and detailed "background" and "fabric" buildings in addition to unique, iconic structures that inspire its citizens.

4.2 Structure of the Guidelines

The structure of the design guidelines for blocks and buildings is based on the fundamental elements of the private realm. These elementary categories of block and building design are:

- Block Edges and Building Placement
- Block Modulation and Building Massing
- Building Design
- Extending the Public Realm
- Building Treatment and Services
- Sustainability.

Figure 4.1 Public, semi-private and the private realms



4.3 Block Edges and Building Placement

The proper placement of buildings and associated open spaces along streets frame the public realm and reinforce the hierarchy and legibility of downtown. Buildings should define and frame the public realm. Their placement and massing should create a street wall that holds the street volume and creates an urban street edge. Buildings should address the street consistent with the urban design framework and the street typology, reinforcing the principal character of the street, as shown in Figure 4.3 Downtown Block Edge Conditions.

Guidelines

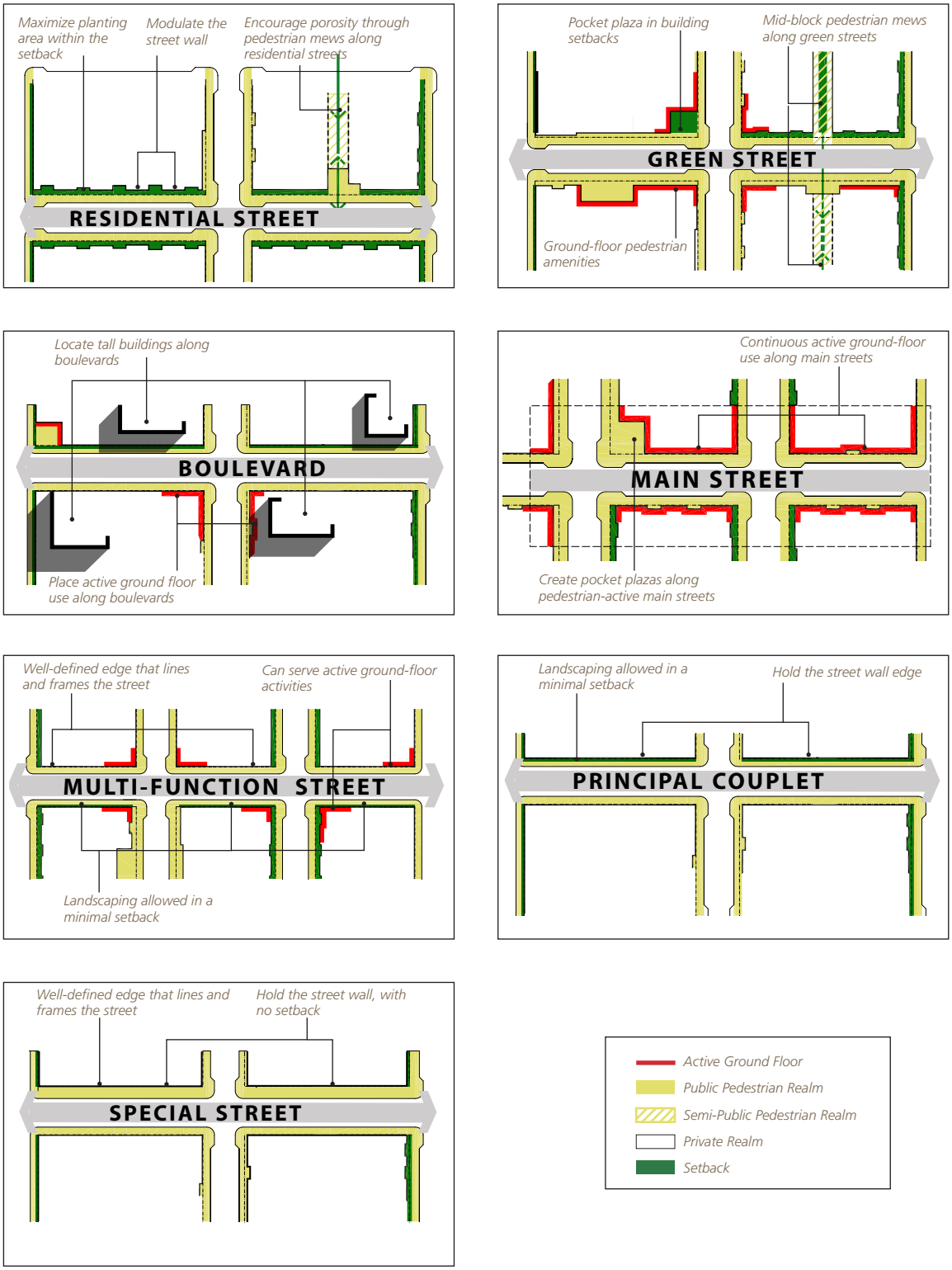
- **4.3.A Boulevards:** When adjacent to boulevards, development projects should place their tall building elements (i.e., building elements over 85 feet) along the boulevard.
- **4.3.B Street Corners:** Buildings should hold the street corner, although setbacks at street corners that accommodate publicly accessible plazas are acceptable. Such plazas should be located along the eastern, western, or southern block face and should be designed to maximize exposure to the sun, especially from the southwest.

Figure 4.2 Street Characteristics

Street or Street Typology	Street Wall	Recommended Setback
Boulevard	Hold Street Wall; Plazas acceptable	0 - 65 feet on Broadway; 0 feet on all others
Principal Couplet	Hold Street Wall	0 - 5 feet
Special Street		
India Street (Hawthorne Street to Beech Street)	Hold Street Wall	0 feet
C Street (India Street to Park Boulevard)	Hold Street Wall	0 feet
Fifth Avenue (C Street to South Harbor Drive)	Hold Street Wall	0 feet
North Harbor Drive (Grape Street to Pacific Highway)	Hold Street Wall	0 feet
Green Street	Modulate Street Wall, Porosity Encouraged	0 - 10 feet
Main Street	Hold Street Wall, Plazas acceptable	0 feet
Residential Street	Modulate Street Wall, Porosity encouraged	3 - 10 feet
Multi-Function Street	Hold Street Wall	0 - 5 feet

Buildings with a minimum height and setback create a street wall that defines and frames the street. Above, San Diego, CA.

Figure 4.3 Downtown Block Edge Conditions



4.4 Block Modulation and Building Massing

The modulation of a block and the massing of buildings significantly impact how the size of the building is perceived by a person at street level. By breaking up a large building into smaller masses, the building's apparent mass can be reduced, forming a more interesting block. Special attention should be paid to buildings that front onto the public realm, and to relationships between buildings.

4.4.1 Block Modulation

Guidelines

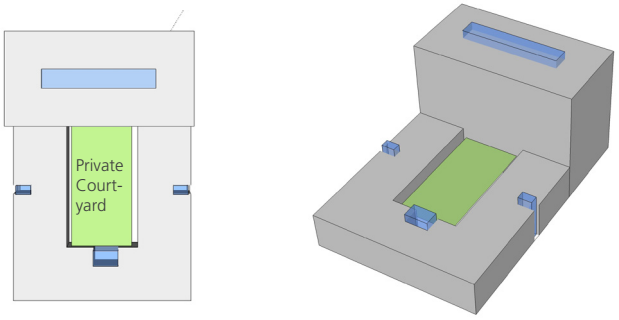
- **4.4.1.A** Full-block building developments should be broken up into distinct volumes that are in proportion to one another, while preserving the integrity of the building's design, and create transitions in bulk and scale. Repetitive elements or monolithic treatments that create a half- or full-block massing or appearance should be avoided.
- **4.4.1.B** In general, downtown blocks should be developed as multiple projects and/or buildings to enhance building variety and fine-grain character (special zones for large-footprint buildings are an exception). In the case of a full-block development, multiple architects could be involved to ensure variety of architectural expression.
- **4.4.1.C** To express variety, avoid monotony and distinguish different building volumes, building design should use a variety of color, material and texture.
- **4.4.1.D** Full-block, commercial high-rise development should not be held to the same above-stated policies but should consider the provision of at-grade public open spaces.
- **4.4.1.E** Tower form should be elegant and slender to allow for sunlight access and visibility of the sky from the street level.

Downtown blocks should be developed as multiple projects to enhance building variety and "fine grain" character. Above, San Diego, CA

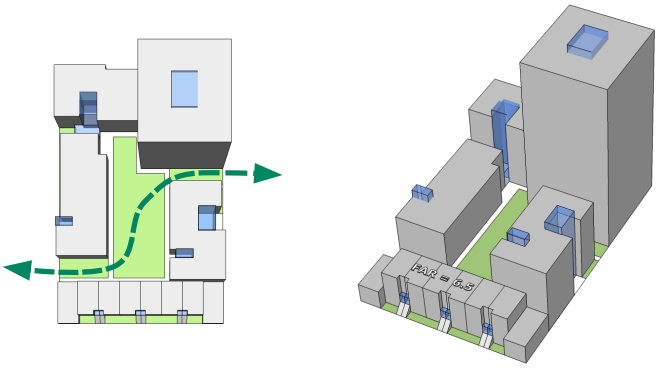
To express variety, avoid monotony, and distinguish different building volumes, building design should employ a variety of color, material and texture. Above, Berkeley, CA.

Buildings should be elegant and slender in form to allow for sunlight access and visibility of the sky from the street level. Above, Vancouver, BC.

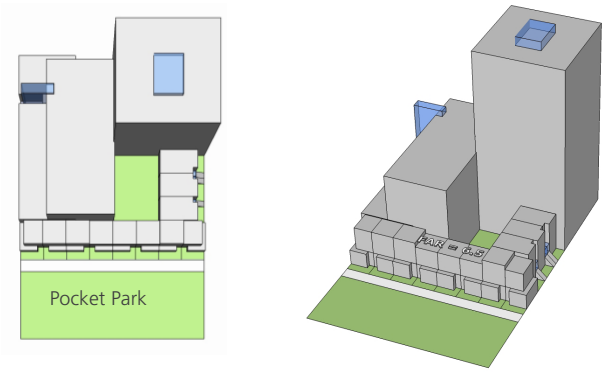
Figure 4.4 Building Massing Options - FAR 6.5



Option 1 - single large building massing



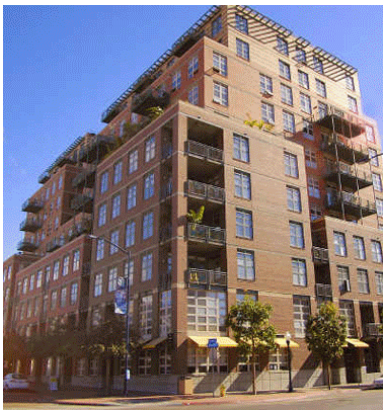
Option 2 - mix of housing types with pedestrian pass-through



Option 3 -mix of housing types with pocket park

4.4.2 Building Massing: Residential Development

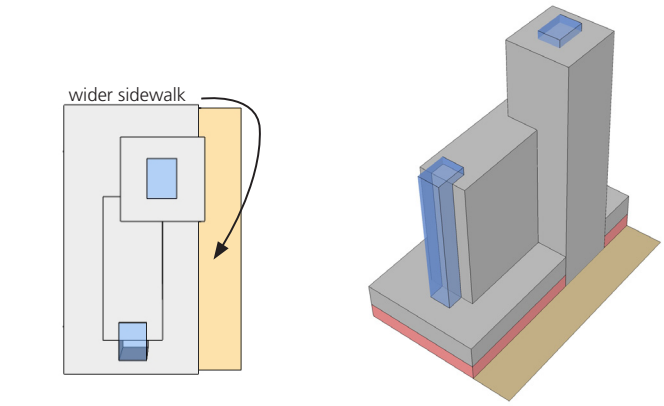
The Community Plan provides a variety of allowable FARs for development within downtown. Different densities create different massing opportunities; the following diagrams demonstrate various examples of recommended building massing for the various FARs that exist within the downtown.



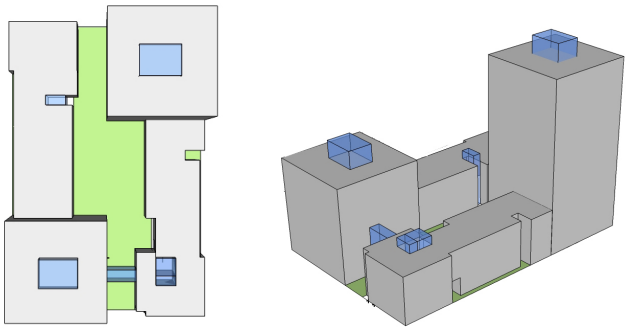
Examples of Residential Buildings - FAR 6.5. Top, San Diego, CA; bottom, Portland, OR.

Examples of Residential Buildings - FAR 8.0. Top and bottom, San Diego, CA.

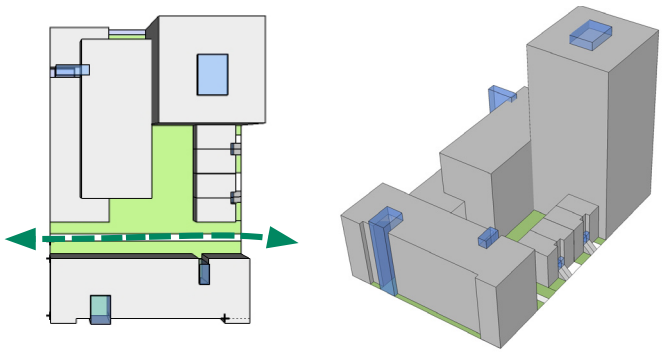
Figure 4.5 Building Massing Options - FAR 8.0



Option 1 - single large building massing

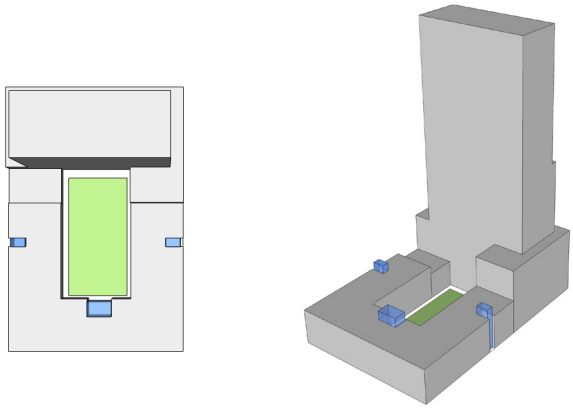


Option 2 - mix of housing types with semi-public internal courtyard

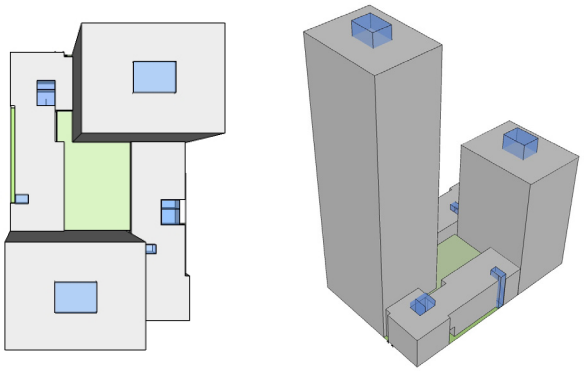


Option 3 - mix of housing types with pedestrian pass-through

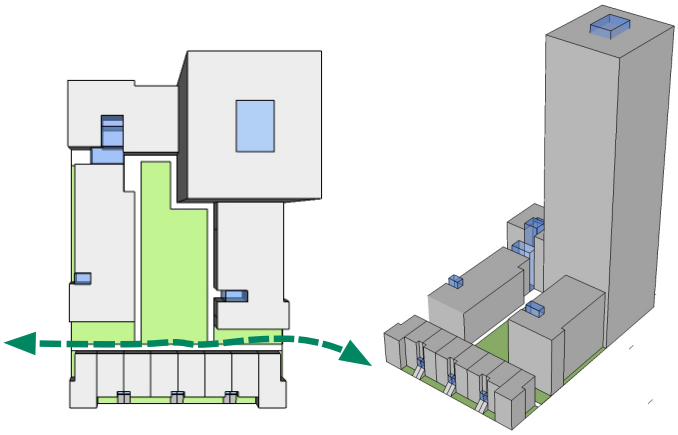
Figure 4.6 Building Massing Options - FAR 10.0



Option 1 - single compact building massing with private courtyard



Option 2 - mix of housing types with semi-public internal courtyard



Option 3 - mix of housing types with pedestrian pass-through

Examples of Residential Buildings - FAR >10.0. Top, New York, NY and bottom, Vancouver, BC.

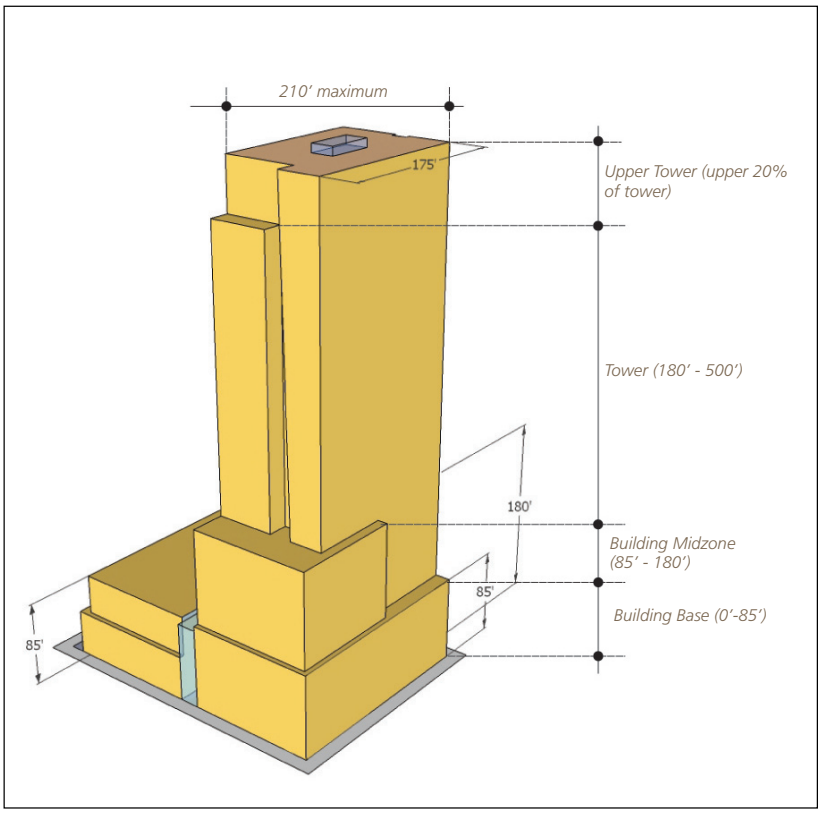
4.4.3
Building Massing: Commercial Development

The Community Plan requires and encourages employment uses in the Core and Large Floorplate Overlay districts. Commercial offices require larger floorplates than residential towers, and these guidelines accommodate the bulkier towers while providing for design creativity and flexibility.

Guidelines

- **4.4.3.A** Commercial tower floor plates (above the height of 85 to 180 feet) should be no larger than 23,000 square feet.
- **4.4.3.B** The maximum average tower floor plate (above the height of 85 to 180 feet) should be no larger than 20,000 square feet.
- **4.4.3.C** The maximum plan dimension (above the height of 180 feet) should be no longer than 200 feet.
- **4.4.3.D** The maximum diagonal dimension (above the height of 180 feet) should be no longer than 210 feet.

Figure 4.7 Tower Configurations



Examples of Commercial Office Buildings

Left, 199 Fremont Street, San Francisco, CA

- *Tower Floorplate: 11,700sf*
- *Plan Dimension: 120'*
- *Diagonal: 140'*
- *Height: Approx. 365'*

Right, 101 Second Street, San Francisco, CA

- *Tower Floorplate: 14,500sf*
- *Plan Dimension: 160'*
- *Diagonal: 180'*
- *Height: Approx. 350'*

Left, Diamond View Tower, San Diego
J Street and 10th Ave

- *Tower Floorplate: 18,750sf*
- *Plan Dimension: 150'*
- *Diagonal: 200'*
- *Height: 15 Floors*

Right, Advanced Equities Plaza, San Diego
Kettner Blvd and W. Broadway

- *Tower Floorplate: 20,400sf*
- *Plan Dimension: 170'*
- *Diagonal: 210'*
- *Height: Approx. 410'*

4.4.4
Building Massing: Street Wall

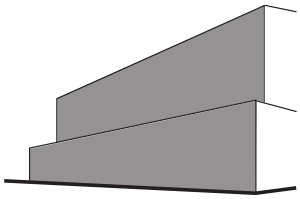
Buildings that frame and define the street and express a fine-grain character contribute to the quality of the public realm and the pedestrian experience. Well-articulated and detailed street walls are important to the fabric of the city and help to establish a human-scale urban experience.

Guidelines

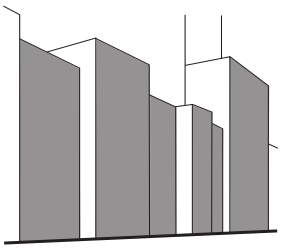
- **4.4.4.A** Buildings should incorporate a variety of vertical and horizontal modulations to develop distinct architectural volumes, break up monotonous volumes and create a fine-grain character.
- **4.4.4.B** Buildings along all streets should have a minimum street wall height of 45 feet, consistent with the PDO regulatory requirements.
- **4.4.4.C** For buildings along Main Streets and within the Fine-Grain Overlay District, the street wall building facades should be architecturally modulated to express the rhythm and fine-grain character of downtown's historic core, generally with volumes or architectural bays that are 50-100 feet in width.

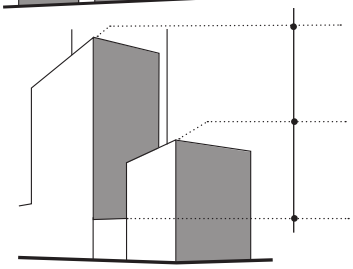
Buildings with a well-composed variety of vertical and horizontal modulations and distinct architectural volumes break up the massing of large projects. Above, San Jose, CA

Figure 4.8 Street Wall

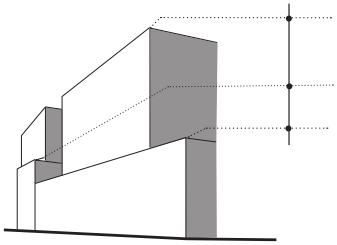


Horizontal Plane Modulation





Vertical Plane Modulation



Vertical + Horizontal Plane Modulation

Consistent canopies add human scale to the streetscape. Above, Denver, CO.

The building lobby should be designed as a clearly demarcated architectural feature. Above, San Francisco, CA.

Stores should have direct access from the sidewalk and use piers or changes in plan for distinctiveness.. Above, Vancouver, BC.

4.5 Building Design

These urban design guidelines are established to create a distinct urban character for the downtown area, to ensure that new development is designed with a pedestrian orientation which will foster a vital and active street life while creating an overall positive architectural image for downtown. The design of different elements of a building is critical: tower designs create the skyline image of a city; the mid-portions of buildings provide visual interest to pedestrians and serve as attractive backgrounds for public open spaces; and the ground floor designs activate the street and enrich the pedestrian environment.

4.5.1 Ground-Floor Retail/ Commercial Use

Guidelines

- **4.5.1.A** The building lobby in an office, hotel or other commercial building should be designed as a clearly defined and demarcated standout architectural feature of the building.
- **4.5.1.B** Entries to stores and ground-floor commercial uses should be visually distinct from the rest of the store façade, with creative use of scale, materials, glazing, projecting or recessed forms, architectural details, color and/ or awnings. These entries should have direct at-grade access from the sidewalk.
- **4.5.1.C** All commercial uses located at the street level should provide a direct at-grade entrance from the public right-of-way, with door thresholds flush with the sidewalk level. An entrance should be provided for each tenant street frontage exceeding 50 feet. Where such frontages exceed 100 feet, one entrance should be provided for each 100 feet of frontage or portion thereof. Separate pedestrian entrances for individual tenants should be at least 25 feet apart. Pedestrian ramps within the public right-of-way should be prohibited, except where necessary for required disabled access to existing buildings when no alternative is available.

- **4.5.1.D** On Main Streets, a single tenant should have a maximum of 150 linear feet of street-facing facade on any street frontage or contiguous corner. Where a large tenancy is planned, it is desirable to locate the majority of the area behind smaller frontages. Storefronts and entrances should activate corners.

- **4.5.1.E** Recessed entrances should not exceed 25 feet in width and the face of the door or gates should be within 15 feet of the property line.

- **4.5.1.F** Individual storefronts should be clearly defined by architectural elements, such as piers, changes in plane, and/or materials. To avoid monotony along main streets, flat wall planes, storefront windows, bulkheads, entries and other surfaces should recess a minimum of 6 to a maximum 18 inches from the face of primary columns or walls.

- **4.5.1.G** Architectural features such as awnings, canopies and other design features which add human scale to the streetscape are encouraged and should be consistent with the overall design of the building.

- **4.5.1.H** A continuous series of awnings, canopies, or other coverings is encouraged along all retail street frontages. High-gloss, vinyl, or plasticized fabrics should not be used. Awnings should not conceal important architectural details.

- **4.5.1.I** Between 3 and 12 feet above the sidewalk, a minimum of 60 percent of the façade should contain windows of clear or lightly tinted vision glass that allow views of indoor space. Heavier tinted or mirrored glass should not be permitted.

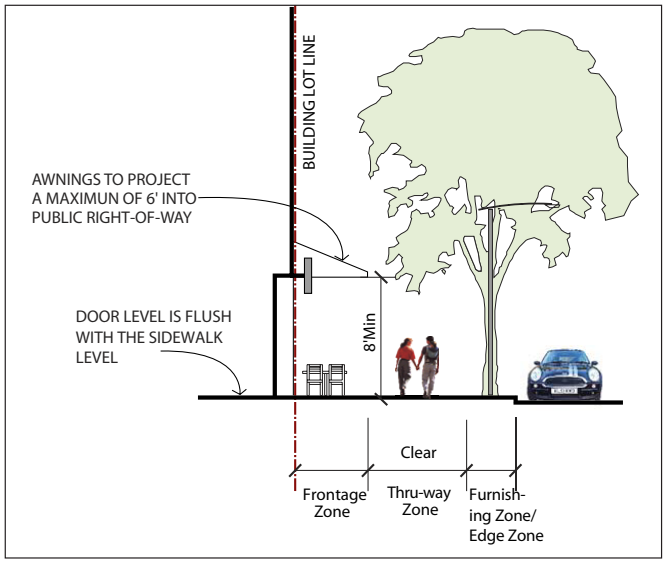
- **4.5.1.J** A maximum of 30 percent of the transparent area of each respective storefront or structural bay potentially may be obscured visually from the public right-of-way by interior blinds, drapes, and/or interior shelving for product displays. Interior shelving should be screened by solid building walls, metal storefront panels or obscured glass.

- **4.5.1.K** Storefronts should remain unshuttered and minimally lit from within after business hours during active pedestrian times to illuminate adjoining sidewalks.

- **4.5.1.L** Signage attached to storefront windows should be kept to a minimum.

Clear windows visually engage pedestrians. Above, New York, NY.

Figure 4.9 Commercial Ground Floor Section



Tall storefront with varied building massing. Above, San Diego, CA.

Multiple building treatments within a single development. Above, San Diego, CA.

Multiple facade designs, materials, and colors within a single development. Above, San Diego, CA.

4.5.2 Neighborhood Mixed-Use Centers and Fine Grain Development Overlay District

Guidelines

- **4.5.2.A** Streetwalls should incorporate distinct forms and elements that acknowledge the 50-foot by 100-foot and 25-foot by 100-foot historical lot development pattern. Repetitive elements or monolithic treatments shaould not create a half- or full-block massing or appearance.
- **4.5.2.B** Different elements should imply distinct architectural treatments (materials, fenestration, heights, window types, etc.) to exhibit incremental, diverse street faces.
- **4.5.2.C** A strong horizontal cornice/canopy, stepback, or parapet should be established between 45 and 85 feet on all street walls, broken and corresponding with the modulated volumes, to maintain an appropriately scaled frame for the public right-of-way. To achieve modulation, primary structural columns should be recessed 3 to 5 feet from street property lines, affording design flexibility for wall planes and volumes.
- **4.5.2.D** Well-detailed, high quality, durable materials such as stone, tile, metal, brick, or limited expanses of architectural concrete should be extended up into upper floors of the structure on Main Streets.
- **4.5.2.E** Main Streets should exhibit tall storefronts with clear glass.

4.5.3
Ground-Floor Residential Use

Guidelines

- **4.5.3.A** The ground floor of residential building facades should be articulated at regular increments to differentiate individual residential units from each other and from the overall massing of the building, to express a rhythm of individual units along the street.

- **4.5.3.B** Street walls containing ground floor residential units should be set back between 3 and 10 feet from any property line fronting a public street. Stoops and landscaping should be provided in this setback to provide a buffer between the sidewalk and the unit's living areas. At least 75 percent of ground floor units should have direct access from the street, and a maximum of two units may share a single stoop.

- **4.5.3.C** Ground-floor residential units should be raised between 18 to 42 inches above the adjacent sidewalk grade to provide an additional buffer.

- **4.5.3.D** A minimum of 25 percent of each street-facing ground-level residential unit between 3 and 12 feet above the sidewalk should possess clear, nonreflective windows. Windowsills should be no higher than 5 feet above the sidewalk level.

- **4.5.3.E** Fences and gates should be utilized within the setback area only if they demarcate private open space attached to a residential unit. Solid walls or fences should not exceed a height of 42 inches above grade. At-grade glass or railings (at least 80 percent open) may reach a height of 60 inches. Gates and railings located on stoops or raised patios should be transparent (clear glass or railings at least 80 percent open) and should not exceed 48 inches in height.

- **4.5.3.F** Each street-facing unit should be identified either on the door or the adjacent wall.

Ground-floor residential building facades should be articulated at regular intervals to differentiate individual residential units. Above, San Diego, CA

Front setback areas in residential projects should be landscaped. Above, San Diego, CA

Ground-level residential entrances should be visible and accessible from the sidewalk. Above, San Diego, CA

Buildings towers should employ a variation in massing and fenestration and material patterns to create visual interest. Above, San Francisco, CA

Multiple towers in one project should display variation in either form or elevation in order to prevent close similarity. Above, Philadelphia, PA

Building design should incorporate appropriate shading devices, balconies, projections and louvers.

4.5.4
Building Tower Design

Guidelines

- **4.5.4.A** All building façades of towers should include a variety of fenestration and material patterns to create visual interest and avoid the appearance of a repeated single floor extrusion. Building façades more than 100 feet in width should consider the use of plane offsets and material changes to create shadows and relief. Some elements of towers should integrate with, and extend into the building base façades to avoid the appearance of towers isolated both from the street and their own bases.

- **4.5.4.B** Designers should carefully study their tower orientation to maximize energy conservation. Although orienting the tower's longer edge along the east-west axis to maximize northern/southern exposure and minimize western exposure is typically preferred, the use of sun-shading devices should be studied on the western and southern facades where appropriate to reduce heat gain.

- **4.5.4.C** Regardless of height or plan variation, no two towers within a project should exhibit identical, or closely similar, form and/or elevations. No tower should be designed to be identical, or closely similar, to another tower located elsewhere in Centre City.

- **4.5.4.D** To create a graceful transition to the sky and avoid a cut off, flat-top appearance, the upper 20 percent of any tower (measured above the base or midzone) should achieve an articulated form and composition by means of architectural techniques such as layering, material changes, fenestration pattern variation and/or physical step-backs. Actual reductions of floor areas and/or recessed balconies can assist this composition goal, but are not required. Tower top designs should resolve mechanical penthouses and other technical requirements in an integrated, coherent manner consistent with the composition below them.

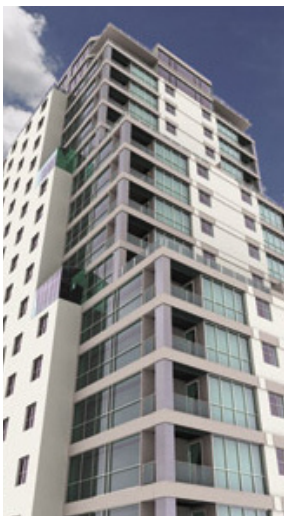
- **4.5.4.E** Façades should have distinct solar orientations with integrated and appropriate shading devices, balconies, projections, louvers and/or window treatments. These treatments will provide desirable elevation and composition variety.

- **4.5.4.F** Towers should be designed with a majority of the facades composed of glazing, including façades facing interior property lines. Large expanses of solid walls should be avoided and should not exceed 20 feet in width. Solid walls should contain enhanced materials, deep reveals and scoring, and other textures.

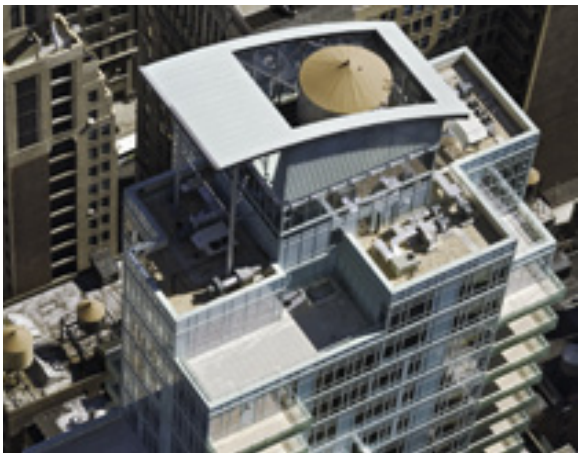
- **4.5.4.G** Reflective or mirror glass is strongly discouraged, as is heavily tinted bronze, black, or gray glass. Glass color should not be emphasized as a "signature" element, and subtle gray-green or blue-gray tints are encouraged if clear glass is not proposed. Glass materials should exhibit visible light transmittance of a minimum of 60 percent.

- **4.5.4.H** Projecting balconies facing public streets should be an average of no less than 40 percent open or transparent (perforated mesh, 40 percent translucent glass, or open rail) above a height of 18 inches, measured from the balcony walking surface.

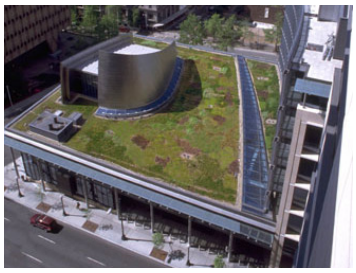
- **4.5.4.I** To ensure a cohesive and compatible night skyline, and to mitigate night-sky pollution, tower accent lighting should be modest, restrained and focused on the upper tower. Bright hues and neon outlines are strongly discouraged, and white or warm-color washes are preferred. Any signature lighting, including rooftop lanterns and other lighting effects, should be designed with adjustable intensity controls for subsequent testing and approval as part of the Design Review process.

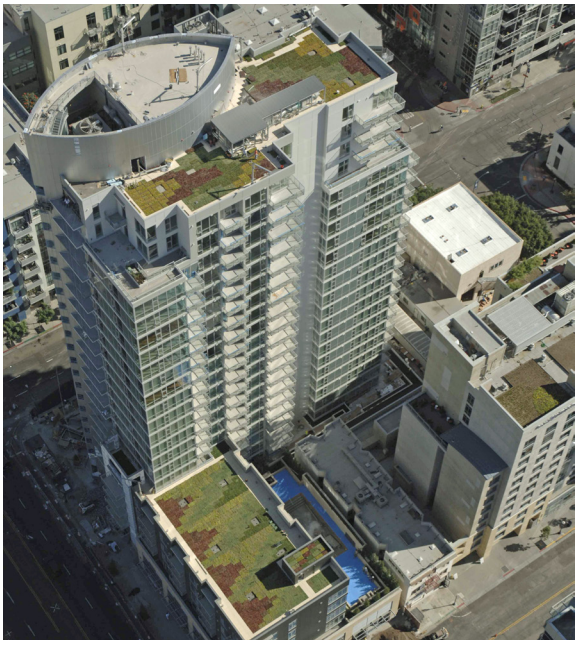


The upper 20 percent of any tower shall achieve an articulated form and composition through layering, material changes fenestration patterns and/or physical stepbacks. Top, Chicago, IL; bottom left, Philadelphia, PA; bottom right, San Diego, CA.



Mechanical equipment on top of the building should be screened from views from adjacent rooftops. Above, New York, NY.





Roof gardens and green roofs can save energy while achieving patterns in color and material, especially on large roof areas. Top, Seattle, WA; bottom, San Diego, CA

4.5.5
Building Rooftops

Guidelines

- **4.5.5.A** Penthouse space, mechanical equipment, stair and elevator overruns, heliports, vertical roof attachments, and decorative roof construction are permitted to achieve distinctive building tops, provided that the building top is designed as an integral part of the architecture. All vertical rooftop forms, surfaces, and elements should use high-quality cladding materials the same as, or similar to, the typical surfaces of walls below.

- **4.5.5.B** All mechanical equipment, appurtenances, and access areas should be intentionally grouped and screened architecturally within fully covered enclosures consistent with the overall composition of the building. Mechanical enclosures should have a screened or louvered top to improve views from above and to provide required air circulation.

- **4.5.5.C** Independent mechanical screens should be set back a minimum of 10 feet from the building façade.

- **4.5.5.D** Large roof areas (measuring more than 10,000 square feet) should exhibit patterns of roofing colors and materials. Roof gardens and eco-roofs can be employed to achieve these patterns. All roofs should be considered a "fifth elevation," composed to be visually appealing from taller adjacent buildings.

4.5.6
Interface Between Buildings and Parks/Open Spaces

Buildings facing parks, either across the street or on adjacent parcels, can enhance the park experience, serve as an architectural backdrop to parks, frame the outdoor space and provide a greater degree of safety through "eyes on the park." Designers of park-fronting buildings have a heightened responsibility to the public realm. The park can be activated through ground-floor use, and proper design can minimize impact on solar access.

Guidelines: Buildings Facing Parks

- **4.5.6.A** Buildings should engage adjacent parks through active ground floor uses, such as restaurants and cafés, and with glazed storefronts to create visual interest. They should include spill-out space for dining or sitting on the sidewalks facing parks.
- **4.5.6.B** Building entrances should face parks to encourage building occupants to cross the street to parks.
- **4.5.6.C** Buildings should step down in height to maximize solar access to the park.
- **4.5.6.D** Where buildings face a park, balconies and usable green roofs should face parks to maximize the number of people looking into the park.
- **4.5.6.E** Where buildings face parks, blank walls with few windows and lack of ground-level program are strongly discouraged.

Guidelines: Buildings Adjoining Parks

- **4.5.6.F** Where buildings are adjacent to parks, the outdoor space next to parks should be visible, attractive and, ideally, publicly accessible.
- **4.5.6.G** If the building contains residential uses, any adjacent outdoor space (such as patios of garden apartments or the communal open space of a residential building) should be landscaped to provide an attractive backdrop to the park.
- **4.5.6.H** If the building contains commercial uses, adjacent outdoor space should be given over to spill-out space for restaurants, cafés or shops.
- **4.5.6.I** Secondary entrances, to and from the park, are encouraged for all buildings.

Buildings adjacent to parks define the park edge. Its ground-floor uses can activate the park. Above, Portland, OR.

Balconies should face parks to maximize "eyes on the park". Above, San Francisco, CA.

Larger building mass should be broken down into distinct architectural elements to promote visual interest. Above, Seattle, WA

Building facades should include a repeating pattern. Above, Chicago, IL.

4.5.7
Large Floor-Plate Buildings

Large-floor-plate, bulkier buildings are allowed in certain portions of downtown to encourage a greater range of tenants and create employment opportunities. These buildings may encompass a "midzone" between 85 and 185 feet to accommodate office uses which typically require larger single-floor footprints than allowed in tower floor plates. Many opportunities exist to improve their physical design and function, to enhance their architectural design, and enliven the pedestrian environment at street level.

Guidelines

- **4.5.7.A** Larger building mass should be broken down into distinct architectural elements to promote visual interest.
- **4.5.7.B** Façades should be articulated to reduce massive scale and uniform physical appearances.
- **4.5.7.C** Buildings should have variations in rooflines to enhance the variety of massing.
- **4.5.7.D** Where façades face smaller-scale buildings or narrow public streets, setbacks on upper floors are encouraged.
- **4.5.7.E** Windows, wall panels, pilasters and building bays should be based on a module derived from the building's structural bay spacing. Expression of the structural elements and bays of the building on the façade is encouraged.
- **4.5.7.F** Active programs should be placed along public streets and thoroughfares.
- **4.5.7.G** Upper-level courtyards and built-in balconies are encouraged to break up massing and enliven building façades.
- **4.5.7.H** Penthouses are encouraged to reduce the overall façade area of the building and articulate the roofline.
- **4.5.7.I** Street-level frontages adjacent to public streets or open spaces should be articulated with entrances, lobbies, storefront windows and displays to avoid blank ground-floor façades.
- **4.5.7.J** Building façades over 100 feet in length should include a repeating pattern of at least three of the following building elements: color change, texture change, material module change and expression of a structural bay.

4.5.8
Historical Resources

The Community Plan recognizes the importance of historical resources in maintaining the history of downtown and that historical resources enrich the urban fabric. Therefore, new projects are strongly encouraged to incorporate existing historical resources into them. This is also a beneficial reuse of existing resources and reduces construction waste.

Guidelines

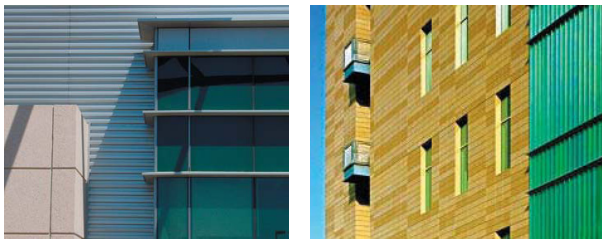
- **4.5.8.A** Historical resources should be retained and integrated into larger projects, wherever feasible, with adaptive use consistent with the Secretary of Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties and Guidelines for Preserving, Rehabilitating, Restoring and Reconstructing Historic Buildings.

- **4.5.8.B** New construction adjacent to, or new additions to historical resources, should avoid mimicking the historical resource but rather stand in contrast to accentuate the existing building. Inappropriate additions that detract from the architectural and/or historic integrity of the existing buildings are strongly discouraged.

A new addition to a historic building should build on the architectural composition of the existing building and/or stand in contrast to accentuate the historic building. Top and middle, San Diego, CA

Building design should incorporate quality materials and architectural elements, such as a well-defined building base and glazed facades and balconies, to create a people-oriented development. Above, Portland, OR.

Building design should use a durable upgraded material for the building base. Above, San Diego, CA.



Building design should use high standard materials to avoid weathering and staining, and minimize deterioration.

4.5.9
Building Materials

Guidelines

- **4.5.9.A** The building base should be clad in durable upgraded materials such as stone, tile, metal, brick, concrete and glass. Insulated paneling systems and stucco are strongly discouraged in commercial projects and the ground floor of residential projects. Designated historical resources are exempt from this standard and should utilize materials consistent with the historical designation of the site.

- **4.5.9.B** The building base's upgraded materials should extend to within 1 inch of finish sidewalk grade, and these materials should wrap corners of exposed interior property line walls a minimum of 5 to 10 feet.

- **4.5.9.C** Exit corridors, garage openings, loading docks, and all recesses should provide a finished appearance to the street with street level exterior finishes fully wrapping into the openings to a minimum dimension of 10 feet. Utility rooms and exit corridors should have decorative doors and that are integrated into the design of the adjacent street wall. Loading dock doors should provide full screening of the loading dock area, and use such materials as translucent glass or decorative metal.

4.5.10
Blank Walls

Guidelines

- **4.5.10.A** Blank walls on the ground level or on façades of buildings are to be limited to provide a pleasant and rich pedestrian experience. Blank walls include any street wall area that is not transparent, including solid doors and mechanical areas.

- **4.5.10.B** Unavoidable blank walls along public streets or those viewed from public streets, open spaces and thoroughfares should be treated to create an inviting visual experience. All blank wall area should be enhanced with architectural detailing, material texture, ornamentation, landscape treatment and/or artwork.

Unavoidable blank walls viewed from public streets should be enhanced with architectural detailing, material texture, and other devices. Above, San Diego, CA.

Blank walls at street-level should be treated through use of rich and textured materials, color, and landscape materials. Top, Portland, OR; bottom, San Diego, CA.

Electrical components and other details can be creatively concealed or integrated into the building facade. Top, San Diego, CA, OR, bottom, Los Angeles, CA

4.5.11
Driveway Entrances and Utilities

Guidelines

- **4.5.11.A** Garage and loading dock driveway entrances should exhibit the minimum width and height feasible for proper access. Such openings should contain solid, obscured, or screening doors and minimize lighting contrast in order to reduce visual impacts on the pedestrian experience.
- **4.5.11.B** Exposed garage and loading dock driveway walls should contain the same materials as the adjoining street walls for a minimum distance of ten feet. Interior driveway walls that have regular exposure to the public right-of-way beyond ten feet (with transparent doors or with doors subject to being open on a regular basis) should be painted or similarly treated.
- **4.5.11.C** All utilities, such as backflow prevention devices, groupings of meters, and so on should be located outside the public right-of-way within a building alcove, utility room, or landscaped area and be fully screened from view of the public right-of-way.
- **4.5.11.D** The utility needs of future commercial tenants (e.g., grease traps, exhaust chutes, air conditioning) should be anticipated in the initial building design to avoid difficulty when retrofitting buildings after construction.

Figure 4.10 Backflow-Prevention Devices

Backflow-prevention devices are to be located in a building alcove, landscaped area, or utility room within the building, outside of the public right-of-way, and completely screened from view. Above, San Diego, CA.

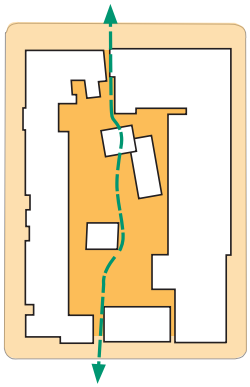
4.5.12
Construction Execution

Guidelines

- **4.5.12.A**. All construction details should meet the highest industry standards and be executed to minimize weathering, eliminate staining, and avoid causing deterioration of materials on adjacent properties or the public-right-of-way.
- **4.5.12.B** All elements on the undersides of balconies and projection surfaces should be logically composed and placed to minimize their visibility, while meeting code requirements. Soffit materials should be high-quality and consistent with adjacent elevation materials, and should incorporate drip edges and other details to minimize staining and ensure long-term durability.
- **4.5.12.C** Downspouts, mailboxes, electrical components and other miscellaneous details should be concealed or integrated into building façades. No downspouts should project across a public sidewalk or beyond the property line.
- **4.5.12.D** Graffiti coatings should be extended the full height of the upgraded base materials or up to a natural break such as a cornice line.

The undersides of balconies and bay windows should be comparable in quality to the rest of the building and creatively executed. Top and bottom, New York, NY (Photo credit: Flickr)

Visually accessible private courtyards introduce openings in the street wall, break up the mass of the block and enhance the pedestrian experience. Top, Vancouver, BC; bottom left, San Diego, CA; bottom right, Portland, OR.



Publicly-accessible through-block walkways, courts and urban open spaces are strongly encouraged. Above, Portland, OR.

4.6 Extending the Public Realm

The creation and extension of the public realm within downtown is crucial to the development of a distinct and vibrant pedestrian-oriented place that is inviting to people. Consistency in the zone between the building and the street and within building sites is important to shaping this realm, which can range from public to semipublic and semiprivate uses. Buildings should be flexible and accommodating to open space opportunities, either as visual or physical linkages with the public realm, to develop a richer urban neighborhood experience downtown.

Guidelines

- **4.6.A** Residential and commercial buildings, particularly half-block and full-block developments, should introduce openings in the street wall, breaking the street wall, and extending the public realm farther into the block. Such openings break down the mass of the building and enhance the richness and variety of publicly accessible open spaces. Such openings are encouraged for development on designated green streets and residential streets in downtown. They could include extended sidewalk areas, urban open spaces such as pocket parks and plazas, and mid-block mews, pathways and walkways opening into the courtyard.

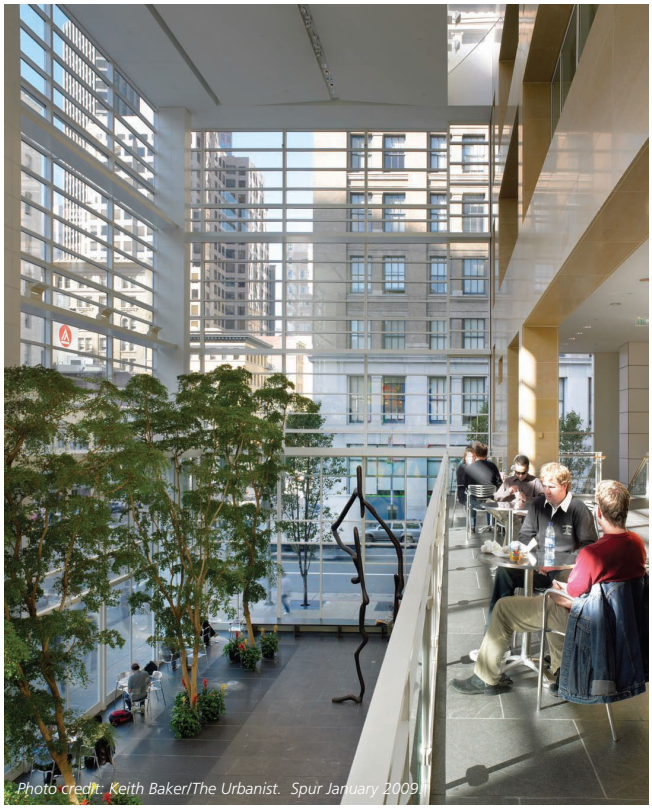
- **4.6.B** In place of publicly accessible outdoor spaces, commercial buildings in downtown's Central District could incorporate publicly accessible indoor spaces. Such space should be highly visible, accessible and inviting.

- **4.6.C** Buildings should be scaled appropriately to permit light and air into publicly accessible open spaces.

- **4.6.D** Where documented earthquake faults, or other site constraints such as public utility easements, are located on a site and prohibit the construction of building area on a portion of the site, projects should incorporate publicly accessible through-block walkways, courts, and/or urban open spaces. Such spaces provide alternative circulation paths, particularly those that are part of the Green

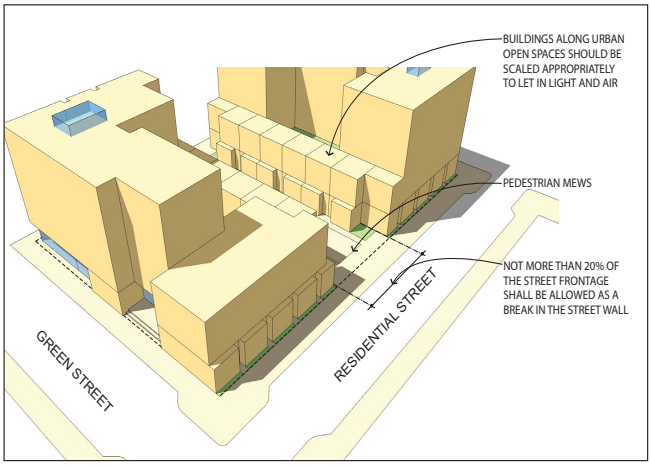
Loop concept of the urban design framework (See 2.2.8 Open Space Network) and could support ground-floor commercial activities, as long as projects locate primary commercial activities along public streets. These areas should be designed to ensure public safety and promote maximum visibility and surveillance from adjacent areas and should be maintained by the property owner(s).

- **4.6.E** Up to a maximum of 20 percent of the street frontage along green streets and residential streets should be allowed as a break in building mass. The 20 percent length could be broken down into more than one opening, as appropriate to the design of the project. At any given instance, the break in the street wall should not be greater than 40 feet in width.



Highly visible, publicly-accessible interior open spaces are another way to extend the pedestrian realm and provide public-serving amenities. Above, San Francisco, CA

Figure 4.10 Residential Block Composition



Well designed, publicly-accessible urban open spaces are welcoming and provide public serving amenities such as shade and seating. Above, San Francisco, CA

Gracious steps help pedestrians enter an open space area on a sloping site. Above, New York, NY

4.6.1
Urban Open Spaces

These guidelines apply to any public urban open space that is proposed as a public amenity, including those proposed for the purpose of obtaining an FAR bonus or as an exception to the street wall requirements of the PDO. The following guidelines should be used in the evaluation of urban open spaces during the Design Review process.

Guidelines

- **4.6.1.A** The urban open space area should be a publicly accessible park or plaza area.
- **4.6.1.B** The urban open space should be located along the eastern, western, or southern block face, and it should be designed to maximize exposure to the sun, especially from the southwest.
- **4.6.1.C** The urban open space area should be a minimum of 1,000 square feet in area. The open space area should contain a minimum dimension of 40 feet measured parallel to a public sidewalk and 25 feet measured perpendicular to a public sidewalk.
- **4.6.1.D** The grade of an urban open space should not be more than 3 feet above or below the sidewalk grade. On sloping sites, the change in elevation between the sidewalk and adjacent urban open space must include gracious steps and landings, with features such as low risers and wide treads, and any planter boxes should include seating ledges. Any walls, planters, or other obstructions (not including trees, lights, and steps) that would prevent views into the open space should be limited and generally not exceed a height of 18 inches above the adjacent sidewalk.
- **4.6.1.E** A minimum of 20 percent of the urban open space ground area should be improved with landscaping, which may be reduced with the provision of substantial tree canopy coverage. At least one 36-inch box tree should be planted in the urban open space for each 25 feet of street frontage (for linear open space) and/or for each 500 square feet of urban open space, whichever is greater. Urban open space landscaping should complement and extend the materials and design of the adjoining

public right-of-way. Trees planted in urban open space areas should have a minimum planting area of 100 square feet, with a minimum soil depth of 5 feet. Shrubs should have a minimum planting area of 24 square feet, with a minimum soil depth of 30 inches.

- **4.6.1.F** Seating should be provided for users in urban open spaces at a ratio of 1 linear foot of seating for each 40 square feet of urban open space. The seating may be composed of benches and seating walls, and movable seating is highly encouraged. Seating should be between 12 and 24 inches above the level of the adjacent walking surface, and comprise 14 inches of minimum horizontal surface.

- **4.6.1.G** Open-air cafés should not occupy more than 25 percent of the total area of the urban open space.

- **4.6.1.H** Other site amenities may include open-air cafés, kiosks and pushcarts. Kiosks should be constructed of predominantly light materials such as metal, glass or fabric. No kitchen equipment should be installed within any open-air café. Movable pushcarts providing food products, fresh fruits or vegetables, fresh-cut flowers or live plants are encouraged.

- **4.6.1.I** Plaza lighting should be provided to ensure adequate security and its design should be coordinated with the lighting used in the public right-of-way and with the building's architectural lighting.

Movable seating should be provided for users in urban open spaces. Above, New York, NY

Urban open spaces should be improved with landscaping, incorporating impervious surfaces, trees and other plantings. Above, San Francisco, CA

Kiosks should be free-standing and constructed of light materials such as metal, glass, or fabric. Above left, Portland, OR; right Victoria, BC.

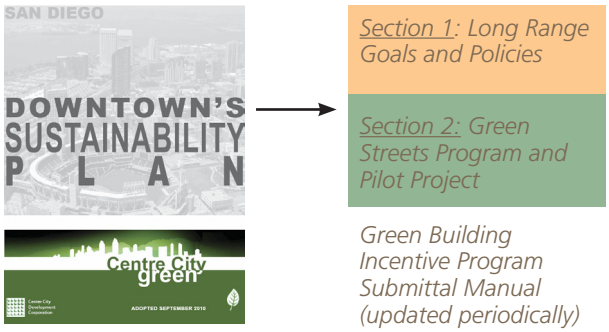
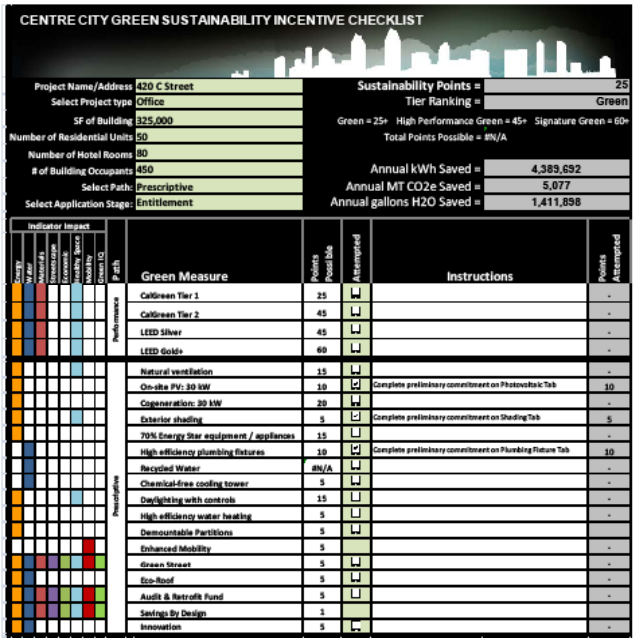


Figure 4.11 Centre City Green Document

Figure 4.12 Sustainability Indicators



CENTRE CITY GREEN SUSTAINABILITY INCENTIVE CHECKLIST

Project Name/Address	420 C Street	Sustainability Points =	25
Select Project type	Office	Tier Ranking =	Green
SF of Building	325,000	Green = 25+ High Performance Green = 45+ Signature Green = 60+	
Number of Residential Units	50	Total Points Possible = #N/A	
Number of Hotel Rooms	80		
# of Building Occupants	450	Annual kWh Saved =	4,389,692
Select Path:	Prescriptive	Annual MT CO2e Saved =	5,077
Select Application Stage:	Entitlement	Annual gallons H2O Saved =	1,411,898

Indicator Impact: Energy	Water	Materials	Streetscape	Economic	Healthy Spaces	Mobility	Green IQ	Path	Green Measure	Points Possible	Attempted	Instructions	Points Attempted
								Performance	CalGreen Tier 1	25			-
									CalGreen Tier 2	45			-
									LEED Silver	45			-
									LEED Gold+	60			-
								Prescriptive	Natural ventilation	15			-
									On-site PV: 30 kW	10		Complete preliminary commitment on Photovoltaic Tab	10
									Cogeneration: 30 kW	20			-
									Exterior shading	5		Complete preliminary commitment on Shading Tab	5
									70% Energy Star equipment / appliances	15			-
									High efficiency plumbing fixtures	10		Complete preliminary commitment on Plumbing Fixture Tab	10
									Recycled Water	#N/A			-
									Chemical-free cooling tower	5			-
									Daylighting with controls	15			-
									High efficiency water heating	5			-
									Demountable Partitions	5			
									Enhanced Mobility	5			-
									Green Street	5			-
									Eco-Roof	5			-
									Audit & Retrofit Fund	5			-
									Savings By Design	1			
									Innovation	5			-

Figure 4.13 Green Building Checklist

4.7 Sustainability

All new buildings located within Centre City should review the guidelines in the Downtown Sustainability Master Plan. The following are general sustainability guidelines that may apply to various building types.

4.7.1 Climate-Responsive Design Elements

San Diego's temperate weather is ideal in terms of maximizing energy conservation through design elements and technologies.

Guidelines

- **4.7.1.A** Buildings should be designed to allow for natural ventilation, using courtyard designs, arcades, canopies and other passive space-cooling techniques.
- **4.7.1.B** Buildings should reduce use of daytime artificial lighting through such design elements as light shelves, clerestory lighting, skylights and translucent wall materials.
- **4.7.1.C** Buildings should incorporate various architectural elements into the design to regulate the amount of direct sunlight and glare into the interiors. Such elements could include light shelves, louvered wall openings, and brise-soleil shading devices.
- **4.7.1.D** Buildings should incorporate arcades, trellises, horizontal shading devices and appropriate tree planting along the base of buildings to screen southern and western sun exposure during summer where appropriate.
- **4.7.1.E** The longer edge of towers should be oriented along the east-west axis to maximize north-south exposure and minimize western exposure.
- **4.7.1.F** To maximize use of solar energy, buildings should integrate active solar technologies such as photovoltaic panels on roofs and/or within the exterior wall systems.
- **4.7.1.G** Tall buildings should use wind power as a source of renewable energy where appropriate, with wind turbines that are integrated into the tower top design.

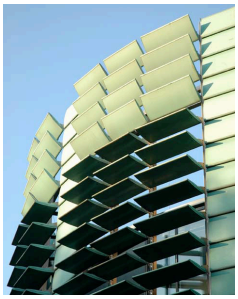
4.7.2
Green Building Techniques and Material

A range of green building techniques, including those outlined below, should be considered, depending on a project's specific program and location.

Guidelines

- **4.7.2.A** Reuse and recycling of construction and demolition materials is recommended for all new construction.
- **4.7.2.B** Use of products with identifiable recycled content—including postindustrial content and with a preference for postconsumer content—is encouraged.
- **4.7.2.C** Building materials, components, and systems found regionally are preferred, to save energy and resources in transportation.
- **4.7.2.D** Use of material from renewable sources is highly encouraged.
- **4.7.2.E** Exterior lighting on buildings not only should complement the architectural features but should be designed to prevent glare and light trespass (see Downtown Lighting Plan).
- **4.7.2.F** Improvements to existing buildings should use ENERGY STAR-qualified fixtures to reduce a building's energy consumption.
- **4.7.2.G** Buildings should incorporate green roofs in their design. Green roofs are effective in reducing the heat island effect from the roof surface.
- **4.7.2.H** Projects should use porous material on walkways, driveways and car parks to minimize storm water runoff from paved surfaces.
- **4.7.2.I** Regional native and drought-resistant plant species are encouraged as planting materials.
- **4.7.2.J** Community gardens, vegetable gardens and composting gardens are encouraged at grade or on podiums or roofs as a means of productive landscaping and also as efficient and natural waste-recycling.

Reduce demand on utilities by considering cogeneration, photovoltaic panels, wind turbines and other renewable energy systems.



Building design should allow for natural ventilation through courtyards, operable windows and louvers. Above, San Francisco, CA.

Green Roofs reduce solar gain, can be planted with native species to reduce water consumption and provide amenity spaces for building occupants. Above, Toronto, ON.

Community Gardens create a more liveable downtown by turning under utilized spaces into productive landscapes that improves affordable living, softens hardscapes, and fosters a community's sense of place. Above, Seattle, WA.

Lighting guidelines are organized in three zones:

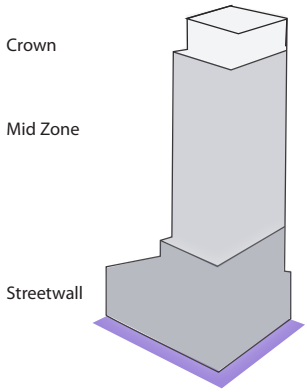


Figure 4.14 PDO Bulk Model

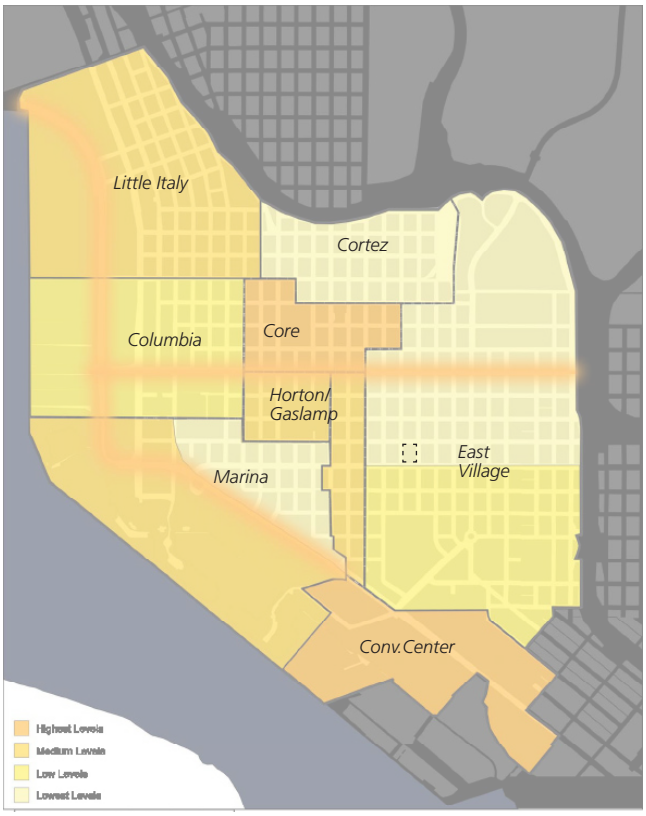
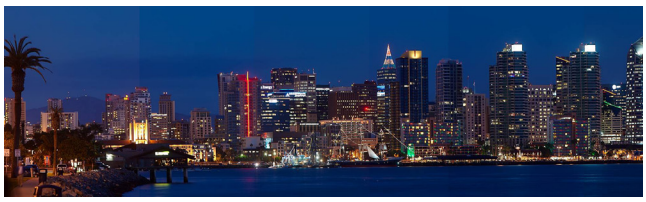


Figure 4.15 Conceptual Lighting Intensity Map

The Downtown Lighting Plan creates design guidelines that are unique to each downtown neighborhood, with incentives for energy conservation. Refer to Centre City Green - Green Building Incentive Program.

This approach allows for allocating more light to specific activities per neighborhood, commercial or residential buildings and/or street type, based on activity as represented by the map's lighting levels.



4.8 Lighting Design Principles

The Downtown Lighting Plan defines exterior lighting strategies that apply to new and existing buildings that are intended to enhance the architectural composition of a building with guidelines unique to each downtown neighborhood; permitting more light in areas with more commercial activity and less in residential areas, while reinforcing the neighborhood character, minimizing light pollution and glare.

The lighting guidelines are organized per the Centre City Planned District Ordinance (PDO) definitions for bulk: Tower Crown (the portion of a building that is above the base, or mid-zone); Mid-Zone (applies to the portion of a building located above the base and below the tower crown); Streetwall (from grade up to 85 feet) and are based on three categories of light:

- Safety - the minimum amount of light needed to support basic visual activity along the streetwall
- Architectural - the aesthetic appeal of the entire building, expressing its form, profile and structure, emphasizing the unique character of the building, district and/or neighborhood.
- Special - festival, celebratory, seasonal and/or holiday lighting that occurs on weekends, holidays and on special event days

General lighting design guidelines are outlined in this section. (Refer to the Downtown Lighting Plan for full narrative)

Guidelines

Refer to Figure 4.16 Lighting Examples (1-12)

- **4.8.1.A** Employ lighting design objectives that are specific to downtown districts and areas, as defined by the Downtown Lighting Plan.
- **4.8.1.B** Support sustainable design objectives by encouraging effective and efficient use of energy through new lighting technologies and renewable energy sources.
- **4.8.1.C** Control systems are encouraged to manage the time, amount, intensity and character of light.
- **4.8.1.D** Lighting strategies should be designed so that lighting above the street wall dims or completely shuts-off after business hours.
- **4.8.1.E** Lighting strategies should minimize light pollution and glare. (4,5)

- **4.8.1.F** The lighting of buildings shall highlight the composition, massing, geometry, structure, features, and articula tion of building elements, verticality, and porosity of architecture elements that add to the complexity of a design. (1-4)
- **4.8.1.G** Lighting strategies envisioned as "physical attachments" that have no visual relation to the architectural composition of the building should not be allowed.
- **4.8.1.H** Light sources are encouraged to be integrated into the architectural fenestration and design when possible.
- **4.8.1.I** Lighting of the building crown should emphasize it's three dimensional character.
- **4.8.1.J** Lighting treatments should be emphasized on buildings that are located on street intersections, view corridors, designated main and commercial streets and gateways to assist in downtown wayfinding.
- **4.8.1.K** Mid-tower lighting should prioritize the street wall and crown of buildings, and may allow mid-tower lighting (of a high rise building) depending on context and type of exterior finish. (8)
- **4.8.1.L** Mid-tower lighting shall visually connect the building base to the building crown and emphasize the architectural composition, scale, structure and character of the building. (8,9)
- **4.8.1.M** Lighting effects that project light downward are generally encouraged to minimize light pollution. (5,9)
- **4.8.1.N** Up-lighting should be directed toward the building with the minimum amount of energy to do the effect. Uplighting on areas of buildings that have substantially specular facades (such as glass or other highly polished material) due to undesirable light scatter into the sky is discouraged. (4,11)
- **4.8.1.O** Baffles or shields on the luminaires should be included to minimize direct light into the sky. (5)
- **4.8.1.P** Pedestrian scaled lighting at the street wall should emphasize the character of the building, the points of entry and other wayfinding elements. (11,12)
- **4.8.1.Q** Seasonal lighting: Lighted attachments with color scenarios are encouraged in commercial and active use areas. (7,12)
- **4.8.1.R** Projected light art is encouraged in civic and commercial areas. (6)
- **4.8.1.S** All conduit and electrical sources should be hidden from public view.

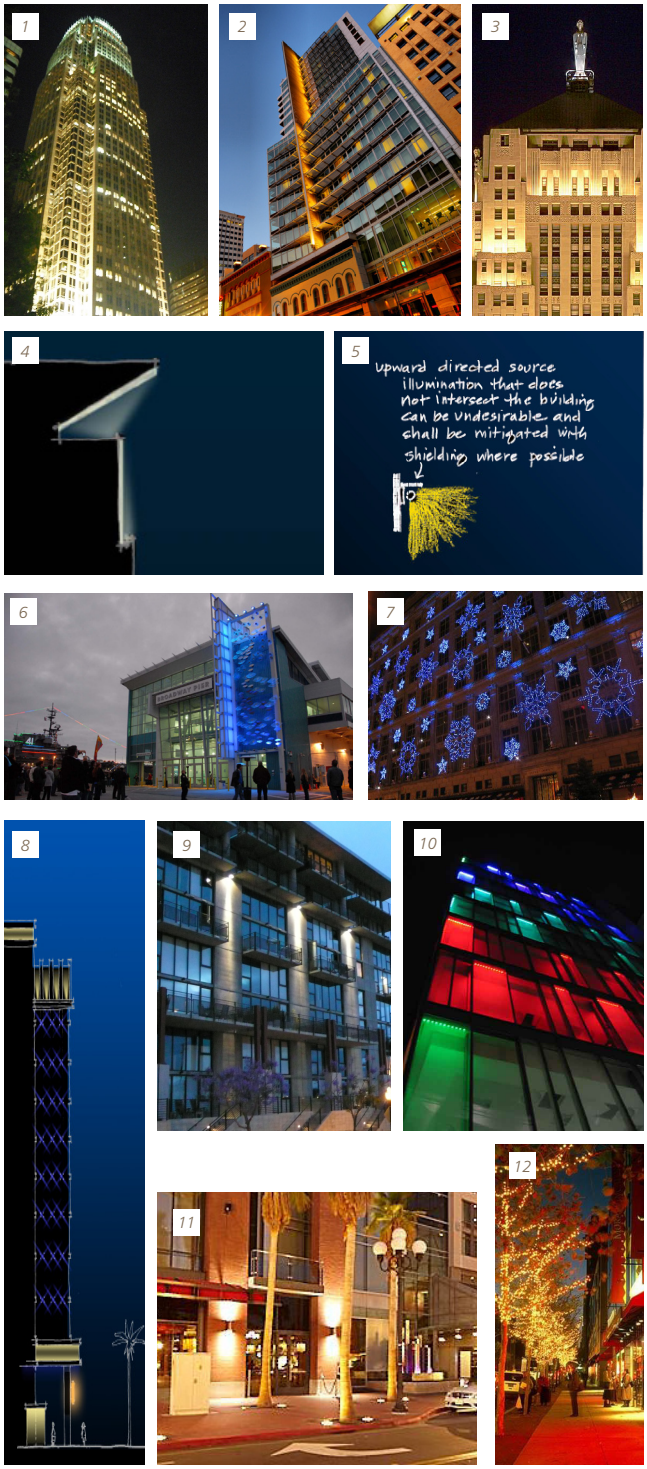


Figure 4.16 Lighting Examples (Photos 1-12)

5

PUBLIC ART

Overview 127

5.1 Public Art Defined 128
5.1.1 Definition 128
5.1.2 Temporary Public Art 128
5.1.3 Public Art and the Built Environment 128
5.1.4 Public Art and Wayfinding 129
5.1.5 Public Art and Cultural Amenities 129

5.2 Public Art Framework 130
5.2.1 Boulevards and Special Streets 130
5.2.2 Green Streets 130
5.2.3 Main Streets 130

5.3 Types of Public Art 130
5.3.1 Iconic Artwork 132
5.3.2 Wayfinding Artwork 132
5.3.3 Temporary Art 133
5.3.4 Points-of-Interest Artwork 133
5.3.5 Neighborhood-Identity Artwork 134
5.3.6 Comprehensive/District-Wide Artwork 135

5.4 Placement Guidelines 136

Overview

According to the City's General Plan, public art and cultural amenities are an effective and desirable means to improve the quality of the built environment, contribute to economic prosperity, create great public spaces, foster cultural diversity, attract tourists and celebrate the distinctiveness of San Diego's neighborhoods. Public art downtown should reinforce primary gateways and streets, green streets, and neighborhood centers, consistent with the urban design framework in Section 2.

The public art discussion in this section focuses on downtown's public realm. It supplements and complements other City policy and guideline documents that address public art on streets, in parks and plazas and within private development. These include Inclusion of Public Art in Selected Capital Improvement Program and Redevelopment Agency Projects, Municipal Code, Chapter 02, Article 06, Division 07: Commission for Arts and Culture, Developer/Applicant Guide to the City of San Diego Public Art; and the Public Art Master Plan, March 2004. The user of this framework should review these other documents when considering and implementing public art in downtown San Diego. This section addresses public art in terms of public art defined and public art framework.

5.1 Public Art Defined

5.1.1
Definition

Public art is simply art in a public place. Whether they are temporary or permanent, visual or performance, these works engage the public imagination. Public art has the power to energize our public spaces, arouse our thinking, and transform our experience of the places where we live, work, and play, creating more welcoming and meaningful environments that invite interaction. Public art, when done well, engenders pride in place, adds meaning and a sense of history to the public realm, and creates a unique and lasting impression on residents and visitors alike. For these reasons, it has the power to transform a city's image.

Within downtown San Diego, public art should serve as a point of reference or landmark, welcoming and orienting visitors to downtown and its various neighborhood and civic spaces. It should also reinforce critical linkages and enliven the pedestrian experience. In these permanent and/or temporary roles, public art can be iconic, contemplative, interactive or static.

5.1.2
Temporary Public Art

Temporary public art–art that changes over time–is a highly effective tool for developing socially-engaging interactive art experiences in community settings. When carefully planned and executed, temporary art generates substantial awareness of, interest and involvement in, and appreciation for public art and the surrounding environment. Temporary projects can involve a wide range of artists, can be experimental in nature or necessitate only short-term viability. By its fresh and immediate nature, temporary art fosters artistic exploration far beyond the traditional boundaries of public art and provides an ongoing attraction for residents and visitors to San Diego.

5.1.3
Public Art and the Built Environment

Public art should be unique and discernible as art (in contrast with integrated architectural features, such as decorative or ornamental elements, and landscape improvements, which can also enhance the character of downtown districts, streets and open spaces).

Public art can be integrated into buildings, the streetscape and publicly-accessible open space with artistic embellishments such as murals (painted, mosaic, low relief, etc.), figurative and other sculptural elements, and light installations. Bollards, lamp posts and street furniture can qualify as public art if they are unique sculptural elements created by artists. To be successful, the art should not compete with the built environment nor blend in to the point of obscurity.

5.1.4
Public Art and Wayfinding

Public art and signage are not the same. Signage, maps and plaques are functional elements that provide information and direction to pedestrians and vehicular traffic. These are typically created by graphic designers and signage consultants to provide information in a consistent, unified and easily-identifiable way.

Wayfinding refers to the user experience of orientation within the built environment. Architectural and design elements provide ways in which people orient themselves in physical space and navigate from place to place. Public art also can serve that purpose; it can be used, for example, to delineate access routes and entrance points, or to mark linkages between adjacent neighborhoods and the downtown core.

5.1.5
Public Art and Cultural Amenities

Public art and cultural amenities can enhance the viability of downtown and enrich the lives of both visitors and residents. According to the City's General Plan, cultural amenities are designated spaces or programming dedicated to individual and group presentations, exhibitions or public performances involving music, dance, theatre, opera, literature, visual arts or any combination of media or genres. They require venues and infrastructure sufficient to support programming of cultural activities and temporary public art installations. Addressed in the Downtown Community Plan, such venues may be situated in public parks, plazas and other publicly-accessible open spaces.

5.2 Public Art Framework

The public art framework illustrated in Figure 5.1 is a conceptual framework for public art downtown. It provides an overarching vision and guide for the development of a coherent, thoughtful and relevant visual art collection; it should be used by the private and public sectors in defining and shaping neighborhoods. It is not intended to serve as an inventory or locator of existing and/or planned public artwork.

Consistent with the urban design framework, the public art framework concentrates public art on downtown's primary gateways and streets, green streets and neighborhood centers, reinforcing the image and legibility of downtown San Diego and its key entryways, districts and downtown-wide connections.

The public art framework emphasizes where and what type of public art should be located in downtown San Diego, as discussed below. It does not preclude or address public art that may be placed elsewhere, particularly in public parks and open spaces. Such placement is addressed in other policy and guidelines documents, including the Neighborhood Design Guidelines.

5.2.1
Boulevards and Special Streets

Significant, large-scale, iconic art strategically located on boulevards demarcates major downtown entrances, provides points of reference for wayfinding and provides definition and identity of place to high-impact areas. Conveying the uniqueness of San Diego, tied together by a network of streets, sidewalks and other open spaces, these public artworks will become treasured centerpieces for the urban core. Public art on special streets, in particular Cedar and Ash Streets, conveys their standing as historic gateways and high-traveled linkage streets.

5.2.2
Green Streets

Public art in select green-street locations—on sidewalks and in plazas and parks—enhances the pedestrian experience and fosters pride and stewardship among neighborhood residents. It also serves to highlight noteworthy historic, cultural and physical characteristics of the area, and to visually and psychologically join the downtown's constituent parts, its neighborhoods and the bayfront.

5.2.3
Main Streets

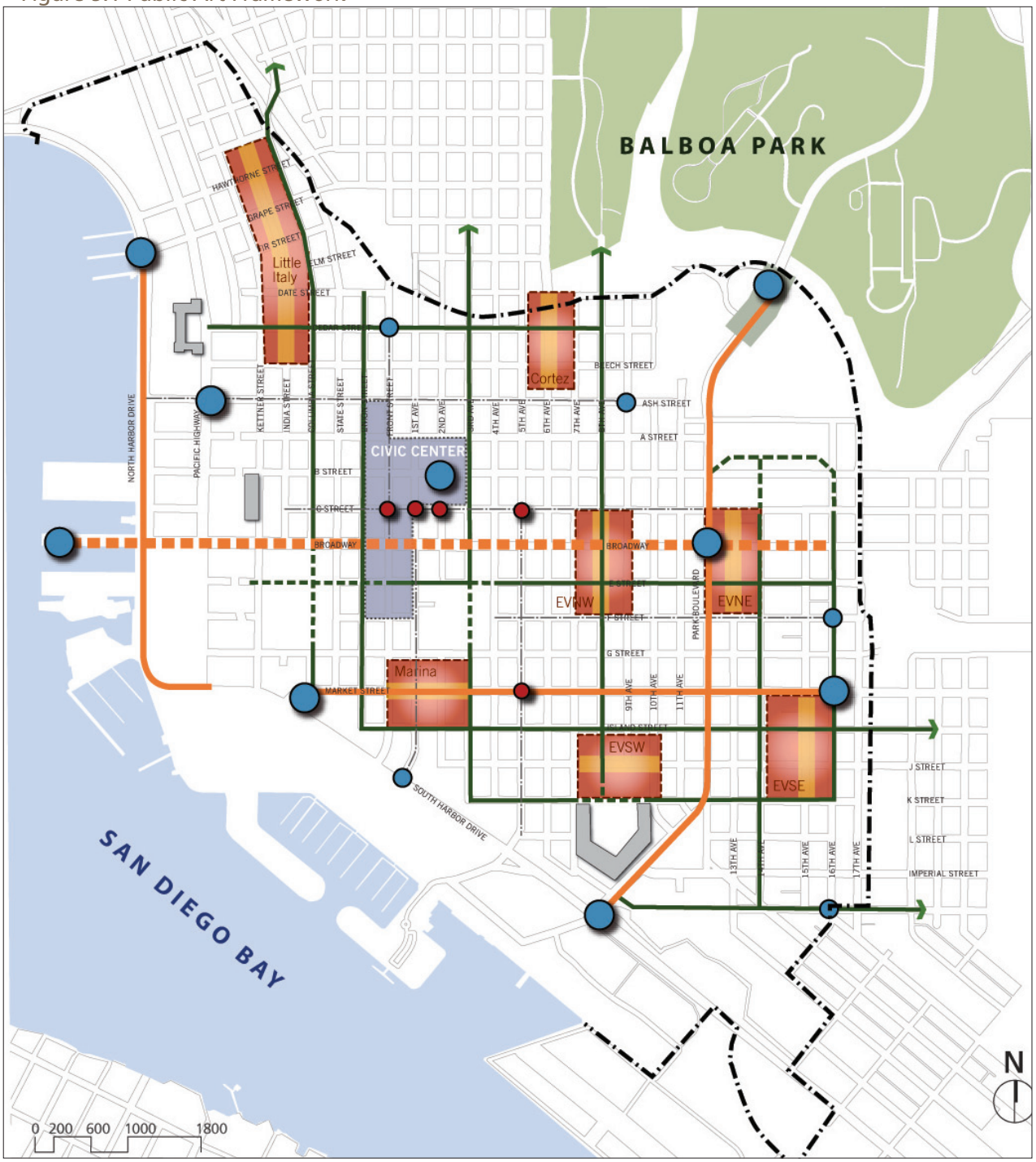
Placing public art on street corners and plazas of designated main streets serves to reflect and promote neighborhood identity, attract people to the neighborhood center as a destination and gathering place, and emphasize linkages to adjacent neighborhoods and other nearby amenities.

5.3 Types of Public Art

Public art in downtown San Diego can take many forms, particularly along downtown's boulevards, special streets, green streets and main streets and at downtown's civic center. The following pages show examples of various types of public artwork, which include:

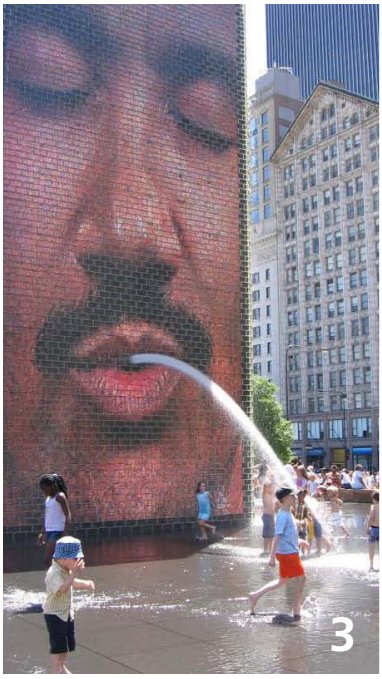
- Iconic artwork
- Wayfinding artwork
- Temporary art
- Points-of-interest artwork
- Neighborhood-identity artwork
- Comprehensive/district-wide artwork

Figure 5.1 Public Art Framework



5.3.1
Iconic Artwork

Iconic artwork is significant, large-scale permanent artwork serving as defining landmarks at major gateways into downtown, at the civic center, and on major boulevards and intersections.



1. *"I See What You Mean" by Lawrence Argent, Denver, Colorado*
2. *"Cupid's Span" by Claes Oldenburg and Coosje van Bruggen, San Francisco, California*
3. *"Crown Fountain" by Jaume Plensa, Chicago, Illinois*

5.3.2
Wayfinding Artwork

Wayfinding artwork is permanent artwork located in active vehicular and pedestrian intersections. It serves to connect key locations to the downtown core and enhance pedestrian circulation. [Note: Enhanced signage does not qualify as wayfinding artwork.]

1. *"Flame" by Ray King, Arlington, Virginia*
2. *"Light Channels" by Bill Fitzgibbons, San Antonio, Texas*
3. *"Portlandia" by Raymond Kaskey, Portland, Oregon*
4. *"As on a Darkling Plain" by Wendy Ross, Arlington, Virginia*

5.3.3
Temporary Art

Temporary art installations are non-permanent artwork in a range of media and scale displayed for a limited amount of time in generally unexpected places. The artwork serves to enliven and refresh the pedestrian experience, enhance tourism and pique public awareness of the built and natural environments. Priority placement is in high-traffic pedestrian areas where first-time and repeat visitors can delight in a changing environment. On-going temporary art installations along Broadway reinforce its prominence as downtown San Diego's main street and its character as the preeminent promenade to the bay.

1. *"Red Ball Project" by kurt perscke, Portland, Oregon*
2. *"Digital Kakejiku" by Akira Hasegawa, San Jose, California*
3. *"Chalk" by Jennifer Allora and Guillermo Calzadilla, Boston, Massachusetts*

5.3.4
Points-of-Interest Artwork

Points of interest artwork are individual or multiple artworks placed at select locations along the sidewalks and in open spaces along a heavily trafficked vehicular and/or pedestrian thoroughfare. The artworks serve as points of interest and visual respite along the corridors and to delineate and connect key places and neighborhoods.

1. *"Tiki Tote Moniki" by Kenny Scharf, Portland, Oregon*
2. *"Walking Figures" by Magdalena Abakanowicz, San Diego, California*
3. *"Corporate Head" by Terry Allen and Philip Levine, Los Angeles, California*
4. *"Head" by Jun Kaneko, New York, New York*

Points-of-interest artwork should be permanent, interactive artworks placed within the streetscape that function to reinforce connective qualities and enliven the pedestrian experience.

1. *"Ecology Stones" by Fernanda D'Agostino with Valerie Otani, Portland, Oregon*
2. *"Face Time" by Steve Appleton, Los Angeles, California*
3. *"Kneeling Man with Hammer" by Viola Frey, Pasadena, California*

5.3.5 Neighborhood-Identity Artwork

Neighborhood-identity artwork is permanent artwork where people congregate, interact, and engage in social activities. The artwork augments a sense of neighborhood identity and signals a community gathering place.

1. *"Bitmap Fence: Newsreaders" Christian Moeller, Seattle, Washington*
2. *"Recipe for Friendship" by Nina Karavasiles, San Diego, California*
3. *"Bells and Books of Knowledge" by Jacqueline Dreager, Santa Monica, California*

5.3.6 Comprehensive/District-Wide Artwork

Comprehensive/district-wide artwork is permanent artwork that is located throughout the designated site in response to the design and function of the built environment and its importance to the downtown core.

1. *"La Grande Vitesse" by Alexander Calder, Grand Rapids, Michigan*
2. *"Fulcrum" by Richard Serra, London, England*
3. *"Eye Benches" by Louise Bourgeois, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania*

5.4 Placement Guidelines

- **5.4.A** Public art is encouraged to help express the image and key linkages of downtown and define and represent various districts, consistent with the public art framework. In identifying locations for public art–whether on boulevards, special streets, green streets, main streets, parks or plazas–the following criteria should be considered:

  Visibility

  Public safety

  Interior and exterior traffic patterns

  Relationship of the site to existing or future architectural features and to natural features

  Function of the site

  Future development plans for the area

  Overall urban-design goal for the site

  Landscape design

  Relationship of the site to existing artworks within the vicinity

  Environmental impact of the site

  Public accessibility to the artwork

  Social context of the artwork

- **5.4.B** Public art should contribute to and complement a well-organized streetscape composed of signage, banners, trash receptacles, utility boxes and other streetscape furnishings. Public art should not add substantially to the existing or potential visual clutter of a streetscape.

- **5.4.C** Public art should be located in an area that is open and accessible to the public. That is, the area should open be a minimum of five days a week during normal business hours and provide unobstructed access to the artwork without security check-in, clearance, or invitation. Any artwork sited inside a building lobby or courtyard must be directly accessible to the public, not just viewed through windows or doorways.

- **5.4.D** Permanent art in the public right-of-way is considered similarly to any other physical element of the sidewalk. As such, it should conform to guidelines for public sidewalks in Section 3 and the <Streetscape Guidelines>.

- **5.4.E** Any three-dimensional art object that might be an obstacle to pedestrian traffic should be installed in the frontage zone, or in the furnishings zone at a minimum of 24 inches from the outside edge of the curb.

- **5.4.F** Placement of three-dimensional art objects is restricted to sidewalks with sufficient space. The art installation should ensure that a minimum of six feet (6') of clear pedestrian passage is maintained on the sidewalk.

- **5.4.G** Two-dimensional sidewalk inlay art pieces may be incorporated into any area of the sidewalk. Any art that is placed in the sidewalk surface should not be hazardous to pedestrians, nor should it cause the surface to fail to meet a minimum friction coefficient that is compliant with City guidelines and current codes.

- **5.4.H** Any artwork, whether permanent or temporary, must conform to the most current requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and all other federal, state, and local codes and regulations regarding accessibility.

GLOSSARY

G

A

Active Commercial Use
Commercial uses that are accessible to the general public, generate walk-in pedestrian clientele and contribute to a high level of pedestrian activity. Uses that generate pedestrian activity include retail shops, restaurants, bars, theaters and the performing arts, commercial recreation and entertainment, personal and convenience services, *hotel* lobbies, banks, travel agencies, airline ticket agencies, child care services, libraries, museums and galleries.

B

Base Floor Area Ratio (Base FAR)
The minimum and maximum development potential permitted for a site and expressed as a ratio of the amount of gross floor area to the size of the parcel. The minimum base FAR is the minimum floor area which must be built on a site in a new project. Maximum base FAR is the maximum floor area permitted to be built without bonuses or transfers.

Bicycle Lane
One-way striped lane on a street or expressway dedicated for bicyclers.

Bicycle Path
Right-of-way completely separated from any street or highway that is dedicated for bicyclers.

Bicycle Route
Route shared with pedestrians and motor vehicle traffic that is also available to bicyclers and is marked only with signs.

Blank wall(s)
Any street wall area that is not transparent, including solid doors and mechanical area wall(s).

Block
An area, typically rectangular in shape, bounded by public rights-of-way (i.e. streets and/or open space).

Block Opening
A break in the street wall that allows for a visual and/or physical connection to the interior of the block.

Buffer
Open space, landscaped area, fence, wall, planting and/or building that screen one use or property from another, usually to block noise, lights or other nuisances.

Build-to Line
The line to which a building façade is built up to, establishing a vertical plane at that line.

Building Articulation
The manner in which portions of a building form are expressed (materials, color, texture, pattern, modulation, etc.) and come together to define the structure. Such expression gives emphasis to architectural elements (windows, balconies, porches, entries, parapets, etc.) that create a complementary pattern or rhythm, dividing larger buildings into smaller identifiable pieces.

Building Base
The lower portion of a building located immediately above grade.

Building Frontage
A vertical side of a building that faces the primary street or space.

Building Materials
All materials visible from the exterior of a development, including materials used for walls, roofs, windows, doors, and architectural or decorative features applied to the building façade.

C

CCDC
An abbreviation for the Centre City Development Corporation.

CCDC President
The President of the Centre City Development Corporation and his or her designees.

Civic Scale
A proportionately distinguished space for public use or gathering. Typically defined by larger buildings, this type of space may be a wide street or boulevard, or a public square, of a grander scale that conveys a strong image. This type of space is often adjacent to public buildings, such as municipal buildings, performing arts, exhibition halls or museums, and typically oriented along boulevards.

Common Indoor Open Space
Usable indoor areas commonly accessible to all residents and users of the building for the purpose of active or passive recreation.

Common Outdoor Open Space
Usable outdoor spaces commonly accessible to all residents and users of the building for the purpose of passive or active recreation.

Couplet Street
Pair of parallel streets one block apart wherein each street is a three-lane, one-way street, and where one of the pair provides access to a freeway entrance and the other access from a freeway exit, to and from downtown.

Courtyard
An open space unobstructed to the sky, located at or above grade level on a lot, and bounded on two (2) or more sides by walls of a building.

Cultural Institutions or Cultural Use
Non-profit institutions recognized as a 501(c), displaying or preserving objects of interest in one or more of the arts or sciences. This classification includes libraries, museums, non-profit art galleries and interpretive centers.

D

Density
The number of dwelling units within a standard measure of land area. Usually expressed in dwelling units per acre.

Design Review
Formal review of a proposed project through the established process relevant to the size and nature of the proposed project.

Dwelling Unit
A room or group of rooms -- including sleeping, eating, cooking, and sanitation facilities--that constitutes an independent housekeeping unit, occupied or intended for occupancy by one household on a long-term basis (i.e., for more than 30 days.)

F

Façade
Any vertical, exterior face or wall of a building that is adjacent to or fronts on a street, mid-block walkway, park or plaza. Such walls are often distinguished from other faces by architectural details.

Fine-grain Character
A neighborhood characterized by human-scale buildings which offer a variety in texture, form, scale, color and material. Fine-grain is further enriched by well-articulated and detailed ground floor treatment, with frequent entrances, plenty of transparency and well-landscaped setbacks.

Floor area ratio (abbreviated as "FAR")
The numerical value obtained by dividing the total gross floor area (GFA) of all building(s) on a premises by the total land area of the premises on which the building(s) are located.

Floor area ratio bonus (FAR Bonus)
The additional floor area ratio that may be earned by meeting certain requirements listed in the Planned Development Ordinance (PDO).

Floor plate
The amount of gross floor area located on a single floor in the tower of a building.

Frontage Zone
The area of a public sidewalk located between the throughway zone and adjacent building or property line, assuming the sidewalk dimension allows for it.

Furnishings Zone
The area of a public sidewalk located between the throughway zone and adjacent street that accommodates public amenities such as street trees, street lamps and benches.

G

Gateway
A principal or ceremonial point of entrance into a district or neighborhood. Gateways may be distinguished through distinctive landscape treatment or public art.

Grand Scale
See 'Civic Scale'.

Green roof
An open space area on top of a roof of a building that is landscaped and maintained according to the requirements of the Planned Development Ordinance (PDO).

I

Iconic Artwork
Significant, large-scale permanent artwork serving as defining landmarks at major gateways into downtown, at the civic center and on major boulevards and intersections.

Imageable
The ability to represent, reflect or symbolize for the benefit of public perception. Places are imageable through such devices as street character, architectural style, public art, landmarks, planting, materials and setting.

L

Legibility
The degree to which a place can be easily understood and traversed. Legibility is enhanced through easily-decipherable and strongly-differentiated form, function and feel that affords orientation within a particular area. Legibility is often achieved through a hierarchy of streets and opens space, distinctive buildings, public art, landmarks and views to distinctive features in the landscape.

Lot
A parcel, tract, or area of land established by plat, subdivision, or other legal means to be owned, used, or developed. See Section San Diego Municipal Code (SDMC)113.0237 for additional information on determining a lot.

Lot Line
The boundary that legally and geometrically demarcates a Lot.

Lot Width
The length of the frontage line of a Lot.

M

Mass and scale
The visual perception of the organization of the gross floor area of the structure compared to adjoining development.

Massing
The overall exterior shape of a building or structure (i.e. three dimensional bulk of a structure: height, width, and depth); the proportion aspect of the elements of the form.

Mid-zone
The portion of a building above the building base and below the tower. The mid-zone only applies within the Large Floorplate and/or Employment Required overlay districts.

Mixed-use development
Developments in which two or more land uses are included.

Modulation
A stepping back or projecting forward of sections of a structure's façade within specified intervals of building width and depth, as a means of breaking up a structure's apparent bulk. Building modulation is typically expressed through horizontal and/or vertical proportions.

O

Open Space
A natural area, park, square or plaza open to the sky and preserved from development for public use and outdoor recreation, conservation of valuable natural resources and/or structuring of urban development and form.

Orientation
The means by which one locates him or herself within a particular area, typically through landmarks and/or other features of the environment.

P

Pedestrian-Clear Zone
See 'Throughway Zone'.

Pedestrian Entrance
A functional entrance or door that is accessible to the general public from an enclosed occupied space. This does not include entrances to mechanical equipment or storage areas, emergency exits or decorative nonfunctional doors and entrances.

Pedestrian-Oriented
The characteristics of an area where the location and access to buildings, types of uses permitted on the street level, storefront design and sidewalk design afford a safe, inviting and comfortable environment to walk.

Permeable or Pervious
Having pores or openings that permit water and air to pass through, typically associated with ground cover and paving materials. The use of pervious materials allows water to filter into the ground, which helps to filter pollutants and reduce erosion and flooding, and can aid in storm-water management.

Podium
The base of a structure.

Porosity
Refers to an opening or break in the street wall to allow for passageways through the block, plazas and courtyards and penetration of light and air.

POPO
Privately-owned, publicly-occupied spaces that complement and effectively extend the public realm (i.e. public sidewalks and open spaces).

Private Open Space
An area connected or immediately adjacent to a dwelling unit. The space can be a balcony, porch, ground or above grade patio or roof deck used exclusively by the occupants of the dwelling unit and their guests.

Projection
A part of the building facade that extends outward beyond the building lot line.

Property Line
See 'Lot line'.

Public Art
Permanent or temporary physical works of art visible to the general public, whether part of a building or free-standing: can include sculpture, lighting effects, street furniture, paving, railings and signs.

Public Park
A publicly owned area that is designated as a park.

Public Realm
The parts of a city (whether publicly or privately owned) that are available, without charge, for everyone to use or see, including streets, squares and parks. Well-designed public realm spaces encourage and enable human interaction.

Public Right-of-way
A public easement for streets, alleys, or other uses.

S

Scale
The spatial relationship among structures along a street or block front, in particular the perceived height, bulk and proportions of a building relative to that of neighboring buildings and to the human form. Also refers to the quality of building that exhibits through its structural or architectural components the human functions.

Screen or screening
The act, process, or result of visually shielding or obscuring a structureor use from adjacent property by fencing, walls, berms, or densely planted vegetation.

Setback
A required distance inward from and perpendicular to a property line at or behind which all structures must be located unless otherwise specified. See SDMC 113.0252 for additional information on measuring setbacks.

Sidewalk
The paved section of the public realm dedicated exclusively to pedestrian activity.

Solar Access
The provision of direct sunlight to an area specified for solar energy collection when the sun's azimuth is within 45 degrees of true south.

Stoop
The space typically associated with residential ground floor entries that are aligned close to the property/frontage line. Typically, the space is elevated from the sidewalk for privacy and consists of an exterior stair and landing at the entrance.

Story
The area between grade and finished floor, the area between finish-floor elevations or the area between the finish-floor elevation and the roof elevation. See SDMC Section 113.0261 for additional information on measuring story.

Stormwater
Water that accumulates during precipitation events.

Street Edge
Refers to the ground/lower floors of buildings with a minimum setback that line and frame the street.

Streetscape
The design and environment of streets, roadways and public sidewalks and the interface between streets and adjoining parks, plazas and public and private development.

Street Volume
The amount of space bounded by the street wall, framing the public realm.

Street Wall
All contiguous walls of a building whose overall limits make up the building facade. See SDMC Section 113.0264 for additional information on determining the street wall.

Structured Parking
All constructed or erected parking facilities that serve a primary use and/or the general public.

Sustainable Development
A development that is sensitive to its building site and surroundings, minimizes its consumption of resources and waste and can be maintained over time with minimal impact on the environment; balancing near-term interests with the protection of the interests of future generations.

T

Throughway Zone
The area of a public sidewalk located between the frontage zone and furnishings zone that allows for clear pedestrian access, free of obstructions.

Tower
The portion of a building located above the base or the mid-zone, if applicable, to the top of the building.

Traffic Volume
The total amount of vehicles measured within a given period of time.

Transit Emphasis
With special importance laid upon the passage of vehicles and/or public transportation.

Transparency
Possessing the quality of transmitting light, typically referring to clear, ground-level, non-reflective windows. In storefronts, transparency refers to windows that are characterized by having visibility or accessibility to information of the store's goods or services.

U

Upper Tower
The upper 20 percent of a tower, measured above the base or mid-zone to the top of the building, including mechanical penthouses.

Urban Design Framework
A set of assumptions, concepts, values, and practices that constitute and structure a way of viewing and designing an urban environment, within which public and private improvements can take place.

Urban Open Space
Any usable space, such parks and plazas, accessible to the general public which is 1,000 square feet or greater in size.

V

Variance
A discretionary land use entitlement designed to provide some flexibility from the zoning regulations, issued to a property owner and allowing deviation(s) from the development standards otherwise applicable to property, requiring findings that there are special circumstances applicable to the property, that the entitlement is necessary to allow the owner to exercise substantial rights and that the approval will not result in detriment to the neighborhood or to the city.

View Corridors
A passageway / corridor that provides clear, unobstructed line of sight between two locations, generally an object of significance to the community (i.e. ridge line, river, historic building, etc).

W

Walkable
Within a five minute walking distance (approximately 1320 feet) from point to point usually in relation to a park, neighborhood center, transit stop or open space.

Wayfinding
Refers to the user experience of orientation within the built environment and the process of organizing spatial and environmental information to help users navigate and find their way.

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