SAN JOSE DOWNTOWN

DESIGN GUIDELINES AND STANDARDS

Adopted
April 23, 2019

Amended
May 21, 2019

Planning Director's Update
May 1, 2020

CITY OF SAN JOSE
CAPITAL OF SILICON VALLEY

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SAN JOSE DOWNTOWN

DESIGN GUIDELINES AND STANDARDS

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

1.0 INTRODUCTION 1

1.1 Background and Applicability 2
1.2 Purpose 4
1.3 Values and Guiding Principles 5
1.4 How to use the Guidelines 6

2.0 FRAMEWORK PLANS 7

1 2.1 Prominent Sites and Frontages 8
2 2.2 Podium Level and Pedestrian Level 10
3 2.3 Historic Sites and Districts 12
4 2.4 Civic Icon Buildings 14
5 2.5 Street Level View Corridors 15
6 2.6 Special Lighting 16
7 2.7 Block Structure 18

3.0 SITE 19

3.1 Importance of the Site 20
3.2 Site Context
3.2.1 Block Size 21
3.2.2 Building Placement 22
3.3 Site Organization
3.3.1 Arrangement of Activities 23
3.3.2 Relationship to Transit 24
3.3.3 Paseo / Mid-Block Connection Location 25
3.4 Site Element Locations
3.4.1 Locating Privately-Owned Public Open Space 26
3.4.2 Locating Ground Level Semi-Private Open Space 27
3.4.3 Locating Ground Level Building Open Space 28
3.4.4 Vehicle and Bicycle Parking Location 29
3.5 Site Access Locations
3.5.1 Pedestrian and Bicycle Entrance Location 30
3.5.2 Service Entrance Location 31
3.5.3 Parking and Vehicular Access Location 32

4.0 BUILDING 33

4.1 Buildings and the City 34
4.2 Context
4.2.1 Form, Proportion, and Organizing Idea 35
4.2.2 Massing Relationship to Context 36
4.2.3 Civic Icon Adjacency 37
4.2.4 Historic Adjacency 38
4.3 Massing
4.3.1 Podium Level Massing (Below 70 Feet) 40
4.3.2 Skyline Level Massing (Above 70 Feet) 41
4.3.3 Streetwall 42
4.3.4 Sunlight 44
4.3.5 Wind 45
4.4 Building Elements
4.4.1 Facade Pattern and Articulation 46
4.4.2 a. Windows and Glazing 48
b. Bird Safety 49
c. Balconies (Private Open Space) 50
4.4.3 Materials and Colors 51
4.4.4 Mitigating Blank Facades 52
4.4.5 Vertical Circulation 53
4.4.6 Parking Garages 54
4.4.7 Roofs
a. Rooftops and Mechanical Equipment 56
b. Green Roofs and Decks (Building Open Space) 57
4.4.8 Pedestrian Bridges 58
4.4.9 Lighting
a. Lighting - Podium Level 59
b. Lighting - Skyline Level 60
4.4.10 Signage - Skyline Level 61

5.0 PEDESTRIAN LEVEL 63

5.1 Street Life, Commerce, and the Public Realm 64
5.2 Public Art in Private Development 65
5.3 Ground Floor Treatments and Uses
5.3.1 a. Active Frontages 66
b. Mitigating Blank Walls 68
c. Service and Utility Design 69
5.3.2 Ground Floor Non-Residential Space 70
5.3.3 Ground Floor Residential Space 71
5.3.4 Lighting - Pedestrian Level 72
5.3.5 Signage - Podium Level and Pedestrian Level 74
5.4 Surface Parking Lots 75
5.5 Entrances
5.5.1 Pedestrian and Bicycle Entry Design 76
5.5.2 Vehicle and Service Entry Design 78
5.6 Paseo Design 79
5.7 Privately-Owned Public Open Space Design 80

A.0 APPENDIX 81

A.1 Glossary 82
A.2 Background Studies
A.2.1 Skyline Studies 86
A.2.2 Paseo Precedents 90
A.3 Resources and References 92

1.0
INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background and Applicability

1.2 Purpose

1.3 Values and Guiding Principles

1.4 How to use the Guidelines

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1.1 Background and Applicability

San José's Downtown is the largest urban center in Silicon Valley and is a unique place to work, live, and play. Downtown is a center of business, culture, history, living, entertainment, and transportation. This area is rapidly developing and affords opportunities to develop great civic spaces and for *placemaking* that will further define San José as the capital of Silicon Valley.

Downtown's urban design constraints are also unique. These include:

- A low airport flight path that limits building height
- A high groundwater table that favors placement of parking and other basement utilities above ground.
- Nearby highways that provide access yet also limit and divide the area.

The San José Downtown Design Guidelines and Standards (referred to in the document as the Downtown Design Guidelines or the Design Guidelines) provide guidance for the form and design of buildings in Downtown, their appearance in the larger cityscape, and their interface with the street level *Public Realm*. The Design Guidelines document defines the design objectives for the elements that determine the image of Downtown and refines the concepts of other plans, translating them into an operational document that increases predictability for developers and their architects for development in Downtown.

APPLICABILITY

The Downtown Design Guidelines are effective thirty (30) days after approval by the City Council ("Effective Date"). Any Planning application submitted after the Effective Date for a new permit or permit amendment is required to comply with the Downtown Design Guidelines. The San José Downtown Design Guidelines and Standards fully replace the 2004 Downtown Design Guidelines.

ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTS TO CONSULT

There are additional expectations for development in some areas of Downtown. Refer to the specific area document for more information, listed below. All of these documents can be found at www.sanjoseca.gov/planning.

- ☐ Downtown Street and Pedestrian Lighting Master Plan
- ☐ Diridon Station Area Plan
- ☐ Market Almaden Neighborhood Improvement Plan
- ☐ Downtown San José Historic District Design Guidelines
- ☐ St. James Square Historic District Design Guidelines
- ☐ Public Art NEXT! San José's New Public Art Master Plan
- ☐ Downtown Next! A Public Art Focus Plan for Downtown San José
- ☐ Draft Diridon Station Area Art Master Plan
- ☐ Cultural Connection: City of San José's Cultural Plan
- ☐ San José Complete Streets Design Standards and Guidelines
- ☐ San José Green Stormwater Infrastructure Plan (2019)
- ☐ Chapter 20.70 - Downtown Regulations of the San José Municipal Code

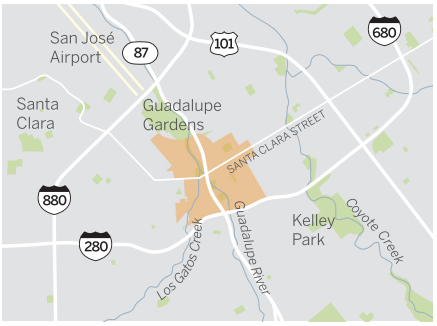
DESIGN GUIDELINES SCOPE

The San José Downtown Design Guidelines and Standards provide guidance for the site planning, access, form, and design of buildings in Downtown, their appearance in the larger cityscape, and their interface with the *Pedestrian Level*. The Design Guidelines define the design objectives for the elements that determine the image of the general area of Downtown, translating them into an operational document that increases predictability for various stakeholders.

The Design Guidelines document includes design guidelines for buildings adjacent to historic buildings but does not include guidelines for rehabilitation or modifications to historic buildings or adaptive reuse of historic buildings. Furthermore, the Design Guidelines do not update or change the 1989 Saint James Square Historic District Design Guidelines, the 2003 Downtown San José Historic District Guidelines, the 2004 Downtown Historic Design Guidelines, or any other applicable historic review guidelines and standards. These existing historic guidelines will remain in use as applicable until the City updates those documents.

DIRIDON STATION AREA PLAN UPDATE

The Diridon Station Area is envisioned as a vibrant and critical component of the overall Downtown. At the time of approval of the Downtown Design Guidelines by the Planning Commission and City Council, Planning staff was also in the beginning stage of updating the Diridon Station Area Plan (DSAP). As part of this DSAP update process, new design solutions could be identified and adopted that may take alternate approaches to achieve common goals for the Diridon area. This may result in proposed new standards and guidelines which, if approved, could supersede the Downtown Design Guidelines as they apply to the Diridon Station Area.



Downtown Context

GUIDELINES BOUNDARY

The proposed Downtown Design Guidelines apply generally to the General Plan Downtown Growth Area and the Diridon Station Area Plan Area. The area is generally bounded in the south by Highway 280, on the north by Coleman Avenue, on the west by Diridon Station, and on the east by San José State University. While the San José State University (SJSU) campus is not within the boundary of the Downtown Growth Area, SJSU contributes significantly to the vitality of Downtown and is part of its larger context. Therefore, SJSU is included within the proposed Design Guidelines boundary.

REVISIONS

As a part of the approval of the Downtown Design Guidelines on April 23, 2019, City Council delegated authority to the Director of Planning, Building, and Code Enforcement to make minor clarifications, corrections, or technical changes to the text and diagrams of the San José Downtown Design Guidelines and Standards. These revisions are also to be published on the Planning, Building, and Code Enforcement webpage at www.sanjoseca.gov/planning.

1.2 Purpose

AN IMPLEMENTATION TOOL

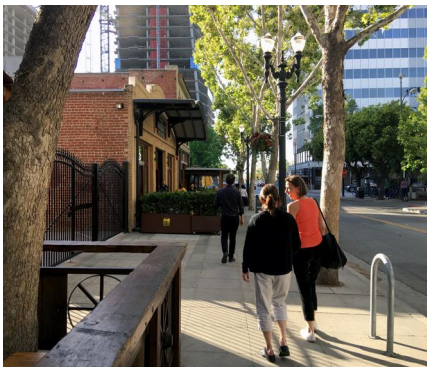
The vision for the future of Downtown San José has come from a variety of plans and public involvement over multiple years. Implementing the vision will require both public and private investment and action, and the Downtown Design Guidelines document is a tool to help achieve the vision.

Many key elements of Downtown will be governed by other documents and public investments and actions. The Design Guidelines, in coordination with other plans, work toward the vision with specific requirements and clear direction for **new buildings** and **major exterior modification to existing buildings**. The Downtown Design Guidelines are intended to guide buildings toward design excellence, sustainable urbanism, and a sense of place that is unique to San José.

DESIGN EXCELLENCE

An inviting *Public Realm* forms the setting for *Public Life* - of strolling, shopping, civic celebration, and activism. Memorable buildings, pedestrian *paseos*, *Public Spaces* and the social and physical environment in which to enjoy them form the backbone of a livable community. As a regional job, entertainment, and cultural destination, Downtown San José is the South Bay region's primary and most intensive employment center, providing a distinctive work environment for large and small companies at high densities that generates business development and contributes to the City's culture of innovation. Urban areas such as this require thoughtful design, and Downtown's high design quality will support these elements of *Public Life* and economic health.

"Sensing You" by Dan Corson; photo by Adrien Le Biavant



SUSTAINABLE URBANISM

Downtown San José includes unique and growing residential neighborhoods with convenient access to urban activities and amenities, inviting families, young professionals, empty-nesters, youth, and elderly to live Downtown. Development in Downtown San José is urban, compact, and resource efficient, with historic architecture side by side with contemporary high-rise development. Sustainable transportation works well in this pedestrian-oriented environment, with facilities to support walking, bicycling, and transit use, and with vehicles carefully managed. For long trips, public transit is the mode of choice, providing an advantage in accessibility to the region, moving past vehicle dependence. These factors require good design to create a vital, resilient urban area with environmental and economic sustainability.

SENSE OF PLACE

Downtown is San Jose's largest and most vibrant urban center for living, working and entertaining and the center of the City's arts, entertainment, culinary, and professional sports activities. Downtown has a vitality that makes it "home" to all of San Jose's citizens, workers, and visitors. It is the symbolic, economic, and cultural heart of San José and the cultural center of Silicon Valley. With the South Bay's largest and most intensive concentration of civic and cultural facilities, including San José State University, the largest university library building in the western United States, and world-class performing arts institutions, Downtown contributes to the City's positive identity and establishes San José's prominent place in the region. High-quality buildings and urban spaces will knit these facilities and activities together into a unified and welcoming place for all.

1.3 Values and Guiding Principles

The Values and Guiding Principles have guided the creation of the Design Guidelines and provide the rationale for their guidance of Downtown development. They flow from the values and principles expressed by the community and City in previous San José plans as well as from community outreach. Plans consulted include (but were not limited to):

- Envision San José 2040 General Plan (2011)
- Greater Downtown Strategy for Development
- Diridon Station Area Plan (2014)
- Downtown Design Guidelines (2004)
- St. James Square Historic District Guidelines (1989)
- Downtown Streetscape Master Plan (2003)
- Guadalupe River Park & Gardens Urban Design Guidelines (2003)

The Design Guidelines are intended to help Downtown realize its greatest potential as a livable, pedestrian-oriented, sustainable City core.

PROSPERITY	**ENHANCE THE LOCAL, CITY, AND REGIONAL ECONOMY.**
Innovate and Support Creativity	Encourage innovation in a built environment that supports the flexibility to enable creativity and innovation, public art, and cultural engagement.
Promote High Quality Architecture	Create an attractive and functional urban environment through the positive addition of each new building or exterior modification of a non-historic building.
Focus on the Ground Floor	Promote a diverse, active, and attractive pedestrian environment at the ground level including flexible, multi-purpose spaces suitable for arts as well as commercial and residential uses.
Mix Uses and Activities	Enable positive interaction between a diverse and fine-grained mix of uses.
HEALTH	**PROMOTE HUMAN AND ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH.**
Design for Sustainability	Use new development to make the area more environmentally and economically sustainable through building quality and multimodal connectivity.
Put People First	Promote health and activity with safe, attractive, functional, and comfortable urban spaces and buildings.
Create Connection and Accessibility	Use new development to enhance individual health through Downtown's multimodal accessibility and enhance pedestrian and bicycle connectivity.
Generate Resilience	Create a physical infrastructure that enables human, economic, environmental, and social resilience.
IDENTITY AND HISTORY	**ACCENTUATE THE AREA'S UNIQUE CHARACTER AND CULTURE.**
Create Legibility	Promote Downtown as a cohesive and unified district with citywide and regional importance while celebrating unique sub-areas and using public art as a *placemaking* method.
Create a Memorable Destination	Build on Downtown's unique strengths as the cultural, artistic, and creative center of the South Bay and support residents' active, personal participation in arts and culture.
Be Authentic to San José	Build upon the cultural, historic, and environmental characteristics of San José.
Welcome All of San José	Strengthen the area as a center for the City and the region for people of all abilities, ages, genders, and income levels.

VALUE
Guiding Principle

1.4 How To Use the Guidelines

DESIGN GUIDELINES STRUCTURE

The Design Guidelines document is organized into five chapters and an appendix:

Chapter 1 – Introduction lays out how to use the Design Guidelines, includes the Design Guidelines boundary, and has sections for Purpose, Values and Guiding Principles. The Values and Guiding Principles have guided the creation of the document. They flow from the values and principles expressed by the community and City in previous San José plans as well as from community outreach for this project.

Chapter 2 – Framework Plans identifies several different characteristics of Downtown that create guidance for a development project. The Framework Plans assign characteristics to various streets, blocks, and parcels in Downtown. These characteristics affect the treatment of urban design elements in Chapters 3-5.

Framework Plan	Site Characteristic
1	Image-Defining Frontage
1	Gateway Site
2	Primary Addressing Street
2	SoFA Addressing Street
2	Secondary Addressing Street
2	Paseo
2	Urban Park/Plaza Frontage
2	Open Space Frontage
2	Transit Gateway
2	Pedestrian and Bicycle Gateway
3	Within a Historic or Landmark District
3 4	Adjacent to a Historic Building or Civic Icon building
5	Natural or Urban View Corridor
6	Lighting Gateway
6	Enhanced Lighting Corridor
7	Special Block Size Zone

Chapter 3 – Site discusses the arrangement of activities on the site, primarily in relation to the adjacent public space.

Chapter 4 – Building discusses architecture, including issues of massing at the lower and upper levels and design of *facades*.

Chapter 5 – Pedestrian Level discusses the building's interaction with sidewalks, *paseos*, or open space. Issues such as *transparency*, types of access, and service are essential to this topic, appropriate in approximately the lowest 20 feet of the building.

Appendix include a glossary, skyline studies, paseo precedents studies, and a resources and references section.

GUIDELINE STRUCTURE

Guideline Title starts with a number and is typically limited to one subject.

Value correlates this section to one of the values in the Introduction Chapter.

Statement summarizes the intent of the guideline in one sentence.

Rationale describes the design principle addressed in the guideline and the reason for its importance.

Guidelines describe best practices, are typically qualitative, and serve as overarching design guidance. Proposed projects located in the Design Guidelines boundary (Section 1.1) must be in substantial conformance to the intent of the guidelines contained in the document.

Standards provide design guidance that is numeric and verifiable. Proposed projects located in the Design Guidelines boundary must meet the minimum standards set forth in the document. ***Standards are binding and considered City of San José policies***.

General Plan Reference provides references to sections of the San José General Plan that cover related topics and requirements.

Related Guidelines lists similar guidelines or standards within the Design Guidelines. For example, there are guidelines regarding the location of *paseos* in Chapter 3 - Site and the design of *paseos* in Chapter 5 - Pedestrian Level. The references to related guidelines make it easier for users to navigate through the Design Guidelines.

EXCEPTIONS TO THE STANDARDS

The Design Guidelines include an exception process. A project applicant may request an exception to the design standards contained in the Design Guidelines. The request must be made in writing as part of the Planning application for the proposed project. The application for an exception must contain detailed information on the design standard that is requested to be waived; how the physical constraints and unique situations of the project site make it infeasible to comply with the design standard; how the proposed project meets the design standard at issue to the extent feasible; and how the request meets each exception requirements. The decision-maker would need to consider the request and information provided and make certain findings to either approve or deny the request.

The decision-maker (Planning Director, Planning Commission, or City Council, as applicable) shall only grant an exception if all the following findings are made:

a. There is physical constraint or unique situation that:
   1. is not created by the project applicant or property owner; and
   2. is not caused by financial or economic constraints considerations.
b. Approving the waiver will not impair the integrity and character of the neighborhood in which the subject property is located or create a safety hazard.
c. The proposed project meets the design standard at issue to the extent physically feasible.
d. The proposed project meets all other guidelines and standards in the Design Guidelines.

STEPS FOR USING THE GUIDELINES

Step 1. Framework Plans

First, consult the **Framework Plans** in Chapter 2 to find the location of the development parcel to determine characteristics that will affect building design. For example, if the parcel is adjacent to a View Corridor in Framework Plan 5, the rules for block sizes and pedestrian bridges (Sections 3.2.1 and 4.4.8) are different than these rules for other parcels.

Step 2. Guidelines

Next, consult **Chapters 3 - 5** to determine the guidelines and standards for the property related to the Site, *Skyline Level*, *Podium Level*, and *Pedestrian Level*.

Note: Diagrams and photos in the Design Guidelines are for illustrative purposes. Proposing a similar design would not guarantee City acceptance. Image and diagram captions are explanatory only and are not guidelines or standards. Measurements are straight line distance unless otherwise noted.

2.0
FRAMEWORK PLANS

2.1 Prominent Sites and Frontages
2.2 Podium Level and Pedestrian Level
2.3 Historic Sites and Districts
2.4 Civic Icon Buildings
2.5 Street Level View Corridors
2.6 Special Lighting
2.7 Block Structure

2.1 Prominent Sites and Frontages

The Framework Plans in this chapter identify characteristics of development sites that have specific guideline requirements in addition to the requirements for all parcels.

WHAT TO DO IN THIS SECTION

Locate the proposed development site to determine if it:

1. Has an **Image-Defining Frontage**
2. Is a **Gateway Site**

This will affect its treatment in the **Relevant Guidelines** (see below) in chapters 3 - 5.

RELEVANT GUIDELINES

Designations in this Framework Plan affect the following guidelines:

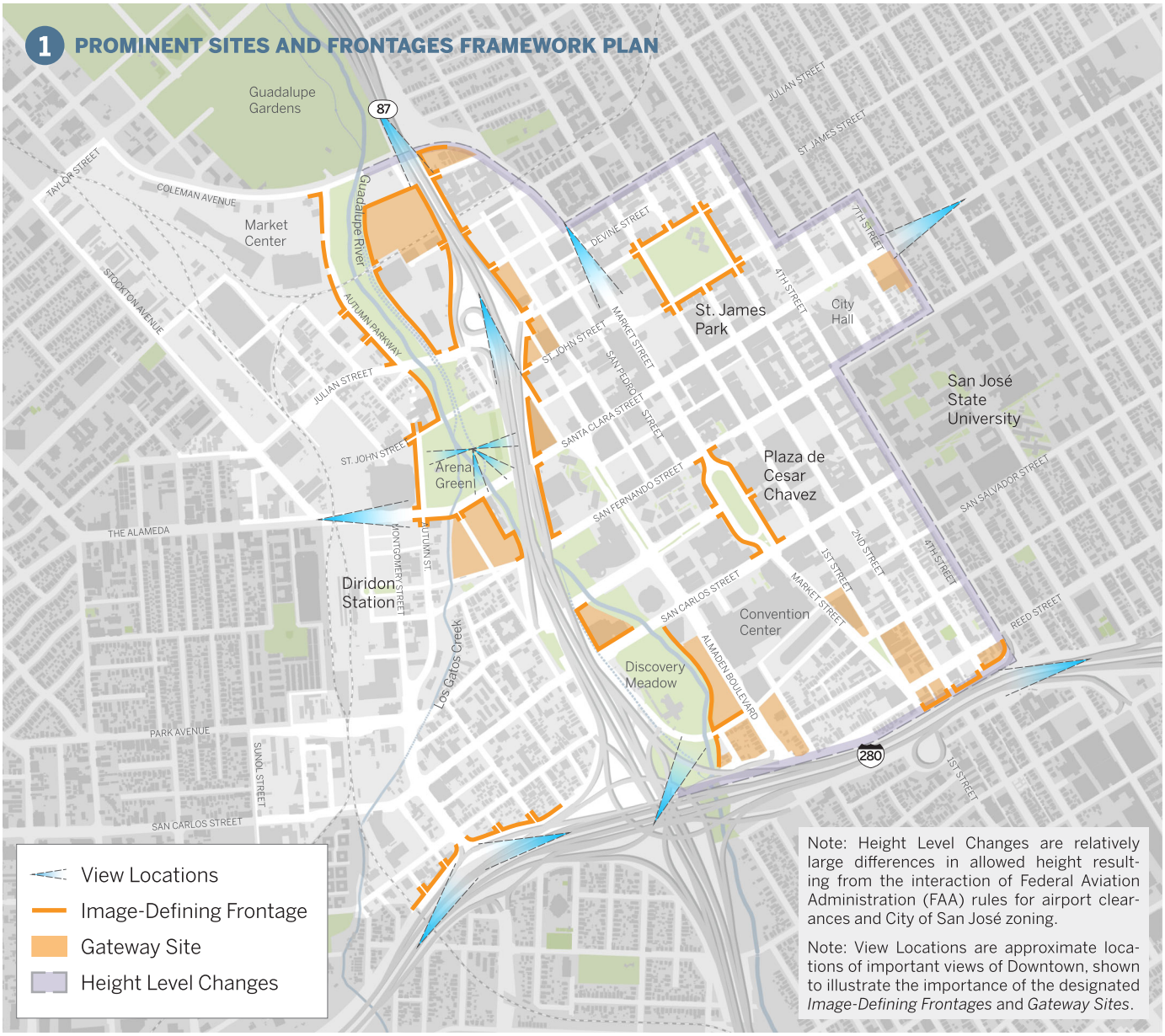
4.2.1 - Form, Proportion, and Organizing Idea

4.3.2 - Skyline Level Massing (Above 70')

4.4.1 - Facade Pattern and Articulation

4.4.3 - Materials and Colors

4.4.6 - Parking Garages



The Downtown skyline has a mesa shape due to height limits *(Photo © Google)*

RATIONALE

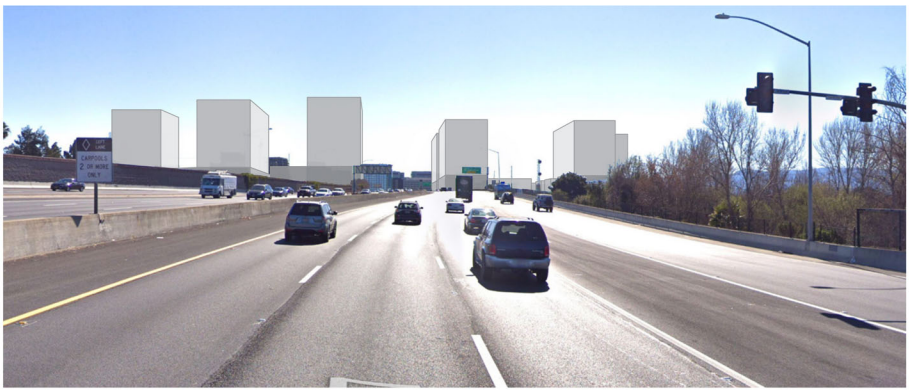
The skyline and highly visible building *facades* create the first impression of Downtown from other locations within San José and beyond. The skyline is also visible inside Downtown from certain vantage points.

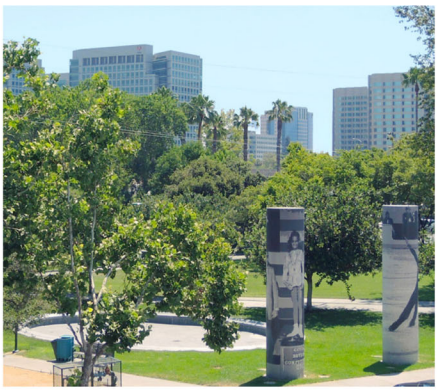
The skyline is shaped by many factors, but one of the foremost is the limitation of building height by the Mineta-San José International Airport, located north of Downtown. This limit, in combination with zoning height standards, has created a "mesa" (table) shaped skyline, with most buildings at similar heights.

Among the most memorable Downtown skyline views are those from parks such as Arena Green, from highways that pass through and adjacent to the site, and from some major streets, such as the Alameda.

PROMINENT LOCATIONS

Due to the flat shape of the skyline and limited view locations, some sites have more impact on the Downtown skyline. From an analysis of this pattern (see Appendix A.2.1), the derived *Gateway Sites* and *Image-Defining Frontages* are shown in the plan at left. Buildings on these sites will have a large impact on the image of the City. For this reason, their design receives special attention in the Design Guidelines in the following chapters.





The simulation above left shows the importance of development on *Gateway Sites* and *Image-Defining Frontages* to the first impression of Downtown while entering from the north on Highway 87 *(Photo © Google)*. The simulated view at bottom left from the Highway 87 ramp looking northeast toward Downtown demonstrates the visual prominence of the *Gateway Sites (Photo © Google). Note: both images show massing simulations and do not represent actual building designs.*

Above, local open spaces like Arena Green provide views of the skyline.

2.2 Podium Level and Pedestrian Level

WHAT TO DO IN THIS SECTION

Locate the proposed development site to determine if it is adjacent to a:

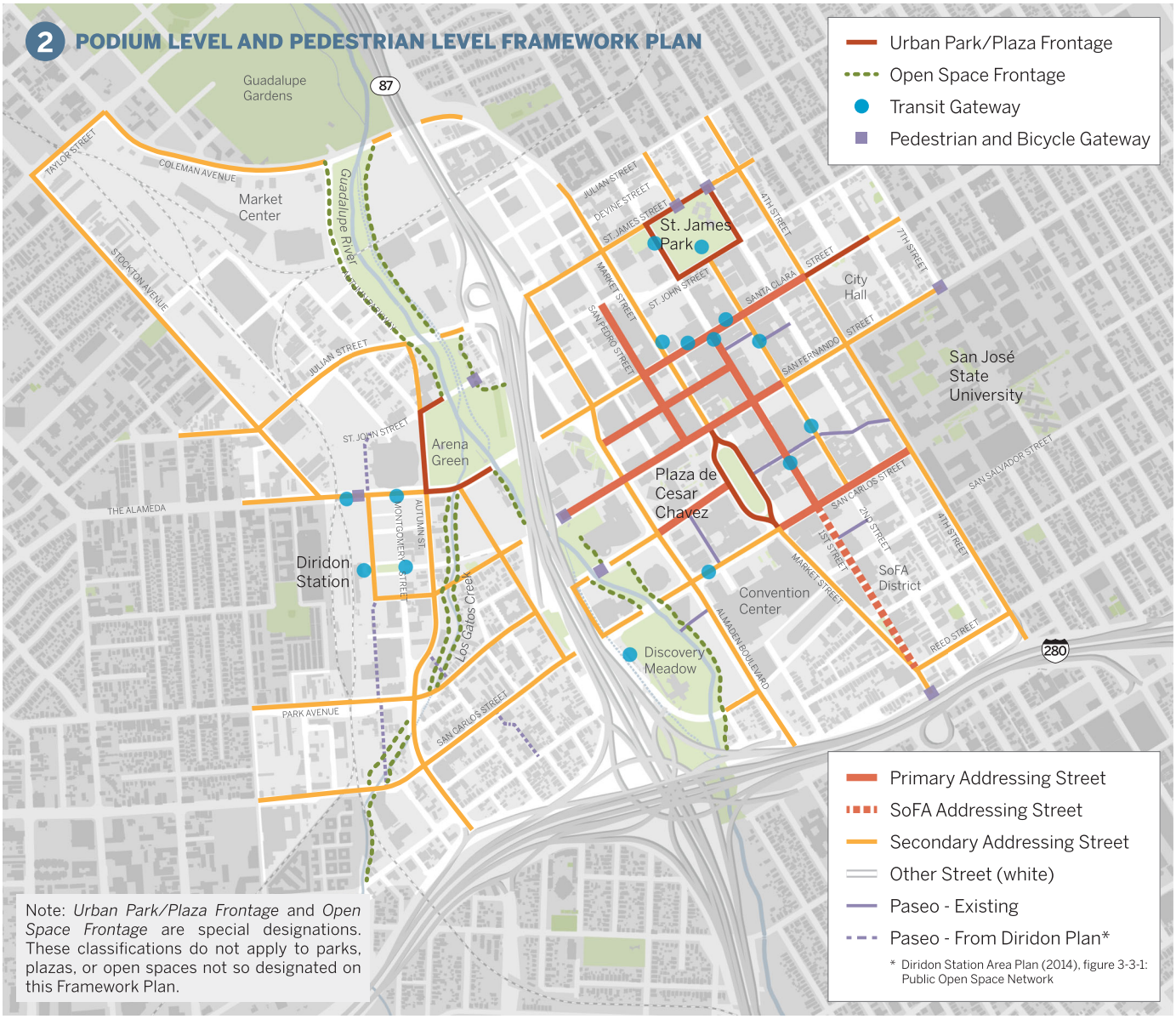
1. **Primary Addressing Street**
2. **SoFA Addressing Street**
3. **Secondary Addressing Street**
4. **Paseo**
5. **Urban Park/Plaza Frontage**
6. **Open Space Frontage**
7. **Transit Gateway**
8. **Pedestrian and Bicycle Gateway**

This will affect its treatment in the **Relevant Guidelines** (see below) in chapters 3 - 5.

RELEVANT GUIDELINES

Designations in this Framework Plan affect the following guidelines:

3.3.2 - Relationship to Transit
3.4.4 - Vehicle and Bicycle Parking Location
3.5.1 - Pedestrian and Bicycle Entrance Location
3.5.2 - Service Entrance Location
3.5.3 - Parking and Vehicular Access Location
4.3.1 - Podium Level Massing
4.3.3 - Streetwall
4.4.6 - Parking Garages
5.2 - Public Art in Private Development
5.3.1.a - Active Frontages
5.3.2 - Ground Floor Non-Residential Space
5.3.4 - Lighting - Pedestrian Level
5.3.5 - Signage - Podium Level and Pedestrian Level



RATIONALE

The interface with the street is the primary organizing element at the base of a building. The design should be attractive and engage pedestrians with the activities within the building.

The *Public Realm* treatment of streets varies by their location, land uses, and commercial and symbolic importance within Downtown. Street design is governed by the San José Complete Streets Design Standards & Guidelines (2018).

STREET FRONTAGE CLASSIFICATION

There are no unimportant streets. However, the built form treatment along streets can vary. Street frontage classification indicates the role of the street in the Downtown urban fabric. These classifications and related requirements are in addition to the requirements of the Downtown Groundfloor Space Area (DG Overlay Area) in the Zoning Ordinance. Other City rules may also require specific locations for some retail uses.

Primary Addressing Street: This is a primary commercial street that includes retail and other active ground floor uses.

SoFA (South of First Area) Addressing Street: This is a variant of the *Primary Addressing Street* that addresses the character of the SoFA district. SoFA's 1st Street is a historic retail street consisting of mostly one or two-story buildings and a mix of cultural, commercial, and residential uses. The designation extends between San Carlos and Reed Streets.

Secondary Addressing Street: This is a street with a commercial or residential focus. While it may provide some active ground floor uses, retail is not the primary function of the street.

Paseo: *Paseos* are pedestrian connections that can have a variety of uses (see Glossary).

Alleys: Alleys have no *Streetwall* requirements. An alley should always be the location of services, if one is available.

Other Streets: Other Streets are streets within the Guidelines boundary without the designations stated above.

PARKS AND OPEN SPACES

Urban parks and natural open spaces are amenities that form part of Downtown's ecological systems and address the need for natural spaces that support mental and physical health.

Urban Park/Plaza Frontage: These *facades* form the urban framework for the existing civic spaces in Downtown. They should create a sense of enclosure for the spaces.

Open Space Frontage: These *facades* define the experience within Downtown's natural spaces and should have an urban form that provides visual permeability toward the open space.

GATEWAYS

Entry points into Downtown from transit and for pedestrians and bicyclists create special opportunities for high levels of amenity and safety at the small scale. These are different from *Gateway Sites* (see section 2.1) which relate to the visual entry experience at the larger scale and for longer views.

Transit Gateway: Rail transit stations are key permanent locations for entry into and exit from Downtown (See 3.3.2 - Relationship to Transit for information on buildings at both rail stations and bus stops on the *Frequent Network*).

Pedestrian and Bicycle Gateway: Certain pedestrian and bicycle routes take on additional importance at entry points into Downtown.

2.3 Historic Sites and Districts

WHAT TO DO IN THIS SECTION

Locate the proposed development site to determine if it:

1. Is **within any of the districts or areas** on the map on this page. If so, consult the appropriate design guideline as listed in the Other Guidelines table in this section. In case of a conflict between the Design Guidelines and guidelines for a site's historic district or area, the historic district or area guidelines take precedence.
2. Qualifies for *Historic Adjacency*, as defined on the next page. If so, refer to Sections 4.2.2 and 4.2.4. Note that some historic buildings are also Civic Icon Buildings, and there is additional guidance for buildings in the Affected Areas; see section 2.4.

As noted in Section 1.1, the Design Guidelines do not apply to historic buildings themselves.

RELEVANT GUIDELINES

Designations in this Framework Plan affect the following guidelines:

4.2.2 - Massing Relationship to Context

4.2.3 - Civic Icon Adjacency

4.2.4 - Historic Adjacency

RATIONALE

San José has many unique historic resources and a building's design should respond to this historic context.

OTHER GUIDELINES TO CONSULT

Historic and landmark district and conservation area boundaries appear on the map in this section. For projects within the **National Register Districts,** consult the applicable guidelines - "Downtown San Jose Historic District Design Guidelines" or the "Saint James Square Historic District Design Guidelines." **Other districts and areas** and their associated guidelines are listed in the Other Guidelines table below. Guidelines documents are available at www.sanjoseca.gov/planning.

DOWNTOWN DESIGN GUIDELINES GUIDANCE

In addition to the other guidelines, the Downtown Design Guidelines set rules for new buildings and external alterations to non-historic buildings being built near and adjacent to historic and other key structures within the Design Guidelines boundary.

1. **Historic Adjacency** - A site has Historic Adjacency when any of the these are true:
   a. At least 50% of buildings fully or partially within 200 feet are on the San José Historic Resources Inventory (HRI) or are eligible for HRI listing
   b. The site is within 100 feet of a Designated or Candidate City Landmark or contributor to a district or conservation area
   c. The site is adjacent to a historic building on the Historic Resources Inventory (HRI) or eligible for HRI listing

   The building(s) within the categories above that cause a new building to have *Historic Adjacency* are the new building's *Historic Context*.

   For sites with Historic Adjacency, refer to Section 4.2.4.
2. **Massing Relationship to Context** - A new building adjacent to historic buildings may have additional guidance for massing (see Section 4.2.2).
3. **Civic Icon Buildings** - If a historic building is also a Civic Icon Building, it receives additional guidance for buildings within the Affected Area (see sections 2.4 and 4.2.3).

GENERAL NOTE ABOUT HISTORIC RESOURCES

The City's General Plan includes goals and objectives for historic preservation, including public awareness efforts coordinated with neighborhood and advocacy groups. The Planning Division maintains an inventory of both designated and surveyed historic properties. The Historic Preservation Ordinance (Chapter 13.48 of the Municipal Code) provides the local historic designation process and the development review process for individual historic properties and historic areas.

The City Council adopted the Preservation of Historic Landmarks policy (amended in 2006; potential future amendments) about the preservation of historic resources. The local Historic Landmarks Commission and staff help to administer the City's Historic Resources Program.

Administration and planning for historic resources includes compliance with local, state, and national rules, including the California Environmental Quality Act. For projects proposing changes to historic properties and areas, the City generally reviews for compatibility and compliance with the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for the Treatment of Historic Properties* as published by the National Park Service.

As of 2018, there are seven designated Historic Districts and Conservation Areas in the Downtown area and several historic properties designated at the local, State, and/or National level. Additionally, there are many properties on the City's Historic Resources Inventory (HRI) as well as potential historic districts and potentially eligible individual properties. The City is in the process of updating the HRI through survey work as of the date of the Design Guidelines, and not all areas of the Downtown and City have been surveyed.

OTHER GUIDELINES

NAME OF DISTRICT OR AREA	NAME OF APPLICABLE DESIGN GUIDELINES
Saint James Square City Landmark District/Saint James Square National Register District	Saint James Square Historic District Design Guidelines
Downtown Commercial National Register District	Downtown San Jose Historic District Design Guidelines
Hensley City Landmark District/Hensley National Register Historic District	Your Old House, Guide for Preserving San Jose Homes
City Landmark Districts: Lakehouse, River Street (Little Italy), Reed	Your Old House, Guide for Preserving San Jose Homes
Conservation Areas: Martha Gardens, Guadalupe/Washington, Market Almaden, Hanchett and Hester Park, and Naglee Park	Your Old House, Guide for Preserving San Jose Homes

2.4 Civic Icon Buildings

WHAT TO DO IN THIS SECTION

Locate the proposed development site to determine if it is in the **Affected Area** of a Civic Icon Building. This will affect its treatment in the **Relevant Guidelines** (see below) in chapters 3 - 5.

RELEVANT GUIDELINES

Designations in this Framework Plan affect the following guidelines:

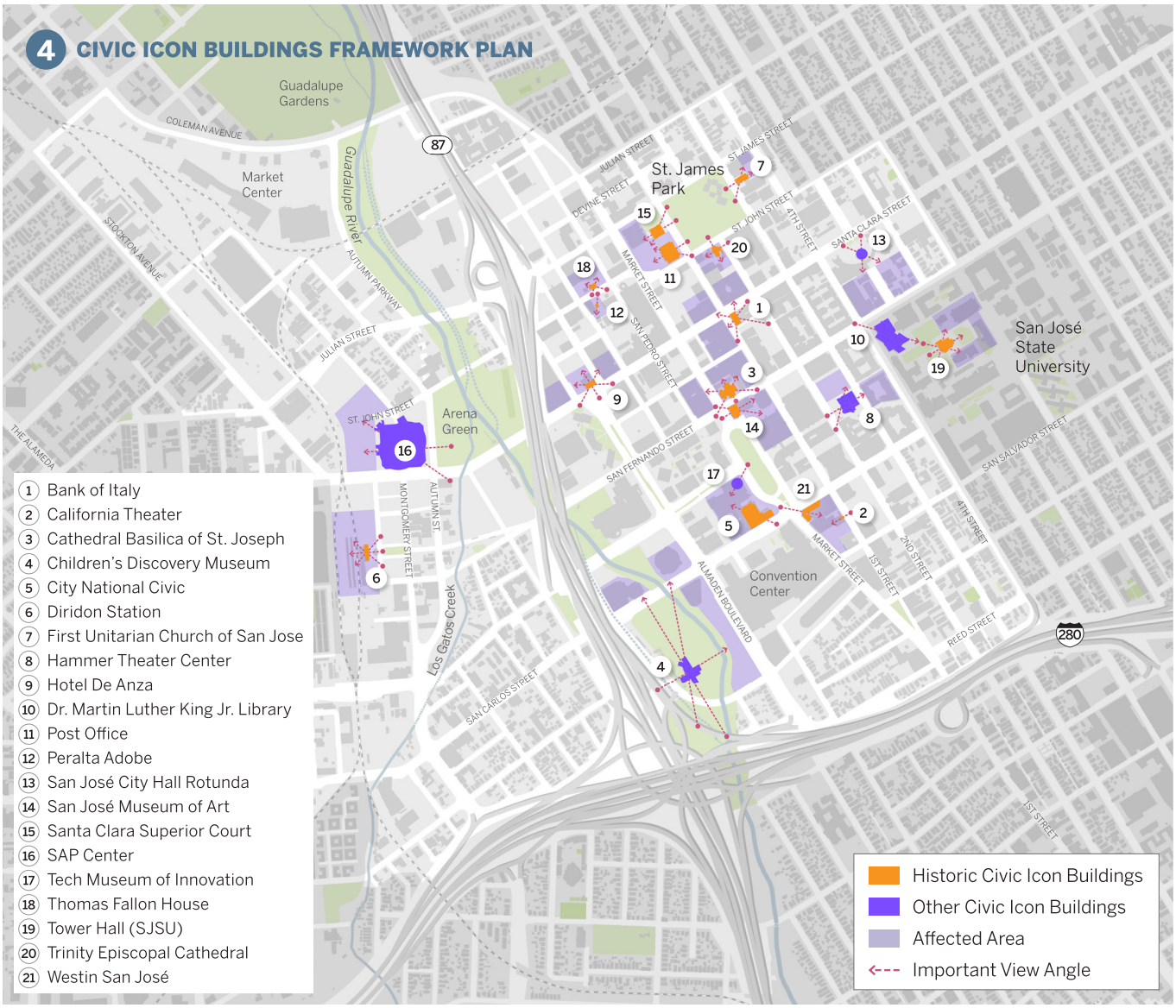
4.2.2 - Massing Relationship to Context (for Historic Civic Icon Buildings)

4.2.3 - Civic Icon Adjacency

4.2.4 - Historic Adjacency (for Historic Civic Icon Buildings)

RATIONALE

Some buildings in San José have become cultural symbols or landmarks within the City. This is typically due to their history, height, special location, or distinctive profile. Buildings built in certain locations near these Civic Icon buildings have specific requirements so that their designs complement the Icon structures.



2.5 Street Level View Corridors

WHAT TO DO IN THIS SECTION

Locate the proposed development site to determine if it is adjacent to a:

1. View Corridor - Natural View
2. View Corridor - Urban View

This will affect its treatment in the **Relevant Guidelines** (see below) in chapters 3 - 5.

RELEVANT GUIDELINES

Designations in this Framework Plan affect the following guidelines:

3.2.1 - Block Size

3.2.2 - Building Placement

4.3.1 - Podium Level Massing

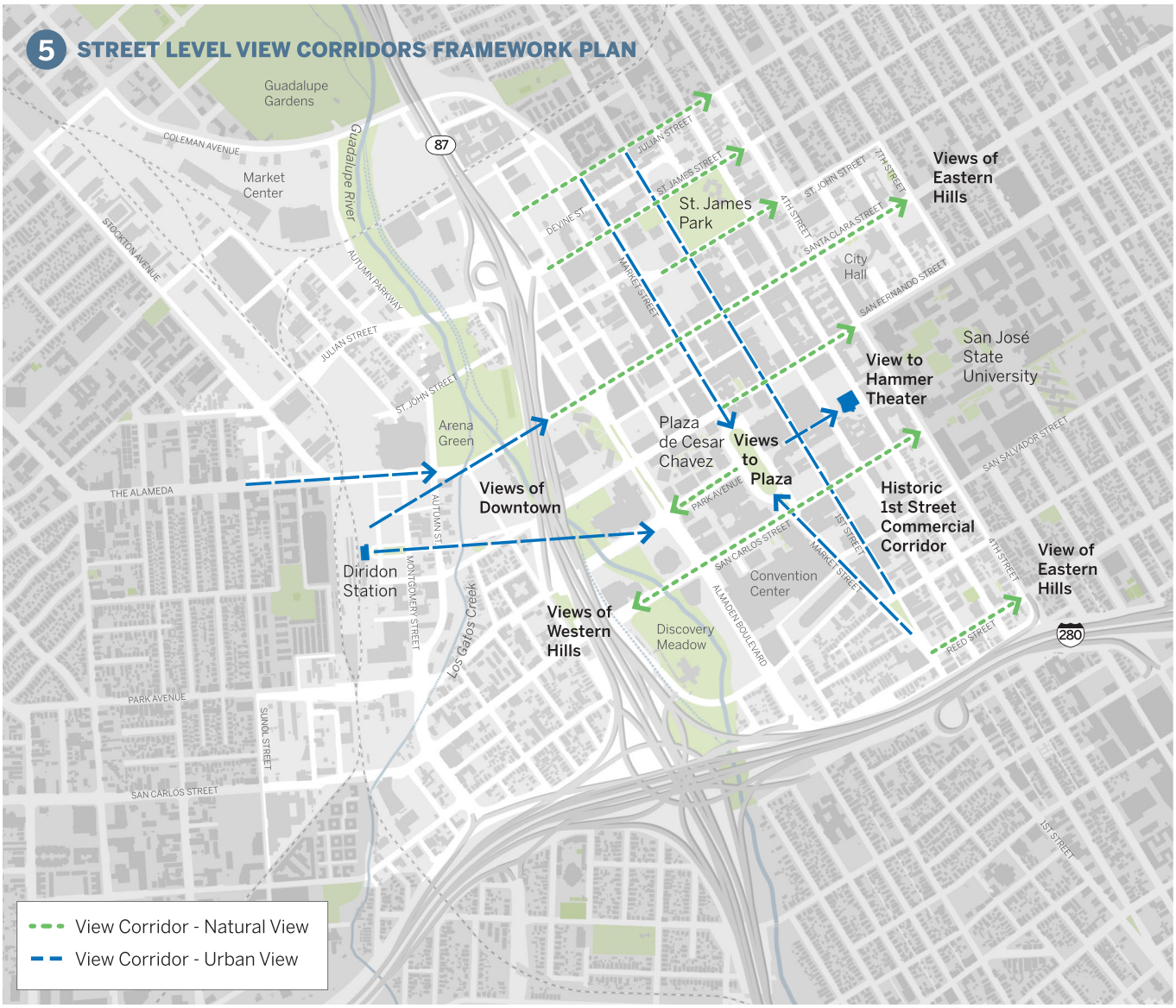
4.4.8 - Pedestrian Bridges

RATIONALE

Street level views are essential to orientation within Downtown and a way to connect to the surrounding landscape. Level topography makes these corridors crucial because there are few high public vantage points.

Within Downtown there are two types of street level view corridors to be protected:

- **Urban View** - Distinctive views to buildings and along corridors within the district
- **Natural View** - Dramatic or characteristic views from the district to the eastern and western hills



2.6 Special Lighting

WHAT TO DO IN THIS SECTION

Locate the proposed development site to determine if it is:

1. Adjacent to an **Enhanced Lighting Corridor**
2. Adjacent to a **Lighting Gateway**
3. Has an **Image-Defining Frontage**
4. Is a **Gateway Site**

This will affect its treatment in the **Relevant Guidelines** (see below) in chapters 3 - 5. Note that lighting guidelines apply to all locations in Downtown, but locations noted in this Framework Plan have specific guidance.

RELEVANT GUIDELINES

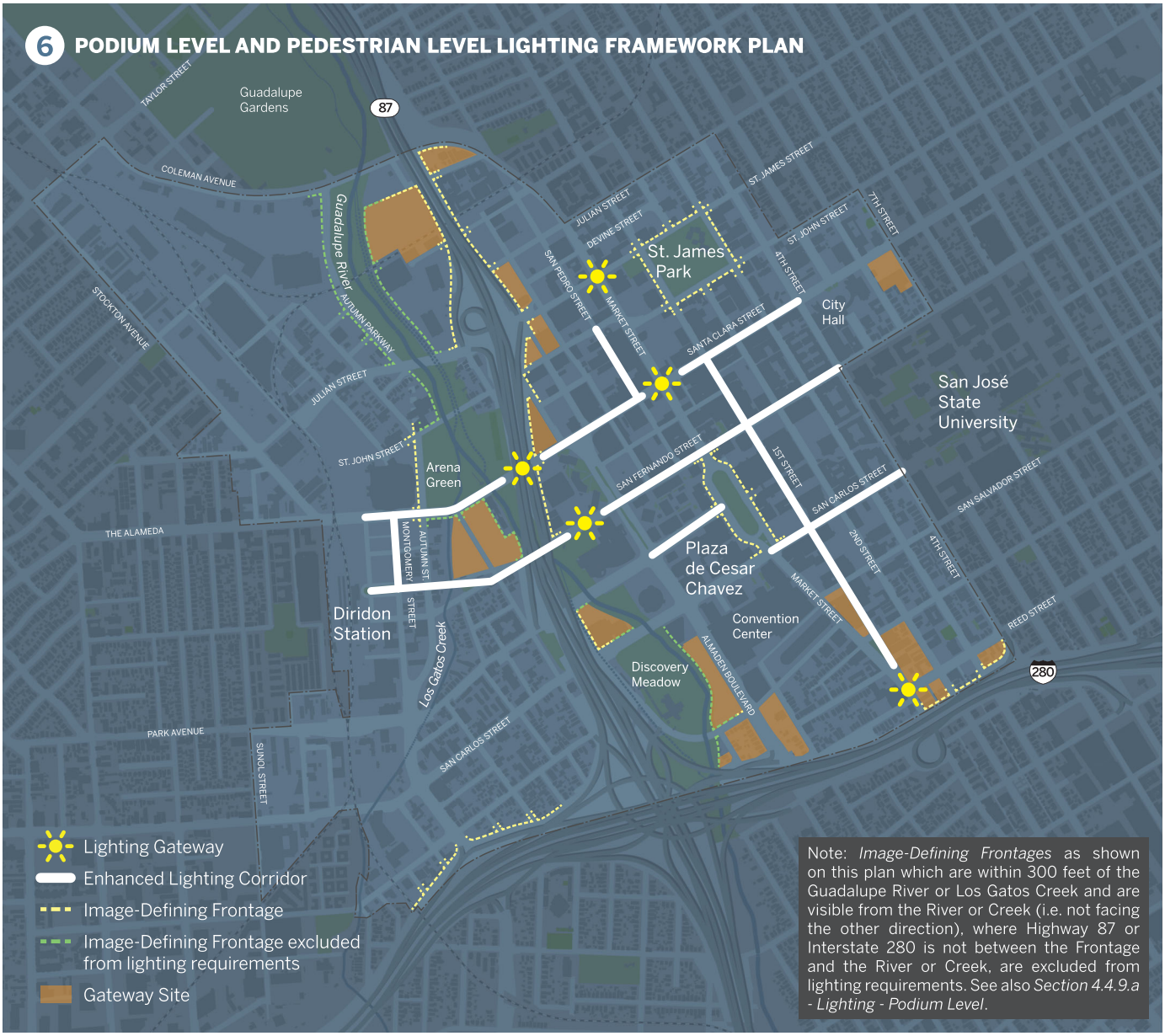
Designations in this Framework Plan affect the following guidelines:

4.4.9.a - Lighting - Podium Level

4.4.9.b - Lighting - Skyline Level

5.2 - Public Art in Private Development

5.3.4 - Lighting - Pedestrian Level



RATIONALE

Lighting at all levels of a building is a *place-making* quality that provides around-the-clock legibility to Downtown. Lighting that illuminates the pedestrian space without creating glare makes that space more comfortable and safe. Lighting on the building can emphasize interesting architectural features and create a more distinctive and memorable urban fabric.

This framework plan creates lighting to enhance the experience of pedestrians as well as Downtown's *Skyline Level* and distant image. See the Relevant Guidelines for specific information.

LIGHTING GATEWAYS

These special points aid orientation by serving as markers for specific areas and as points of transition at the ground level as people pass through and experience Downtown.

ENHANCED LIGHTING CORRIDORS

These corridors form the core commercial and active districts in Downtown. Employing distinctive lighting techniques or artistic illumination along these streets will contribute to the creation of more interesting nighttime urban spaces for pedestrians and other occupants of the spaces.

IMAGE-DEFINING FRONTAGES

These *frontages*, also noted in Framework Plan 2 in Section 2.1, offer opportunities to create interesting and dramatic *facade* lighting in prominent locations.

GATEWAY SITES

These sites are particularly prominent in long views of Downtown. As noted in the relevant guidelines, they are good locations for special lighting in buildings' *Skyline Levels*.

Lighting Gateways are prime locations for light-based artworks.
350 Mission, San Francisco, Photo © SOM | Lawrence Anderson

Gateway Sites can feature distinctive lighting.
Pan Peninsula, London, Photo © SOM | Bernard McDonagh

2.7 Block Structure

WHAT TO DO IN THIS SECTION

Locate the proposed development site to determine if it is within a Special Block Size Zone. This will affect its treatment in the Relevant Guidelines (see below) in chapters 3 - 5.

RELEVANT GUIDELINES

Designations in this Framework Plan affect the following guidelines:

3.2.1 - Block Size

3.3.3 - Paseo / Mid-Block Connection Location

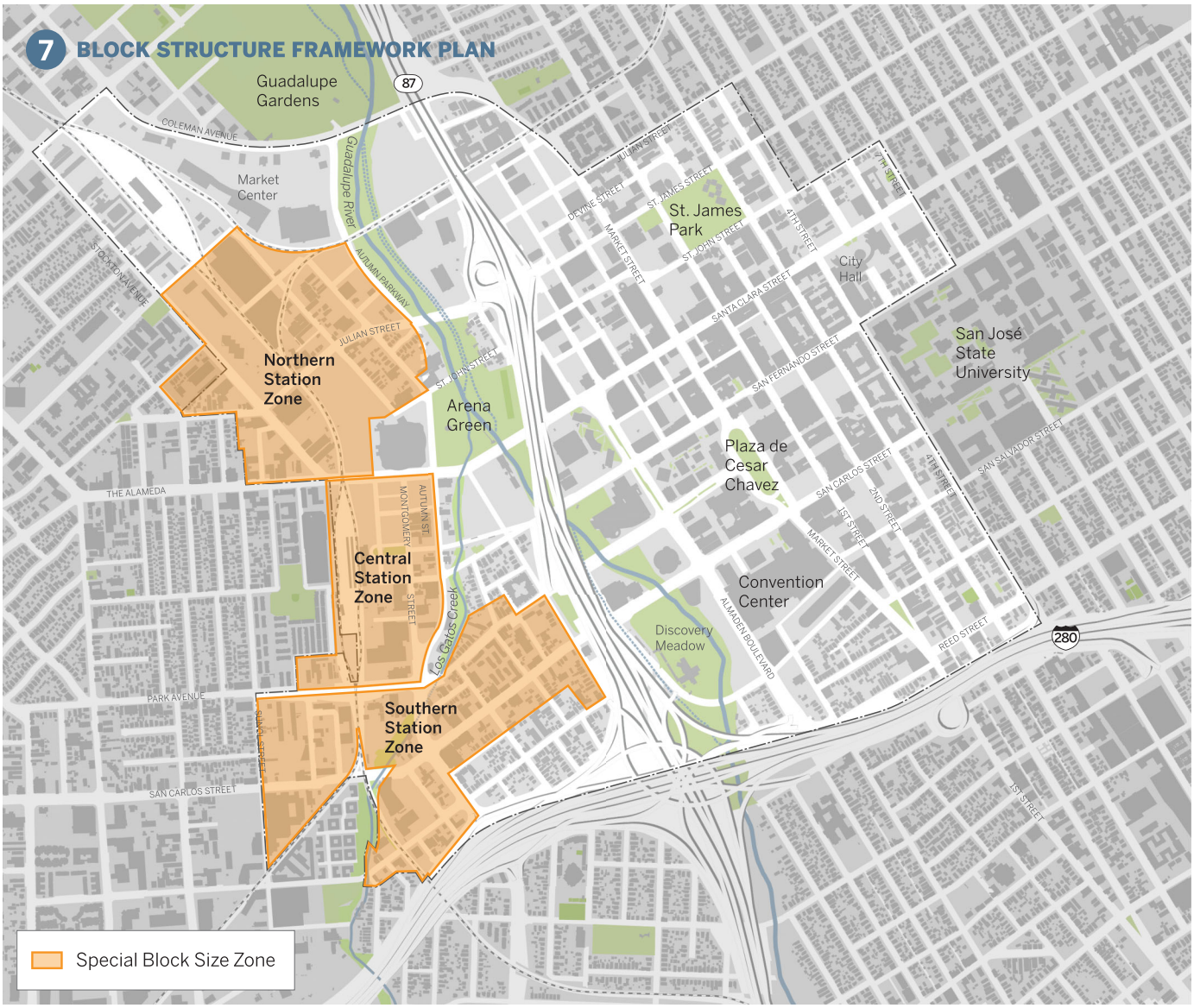
RATIONALE

Block size and orientation affects walkability, building size, views, street patterns, and circulation. Thus, block structure is a key element of the livability and efficiency of both built form and the transportation network, and helps relate new development to Downtown's historic development pattern.

The Diridon Station Area Plan (2014) created zones corresponding to the intended uses within each zone to regulate block size.

The Design Guidelines include the Diridon Station Area Plan's block size guidance in Section 3.2.1 and set block size limits for the rest of the Guidelines area.

Note: Block sizes maximums cannot be satisfied by the creation of a *paseo*. *Paseos* do not count as divisions between blocks.



3.0
SITE

3.1 Importance of the Site

3.2 Site Context
- 3.2.1 Block Size
- 3.2.2 Building Placement

3.3 Site Organization
- 3.3.1 Arrangement of Activities
- 3.3.2 Relationship to Transit
- 3.3.3 Paseo / Mid-Block Connection Location

3.4 Site Element Locations
- 3.4.1 Locating Privately-Owned Public Open Space
- 3.4.2 Locating Ground Level Semi-Private Open Space
- 3.4.3 Locating Ground Level Building Open Space
- 3.4.4 Vehicle and Bicycle Parking Location

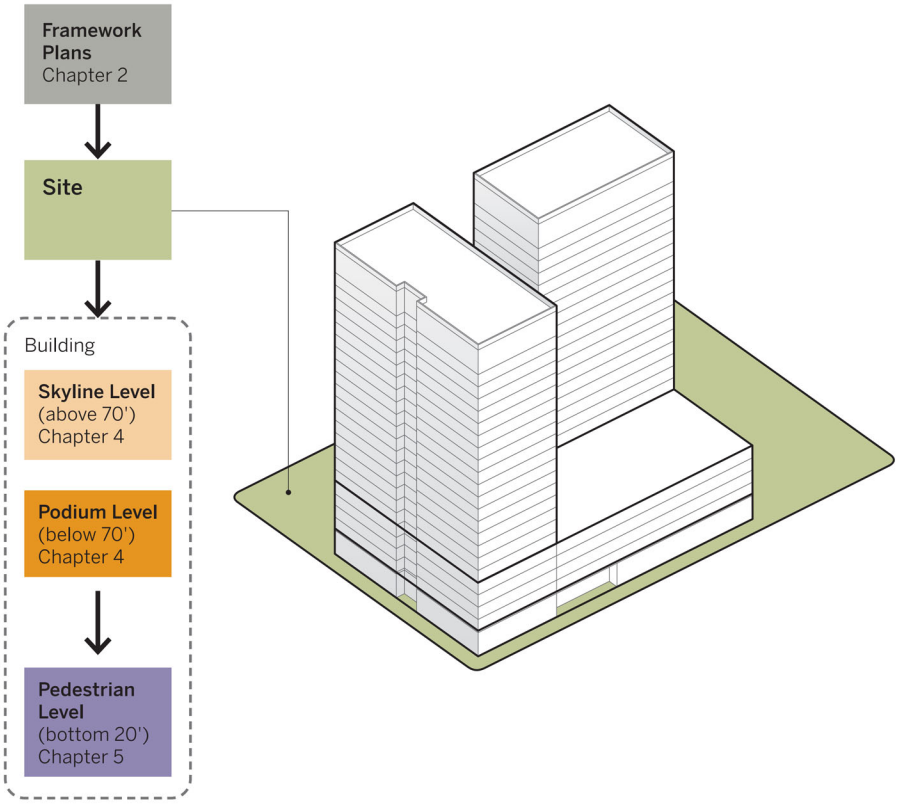
3.5 Site Access Locations
- 3.5.1 Pedestrian and Bicycle Entrance Location
- 3.5.2 Service Entrance Location
- 3.5.3 Parking and Vehicular Access Location

3.1 Importance of the Site

The design of the site and the arrangement of activities on it are critical to the quality of a building's interaction with the Downtown urban environment. Some guidelines in this chapter relate to the site's characteristics as discussed in Chapter 2 - Framework Plans. Other requirements apply to all sites.

Appropriately-scaled blocks and fine-grained *Public Spaces* that respond to their *context* create the urban structure. Organizing the development by placing activities in the best locations in relation to *Public Space* enables interactions between public and private. Well-scaled and frequent open spaces create high-quality amenities for building occupants, neighbors, and visitors.

Access through new *paseos*, as needed, can break down large blocks and provide essential connections to nearby amenities and transit. Well-located entries for pedestrians, bicyclists, passenger vehicles, and service vehicles can reduce use conflicts and preserve the continuity of activity.



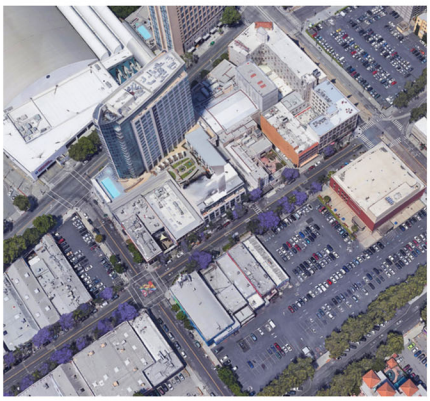


Image © Google Earth

3.2.1 Block Size

CREATE CONNECTION AND ACCESSIBILITY

Keep urban block size small to promote better architecture, increase views and wind flows, and create multiple transportation routes for pedestrians, bicycles, and vehicles.

RATIONALE

Blocks are the foundation of urban development. Small *human-scale* blocks are preferable because they improve mobility by providing shorter routes for vehicles, bicycles, and pedestrians and multiple route choices. Small blocks also promote narrower buildings which provide greater view opportunities and may increase wind flows.

Blocks are defined as the area bounded by public street right-of-ways, by publicly-owned open space, or by utility or transportation parcels (such as railroads). Downtown has a variety of block sizes and orientations, and most existing blocks are small enough to promote high-quality urban development.

GUIDELINES

- While there is a maximum allowable block size established in the Standards below, smaller block sizes are preferable. For this reason, do not join multiple existing blocks by vacating (selling or giving away) streets even if the new consolidated block(s) would be smaller than the maximum block size.

DO - A *paseo* that creates connections is more active and useful. *Photo © Sergio Ruiz for SPUR*

STANDARDS

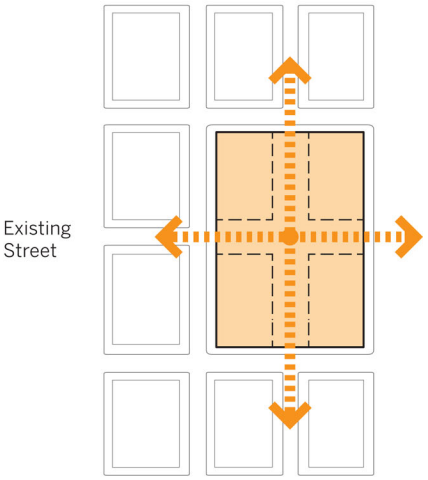
a. When developing an area larger than the relevant maximum block size below, divide the area with new streets such that all resulting blocks are less than the maximum allowed size. Maximums are based on the location of the parcel or block, as defined in **Section 2.7 - Block Structure Plan**. The maximum sizes by location are:

1. **Central Station Zone** - 250 feet on a side
2. **Northern Station Zone** - 350 feet on a side
3. **Southern Station Zone** - 300 feet on a side
4. **All other areas** - 500 feet in length or 4 acres total area

Maximum *lengths* may be exceeded for edges of blocks adjacent to railroads and utilities, highways, and highway ramps in the direction parallel to the railroad, utility, highway, or highway ramp. The maximum *area* may be exceeded for the portions of blocks within 150 feet of railroads and utilities, highways, and highway ramps.

b. Connect the ends of new streets or *paseos* with existing streets and *paseos* in adjacent blocks.

c. Do not vacate (sell or give away) or construct buildings upon an existing public street right-of-way that lies along a view corridor (see Section 2.5). Structures for use in outdoor recreation such as parklet seating or play structures are not covered by this Standard.



DO - Align new streets or *paseos* with existing ones

GENERAL PLAN REFERENCE

- CD-3.6, CD-2.1, TR-5.4, TR-5.5, LU-1.2, CD-2.3, CD-3.1
- Diridon Station Area Plan (2014)

3.2.2 Building Placement

CREATE LEGIBILITY

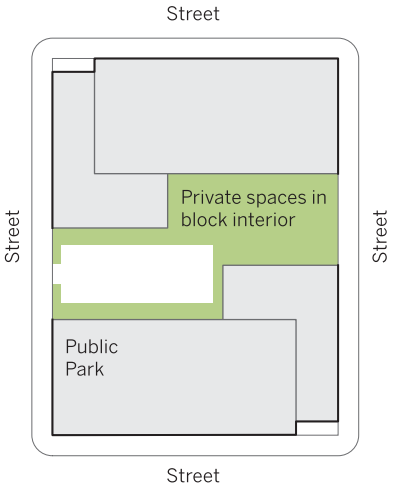
Line the edges of blocks with buildings to frame the surrounding Public Space.

RATIONALE

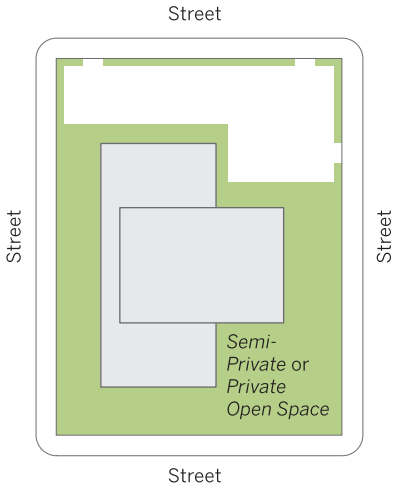
The purpose of an urban environment is to enable connection between people and activities. Buildings need to be near each other, not placed at a distance behind parking or vegetation. Greater separation of buildings and more landscaping at block edges may appear "green" but are unsustainable and unhealthy because they cause people to walk less and drive more. Buildings placed at block edges also create an attractive urban space by defining the space of the street, and a public face of the building distinct from interior *facades*. A close connection between buildings and *Public Space* also creates a safer urban area through casual surveillance and *eyes on the street*.

For most of Downtown, a pattern of buildings lining the edges of streets and other *Public Spaces* is already set. New buildings in these areas can fit in by following this configuration. This pattern is not as firmly set for parcels and blocks within the Diridon area, and it is critical to establish it with new development.

DO - Bring buildings to the sidewalk to frame the street.



a. **DO** - Buildings lining the streets frame the *Public Realm* and create private space in the block interior. Small gaps in the built form do not diminish the overall structure.



b. **DO NOT** - Buildings set back from adjacent streets leave undefined open spaces and have a poor visual relationship to the *Public Realm*.

GUIDELINES

a. Use buildings to create edges for streets and public parks.

b. Place buildings to preserve any designated view corridors crossing the site (see Section 2.5).

STANDARDS

- Place a ground level building *facade* along 70% of each parcel's *Public-Space*-facing property lines (within 10 feet) or *setback* lines (within 3 feet). Streets for this standard do not include Highways 87 or 280, highway ramps, or railroad alignments. For a project located within a historic district or context, refer to adopted historic district guidelines and to Guideline (f) in Section 4.2.4.

RELATED GUIDELINES

3.4.1 - Locating Privately-Owned Public Open Space

3.4.2 - Locating Ground Level Semi-Private Open Space

4.3.1 - Podium Level Massing

4.3.3 - Streetwall

GENERAL PLAN REFERENCE

- MS-2.3, CD-1.9, CD-2.3, H3.2, LU-11.4, LU-13.2, CD-4.10

3.3.1 Arrangement of Activities

FOCUS ON THE GROUND FLOOR

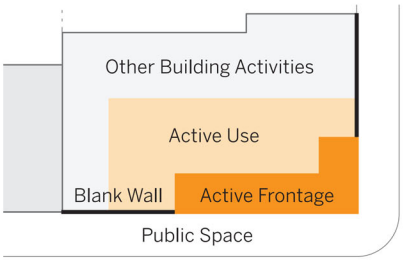
Enhance the vitality of Downtown by placing activities to support a vibrant Public Realm and by internalizing activities and uses that detract from the Public Realm.

RATIONALE

The arrangement of activities on a site should support its surroundings by responding to patterns of land use and *Public Space*. Placing the most active, least private, and least disruptive activities (*Active Uses*) such as lobbies, hallways, cafeterias, work-out areas, and meeting rooms near *Public Space* keeps the *Streetscape* visually active, even if they are not open to the public. Counter examples are utility rooms, bathrooms, and ground floor bedrooms.

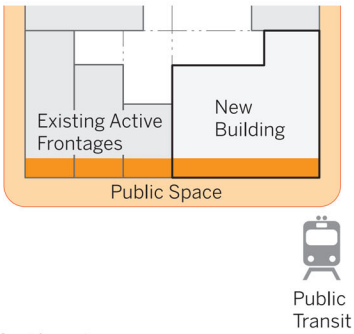
Activities in the space above the *Pedestrian Level* also contribute to the attractiveness and safety of *Public Space*. Upper-level uses with visible activity such as residential or office uses or vertical or horizontal circulation contribute to street safety with *eyes on the street* and make *Public Space* more interesting.

Whether a *Pedestrian Level frontage* is an *Active Frontage* or a *Blank Wall* (see the diagram below) depends on the design treatment of the frontage. See Section 5.3.1.a for guidance on *Active Frontages* and Section 5.3.1.b for rules about mitigation of *Blank Walls*.



a. *Active Uses* in the building may support the creation of *Active Frontages,* depending on building design (see Section 5.3.1.a).

DO - Arrange activities to support creation of *Active Frontages* along *Public Space*.



b. **DO** - Place *Active Uses* toward *Public Space* to respond to *context* and transit.

GUIDELINES

a. Arrange activities in new development to support existing or planned *context*. Examples are to continue an existing retail corridor, face *Active Uses* toward an existing park, or avoid the disruption of a quiet residential area with noisy activity.

b. Locate *Active Uses* to support the creation of *Active Frontages* (see Section 5.3.1.a) to respond to the pattern of surrounding streets and pathways (e.g., across from a mid-block street intersection).

c. Minimize disruption of active pedestrian areas by placing uses that are not *Active Uses,* such as loading docks and service areas, away from *Public Space*.

STANDARDS

a. Place *Active Uses* along the edges of *Public Space* at the *Pedestrian Level* and not toward internal site spaces, unless all requirements for *Active Frontages* on *Public Space* have been met (see Section 5.3.1.a).

b. Prioritize placement of *Active Uses* to support *Active Frontages* near street intersections, *paseo* intersections, parks, plazas, and transit stops.

RELATED GUIDELINES

5.3.1.a - Active Frontages
5.3.1.b - Mitigating Blank Walls
5.3.1.c. - Service and Utility Design
5.3.2 - Ground Floor Non-Residential Space
5.3.3 - Ground Floor Residential Space

GENERAL PLAN REFERENCE

- CD-1.9, CD-1.18, CD-5.3, CD-2.10, IE-5.3, CD-1.6, CD-1.11, CD-2.3(4), LU-5.7, MS-10.6, LU-5.6, VN-1.6

3.3.2 Relationship to Transit

CREATE CONNECTION AND ACCESSIBILITY

Emphasize transit by orienting activities and amenities to stations.

RATIONALE

Downtown is a growing center of transit infrastructure. Existing transit at Diridon Station, multiple light rail lines, and a robust *Frequent Network* will be joined by two Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) stations and California High Speed Rail at Diridon Station. Development near transit has a great accessibility advantage and should use this location to its fullest. Clustering density and activity near stations improves the likelihood of residents, workers, and visitors using transit. The stations will be safer and more pleasant with *Active Frontages* and amenities nearby, improving the experience of transit users as well.

GUIDELINES

a. Place the highest density of development near transit, particularly rail transit stations and stops in the *Frequent Network*, to facilitate transit use.

b. Keep transit stops and station areas active to promote safety and integrate transit into the activity of nearby development.

c. Locate commercial building lobbies near transit stops and stations.

d. Add benches and landscaping to benefit transit patrons and others near transit stops, stations, and entrances.

e. Design building facades near transit stops and stations to reinforce pedestrian orientation.

f. Do not create parking or vehicular access on streets with light rail or bus rapid transit.

STANDARDS

a. Place a building's *Active Frontages* (particularly retail) and amenities such as *Privately-Owned Public Open Spaces* (POPOS) near rail transit stations and bus stops on the *Frequent Network*.

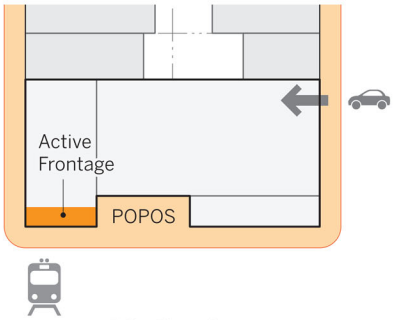
b. Locate vehicular curb cuts away from bus stops, rail stations, and light rail corridors.

RELATED GUIDELINES

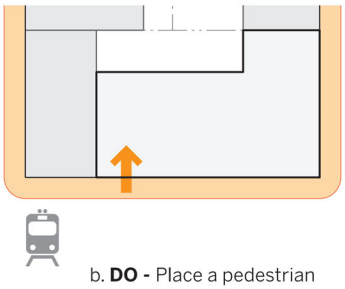
5.3.1.a - Active Frontages

GENERAL PLAN REFERENCE

- IE-1.5, CD-3.2, CD-3.4, CD-1.9, MS-10.5, MS-10.6, CD-1.3, CD-1.12, CD-2.3(7), CD-6.8, H-3.2, ES-6.5, LU-3.5, TR-3.3, TR-6.7



a. **DO -** Place Active Frontages and open space near a transit station.



b. **DO -** Place a pedestrian entrance near transit.

DO - *Active Frontages* can have beneficial adjacencies with transit stations by making both more active and visible.

3.3.3 Paseo / Mid-Block Connection Location

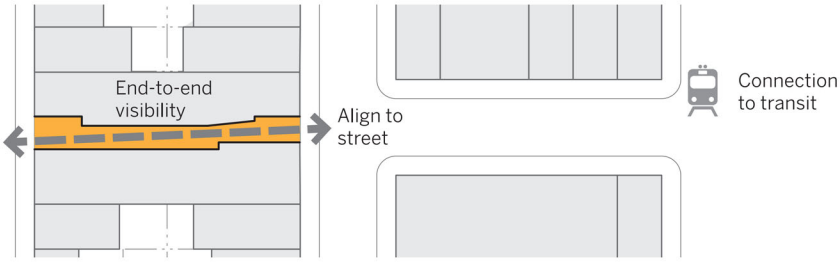
CREATE CONNECTION AND ACCESSIBILITY

Mid-block pedestrian and bicycle connections are helpful additions to the Downtown circulation network.

RATIONALE

The *paseo* network is a unique element of Downtown. These *walkways* provide shortcuts for pedestrians through a block between *Public Spaces*, increasing visibility and accessibility between different areas. *Paseos* also provide open space separated from vehicular traffic and parking.

Successful *paseos* have enough pedestrians to be safe and inviting without absorbing so much activity that they reduce the viability of retail on public sidewalks. They are safe and open 24 hours per day every day to avoid forcing pedestrians to travel circuitous routes in off hours (an issue in some cities, e.g., Melbourne laneways and Minneapolis skyways).



GUIDELINES

a. Keep *paseos* within four vertical feet of sidewalk level to ensure visibility and accessibility.

b. A *paseo* may have built space above or below the pedestrian surface as long as the *paseo* appears public and safe, and has lighting equal to the level of the connecting *Public Space*.

c. Use *paseos* to create routes to transit stations.

d. Design *paseos* with end-to-end visibility from connecting *Public Space*.

STANDARDS

a. A new *paseo* may be created only on a block that meets at least one of the following conditions:

1. The block is over 3 acres in size with over 400 feet between streets on the longest side, or
2. The *paseo* will connect to a block containing part of the Guadalupe River park system, or
3. The *paseo* will connect directly to a rail transit stop or station.

A *walkway* cannot connect two or more different Public Spaces (e.g. two different streets) unless it qualifies as a paseo.

b. Make *paseos* accessible to people with disabilities.

c. Meet requirements for floor level and width for any *paseo* that is to be used for building egress.

d. Align and connect the ends of *paseos* with streets, other *paseos*, or paths in *Public Open Spaces* such as the Guadalupe River Trail.

e. Preserve public access at all times in *paseos*.

RELATED GUIDELINES

3.2.1 - Block Size

3.5.1 - Pedestrian and Bicycle Entrance Location

4.3.4 - Sunlight

5.6 - Paseo Design

GENERAL PLAN REFERENCE

- CD-3.6, CD-2.1(2), CD-2.3(5), CD-3.2, CD-3.4, PR-7.1, TR-3.8

DO NOT - A *paseo* above or below grade is less useful or obvious for connections.

DO - Narrow *paseos* can create intimate and unexpected spaces as well as connections.

3.4.1 Locating Privately-Owned Public Open Space (POPOS)

PUT PEOPLE FIRST

Use Privately-Owned Public Open Spaces to provide locations for repose, relaxation, and gathering.

RATIONALE

Downtown has expansive open spaces (green or hardscaped outdoor spaces) with major urban parks and plazas. *Privately-Owned Public Open Spaces* (POPOS) fill the need for smaller spaces for repose, informal dining, people watching, and small gatherings. Private development is encouraged to provide these small ground or roof level plazas and pocket parks, ranging from a few to hundreds of square feet.

Successful POPOS promote a visually pleasing, safe, and active environment and emphasize views and solar access. Connections to adjacent *Public Spaces* increase safety and access.

Note: POPOS may be eligible for private recreation credits under the City's *Park Impact and Park Dedication Ordinances* if they are open to the public at least 360 days per year and meet certain design criteria. Consult the City's Department of Parks, Recreation and Neighborhood Services (PRNS) for the latest information.

DO - Amenities like shade and seating can make a POPOS more useful. *Photo © Sergio Ruiz for SPUR*

GUIDELINES

a. Locate a ground level POPOS to be completely visible from at least one street.

b. Locate a ground level POPOS near at least one building entry.

c. POPOS may be located within a building cluster if visually and physically connected to a pedestrian route and *Public Space*.

d. Where the public sidewalk is narrow, a building may set back up to 10 feet to create a wider sidewalk. Design this space as a part of the sidewalk, open and accessible at all times.

STANDARDS

a. Locate a ground level POPOS adjacent to at least one street, *paseo*, or public park edge.

b. Locate a ground level POPOS within four vertical feet of the sidewalk level with a clear route of entry.

c. Place a POPOS to receive direct sunlight.

d. Locate a POPOS to take advantage of views of historic structures when possible.

e. When near a transit station, locate a ground level POPOS to provide transit patrons with shade and benches.

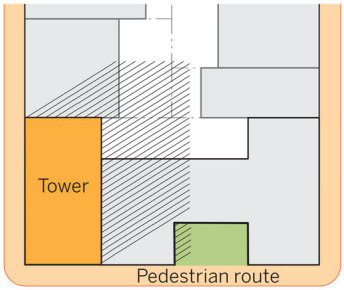
RELATED GUIDELINES

4.3.4 - Sunlight

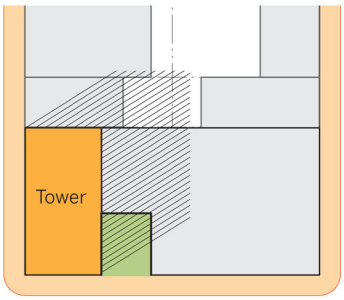
5.7 - Privately-Owned Public Open Space (POPOS) Design

GENERAL PLAN REFERENCE

- CD-5.3, CD-6.3, CD-6.4, H-3.2(6), CD-1.5, CD-2.4, CD-7.8, PR-8.2, PR1.7, CD-1.6, MS-3.4



a. **DO -** Place a POPOS where it can receive good sunlight, adjacent to an active pedestrian route.



b. **DO NOT** place a POPOS in a location that remains shady much of the time.

DO - A small POPOS can provide space for sitting, eating lunch, and enjoying the city.

3.4.2 Locating Ground Level Semi-Private Open Space

CREATE LEGIBILITY

Use small ground level Semi-Private Open Spaces to provide visual relief but do not create divisions between buildings and Public Space.

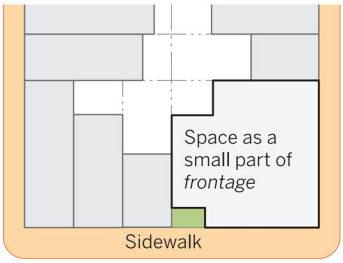
RATIONALE

A large area of semi-private vegetated open space (not meant for public access) between a building and the adjacent *Public Space* reduces the connection between the building and *Public Realm*. This green model is not appropriate in an urban district such as Downtown.

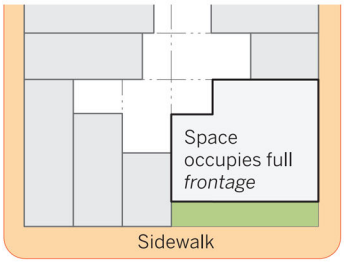
Development should line the *Public Realm*, creating enclosed urban spaces that are appropriate to an urban district and contribute to an active street environment. Small semi-private green spaces can serve to break down building massing and provide visual relief, but should not form a continuous *setback* from the street (see "DO NOT" diagram at right) except where a *setback* provides stoop entries for ground floor residential units.

GUIDELINES

a. Do not create non-residential vegetated ground level *Semi-Private Open Space* except as small areas of visual relief.



a. **DO -** Create semi-private green spaces such as small gardens near building lobbies that are less than 25% of the *Streetwall* length.



b. **DO NOT -** A continuous non-residential vegetated *setback* from the sidewalk divides the building from *Public Space*.

b. Use ground level *Semi-Private Open Space* to create a buffer and transition zone between *Public Space* and ground floor residential units.

STANDARDS

- Do not create ground level vegetated *Semi-Private Open Space* between a building and *Public Space* that occupies more than 25 percent of the *Streetwall* length along a *Primary Addressing Street* or *SoFA Addressing Street* except for stoop entries and front yards for ground floor residential units.

RELATED GUIDELINES

3.4.3 - Locating Ground Level Building Open Space

4.4.2.c - Balconies (Private Open Space)

5.3.1.a - Active Frontages

5.3.3 - Ground Floor Residential Space

GENERAL PLAN REFERENCE

- VN-1.10, CD-6.5, H-3.2(6), VN-1.8, CD-1.2, CD-1.8, CD-2.3(1)

DO - Small vegetated open spaces for ground floor residential units provide amenity and transition space between units and the sidewalk.

DO NOT - Even if paved, *Semi-Private Open Space* can divide building and *Public Space*, reducing the potential for Active Frontages.

DO NOT - Unused green space between a building and the sidewalk reduces visibility and spreads out activities.

3.4.3 Locating Ground Level Building Open Space

CREATE LEGIBILITY

Locate ground level Building Open Space to avoid interfering with Public Space and public activities.

RATIONALE

Building Open Spaces include both *Common Open Space* for all building occupants, typically rear yards, courtyards, and *Roof Decks*, and *Private Open Space* for a single dwelling or business. Poorly located ground level *Building Open Space* can create a buffer between a building and *Public Space*, enlivening private areas but deadening public ones.

High quality, usable, and accessible *Building Open Space* for residents, workers, and visitors contributes to the livability of Downtown's dense urban environment. Placing ground level *Building Open Spaces* away from the *Public Realm* and creating direct access from the building increases the privacy and usability of the space. Allowing visual connection between the *Building Open Space* and nearby *Public Space* through a break in the building massing increases the vitality of both spaces.

GUIDELINES

a. Maintain visual connection from *Public Space* to a *Building Open Space*.

b. Locate *Building Open Space* to maximize sunlight exposure, particularly in areas for seating.

STANDARDS

a. Locate ground level *Building Open Space* internal to the site, away from *Public Space*.

b. Do not locate ground level *Building Open Space* that is accessible only from inside the building between a building and the sidewalk.

c. Create direct access for building occupants from the building to the *Building Open Space*, not requiring travel through *Public Space*.

RELATED GUIDELINES

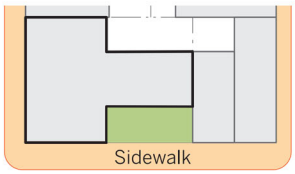
3.4.2 - Locating Ground Level Semi-Private Open Space

4.4.2.c - Balconies (Private Open Space)

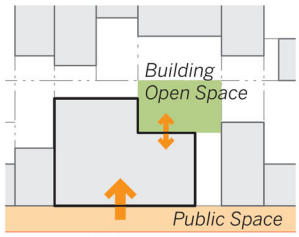
5.3.3 - Ground Floor Residential Space

GENERAL PLAN REFERENCE

- H-3.2(6), CD-3.8, LU-9.6, LU-14.9



a. **DO NOT -** *Building Open Space* at the sidewalk creates a barrier between the building and the *Public Realm*.



b. **DO -** Provide entries, but not primary building entries, directly from the building into associated *Building Open Space*.

DO NOT - *Building Open Space* adjacent to the sidewalk reduces the interaction between the building and the street, creating a green (potentially) but visually sterile environment.

DO - Glimpses into *Building Open Space* create interest at the sidewalk level.

3.4.4 Vehicle and Bicycle Parking Location

PUT PEOPLE FIRST, DESIGN FOR SUSTAINABILITY

Locate vehicle parking away from Public Space while placing bicycle parking in a safe, pleasant, and convenient place.

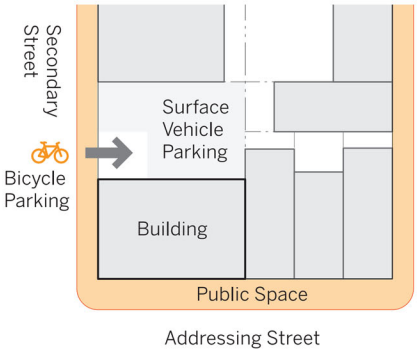
RATIONALE

Parking lots and structured parking can deaden *Public Space* if located between the building and the sidewalk. Parking located away from *Public Space* or adjacent to a street or space of secondary importance reduces this negative effect.

Accessible, secure, and protected bicycle parking helps improve the viability of bicycle transportation. Bicycle parking should be more connected to pedestrian spaces in the building than to the vehicular network. Note: Refer to San José Municipal Code Title 20 and the *San José Valley Transportation Authority Bicycle Technical Guidelines* for further definitions and guidance for bicycle facilities and parking.

New transportation devices such as electric skateboards and scooters can be parked safely on the public sidewalk in most cases. If off-street parking becomes necessary for these devices, the parking areas should follow the same guidelines and standards as listed in this section relating to bicycle parking.

DO - Place a parking garage behind the main building to reduce its effect on the *Streetscape*.



DO - Place surface vehicle parking away from any Addressing Street. Allow bicyclists to enter parking without crossing vehicular space.

GUIDELINES

a. Locate bicycle parking to be part of the pedestrian network, not as part of vehicular parking.

b. Route primary pedestrian access from vehicle parking into the building through the same lobby that is used for pedestrian access from the sidewalk.

c. Locate structured vehicle parking underground, inside the building, or behind the building away from any street.

d. Locate a surface vehicle parking lot at the side or rear of a building, away from the street.

STANDARDS

a. Do not place a surface vehicle parking lot adjacent to any *Addressing Street* or *Urban Park/Plaza Frontage* (see Section 2.2).

b. Place bicycle parking so that bicyclists do not have to cross vehicular parking or drive aisles to enter the building.

c. Locate bicycle parking near street edges and building entrances.

RELATED GUIDELINES

3.5.3 - Parking and Vehicular Access Location

4.4.6 - Parking Garages

5.5.2 - Vehicle and Service Entry Design

5.4 - Surface Parking Lots

GENERAL PLAN REFERENCE

- VN-1.9, LU-5.5, CD-1.17, CD-1.9, CD-1.10, CD-1.18, CD-2.5, CD-2.11, LU-5.6, LU-11.4, LU-3.5, VN-1.8, LU-5.4, TR-2.8, TR-3.8

DO NOT - A separate entry for bicycles is safer than joint entry with vehicles.

3.5.1 Pedestrian and Bicycle Entrance Location

PUT PEOPLE FIRST

Make pedestrian entries from Public Space the primary entry and identity points for the building.

RATIONALE

Building entries that are well-defined and visible from the street are easily accessible and inviting to pedestrians.

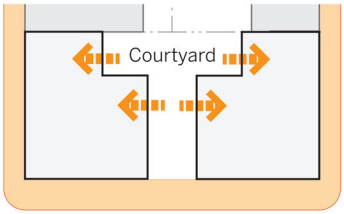
The orientation of pedestrian entries to *Public Space* creates activity on the sidewalk and easy access. Buildings where people can easily arrive and depart by vehicle without interacting with *Public Space* do not promote a vibrant urban area. Easy-to-find pedestrian entries link the building to the district and encourage activity.

GUIDELINES

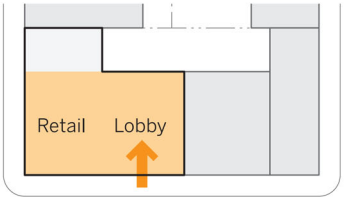
a. Orient buildings and uses to connect to the street and *Public Realm.*

b. Design entries and associated open spaces to avoid the creation of isolated areas and to maintain lines of sight into and out of the space.

c. Do not create a main pedestrian entrance from an internal private courtyard.



a. **DO NOT** place primary entries from internal courtyards, parking lots, or parking structures.



b. **DO -** Entry to the building lobby for access to upper floors should be from mid-block, leaving the corner space for retail.

STANDARDS

a. Connect the primary pedestrian and bicycle building access directly to a public sidewalk, *Public Open Space*, or *paseo*, uninterrupted by a parking lot or vehicular circulation. See Section 5.5.2 Vehicle and Service Entry Design for information about *Porte Cocheres* and primary pedestrian entries.

b. For buildings with multiple *frontages*, locate main pedestrian and bicycle entrances and retail entrances on *frontages* defined in Section 2.2 based on the hierarchy as follows:

1. Urban Park/Plaza Frontage
2. Primary or SoFA Addressing Street
3. Secondary Addressing Street
4. Paseo
5. Open Space Frontage or Other Street

A building with *Active Frontage* on 100% of the length of higher-level *frontages* may place retail entrances the next lower level *frontage*.

c. Provide retail spaces with direct entry from a street, *Public Open Space* or *paseo*, not an interior hall (as in a mall), *walkway*, courtyard, parking lot, or parking garage.

d. In a multi-story mixed-use building with retail, place retail at the street intersection if the building is at an intersection, with the residential or commercial lobby entry toward mid-block.

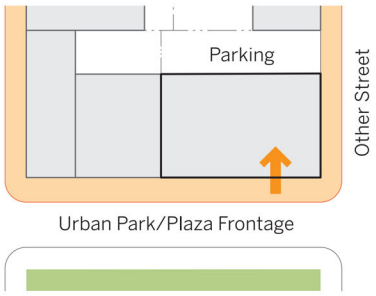
e. Ground floor street- or *paseo*-fronting residential units must have a primary "front door" access from the street or *paseo*, rather than solely entering from interior corridors, lobbies, or the garage. Accessible access may be provided from the building interior.

RELATED GUIDELINES

3.3.3 - Paseo / Mid-Block Connection Location
4.4.2.a - Windows and Glazing
5.3.1.a - Active Frontages
5.5.1 - Pedestrian and Bicycle Entry Design
5.5.2 - Vehicle and Service Entry Design

GENERAL PLAN REFERENCE

- H-3.2, CD-1.9, CD-2.3 (5), CD-2.8 , CD-1.11, CD-1.17, CD-3.3



c. **DO -** Place the main pedestrian entry on a street or *Public Open Space*.

DO NOT - Internalized shop entries pull activity away from *Public Space*.

3.5.2 Service Entrance Location

PUT PEOPLE FIRST

Locate service, utilities, and access points including curb cuts where they do not interfere with the actions of pedestrians, bicycles, and transit.

RATIONALE

Service areas and elements such as trash enclosures may impact *Public Space* for pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit. Services located away from building *frontages* or on secondary *frontages* avoid interfering with the potential for *Active Frontages*. Service entrances in less visible locations for pedestrians and further from adjacent buildings and *Public Open Space* are ideal.

Thoughtful location of service functions will lead to more pleasant and safe *Public Spaces*, more amenable to retail and restaurants or simply for walking, bicycling, and taking transit.

GUIDELINES

a. Locate services including loading docks, delivery, and infrastructure inside the building structure.

b. Locate trash and recycling bins within the building or in an outdoor trash enclosure.

DO NOT - A service entry can create poor conditions on the sidewalk.

STANDARDS

a. For a development with multiple *frontages*, place service entries on a separate *frontage* from the primary pedestrian and bicycle entrance.

b. Locate service entrances at least 25 feet from the primary pedestrian and bicycle entrance (see Section 3.5.3 for parking and vehicular entries).

c. For buildings with multiple *frontages*, locate service doors and entrances on the *frontages* as defined in Section 2.2 based on the hierarchy as follows:

1. Other Street
2. Open Space Frontage (if the frontage has vehicle access)
3. Secondary Addressing Street
4. Urban Park/Plaza Frontage
5. Any street with at-grade light rail transit
6. Primary or SoFA Addressing Street

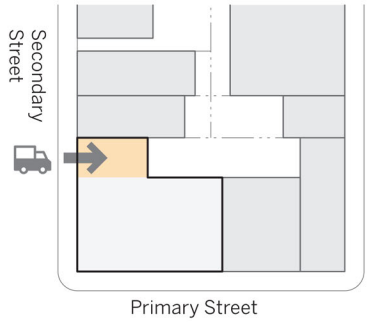
RELATED GUIDELINES

5.5.2 - Vehicle and Service Entry Design

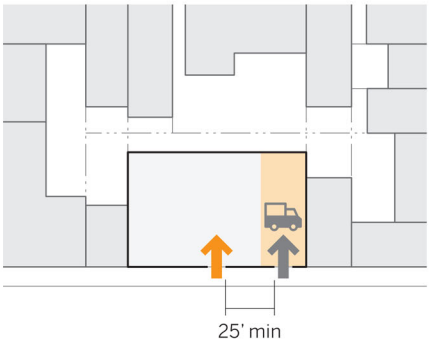
5.3.4 - Lighting - Pedestrian Level

GENERAL PLAN REFERENCE

- CD-1.18, CD-2.3



a. **DO -** Locate a service entry as far away as possible from the primary street.



b. **DO -** Locate a service entry away from the primary building pedestrian entry.

3.5.3 Parking and Vehicular Access Location

PUT PEOPLE FIRST

To promote Public Life, separate vehicular parking access from the pedestrian realm and other transportation modes.

RATIONALE

Vehicular entries can create large gaps in the *Streetwall*, in some cases essentially creating another street intersection. This puts pedestrians and bicyclists at risk and threatens the continuity and success of street-fronting activities such as retail.

A building with *facades* on more than one street or *Public Open Space* creates less pedestrian realm disruption if vehicle access is on the secondary street or open space. Likewise, narrow vehicular entries and ones distant from pedestrian entries minimize interruption of the pedestrian space.

GUIDELINES

a. Use shared driveways between parcels and uses to minimize curb cuts and site area dedicated to vehicles.

b. Where pedestrians and bicyclists need access to parking areas, provide clear, convenient, and safe routes from the sidewalk and street.

STANDARDS

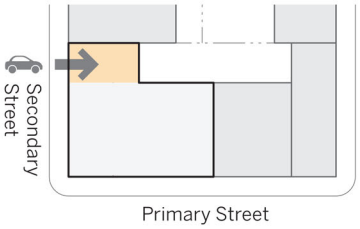
a. Locate parking and vehicle entries at least 20 feet away from primary pedestrian entries (except within *Porte Cocheres*) (see Section 3.5.2 for service entrances).

b. For buildings with multiple *frontages*, locate vehicular and parking entrances on the *frontages* as defined in Section 2.2 based on the hierarchy as follows:

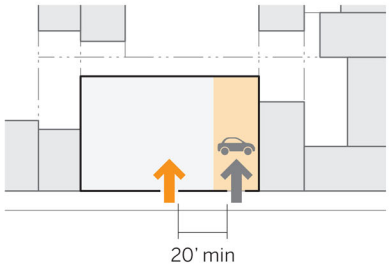
1. Other Street
2. Open Space Frontage
3. Secondary Addressing Street
4. Urban Park/Plaza Frontage
5. Any street with at-grade light rail transit lines or stops
6. Primary or SoFA Addressing Street

c. *Porte Cocheres* are not permitted on any Addressing Street.

d. A pedestrian entry into a hotel lobby from an internal vehicular drive (for instance, inside a parking garage) is allowed as long as the vehicular entry to and exit from the building meet other Standards of the Design Guidelines and the primary pedestrian access to the hotel lobby is directly from the sidewalk, not through the vehicular entry.



a. **DO -** Locate a vehicle entry away from the primary street.



b. **DO -** Locate a vehicle entry away from the primary pedestrian entry.

DO - Place vehicular entries away from intersections and on lower status streets to avoid disruption of primary *frontage*.

DO NOT - Locate vehicular entrances near pedestrian entries.

RELATED GUIDELINES

3.3.2 - Relationship to Transit
3.4.4 - Vehicle and Bicycle Parking Location
3.5.1 - Pedestrian and Bicycle Entrance Location
3.5.2 - Service Entrance Location
4.4.6 - Parking Garages
5.5.2 - Vehicle and Service Entry Design
5.4 - Surface Parking Lots

GENERAL PLAN REFERENCE

- VN-1.9, CD-1.10, CD-3.5, LU-5.5, CD-3.9

4.0
BUILDING

4.1 Buildings and the City

4.2 Context

4.2.1 Form, Proportion, and Organizing Idea
4.2.2 Massing Relationship to Context
4.2.3 Civic Icon Adjacency
4.2.4 Historic Adjacency

4.3 Massing

4.3.1 Podium Level Massing (Below 70 Feet)
4.3.2 Skyline Level Massing (Above 70 Feet)
4.3.3 Streetwall
4.3.4 Sunlight
4.3.5 Wind

4.4 Building Elements

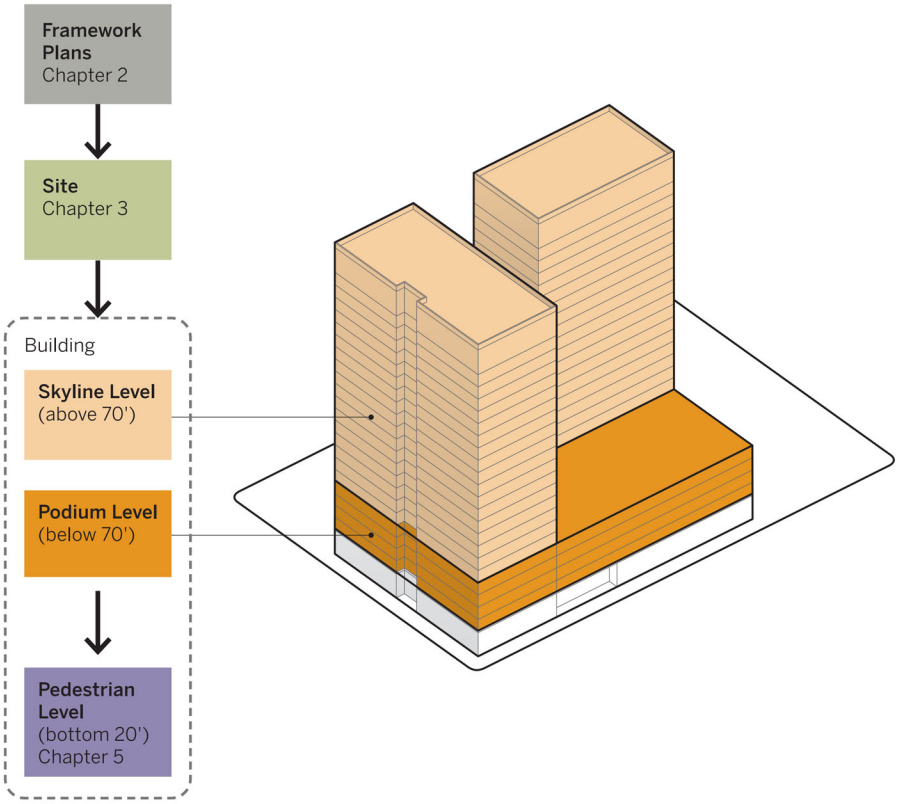
4.4.1 Facade Pattern and Articulation
4.4.2 a. Windows and Glazing
b. Bird Safety
c. Balconies (Private Open Space)
4.4.3 Materials and Colors
4.4.4 Mitigating Blank Facades
4.4.5 Vertical Circulation
4.4.6 Parking Garages
4.4.7 Roofs
a. Rooftops and Mechanical Equipment
b. Green Roofs and Decks (Building Open Space)
4.4.8 Pedestrian Bridges
4.4.9 Lighting
a. Lighting - Podium Level
b. Lighting - Skyline Level
4.4.10 Signage - Skyline Level

Photo credit: Arvind Balaraman / Shutterstock.com

4.1 Buildings and the City

The long-term vibrancy of Downtown depends on buildings that are exciting but timeless, technologically advanced and daring but nurturing of *Public Life*, and inspiring from views both near and far.

This chapter considers building architecture, overall massing, building exteriors, and materials and colors. It discusses relationships between buildings, to the *Public Realm*, and to historic buildings.



4.2.1 Form, Proportion, and Organizing Idea

PROMOTE HIGH QUALITY ARCHITECTURE

Make a building's architectural forms and massing clear and coherent.

RATIONALE

By responding to context buildings, nearby activities, and site conditions, and expressing a unified architectural vision, each new building can be distinctive and a good fit for Downtown. Whether visible in the skyline or experienced at the street level, buildings require both restraint and daring to form a coherent yet exciting cityscape.

GUIDELINES

Overall

a. Use a strong and harmonious architectural concept and organizing idea.

b. Accentuate vertical orientation to reduce the apparent bulk that may originate with local height limits.

c. Design a building to maintain consistency with its own rules for massing and facade organization.

Relationship of Parts

d. Differentiate the top of a building over 70 feet tall with massing and *facade* strategies to add interest to the skyline.

Relationship to Context

e. Shape building massing, architectural details, and activity locations to emphasize *Pedestrian Level frontages* and connection to the Downtown street environment.

f. Use building materials and details that respond to neighborhood context and are consistent with the architectural concept.

g. Respond to context and site conditions such as adjacencies and views to accentuate neighborhood assets, make a building unique, and add identity.

STANDARDS

a. Coordinate and link the building's *Skyline Level*, *Podium Level*, and *Pedestrian Level* with vertical elements.

b. Design *Image-Defining Frontages* (see Section 2.1) with the same level of detail and quality as the primary building *frontage* (if they are not the same *frontage*).

RELATED GUIDELINES

4.2.2 - Massing Relationship to Context

4.3.1 - Podium Level Massing

4.3.2 - Skyline Level Massing

4.4.1 - Facade Pattern and Articulation

4.4.5 - Vertical Circulation

GENERAL PLAN REFERENCE

- CD-1.1, CD-1.15, LU-11.6, CD-4.5, IE-1.16

A building top can create drama in the skyline and increase verticality.

A building with presence at the Skyline Level must also have human scale at the *Pedestrian Level*. *111 Main, Salt Lake City, Photo © SOM | Cesar Rubio*

4.2.2 Massing Relationship to Context

BE AUTHENTIC TO SAN JOSE

Create massing transitions between high-rises and lower-scale development.

RATIONALE

In some Downtown locations, tall new buildings will be adjacent to historic buildings of lower height and to properties at the edge of Downtown where the General Plan land use designation limits buildings to lower heights. In these conditions, a massing transition for the tall buildings to the lower height *context* creates compatibility between new and old.

GUIDELINES

- Use horizontal and vertical massing elements to complement existing context buildings.

STANDARDS

a. **Height Transition (see Illustration a):** If a new building 100 feet tall or more is across the street from or adjacent to either:

1. A historic building 45 feet tall or less
2. A site for residential use that is limited to a building 45 feet tall or less

The new building must step back its street-facing *facade* 5 feet minimum from the front parcel or *setback* line at an elevation between 25 and 50 feet.

DO - A lower massing element creates a transition to shorter buildings nearby.

b. **Width Transition (see Illustration b):** If a new building is across the street from or adjacent to a historic building that is both:

1. 45 feet tall or less
2. More than 30 feet narrower than the new building

The new building must create gaps in the *Podium Level* above the ground floor to divide its street-facing massing into segments no more than 30 feet wider than the widest of the applicable historic buildings. Gaps must be 5 feet minimum width and depth.

Note: There is no need to limit the massing width of a building adjacent to historic buildings that occupy their full lot width, such as historic storefronts. Thus, if a historic building's street-facing *facade* continues to within 5 feet of its parcel edges, it does not trigger the Width Transition requirement.

c. **Rear Transition (see Illustration c):** If a new building 100 feet tall or more is across a parcel line interior to a block from either:

1. A historic building 45 feet tall or less
2. A site for residential use that is limited to a building 45 feet tall or less

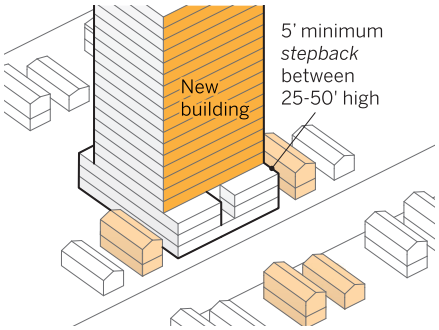
The rear portion of new building must maintain a transitional height of 70 feet or less within the first 20 feet from the property line.

RELATED GUIDELINES

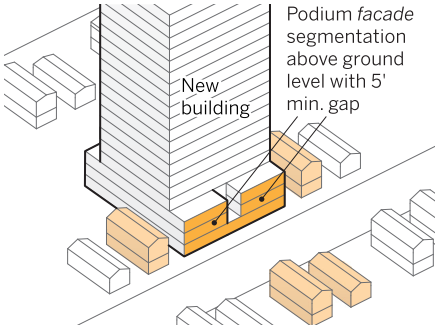
4.2.3 - Civic Icon Adjacency
4.2.4 - Historic Adjacency

GENERAL PLAN REFERENCE

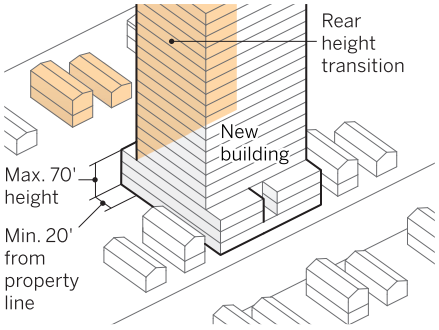
- CD-5.3, LU-9.6, LU-14.9, CD-1.14, CD-2.3, CD-4.5, CD-4.8, CD-1.12



a. **Height Transition** - Five foot *stepback* at an elevation between 25 and 50 feet high



b. **Width Transition** - *Facade* segments no more than 30' wider than historic buildings



c. **Rear Transition** - Height maximum 70' within 20' of property line

4.2.3 Civic Icon Adjacency

BE AUTHENTIC TO SAN JOSE

Design a building within the affected area of a Civic Icon to enhance the Icon's visibility and importance.

RATIONALE

Civic Icon buildings (see Section 2.4) are landmarks and civic markers in Downtown. New buildings within the Affected Area, because of their locations, will have a strong effect on Civic Icons. If done well, the juxtaposition of the two structures will enhance the look of both.

Civic Icons contribute to the identity of Downtown. By enhancing the visibility and distinctiveness of Civic Icons, new development enhances Downtown's unique character.

GUIDELINES

a. Use a *Streetscape* and landscape design that helps to unify the new and existing structure.

b. Design a new building in the Civic Icon building Affected Area (see Section 2.4 for the boundaries of Affected Areas) to avoid dominating the icon to allow the icon to stand out.

c. Protect and enhance views to the Civic Icon building.

STANDARDS

None

RELATED GUIDELINES

2.4 - Civic Icon Buildings Framework Plan

4.2.2 - Massing Relationship to Context

4.2.4 - Historic Adjacency

GENERAL PLAN REFERENCE

- LU-2.2, LU-13.2, LU-13.3, LU-13.6, LU-13.9, LU-15.3

Civic Icons often have distinctive silhouettes.

Civic Icons are historic and contemporary buildings with distinctive features and civic importance.

4.2.4 Historic Adjacency

BE AUTHENTIC TO SAN JOSE

Incorporate essential urban and architectural characteristics of historic context.

RATIONALE

Historic buildings are a unique and irreplaceable feature of Downtown. New adjacent buildings should respect and enhance historic structures, not overwhelm them. A building with *Historic Adjacency* should respond to prominent characteristics and patterns of *Historic Context* buildings to improve the building's fit within the context.

Applicability

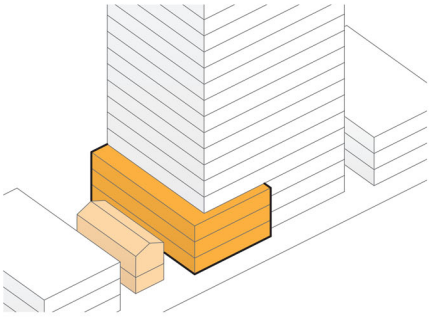
A site has *Historic Adjacency* when any of the these are true:

a. At least 50% of buildings fully or partially within 200 feet are on the San José Historic Resources Inventory (HRI) or are eligible for HRI listing.

b. The site is within 100 feet of a Designated or Candidate City Landmark or contributor to a district or conservation area.

c. The site is adjacent to a historic building on the Historic Resources Inventory (HRI) or eligible for HRI listing.

The building(s) within the categories above that cause a new building to have *Historic Adjacency* are the new building's *Historic Context*.



DO - Transition massing creates a relationship between buildings of different scales.

GUIDELINES

General

a. Design a building with *Historic Adjacency* to stand on the quality of its own architecture, not as a backdrop for historic buildings.

b. Use a *Streetscape* and landscape design that helps to unify the new and old structures.

Massing

c. Use a transition massing element to relate a new building to *Historic Context* buildings below 40 feet in height on the same side of the same block. This massing may be a lower building mass forming the street wall that has a similar height to *Historic Context* buildings, with a step back to the upper *Podium Level* and *Skyline Level*. See also Section 4.2.2.

Facade

d. Design the *Skyline Level* with massing and *facade* elements that reduce contrast to *Historic Context* structures.

e. Design new buildings to be compatible with rear facade features and circulation patterns such as loading access and alleys established by *Historic Context* buildings.

f. Use facade elements with a scale that creates visual correlation with nearby *Historic Context* building facades.

Elements

g. Use distinctive architectural features in the *Podium Level* that relate to those in nearby *Historic Context* buildings.

h. Place windows and doors in a rhythm that responds to the established rhythm of windows and doors of *Historic Context* buildings.

DO - The new building at rear responds to *Historic Adjacency* through materials and *fenestration*.

STANDARDS

Massing

a. Relate *Podium Level* building massing to the scale of *Historic Context* buildings by breaking a large building into masses of similar scale to *Historic Context* buildings.

b. Design buildings with rectilinear rather than curved and diagonal forms where rectilinear forms are typical of the *Historic Context* buildings.

c. Use cornice articulation at the *Podium Level* at a height comparable to the heights of *Historic Context* buildings.

d. Maintain *Streetwall* continuity with *Historic Context* buildings that are on the same side of the same street by placing the street-side facade of a new building within 5 feet of the average *Historic Context* building *Streetwall* distance from the front property line.

Facade

e. Use articulation that creates facade divisions with widths similar to *Historic Context* buildings on the same side of the same block (if the new building is wider). A variety of techniques can achieve this articulation, including facade design, material variations, and color variations. For example, if the street facades of most nearby *Historic Context* buildings are vertical in proportion, taller than they are wide, then maintaining the vertical orientation of the building facade will result in a more compatible design.

f. Do not simulate historic architecture to achieve these guidelines and standards. Do not design new facades to create a false historic appearance or copy historic architectural features unless such features are integral to the design of the new construction.

g. Place windows on *facades* visible from the windows of the adjacent *Historic Context* structure even if this requires that the *facade* be set back from the property line.

Elements

h. Use some building materials that respond to *Historic Context* building materials, such as masonry, terra cotta, limestone, stucco, glass, mosaic, cast stone, concrete, metal, glass, and wood (trim, finishes and ornament only).

i. The new materials should be compatible with historic materials in scale, proportion, design, finish, texture, and durability.

Ground Floor

j. Space pedestrian entries at similar distances to *Historic Context* building entries.

k. Create a ground floor with a similar floor to ceiling height as nearby *Historic Context* buildings, provided the ground floor finish ceiling is no lower than the minimum height identified in this document.

RELATED GUIDELINES

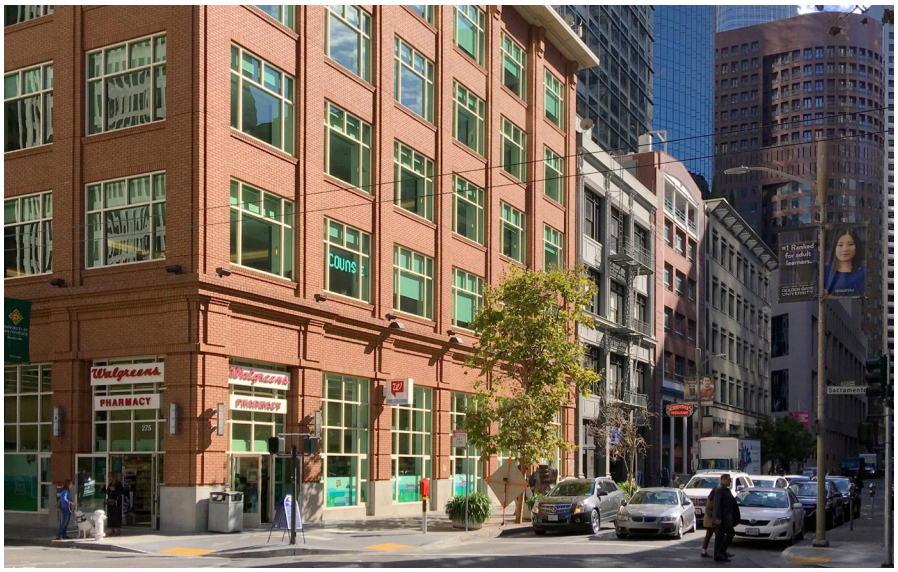
2.3 - Historic Sites and Districts Plan

4.2.2 - Massing Relationship to Context

4.2.3 - Civic Icon Adjacency

GENERAL PLAN REFERENCE

- Chapter 6 - Historic Preservation
- LU-13.5, LU-13.15, LU-15.1, VN-1.10



DO - A new building can fit into a historic context using materials, massing, and *facade* treatments that respond to existing buildings.

4.3.1 Podium Level Massing (Below 70 Feet in Height)

PUT PEOPLE FIRST

Engage the Podium Level massing with the Public Realm and help support a human-scale Streetscape.

RATIONALE

As the tower forms of the *Skyline Level* define the city image from distant views, *Podium Level* massing defines the experience at the ground level.

Podium Level massing requires *articulation* and scaled elements. Height limits and upper level setbacks are used to create transitions in height, bulk, and scale. Extending towers to the ground (while acknowledging the lower levels) aids in creating verticality and visual lightness. *Podium Levels* with towers on top, like candles on a cake, leave the skyline unanchored to the ground, reducing legibility and creating wide, stubby forms.

GUIDELINES

a. Emphasize the intersection of any two *Addressing Streets* (see Section 2.2) through corner building form and detail.

b. Use *Podium Level* massing to frame on-site open spaces.

c. Use massing to enhance access to daylight and ventilation in interior spaces.

d. Shape massing to protect any view corridors running across the site (see Section 2.5).

e. Continue the *Skyline Level* massing to the ground through the *Podium Level* for at least 30 percent of the *Skyline Level's facade* length on the side of the building that contains the primary pedestrian entrance.

STANDARDS

- Divide *Podium Level* building massing facing *Public Space* that creates a *facade* wider than 100 feet into visibly articulated smaller masses no wider than 80 feet using projections and recesses, materials, shadow relief, or other architectural elements (refer to diagram).

RELATED GUIDELINES

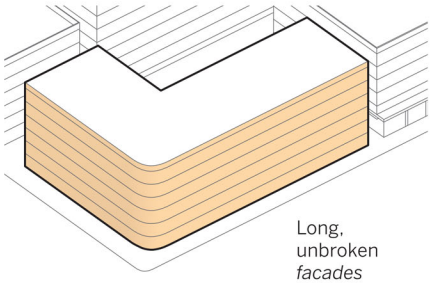
3.2.2 - Building Placement

4.3.3 - Streetwall

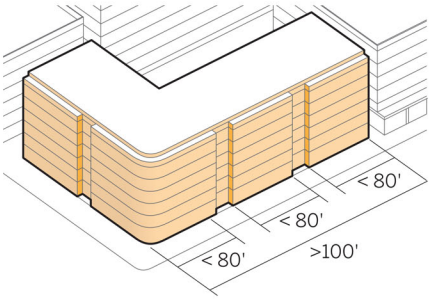
4.3.4 - Sunlight

GENERAL PLAN REFERENCE

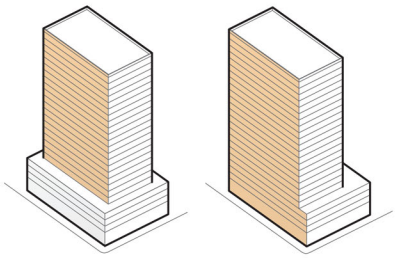
- MS-2.11, CD-4.5



a. **DO NOT** create a long building that breaks the *human scale* rhythm of the street.



b. **DO -** Divide a building over 100' in width with breaks in massing and architectural articulation.



c. **DO NOT** leave the *Skyline Level* unanchored to the ground.

d. **DO -** Extend *Skyline Level* tower massing to ground level. See photo example in Section 4.4.6.

DO - Bring tower massing to ground level and use *Skyline Level* articulation (see Section 4.3.2) to reduce bulk and increase verticality.

4.3.2 Skyline Level Massing (Above 70 Feet in Height)

PROMOTE HIGH QUALITY ARCHITECTURE

Create interesting and compelling Skyline Level massing for a cityscape that is memorable and distinctive.

RATIONALE

Compelling skyline massing will emphasize verticality to create interest from nearby and long distance views. Slender, vertical *Skyline Level* massing also preserves access to sunlight and wind for pedestrians and occupants of other buildings. Thus, towers should both be slender to the extent possible and convey slenderness through means such as shifts of the *facade* plane, articulating tower massing, and preserving sky view corridors.

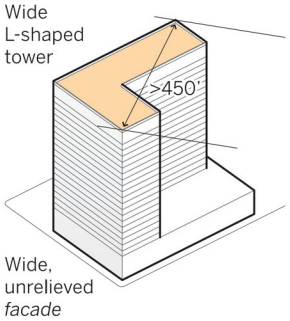
The presence of iconic buildings with unique shapes at Gateway Sites (see Section 2.1) will create distinction and orientation. This distinction can come from massing strategies such as articulated forms.

GUIDELINES

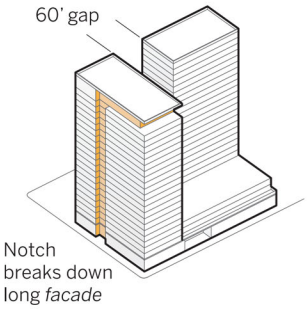
a. Increase perceived tower separation by avoiding direct face to face views (e.g. residential unit living rooms) and using non-rectangular tower shapes.

b. Place towers at the short ends of blocks and near corners to emphasize intersections, to preserve sun exposure in mid-block, and to frame views along streets.

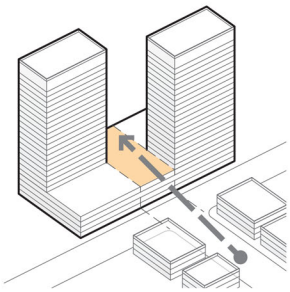
DO - Use articulation and subtraction of mass at the building top.



a. **DO NOT** create wide building masses



b. **DO -** Divide massing wider than 450' into towers and emphasize verticality



c. **DO -** Preserve a street view corridor at a "T" intersection with tower spacing

STANDARDS

a. Design separate *Skyline Level* masses (towers) instead of very wide buildings. Use a maximum of 450 feet for any horizontal dimension, including diagonally, in *Skyline Level* massing.

   Measure connected towers separately if:

   1. The connection is a bridge (not connected at the base of the *Skyline Level*), and
   2. The total vertical connection(s) between any two towers occupy less than 25 percent of the *Skyline Level* height of the shortest tower, and
   3. The connection's facade is set at least 20 feet behind the towers' parallel facades at the same height.

b. Keep a minimum spacing of 60 feet between any portions of *Skyline Level* building masses (towers).

c. For *Skyline Level facades* over 200 feet in width, use changes in massing such as *stepbacks* or notches greater than 30 feet wide and 20 feet deep to reduce apparent building bulk.

d. If a development site is at the head of a "T" intersection, align the location of the required spacing between *Skyline Level* masses along the visual extension of the facing street centerline to preserve sky view from the street.

e. For buildings on *Gateway Sites* (section 2.1), for approximately the top 25% of the *Skyline Level* massing, use sculpted massing such as shifts in building planes, a gradual subtraction of mass toward the top, or a stepped or varied pitch roofline to lend a distinctive identity to orient people as they approach and move around Downtown. See Appendix A.2.1 for examples.

f. For buildings on sites other than defined *Gateway Sites* (section 2.1), use massing for the tower top that generally maintains the overall tower form.

RELATED GUIDELINES

4.3.4 - Sunlight

4.4.7.a - Rooftops and Mechanical Equipment

GENERAL PLAN REFERENCE

- CD-6.6

4.3.3 Streetwall

PUT PEOPLE FIRST

Use the Streetwall to define the adjacent Public Realm and create an enclosed urban space.

RATIONALE

The *Streetwall* is the building *facade* along a public street, *Public Open Space*, or *paseo* from ground level to 70 feet. Urban streets and open spaces benefit from more linear and visually defined *Streetwalls* and a more urban treatment. Natural open spaces require less urban treatments, with greater permeability between the open space and the adjacent built form. Breaks in the street wall are opportunities for mid-block pedestrian connections and *Privately-Owned Public Open Spaces* (see section 3.4.1).

Encroachments of *Occupied Space* such as balconies or bay windows over *Public Space* can create a more interesting and varied *Streetwall*. The Design Guidelines document gives guidance for encroachments, but also refer to Section 13.37 of the San José Municipal Code and Section 3202 of the Building Code, as may be amended, for encroachment permit requirements.

GUIDELINES

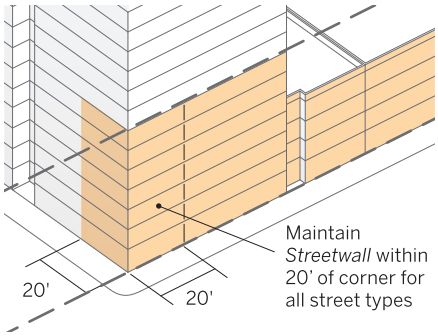
a. Orient buildings parallel to adjacent streets.

b. Enhance *Streetwall facades* with architectural details to create interest and variety for pedestrians.

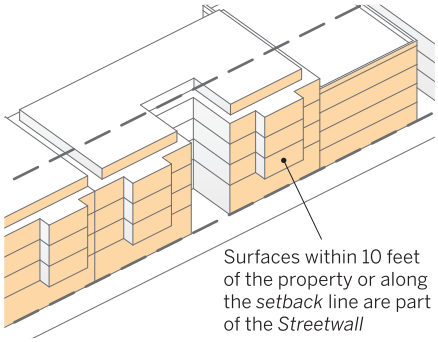
c. Use *transparency* and high quality, durable materials in *Streetwall facades*.

STANDARDS

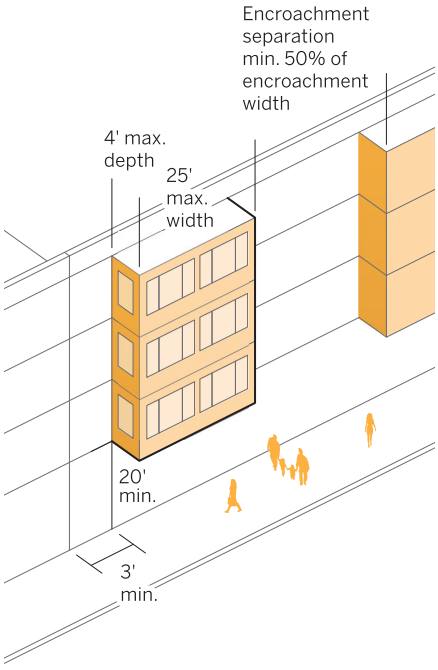
a. For a portion of the *facade* to be a *Streetwall*, it must lie within 10 feet of the property line or within 3 feet of the *setback* line for at least 60% of the distance from ground level to the top of that portion of the building, to a maximum of 70 feet.



a. *Primary Addressing Street* (minimum 70% *Streetwall*)



b. *Secondary Addressing Street* (minimum 50% *Streetwall*)



c. **DO** - Use encroachments above *Public Space* to add visual interest.

b. Create a *Streetwall* along a *Primary Addressing Street* or *SoFA Addressing Street* (see Section 2.2) along at least 70% of the property or *setback* line.

c. Create a *Streetwall* along a *Secondary Addressing Street* (see Section 2.2) along at least 50% of the property or *setback* line.

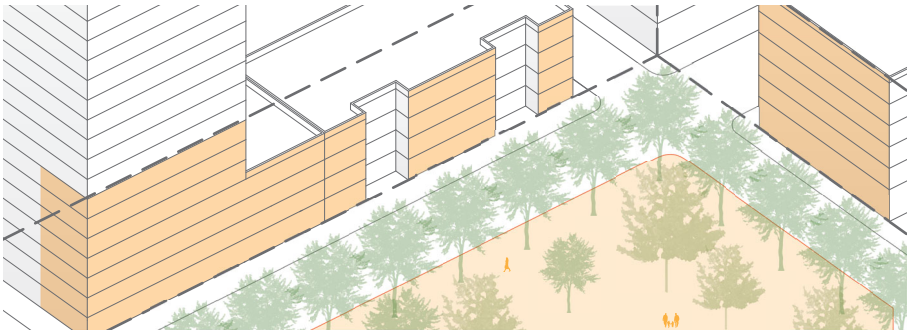
d. Create a *Streetwall* along an *Urban Park/ Plaza Frontage* (see Section 2.2) along at least 70% of the property or *setback* line.

e. Create a *Streetwall* along an *Open Space Frontage* (see Section 2.2) along ***at most*** 60% of the property or *setback* line.

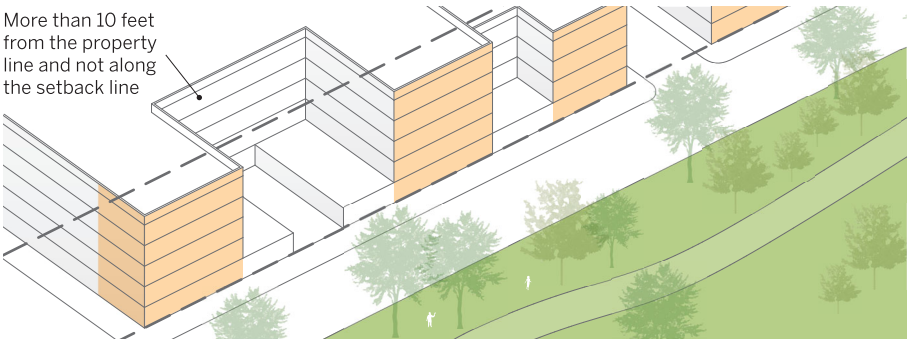
f. Create a *Streetwall* along an *Other Street* (see Section 2.2) for at least 30% of the property or *setback* line.

g. At the corner of intersecting streets, (excluding alleys), emphasize the intersection by maintaining the *Streetwall* along both streets for at least 20 feet.

h. Maintain a 20 foot minimum clearance above *Public Space* for an encroachment of *Occupied Space*.



d. *Urban Park/Plaza Frontage* (minimum 70% *Streetwall*) - St. James Park, Plaza de Cesar Chavez, Arena Green, or City Hall Plaza (see Section 2.1 for *Urban Park/Plaza Frontage* locations)



e. *Open Space Frontage* (maximum 60% *Streetwall*) - Guadalupe River or Los Gatos Creek corridor (see Section 2.1 for *Open Space Frontage* locations)

i. Limit encroachment above *Public Space* to a maximum depth of 4 feet.

j. Limit any individual encroachment to maximum 25 feet width, with spacing between encroachments no less than 50% of the width of the widest adjacent encroachment, with a minimum spacing of 5 feet (see diagram c).

k. Create an encroachment no closer than 3 feet to an adjacent property.

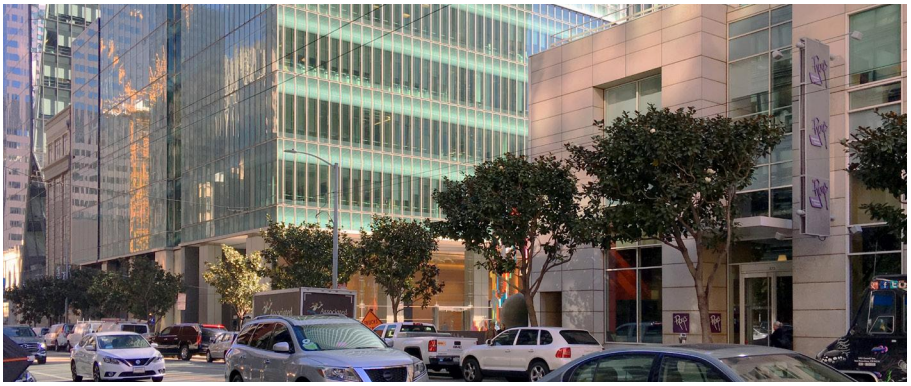
RELATED GUIDELINES

3.2.2 - Building Placement
4.3.1 - Podium Level Massing
4.4.2.c - Balconies
5.3.1.a - Active Frontages
5.3.1.b - Mitigating Blank Walls
5.3.2 - Ground Floor Non-Residential Space
5.3.3 - Ground Floor Residential Space

GENERAL PLAN REFERENCE

- CD-2.3, CD-4.5, CD-4.8, IP-8.6

DO - An attractive *Streetwall* with ground floor *transparency* creates a welcoming outdoor *Public Realm*. *Photo © Sergio Ruiz for SPUR*



DO - Limited gaps in the *Streetwall* can provide visual relief and locations for POPOS.

4.3.4 Sunlight

PUT PEOPLE FIRST

Avoid casting building shadows on public parks and plazas during mid-day and afternoon.

RATIONALE

San José has a warm and sunny summer climate and cool weather in winter, with July high temperatures averaging in the 80s and January highs in the 50s. The presence of sunlight in *Public Open Spaces* may have a large effect on their usability. The need for sunlight is true especially in cooler periods.

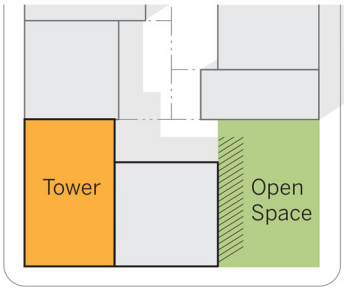
Shade provided by trees has a different and generally preferable quality than shade cast by buildings, which creates a flat, gray appearance. Building massing that balances shade, adequate sunlight access, views of the sky, and a sense of enclosure is preferable to highly-shaded parks and plazas.

GUIDELINES

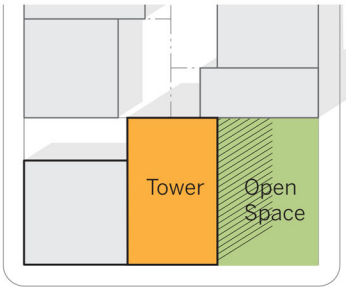
a. Maximize thermal comfort and extend the usable time for *Public Spaces* and *Privately-Owned Public Open Spaces* by providing a range of sun exposures, maintaining sunlight in *Public Open Space* during highest usage periods. Locate taller buildings selectively on one or two sides of open space to maintain sunlight exposure.

b. Use sensitive open space and plaza design to provide sufficient tree cover for shelter from the sun in periods of warmer temperatures.

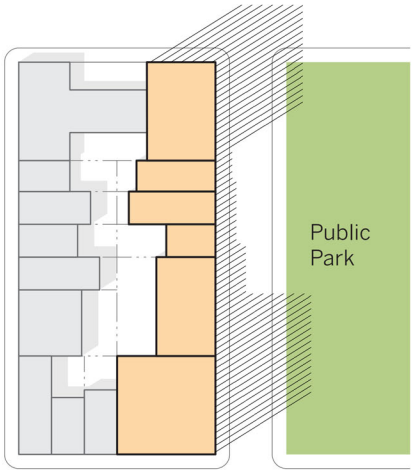
c. Use slender building forms and articulated shapes, particularly at the *Skyline Level*, to avoid wide shadows on *Public Space*, including streets, that leave areas without direct sunlight for long periods. Orient long building forms, including at the *Podium Level*, in the north-south direction to limit shadows on city streets.



a. **DO -** Place tower to minimize shade on open space



b. **DO NOT -** Place tower directly south or west of open space



c. **DO -** Locate and shape towers to minimize shadows on public parks and plazas.

DO NOT - A tower southwest of a plaza may create large areas of shade, reducing the ability of users to choose the amount of shade based on comfort.

STANDARDS

None

RELATED GUIDELINES

3.3.3 - Paseo / Mid-Block Connection Location
3.4.1 - Locating Privately-Owned Public Open Space
4.3.1 - Podium-Level Massing
4.3.2 - Skyline-Level Massing

GENERAL PLAN REFERENCE

- CD-4.5, CD-7.8, MS-2.3, CD-6.6

4.3.5 Wind

DESIGN FOR SUSTAINABILITY, GENERATE RESILIENCE

Preserve and improve wind circulation without creating areas of high wind speed.

RATIONALE

The presence of too much or little wind is bad for health, comfort, and safety. While comfortable wind speed varies by personal preference, air temperature, shade, and other factors, there is an optimum range of wind speeds in an urban environment.

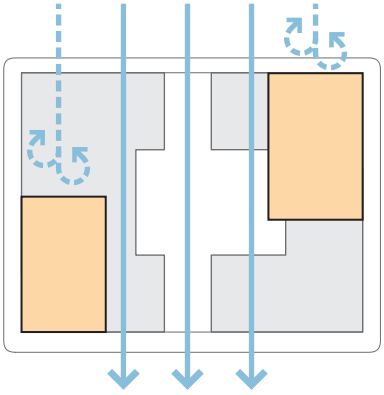
Very low wind speeds can be unpleasant, particularly in warm weather, and unhealthy because the lack of air movement allows pollution to accumulate. Wide building masses turned perpendicular to the prevailing wind direction slow the flow of air, potentially leaving it stagnant.

Groups of tall buildings with uniform heights slow wind and leave ground level air still. Staggered tall building height and location that creates an irregular overall massing allows the wind to regain velocity. Breaks in block perimeter *Podium Level* massing in the prevailing wind direction allow wind to enter and circulate through the internal space of the block.

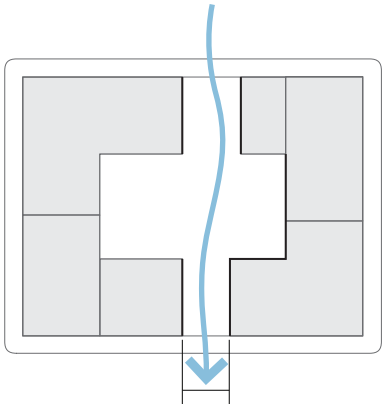
GUIDELINES

a. Stagger the heights and locations of tall buildings in and between blocks to avoid blocking wind flows.

b. Create gaps of 15-20 feet width in *Podium Level* massing in the prevailing wind direction, defined as the alignment of the runways at Norman Y. Mineta-San José International Airport, approximately 319 degrees clockwise from true north.

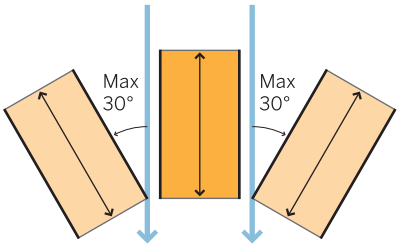


a. **DO** - Stagger towers to preserve wind flow



b. **DO** - Create 15'-20' gaps in massing to allow wind flow

DO - Orient *Skyline Level* massing to preserve wind flow.



c. **DO** - Align the longest *Skyline Level* dimension within 30 degrees of the prevailing wind direction.

c. Orient the widest *Skyline Level* building dimension within 30 degrees of the prevailing wind direction, defined here as the alignment of the runways at Norman Y. Mineta-San José International Airport, approximately 319 degrees clockwise from true north.

STANDARDS

None

RELATED GUIDELINES

3.2.2 - Building Placement

GENERAL PLAN REFERENCE

- LU-17.4 (4)

4.4.1 Facade Pattern and Articulation

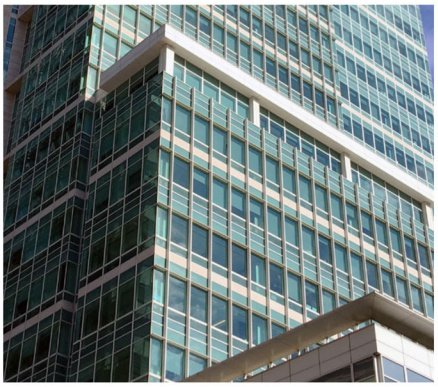
PROMOTE HIGH QUALITY ARCHITECTURE

The buildings of Downtown should rely on simple, sophisticated design using contemporary architecture to achieve timeless appeal.

RATIONALE

A cohesive *facade* organization, varied *human scale* horizontal and vertical elements, texture and depth, and variations to enrich individual *facades* create a rich visual environment while also relating a building to the surrounding city. Associating scale elements and facade materials to context, particularly at the *Podium Level* and *Pedestrian Level*, creates a harmonious urban environment and helps a building fit into its surroundings.

A key element of *Podium Level* and *Pedestrian Level facades* is repeated reference to *human scale* and interior activities with architectural features, *fenestration* patterns, and material compositions.



DO - Horizontal and vertical elements add *human scale* to the *facade*.

GUIDELINES

Overall

a. Design a harmonious, internally consistent, and unified *facade* using elements such as fenestration and horizontal and vertical scale definition that relate to *human scale*.

b. Incorporate *facade* elements to create horizontal and vertical scale definition that conveys information about the building's structural framework and scale.

c. Avoid flat *facades* by using recessed or projected entryways, windows, bays, canopies, awnings, balconies, *step-backs*, and other architectural elements to create visual interest and changing effects of light and shadow.

d. Do not design long featureless expanses of *facade* that eliminate the sense of building scale.

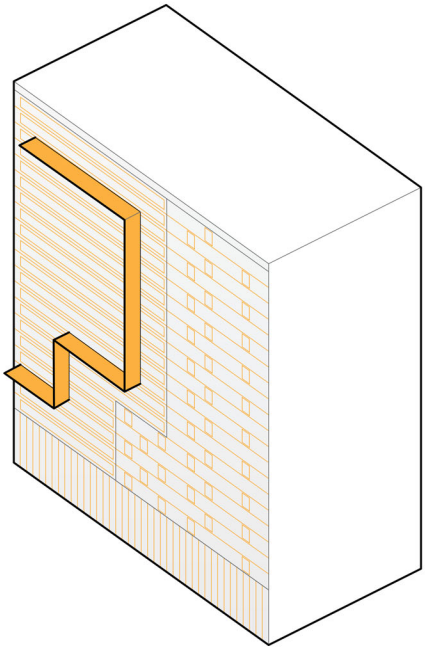
Relationship of Parts

e. Coordinate the *Podium Level* and *Skyline Level* to increase verticality, avoiding the appearance of a squat and bulky building.

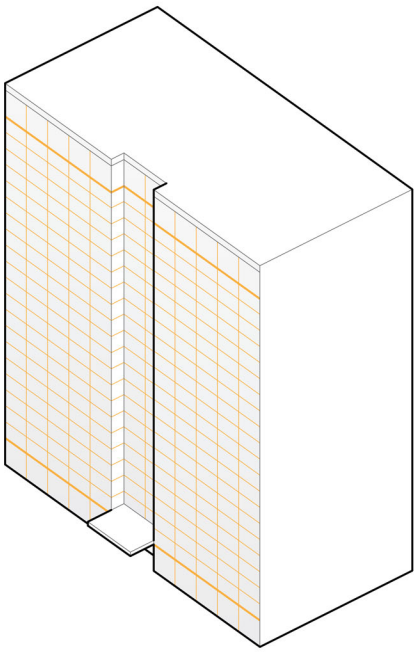
f. Do not create visually busy *facades* with decorative elements that do not relate to the building's form, structure, use, or scale.

g. Do not use multiple visual organizing systems with little relationship to the building's structure or human context, particularly at the *Skyline Level*.

h. Use wide areas of balconies on the *Skyline Level facades* of a residential building to break down the bulk and scale of the tower.



a. **DO NOT -** Do not create visually busy *facades* with elements that do not relate to the building's form, structure, use, or scale, or use multiple visual organizing systems with little relationship to the building's structure or human context. Do not include *facade* elements with no specific function. Do not leave *Podium Levels* and *Skyline Levels* uncoordinated, reducing verticality and making the building appear squat and bulky.



b. **DO -** Design a harmonious and unified concept using *human scale* elements, horizontal and vertical scale definition, *Pedestrian Level transparency*, definition of the building top, and elements to reduce the apparent building bulk and increase verticality.

Relationship to Context

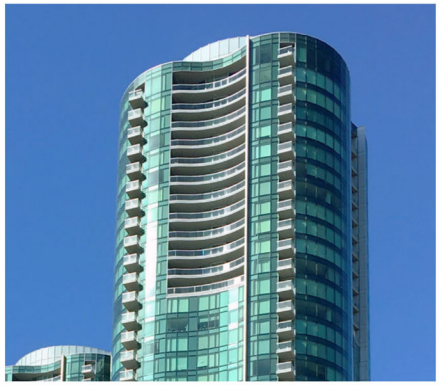
i. Create *compatibility* with context by continuing essential aspects of adjacent and nearby building designs such as entrance location and design, *cornice* line, massing, *setback*, color, materials, and *fenestration*. For corner sites, this includes buildings on both intersecting streets.

j. For buildings on *Gateway Sites* (see Section 2.2), use more innovative and distinctive design, including more elaborate building tops.

k. Design for solar conditions to promote sustainability in building operations and occupant comfort, such as providing shading on *facades* exposed to strong sun.

l. Maximize the number of windows facing public streets at the *Podium Level* and create *Pedestrian Level transparency* to increase safety.

m. Include *facade* elements to promote indoor-outdoor working and living.



DO - Wide areas of balconies help to break down the scale of the *facade*.

STANDARDS

a. Design all buildings to include a top distinguishable from the rest of the *facade*. The building top may consist of the special *facade* treatment of one or more full floors, among other possible treatments.

b. Do not use strong expressions of horizontal or vertical elements that emphasize the *facade* more than the overall building form or structure, such as a projecting fin that does not serve a function like shading or control of the wind.

c. Reflect the scale of neighboring buildings in the *facade* at the *Podium Level* and *Pedestrian Level*.

RELATED GUIDELINES

4.2.1 - Form, Proportion, and Organizing Idea

4.2.2 - Massing Relationship to Context

4.2.3 - Civic Icon Adjacency

4.2.4 - Historic Adjacency

4.4.2.a - Windows and Glazing

4.4.3 - Materials and Colors

5.2 - Public Art in Private Development

GENERAL PLAN REFERENCE

- CD-1.11, CD-6.5, CD-1.12, CD-1.9, CD-4.8

4.4.2.a Windows and Glazing

DESIGN FOR SUSTAINABILITY, BE AUTHENTIC TO SAN JOSE, PROMOTE HIGH QUALITY ARCHITECTURE

Use window type and design to create a building that is more sustainable, efficient, and pleasant for its occupants.

RATIONALE

The use of *facades* with no response to solar and wind conditions creates a building unsuited to its environment. Such a building is over-reliant on mechanical systems, environmentally wasteful, and unsustainable. Sealed off spaces can be less healthy due to poor air quality. They can also foster lower worker productivity. Responding to *context*, climate and orientation will create a cityscape that is interesting and sustainable.

Individual in-window and through-wall air conditioning units are undesirable. Units frequently become dirty and lack external maintenance. Replacement with mismatched units creates a haphazard appearance. Noise and water condensation reduce the enjoyment of balcony space and adjacent ground level *Public Space*. The energy efficiency of individual units is typically poor compared to centralized systems.

GUIDELINES

a. Design the building's window size and location and the *facade* treatment to respond to nearby buildings and interesting elements of the ground level *Public Realm*.

b. Preserve, acknowledge, and exploit long distance and near views of noteworthy structures or natural features. See also Section 4.2.3 on Civic Icon Adjacency.

c. Use operable windows to allow occupants to take advantage of San José's typically warm, sunny climate and potentially reduce the need for mechanical heating and cooling.

d. Respond to the building's orientation by varying the *fenestration* on different *facades*. Use passive solar design elements such as shading devices or balconies to regulate solar gain on southern and western *facades* or use technological solutions such as windows with variable opacity.

e. Create a balance between window and wall, especially in the *Podium Level*, to give the *facade* character and weight. Combine windows where needed to reduce busyness in the *facade*.

f. Orient windows vertically near building corners to emphasize verticality.

g. Do not use individual through-window or through-wall air conditioning units.

STANDARDS

a. Do not use individual through-window or through-wall air conditioning units on buildings over three stories tall.

b. When individual air conditioning units are present, shield them from view with uniform *facade* elements.

RELATED GUIDELINES

3.5.1 - Pedestrian and Bicycle Entrance Location

4.2.3 - Civic Icon Adjacency

5.3.1.a - Active Frontages

5.5.1 - Pedestrian and Bicycle Entry Design

GENERAL PLAN REFERENCE

- Climate Smart San José
- CD-2.8, CD-1.11, MS-4.1, MS-4.2

DO - Vary *fenestration* by building *facade*, placing windows to take advantage of solar conditions and views to the nearby ground level *Public Realm*.

DO NOT - While present on some historic buildings and others, window air conditioning units do not create an attractive *facade* and should be avoided.

DO and DO NOT - Operable windows enhance livability and sustainability. Shading devices would have reduced the potential for glare.

4.4.2.b Bird Safety

DESIGN FOR SUSTAINABILITY

Consider bird safety in building design and landscaping.

RATIONALE

The City of San José has design guidance in place for areas of the City where birds are most common. These requirements apply specifically to areas north of Highway 237 according to the *Envision San José 2040 General Plan (Goal ER-7.1)* and *City Council Policy 6-34 - Riparian Corridor Protection and Bird-Safe Design*.

Bird safety is a vital consideration in Downtown as well, particularly given the size and number of buildings and the presence of riparian corridors. Bird safety may also become an issue in the environmental review process.

There are a variety of techniques to reduce bird deaths due to building collisions. These involve material choice, material patterning, landscaping, and building design. These are particularly important for buildings near bird habitat, such as open spaces and water.

Multiple sections of this document consider bird safety, including this section, 4.4.2.c Balconies, 4.4.8 Pedestrian Bridges, 4.4.9.a Lighting - Podium Level, 4.4.9.b Lighting - Skyline Level, and the Glossary, which includes definitions of *bird safety treatment*, *bird-safe pattern*, *mirrored glass* and *riparian corridor*.

The requirements of the Design Guidelines are in addition to any resulting from City rules or regulations about bird safety.

GUIDELINES

a. For projects within 300 feet of a *riparian corridor*, treat all glass that is visible from a riparian corridor with a *bird safety treatment*.
b. Do not create areas of glass through which trees, landscape areas, water features or the sky is visible from the exterior unless a *bird safety treatment* is used.
c. Reduce or eliminate upward-facing spot-lights on buildings.
d. For projects within 300 feet of a *riparian corridor*, turn off decorative exterior lighting between 2:00AM and 6:00AM except during June, July, December, and January due to bird migration.
e. Do not plant landscaping tree lines that are perpendicular to glass facades.

DO NOT - Highly reflective glass can be dangerous for birds, which may mistake it for sky and collide with the building.

STANDARDS

a. Do not use *mirrored glass*.
b. Use a *bird safety treatment* on facades within 300 feet of a *riparian corridor* that have 50% or more glazed surface.
c. Use a *bird safety treatment* on the facade of any floor of the building within 15 vertical feet of the level of and visible from a green roof, including a green roof on an adjacent building within 20 horizontal feet, if the facade has 50% or more glazed surface.
d. Use a *bird safety treatment* on areas of glass through which sky or foliage is visible on the other side of parallel panes of glass less than 30 feet apart.

RELATED GUIDELINES

4.4.2.c - Balconies

4.4.3 - Materials and Colors

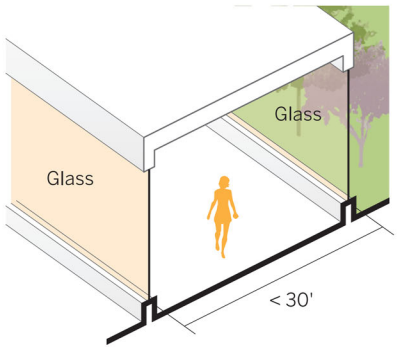
4.4.8 - Pedestrian Bridges

4.4.9.a - Lighting - Podium Level

4.4.9.b - Lighting - Skyline Level

GENERAL PLAN REFERENCE

- ER 7.1, ER-7.6



DO - Add *bird-safe patterns* to parallel glass less than 30 feet apart.

4.4.2.c Balconies (Private Open Space)

PUT PEOPLE FIRST

Improve appearance, increase occupant comfort and enjoyment, and make a building more efficient through well-designed balconies.

RATIONALE

Balconies create positive effects for both residential and commercial buildings. Balconies break down the visual size of large *facades* and their shadows create a shifting appearance during a day. Balconies' shade can enhance the efficiency of interior cooling, improve opportunities for natural ventilation, and provide valuable outdoor space. Balconies increase security through casual surveillance of the street by occupants, particularly at a building's lower levels.

Balconies may encroach on street rights of way with appropriate permits (Refer to San José Municipal Code Section 13.37.230.C and Building Code Section 3202 for requirements). See Section 4.3.3 for *Streetwall* guidance.

GUIDELINES

a. Create balconies for at least 50 percent of street-facing residential units in the *Podium Level*.

b. Avoid aluminum mesh railings with a galvanized or anodized finish. Powder-coated finishes are preferred.

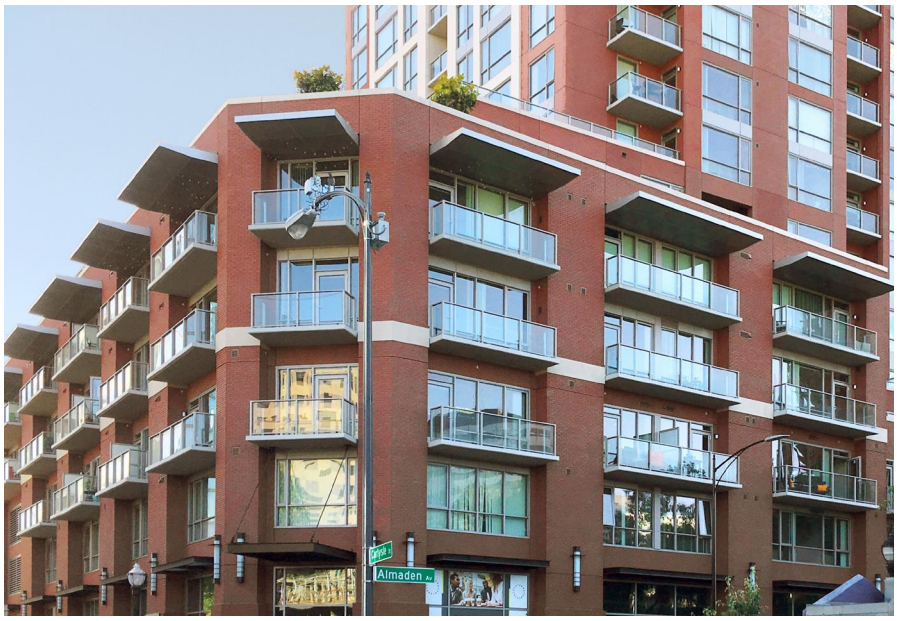
c. Integrate balconies, including the undersides, into the overall facade design including materials and colors.

STANDARDS

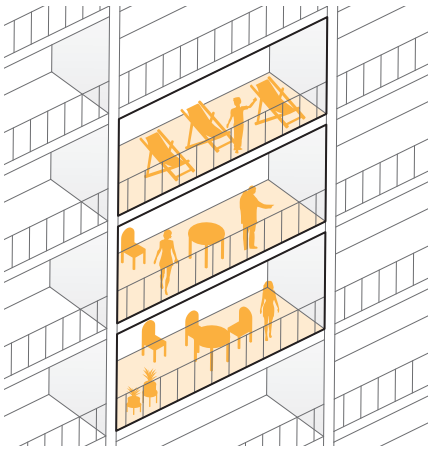
a. Create residential balconies and solariums of minimum of 4 feet deep (6 feet preferred), except for Juliet balconies with a maximum depth of 1 foot. See section 4.3.3 for encroachment rules.

b. Create residential balconies of a minimum 20 square feet to be usable for typical activities such as dining.

c. Use a *bird-safe pattern* on glass railings.



DO and DO NOT - Balconies provide *Private Open Space* and connect a building to its surroundings. Glass railings can be problematic for bird safety.



Balconies with sufficient dimensions and area may serve a variety of activities.

RELATED GUIDELINES

3.4.2 - Locating Ground Level Semi-Private Open Space

3.4.3 - Locating Ground Level Building Open Space

4.3.3 - Streetwall

5.3.3 - Ground Floor Residential Space

GENERAL PLAN REFERENCE

- H-3.2, LU-14.9

4.4.3 Materials and Colors

CREATE A MEMORABLE DESTINATION

Use high quality materials on building exteriors and use materials and colors to indicate the building's role in the Downtown skyline.

RATIONALE

Building materials and colors inform Downtown's look and feel. Simple, local, quality materials are more economically and environmentally sustainable and more timeless in appearance. Distinctive, contrasting colors and materials can add to a building's prominence on the skyline.

GUIDELINES

a. Use materials that are durable, low maintenance, and resistant to wear and vandalism, selected and designed for a 50-year life span (minimum 20 years for roofs), and 20 years of deferred maintenance.

b. Do not create highly-reflective *facades* or use glass that will cause glare at the street level and for neighboring structures.

Facade Composition

c. Integrate *Skyline Level*, *Podium Level*, and *Pedestrian Level* materials to create a coordinated composition.

d. Use high-quality and interesting *facade* materials such as stone at the building base to relate to the pedestrian, energize the street, and enhance the experience of building occupants and pedestrians.

e. Create a composition of solid and transparent materials with at least 15% non-glass materials on every *facade*.

f. Create an appearance of building slenderness with changes of textures, materials, and colors.

g. Use colors and cladding materials to articulate the building's *facades* in intervals to provide a desirable scale in relation to building *context*.

Sustainability

h. Use high quality materials derived from local, renewable sources which reference the Bay Area's natural material colors and textures. Give preference to natural materials like stone, brick, terra cotta, and wood, and those manufactured within 100 miles of San José.

i. Use materials with low embodied energy and low or no chemical emissions.

j. Use materials with recycled content (both post-consumer and post-industrial).

Major and Accent Colors

k. Use two basic categories of building colors: major and accent. Major colors cover the majority of the building's opaque surfaces and accent colors are in smaller quantities in specific locations.

l. Major colors should be predominately light. Avoid dark major building colors, including black, dark red, dark gray, and dark natural stone colors. Greater variation of color from light to dark may be appropriate for major colors on buildings on Gateway Sites (see Section 2.1).

DO - As in downtown Toronto, color may differentiate and highlight important buildings.

m. Use accent colors on up to 30% of the opaque *facade* surface area. Greater freedom of color range from light to dark is appropriate for accent colors. Less than 5% of the building's opaque *facade* surface may have intense colors for visual interest.

n. For buildings on Gateway Sites (see Section 2.1), use colors with a higher level of contrast with surrounding buildings and use accent colors with a higher level of contrast with the major color.

STANDARDS

a. At the *Pedestrian Level*, use elements of stone, pre-cast concrete, terra cotta, masonry, or cast stone in addition to any other materials such as metal and glass.

b. Use materials that are graffiti resistant or easily repainted.

c. Do not use Exterior Insulation Finishing Systems (*EIFS* - see Glossary for definition) below the second floor.

d. Use highly-transparent glass at the ground floor. See Section 5.3.1.a about *Active Frontages*.

e. Use glass above the ground floor that is clear in color or with a subtle cool (blue, green, or gray) tint.

GENERAL PLAN REFERENCE

- LU-17.5, MS-4.1, MS-4.3, MS-2.5, MS-2.10, MS-3.3, MS-3.4

4.4.4 Mitigating Blank Facades

CREATE A MEMORABLE DESTINATION

Avoid creating Blank Facades if possible. If it is necessary to create one, use interventions to enliven the Blank Facade to make it into an asset to the look of Downtown, providing visual interest and relief.

RATIONALE

Large blank building *facades* above the *Pedestrian Level* deaden the cityscape (see Section 5.3.1.b - Mitigating Blank Walls for guidance about the *Pedestrian Level* and 4.4.6 for guidance about parking garages). Windows and balconies enable interaction between activities inside and outside the building and are preferable to the unchanging aspect of a *Blank Facade*.

GUIDELINES

a. Avoid the creation of a *Blank Facade* with the insertion of windows and balconies. When this is not possible, such as with zero-lot-line development, make the *Blank Facade* more attractive and visually interesting.

b. Break down a *Blank Facade* into smaller areas by changing building massing.

STANDARDS

a. A *Blank Facade* is a portion of a *facade* above the ground level without a window (including into parking) or balcony 15 feet in any direction (see diagram).

b. Use architectural treatments (such as trellises, screens, or changes in materials) or art to create visual interest in a *Blank Facade*. Cover at least 50 percent of the *Blank Facade* surface. Commercial advertising or building-related signage does not count as an intervention.

RELATED GUIDELINES

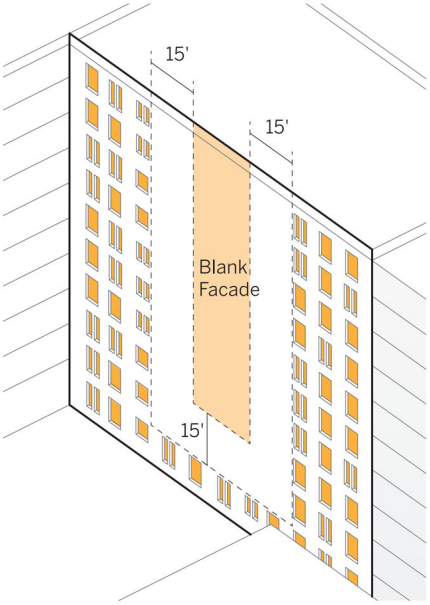
4.4.6 - Parking Garages

5.2 - Public Art in Private Development

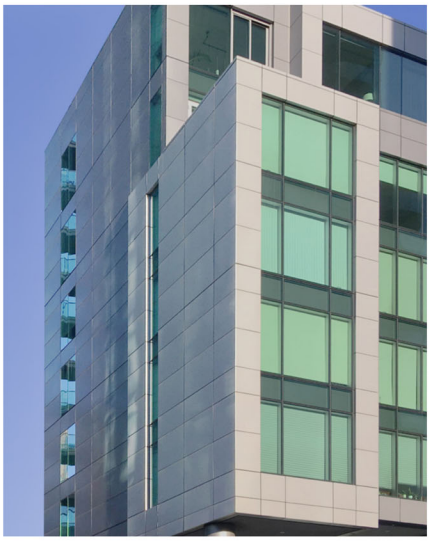
5.3.1.b - Mitigating Blank Walls

GENERAL PLAN REFERENCE

- CD-1.9, CD-1.11, CD-1.2, CD-1.8, CD-1.12



DO - Treat the portion of a *facade* without a window or balcony for 15' in any direction.



DO - Break up a *facade* with windows and balconies, even away from the primary frontage.

DO - A *Blank Facade* mitigation can become an attraction in its own right, like this wall that serves as a backdrop for selfies and other photos.

4.4.5 Vertical Circulation

GENERATE RESILIENCE

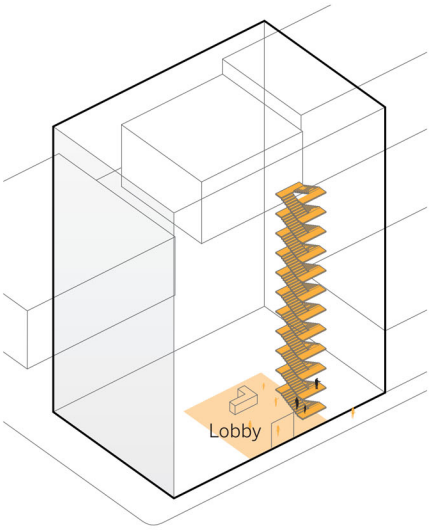
Locate and design stairs to be attractive and invite use.

RATIONALE

Inviting, convenient stairs attract frequent use and bring more physical activity into people's daily routines, improving health.

Stairs in a prominent location, accessible from primary circulation routes and visible from main building entries, are convenient to use and remind people that stairs are an available option.

Likewise, a prominent stairway visible on the building facade creates a safer, more pleasant experience for stair users and helps those outside the building understand where the stairway is located.



DO - Locate stairs near the lobby and visible from outside to make stair access easy and obvious.

GUIDELINES

a. Locate a primary stairway along the building exterior at the *Podium Level*. Create *transparency* from the stairs to the exterior to give stair users interesting views and to make the location of stairs apparent from outside the building.

b. Design tall buildings such that stairs are convenient to use for vertical circulation of four floors or less.

c. Place a stairway near a building corner visible to the building exterior to increase the building's appearance of verticality.

STANDARDS

a. Locate stairs to be visible and accessible to someone entering the building.

b. Design a primary stairway with materials and lighting similar in quality to the building lobby.

RELATED GUIDELINES

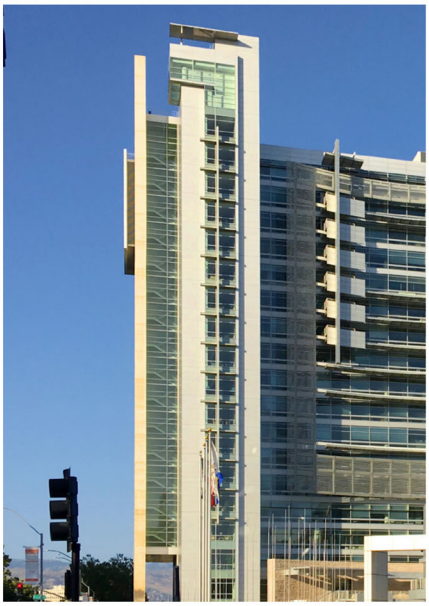
4.2.1 - Form, Proportion, and Organizing Idea

4.3.1 - Podium Level Massing

4.3.2 - Skyline Level Massing

GENERAL PLAN REFERENCE

- CD-3.3



DO - Visible stairs add movement and activity to the building *facade*.

4.4.6 Parking Garages

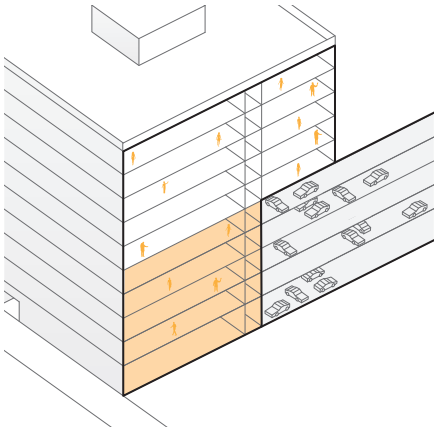
PUT PEOPLE FIRST

Minimize the negative effects of parking garages through placement, design, and screening.

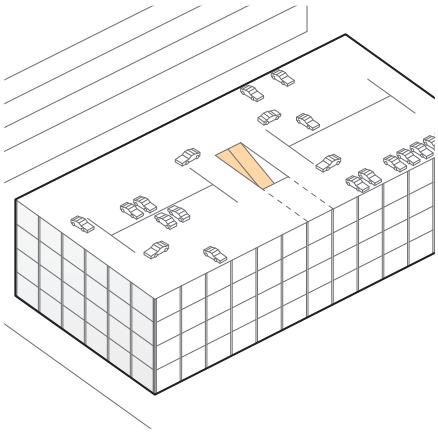
RATIONALE

Even parking garages with good architecture can create deadening effects on the surrounding urban fabric. Their size and location can separate uses and *Active Frontages*, making the city less walkable. They can also become locations for undesirable activities.

To make parking into a good neighbor, reduce the visibility of a garage and use *Occupied Space* to bridge gaps in the urban fabric. Lining parking garages with *Active Frontages* and *Occupied Space* puts the parking garage in the back and brings life to the street. Planning ahead for garage conversion into other uses may avoid the need for expensive and disruptive demolition in case parking is no longer needed due to changes in transportation technology and usage.



a. **DO -** Line a parking garage within the building mass (Section 3.4.4) with *Occupied Space* along a *Primary* or *SoFA Addressing Street* or *Urban Park/Plaza Frontage*.



b. **DO -** "Future proof" parking garages by planning for transition to other uses, such as with structurally-separate vehicle ramps, flat floors, and sufficient floor-to-ceiling heights.

c. **DO -** Future proof garages with sufficient height to accommodate other potential uses.

DO and DO NOT - This parking garage allows harsh light to intrude onto the street. However, the building also uses creative *Podium Level* lighting to create distinction (see Section 4.4.9.a).

GUIDELINES

a. Place landscaping, green roofs, decks, *Green Stormwater Infrastructure*, patios, gardens, solar power generation, or other mitigating elements on an exposed parking garage roof to reduce the heat island effect and water runoff.

b. Provide a canopy, overhang, trellis or other element to mark the top of a standalone parking garage to soften the appearance.

c. Use parking garage lighting of similar light color to that of regular building uses so that the parking garage lighting is not clearly differentiable from regular lighting to avoid an institutional appearance.

d. Place vehicle ramping on the interior of a parking garage, not near any facade.

e. Future proof parking garages to be convertible to other uses in the future. Design structured parking with:

1. Flat floors
2. Minimum 9 foot floor-to-finished-ceiling clear heights
3. Structurally separate vehicle ramps to allow for total or partial removal
4. Sufficient structural strength to allow conversion to other uses
5. Structural depth that is shallow enough to allow necessary daylight access if converted to another use (such as residential, which requires natural light in certain rooms per code), or a plan to reduce the structural depth to the necessary amount

STANDARDS

a. If a parking garage facade is within 50 feet of a *Primary Addressing Street*, *SoFA Addressing Street*, or *Urban Park/Plaza Frontage* (see Section 2.2), line the side(s) of the structure that face those street(s) with *Occupied Space* of at least the same height as the parking garage and of at least 20 feet depth.

b. Treat the *facade* of any exposed garage along an *Image-Defining Frontage* (see Section 2.1) with materials and design of at least comparable quality to the rest of the building, integrated with the building architecture.

c. Design the *facade* of any exposed or standalone parking garage that faces any *Public Space* (but not alley) with an appearance similar to the *facade* of a commercial or residential building. Use window openings or glazing modules of a similar size and shape as those of an office or residential building (typically with a vertical rather than horizontal orientation), and use *facade* materials of similar quality.

d. Screen building lighting of a parking lot or parking garage such that it does not cast direct light on *Public Space* or on nearby buildings. Note that zoning also regulates light trespass from parking lot lighting, particularly onto residential properties. See the San José Zoning Code for details.

e. Screen a parking garage so that vehicle headlights do not shine onto windows of neighboring buildings or buildings across a street or other public space, including when vehicles are traveling up or down a ramp.

f. Provide vehicles a place to stop while exiting a parking garage that gives drivers a clear view of pedestrians on the sidewalk and pedestrians a clear view of approaching vehicles.

g. Design a garage entry so that anticipated vehicle queuing does not cross any *Public Space*.

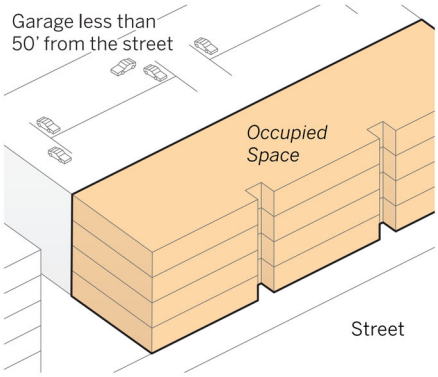
h. Exhaust garage venting to the top of the garage or, if not possible, above the second level and directed away from *Public Space* and neighboring structures.

RELATED GUIDELINES

3.4.4 - Vehicle and Bicycle Parking Location
3.5.3 - Parking and Vehicular Access Location
4.4.4 - Mitigating Blank Facades
5.3.1.b - Mitigating Blank Walls
5.4 - Surface Parking Lots
5.5.2 - Vehicle and Service Entry Design

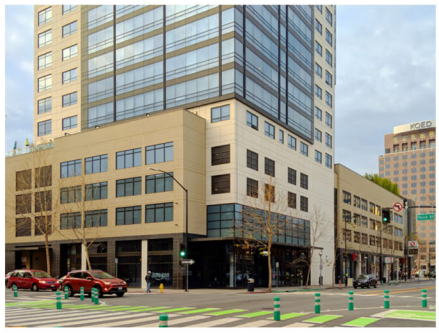
GENERAL PLAN REFERENCE

- MS-2.6, MS-2.7, CD-4.12, CD-1.17, CD-2.11



DO - Line a parking garage within 50 feet of a *Primary Addressing Street*, *SoFA Addressing Street*, or *Urban Park/Plaza Frontage* with *Occupied Space*.

DO - Design the *facade* of a parking garage with high quality materials and architectural treatments.



DO - Treat the *facade* of an exposed parking garage with materials and design similar to the rest of the building and extend the tower facade to ground level (see Section 4.3.1).

DO NOT - Exposed parking diminishes the *Public Realm* even if the garage is decorated.

4.4.7.a Rooftops and Mechanical Equipment

PROMOTE HIGH QUALITY ARCHITECTURE

Design roofs to provide attractive views from other buildings and minimize the negative visual impact of mechanical and window washing equipment.

RATIONALE

Although mostly invisible from the street, rooftops are prominent features of the cityscape from neighboring buildings. Items such as vents, tanks, wiring, rooftop rooms, and stored window washing equipment can create an unattractive view and give an impression of poor maintenance. High-quality materials, occupiable outdoor space, and rooftop mechanical equipment shielded or arranged with care can make the roof a neutral or attractive part of the urban view.

DO NOT - A cluttered, disorganized-appearing rooftop diminishes views from nearby buildings.

DO - Plan for the rooftop to be visible from nearby buildings.

GUIDELINES

a. Design roofs that may be seen from higher buildings consistent with the architecture of the building.

b. Group vents, exhaust fans, and other roof penetrations so that they do not create visual clutter.

STANDARDS

a. Use non-reflective, low intensity (dull, not bright) roof colors.

b. Organize and design rooftop equipment as a component of the roofscape and not as a leftover or add-on element.

c. Screen vents, mechanical rooms and equipment, elevator houses, cooling towers, large vent projections, water tanks, or storage areas on the building elevation and rooftop from street level view with enclosures, parapets, setbacks, plant materials, or other means. Use similar means to obscure these items from neighboring buildings, if visible, or design and arrange them to present an ordered and attractive view.

d. Design enclosures or screening as a logical extension of the building, using similar materials and detailing.

e. Incorporate window washing equipment into the building design, or design it so when not in use it is fully hidden from view from horizontally and below.

RELATED GUIDELINES

4.4.6 - Parking Garages

4.4.7.b. - Green Roofs and Decks

GENERAL PLAN REFERENCE

- MS-3.4, CD-4.12, CD-6.9, LU-12.2, ES-3.2, MS-2.6

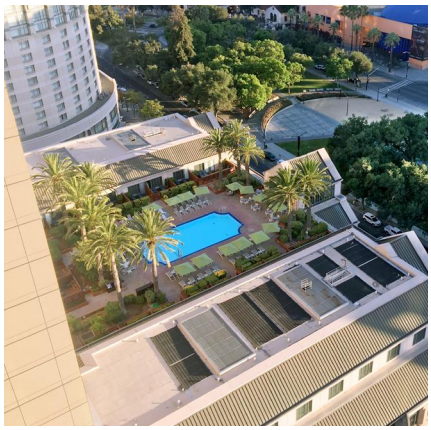
4.4.7.b Green Roofs and Decks (Building Open Space)

DESIGN FOR SUSTAINABILITY, GENERATE RESILIENCE

Include green roofs and occupiable decks for aesthetics, environmental benefits, and as building occupant amenities.

RATIONALE

The benefits of green roofs include storm-water runoff reduction, energy conservation, and reducing urban heat island effects. They can also provide habitat for urban wildlife, improve views and air quality, and reduce noise pollution. *Roof decks* add life to the cityscape and create additional open space for building occupants or the public. Creating a *roof deck* in combination with a green roof allows these two elements to work together.



DO - Green roofs and *Roof Decks* provide amenity and visual relief.

DO - Green roofs (including food production) and *Roof Decks* for residents' use top the 3rd, 4th, and 5th floors of Garden Village in Berkeley.

GUIDELINES

a. Use green roofs to reduce building heat loads and manage stormwater runoff.

b. Use native plant species in green roofs to ensure longevity and to minimize maintenance requirements.

c. Provide usable space such as terraces, gardens, restaurants, pools, and decks on top of the building's *Podium Level* as an amenity for tower occupants.

d. Make rooftop gardens open to the public as an amenity.

STANDARDS

- Cover at least 20% of the area of a roof that is less than 150 feet above ground and that is larger than 2,500 square feet in area with a green roof, solar panels, or a combination of these.

GENERAL PLAN REFERENCE

- MS-2.6, MS-3.4, CD-4.12, LU-12.2, CD-6.9

4.4.8 Pedestrian Bridges

FOCUS ON THE GROUND FLOOR

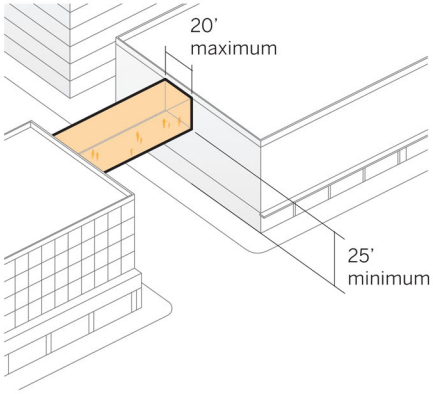
Avoid creating pedestrian bridges across public rights of way. Where unavoidable, design them to reduce their impact on the Public Realm.

RATIONALE

Pedestrian bridges de-emphasize public streets and sidewalks. Sidewalk pedestrian activity helps to create a more vibrant area, and supports retail and *Public Spaces*.

In a place with a typically warm, sunny climate like San José, pedestrian bridges are usually unnecessary. They should only be used between secured areas, such as behind security check points in an office complex or hospital.

Note: If a project demonstrates the need for a pedestrian bridge over public right-of-way (typically due to safety concerns), an encroachment permit may be required pursuant to Chapter 13.27 of the San José Municipal Code.



DO - Limit the size of a pedestrian bridge, and place it high above the street to avoid creating a dark space below.

DO NOT - Pedestrian bridges are not recommended. They keep activity within buildings that could be on the street, and can block views.

GUIDELINES

a. Do not create pedestrian bridges in Downtown. Plan for movement between buildings on the public sidewalk.

b. Design a pedestrian bridge to be as short as possible, ideally perpendicular to the street.

c. Use lighting, art, landscaping, stormwater treatments, and architectural elements to make a pedestrian bridge interesting and functional.

STANDARDS

a. Do not create pedestrian bridges across designated View Corridors (see Section 2.5 - View Corridors Plan).

b. Design a pedestrian bridge a minimum of 25 feet clear above street pavement level.

c. Design a pedestrian bridge a maximum of 20 feet in width in the greatest outside dimension.

d. Make the side elevations of a pedestrian bridge at least 50 percent transparent to provide views into and out of the bridge. Ensure bird safety through glass patterning or other techniques (see section 4.4.2.b - Bird Safety).

GENERAL PLAN REFERENCE

- TN-3.3, TR-2.3, TR-2.12

4.4.9.a Lighting - Podium Level

CREATE LEGIBILITY

Create safe, inviting Public Spaces and highlight distinctive architecture and features with building lighting at the Podium Level.

RATIONALE

Architectural lighting at the *Podium Level* can enhance public safety and enjoyment, create local identity at the street level, and accentuate the district identity of places like SoFA and San Pedro Square. Lighting helps to create a feeling of safety and enables casual surveillance of *Public Space*, or *eyes on the street*.

Buildings along Highway 87 and Interstate 280 have high visibility in Downtown, and several large parks and open spaces provide good views of surrounding buildings. Buildings in these locations have an opportunity to help define the image of the area with accentuated lighting.

GUIDELINES

a. Illuminate distinctive features of the building, including entries, signage, canopies, and areas of architectural detail and interest.

b. Illuminate distinctive features inside the building so they are visible from outside.

c. For buildings in locations not covered in Standards d., e., or f., use soft and understated *Podium Level* exterior lighting.

STANDARDS

a. Provide outdoor lighting using fixtures that yield low light pollution and glare.

b. Orient exterior lighting fixtures downward.

c. Shield all lighting to prevent light intrusion into private and public building uses, especially residential units.

d. For *Image-Defining Frontages,* accentuate *Podium Level* lighting, including the use of *Wall Washing*. *Image-Defining Frontages* within 300 feet of the centerline of the Guadalupe River or Los Gatos Creek that are visible from the River or Creek, where Highway 87 or Interstate 280 is not between the Frontage and the River or Creek, are excluded from requirements of this section for reasons of bird safety. See also Section 2.6.

e. For *facades* along *Lighting Corridors* (see Section 2.6) accentuate the *Podium Level* with lighting to illuminate architectural features and *Wall Washing*.

f. For *facades* at *Lighting Gateways* (see Section 2.6) accentuate *Podium Level* lighting from ground level to the top of the *Podium Level*, including the use of *Wall Washing*, lighting to accentuate architectural features, and artistic lighting or a light-based artwork that marks the location.

RELATED GUIDELINES

2.6 - Special Lighting

4.4.9.b - Lighting - Skyline Level

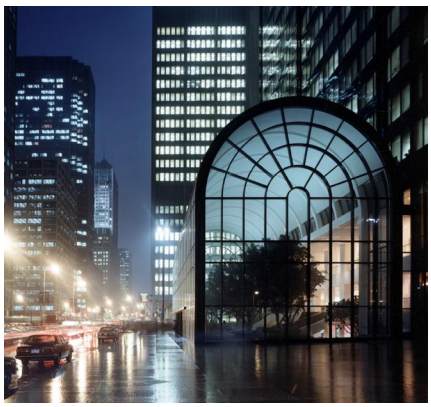
5.2 - Public Art in Private Development

5.3.4 - Lighting - Pedestrian Level

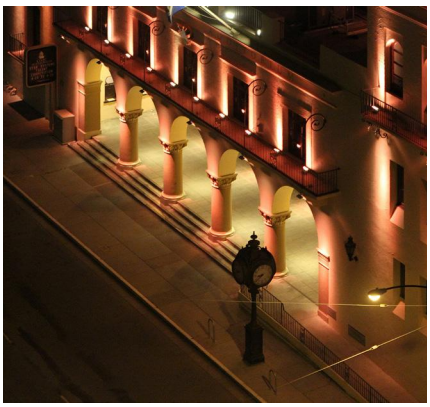
GENERAL PLAN REFERENCE

- CD-1.2, CD-1.7, CD-2.1 (2), CD-5.6, IP-15.1

DO - Use *Wall Washing* to accentuate the *Podium Level*. If lights are pointed upward, avoid spilling extra light away from the building.



DO - Even interior Podium lighting can create drama and interest in the streets.
Willis Tower, Chicago, Photo © SOM | Timothy Hursley



DO - Lighting of architectural features can create dramatic and distinctive views.

4.4.9.b Lighting - Skyline Level

CREATE A MEMORABLE DESTINATION

Use lighting to make Downtown's skyline recognizable in the wider City. Add selected landmarks to make views of the skyline into a source of orientation both within and from outside Downtown.

RATIONALE

The low mesa (table) shape and few dramatic views mean the Downtown skyline does not create identity and orientation as it could. Special architectural lighting design on a limited number of buildings could create a nighttime identity, animate the City at night, create visual excitement, and enhance the skyline. Too many iconic buildings would create visual noise, so only those located such that they have higher prominence in the skyline are needed (see Section 2.1). Elaboration of the skyline can be accomplished while respecting dark sky principles to minimize interference with astronomical research at Lick Observatory.

SKYLINE LEVEL LIGHTING TECHNIQUES

Multiple techniques exist for lighting design that can accentuate a building's *Skyline Level*. These can be used by themselves or together on buildings on appropriate sites (see Standards).

- **Beacon** - A Beacon is a small area of light or a single point that creates a punctuation of the building top.
- **Lantern** - A Lantern is an area of relatively uniform illumination, large enough in comparison to the rest of the building to seem like an independent element and not a simple light.
- **Outline** - An Outline is a series of lights that outlines all or part of a building and key building massing elements.
- **Color** - A Color technique uses lighting of unusual color to create individuality in the building's appearance.
- **Artistic** – An Artistic technique includes working with an artist or artist team to combine art and high-tech to create a unique illumination platform.

GUIDELINES

a. Use *Skyline Level* lighting to create memorable features in the skyline while avoiding overwhelming or out-of-scale elements.

b. Buildings on *Gateway Sites* (see Section 2.1) should use *Skyline Level* lighting techniques to mark their special locations in the area.

c. Buildings not on *Gateway Sites* (see Section 2.1) should maintain simple lighting at the *Skyline Level*, with lighting visible at night mostly coming from the building's internal lighting and activities.

STANDARDS

a. Coordinate *Skyline Level* lighting with *Podium Level* and *Pedestrian Level* lighting to create a unified composition.

b. Create *Skyline Level* lighting that is bird safe, including the potential to reduce or shield lighting visible to birds during migration season (February to May and August to November).

RELATED GUIDELINES

2.6 - Special Lighting

4.3.2 - Skyline Level Massing

4.4.9.a - Lighting - Podium Level

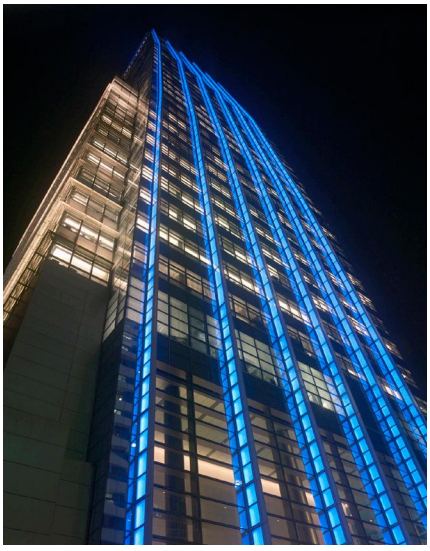
5.3.4 - Lighting - Pedestrian Level

GENERAL PLAN REFERENCE

- CD-6.9

Artistic lighting *("Voxel Cloud" by artist Brian Brush)*

DO - A lantern building top creates a memorable element on the skyline without dominating the view.
St. Regis, San Francisco, Photo © SOM



This lighting combines Color and Outlines
AIA Tower, Hong Kong, Photo © SOM

4.4.10 Signage - Skyline Level

BE AUTHENTIC TO SAN JOSE

Use signage at the Skyline Level carefully to enhance the unified image of Downtown.

RATIONALE

A sign at *Skyline Level* is not useful as direction to an individual business as much as it is a form of general advertising like a billboard. Such advertising does not further the identity of Downtown but can diminish it by allowing the creation of multiple competing messages and visual discord.

Buildings and businesses that seek a strong identity may more appropriately use high quality *Skyline Level* architecture and lighting as noted in the Design Guidelines.

GUIDELINES

a. Use lighting and building shape instead of signage to create building distinction where warranted. Examples of this technique are the Empire State Building in New York City and the Transamerica Pyramid in San Francisco.

b. Emphasize a graphic logo within a sign and de-emphasize text.

STANDARDS

- Place *Skyline Level* signs on an integral part of the building architecture rather than on an add-on shape.

RELATED GUIDELINES

4.3.2 - Skyline Level Massing

4.4.9.b - Lighting - Skyline Level

5.3.5 - Signage - Podium Level and Pedestrian Level

GENERAL PLAN REFERENCE

- CD-6.9

DO - Install signage on the building to maintain visibility while avoiding visual disruption.

Left: 680 Folsom, San Francisco, Photo © SOM | Cesar Rubio

DO NOT - *Skyline Level* signage integrates best with Downtown when placed on a building surface integrated with the architecture, not an add-on shape.

5.0
PEDESTRIAN LEVEL

5.1 Street Life, Commerce, and the Public Realm

5.2 Public Art in Private Development

5.3 Ground Floor Treatments and Uses

5.3.1 a. Active Frontages
b. Mitigating Blank Walls
c. Service and Utility Design

5.3.2 Ground Floor Non-Residential Space

5.3.3 Ground Floor Residential Space

5.3.4 Lighting - Pedestrian Level

5.3.5 Signage - Podium Level and Pedestrian Level

5.4 Surface Parking Lots

5.5 Entrances

5.5.1 Pedestrian and Bicycle Entry Design

5.5.2 Vehicle and Service Entry Design

5.6 Paseo Design

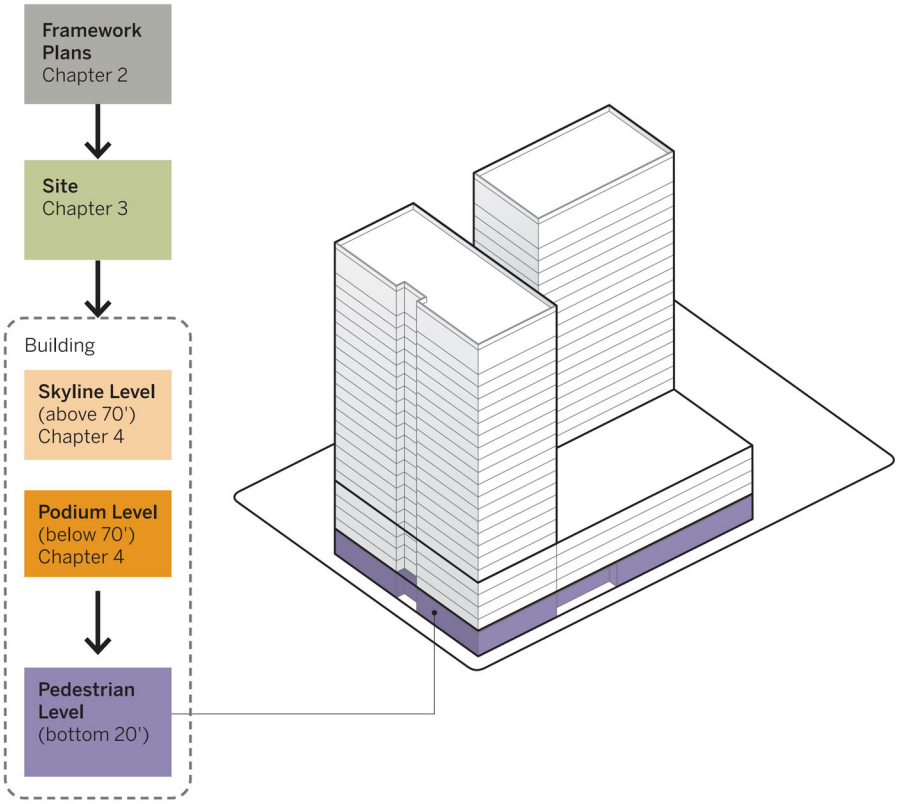
5.7 Privately-Owned Public Open Space Design

Photo credit: Sundry Photography / Shutterstock.com

5.1 Street Life, Commerce, and the Public Realm

A sidewalk bustling with people is a mark of a vibrant Downtown. Building condition, design, and the activities facing the sidewalk are the factors that draw people to the *Public Realm*.

The most important portion of the building for pedestrian activity is the *Pedestrian Level*, the area within 20 feet above ground. The elements necessary for a successful *Public Realm* are safety, comfort, and an interesting *human scale* environment. The guidelines in this section help create these factors in Downtown.



5.2 Public Art in Private Development

CREATE A MEMORABLE DESTINATION, BE AUTHENTIC TO SAN JOSE

Incorporate public art within private development to enrich Downtown and build the area's reputation as a center of innovation and culture.

RATIONALE

San José values public art as part of the City's creative character. Public art is an essential element of *placemaking* and the creation of a memorable district.

Public art ranges from monumental works to intimate *Streetscape* elements. Opportunities exist in interior and exterior spaces, plazas, storefronts, water features, entryways, temporary exhibition sites, and landscaping.

PUBLIC ART TYPOLOGIES

Art within Downtown can be categorized in three ways:

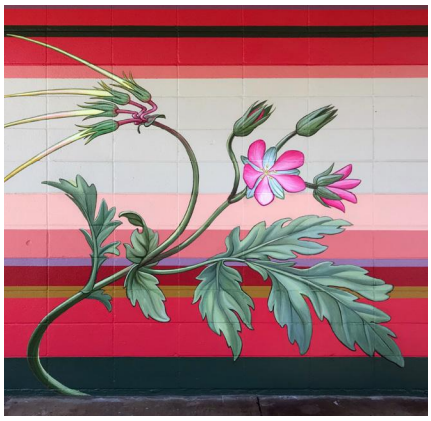
Elements of Distinction - These are unique, memorable features. Typically large in scale, they may provide an identifying view or "selfie spot" to visitors. They may also be physically interactive, providing an opportunity for play.

Elements of Continuity - These are repeated elements that create a unified character, unifying theme, or branding. If coordinated between properties, Elements of Continuity can visually unify an area. Elements with variations can take on a sequential character.

Elements of Change - These are temporary art works, potentially repeating at significant dates or seasons, or works that are changeable such as light features. Over time, a repeating element can add a feeling of continuity and memory to a location. Non-repeating works become markers of time in memory and photographs.

GUIDELINES

a. Place public art in *Public Spaces* (such as exteriors) or semi-public zones (such as lobbies) or integrate the artwork with building architecture at the building top, middle, or base.



DO - Elements of Distinction relieve *Blank Facades* and *Blank Walls* while enlivening an area. *("A Chance to Grow" by Mona Caron)*

b. Integrate permanent and temporary public art into communal and gathering spaces at commercial and residential development projects.

c. To aid in recognition and wayfinding, create artwork to mark the end points of a *paseo* where it meets *Public Space*.

d. Use Elements of Continuity to lead people through a *paseo*.

e. Integrate lighting into public art that is supportive of the *Podium Level* and *Pedestrian Level* lighting strategy (see Sections 4.4.9.a and 5.3.4).

f. Use interactive elements in public art that engage audiences actively and passively.

g. Incorporate art displaced by development (such as an existing mural) into the new building.

h. Use an Element of Distinction or Element of Change to create a focal point within a POPOS.

STANDARDS

a. For a development project at a Transit Gateway or Pedestrian and Bicycle Gateway (see Section 2.2), create an Element of Distinction related to the *gateway* location, visible from the transit stop or pedestrian and bicycle route, and ideally including a reference to the site's neighborhood location in Downtown and status as a *gateway*.

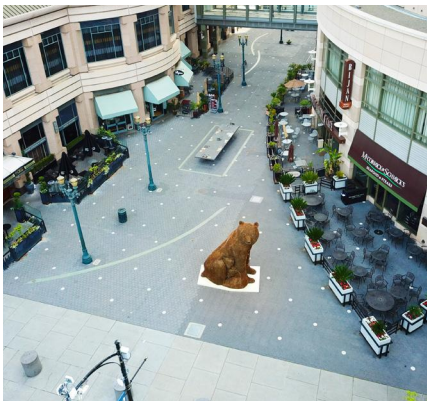
b. At a **Lighting Gateway** (Section 2.6), create an Element of Distinction or Element of Change with lighting art.

RELATED GUIDELINES

4.4.4 - Mitigating Blank Facades

GENERAL PLAN REFERENCE

- Public Art NEXT! San José's New Public Art Master Plan
- Downtown Next! A Public Art Focus Plan for Downtown San José
- AC-2.1, AC-2.3, PR-4.6, CD-1.2, CD-2.1 (2), CD-2.3 (1), TN-1.4, CD-1.2, PR-4.6



DO - Elements of Change (in this case on a public plaza) add a sense of place and time. *("Ursa Mater" by Mr. and Mrs. Ferguson Art; photo by Adrien Le Biavant)*

5.3.1.a Active Frontages

WELCOME ALL OF SAN JOSE

Attract people using Active Frontages facing the Public Realm.

RATIONALE

Active, vibrant street life comes from activity related to both *Public Space* and the uses in adjacent buildings. Entrances, storefronts, and other visual and physical interaction between the building and *Public Space* make the street more safe, interesting, and lively. At the *Pedestrian Level*, connection to the *Public Realm* creates *Active Frontages*. A gap in *Active Frontage* is a *Blank Wall*.

This Design Guidelines document addresses the design of a building and the locations of different uses within the building but does not govern land use.

DO - Small retail spaces such as these on the San Pedro Market Parking Garage create *Active Frontage* and reduce the length of a *Blank Wall*.

DO NOT - Opaque and translucent windows do not contribute to the vitality of the sidewalk.

GUIDELINES

a. Create visual *transparency* at corners.

b. Use glazing that does not obscure commercial activity from the sidewalk.

STANDARDS

Definition

Active Frontage is a *Pedestrian Level* building frontage that allows visual or physical access to *Active Use* within the building via windows, doors, or both. As in the sections below:

- *Active Frontage* is required based on the adjacent Street Type to be a percentage of total frontage.
- Some types of *Active Frontage* receive additional length credit.
- General requirements set the baseline characteristics for all *Active Frontages*.

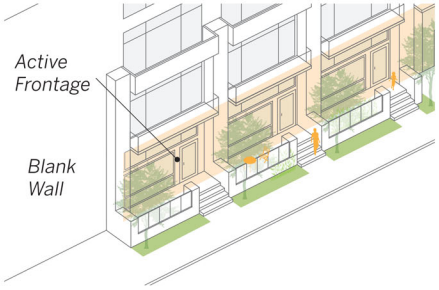
Active Frontage Requirements by Street Type

a. Place Active Frontages along at least 80% of the *Pedestrian Level Streetwall* on a *Primary Addressing Street*, *SoFA Addressing Street, Secondary Addressing Street, Urban Park/Plaza Frontage*, or *Open Space Frontage* (see Section 2.2).

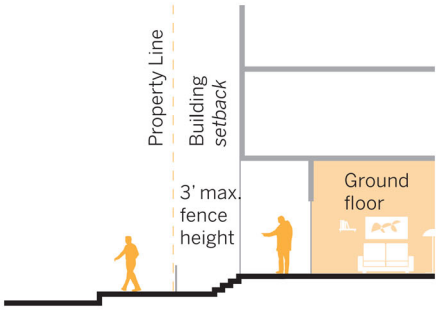
b. Place *Active Frontages* along at least 40% of the *Pedestrian Level Streetwall* on a street that is not an *Addressing Street* or *Frontage* from Standard a. above (including a *paseo* but not including an alley).

c. On an *Addressing Street* of any type, do not create a *Blank Wall* longer than 30 feet, or more than 15 feet in the 50 feet closest to a street intersection.

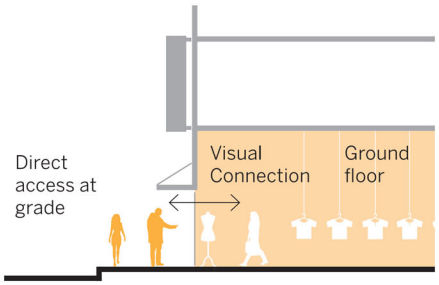
d. On a non-Addressing street (including a *paseo* but not including an alley), do not create a *Blank Wall* longer than 50 feet, or more than 25 feet in the 50 feet closest to a street intersection.



a. *Active Frontage* length extends to the last window or door into the applicable *Active Use*.



b. **DO -** Create a residential frontage with individual unit entries. The ground floor must be within 3 feet of ground level.



c. **DO -** Use transparent material on at least 60% of the commercial ground floor *facade* between 3 and 7 feet above ground level.

Types of Active Frontage

Different *Active Frontages* contribute more or less to the vibrancy of a street based on their level of activity. For instance, a retail shop typically creates higher levels of activity for longer periods than an individual residential unit. Thus, the more active *Active Frontages* are counted at double or triple their actual width, as below, for calculations to meet the *Active Frontage* requirements by Street Type.

Type 1 Active Frontage - counts triple the Active Frontage width:

- Retail shop frontage
- Frontage of an office under 5,000 square feet
- Restaurant or cafe frontage
- Hotel lobby frontage
- Fitness center frontage (open to the public)
- Other lobby of a facility open to the public such as a museum, library, or movie theater.

DO NOT - Highly-reflective glass with small panes and wide, deep mullions reduces *transparency* and the interaction between sidewalk and shop.

Type 2 Active Frontage - counts double the Active Frontage width:

- Commercial office windows, including educational use, whether the office is entered from *Public Space* or inside the building
- Office lobby or residential lobby frontage
- Individual residential frontage with direct entry or stoop to the unit
- Residential balcony with a floor height 10 feet or less above the sidewalk level (direct entry from *Public Space* not required)
- Daycare center frontage
- Community space frontage, such as exhibition or meeting space
- Residential amenity frontage, whether entered from *Public Space* or inside the building. Examples: laundry, fitness center, or library
- Commercial office amenity frontage such as a fitness center, cafeteria, daycare center, bike kitchen, clinic, etc. entered from *Public Space* or inside the building

Type 3 Active Frontage - counts the *Active Frontage* width:

- Building entrance or exit with at least 3 square feet of transparent glass or unglazed openings.
- Window of at least 5 square feet of transparent glass or unglazed openings.

Frontages along these building uses cannot be *Active Frontage*:

- Structured parking
- Driveway or garage entrance
- Service entrance
- Fire exit
- Utility connections

General Requirements

Unless otherwise stated elsewhere, all *Active Frontages*:

e. Must have a floor level within three vertical feet of ground level.

f. Must be visible from *Public Space.*

g. Must have an entry directly from *Public Space.*

h. If non-residential, must use transparent materials for at least 60% of ground floor between 3 and 7 feet above ground level and use panes of glass no less than 3 feet wide and 4 feet high.

i. If retail, between 3 and 10 feet above ground must use mullions no wider than 1 inch when using panes of glass less than 5 feet in width or height.

j. Must not block more than 25% of commercial window area with signage or other opaque or semi-opaque elements between 3 and 7 feet above ground level.

k. If security gates are used for *Commercial Space*, must use gates at least 50% transparent to maintain pedestrian interest during non-business hours.

RELATED GUIDELINES

3.5.1 - Pedestrian and Bicycle Entrance Location

4.4.2.a - Windows and Glazing

4.4.3 - Materials and Colors

5.3.1.b - Mitigating Blank Walls

5.5.1 - Pedestrian and Bicycle Entry Design

GENERAL PLAN REFERENCE

- VN-1.10, CD-2.8, CD-1.11, CD-2.3(3), LU-5.7

5.3.1.b Mitigating Blank Walls

FOCUS ON THE GROUND FLOOR

Avoid long Blank Walls facing the Public Realm. Where a Blank Wall is unavoidable, work to mitigate its impact.

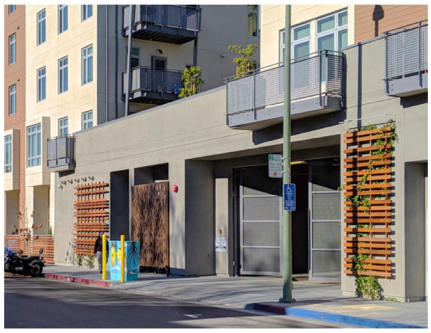
RATIONALE

A ground floor *Blank Wall* has no *Active Frontage*. This includes walls with windows to non-*Occupied Space*, such as a parking garage. Note that windows to parking above the ground level **do count** to avoid creation of a *Blank Facade* (see Section 4.4.4).

Blank Walls deaden the street environment, make *Public Space* less safe and inviting, and reduce a retail area's potential by creating breaks between activities. They provide opportunities for undesirable activities such as graffiti.

Where a building has a *Blank Wall* for unavoidable reasons, use design treatments to increase pedestrian safety, comfort, and interest. Preference is given to treatments that reduce the length of *Blank Wall*, such as small retail spaces for food bars, newsstands, and other specialized retail tenants. Architectural treatments make the space more interesting for pedestrians but do not create the safety and usefulness that comes with an *Active Frontage*.

DO NOT - Long *Blank Walls* are discouraged. Architectural treatments may provide some relief but reducing the length of Blank Walls is of primary importance.



DO - Mitigate *Blank Walls* with features to add interest at the *Pedestrian Level*.

DO - Art can have local meaning as well as reduce the impact of a *Blank Wall*.

GUIDELINES

a. Use architectural treatments such as reveals, small setbacks, indentations, or other means to break up a *Blank Wall* along *Public Space*. Avoid creation of blind spots that may feel unsafe to pedestrians when the street is less busy. Use these treatments for *Blank Walls* along property lines as well where they are exposed without an abutting building.

b. Use different textures, colors, or materials to break up a *Blank Wall's* surface.

STANDARDS

- Mitigate a *Blank Wall* longer than 30 feet with one or more of the following:
  - Public (preferably interactive) art on at least 100 square feet and 10 linear feet of the wall
  - Art exhibition display window
  - Merchandising or regularly-changing public information display case or window
  - Special lighting, canopy, awning, trellis, planter, or other pedestrian-oriented feature.

RELATED GUIDELINES

4.4.4 - Mitigating Blank Facades

5.2 - Public Art in Private Development

5.3.1.a - Active Frontages

5.3.4 - Lighting - Pedestrian Level

GENERAL PLAN REFERENCE

- TN-1.4, VN-1.7, CD-1.11, CD-2.3

5.3.1.c Service and Utility Design

FOCUS ON THE GROUND FLOOR

Design service functions for efficient operations with minimal impact to Public Life and building operations.

RATIONALE

Service functions, including trash and recycling, deliveries, loading, utilities, infrastructure, and mechanical systems are essential to the operation of a building but may diminish the quality of the adjacent *Public Realm*. The size and architectural treatment of service facilities, equipment, and access can affect their impact.

GUIDELINES

a. Minimize *frontages* used for services and utilities and integrate them into the overall *articulation* and *fenestration* of the *facade* by continuing design elements across these areas or by otherwise enhancing visual interest for pedestrians.

b. Integrate services and utilities into the building envelope.

c. Place services and utilities that are not integrated into the building envelope behind the building, away from *Public Space*.

d. Integrate publicly-owned infrastructure such as communications and security equipment, electrical transformers, and meters within the building and make them as unobtrusive as possible, and not at a corner.

STANDARDS

a. In a commercial development, place horizontal, through-the-wall venting to the street above the third building story. For buildings three stories or fewer, vent to the roof.

b. In a residential development, integrate any horizontal venting with the architectural design in a pattern that will not draw attention.

c. Screen services and utilities that cannot be located within the building envelope and are located within 30 feet of and otherwise visible to *Public Space* from view from *Public Space*.

d. Use enclosures or doors to confine odors from trash and recycling and use vents to direct odors away from the sidewalk.

e. Provide internal building access to loading, trash and recycling areas, not across *Public Space*.

f. Enclose equipment for power, utilities, and waste within the building envelope.

RELATED GUIDELINES

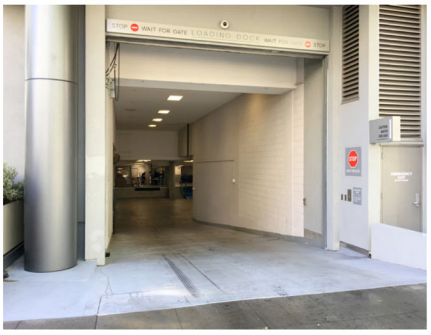
3.5.2 - Service Entrance Location

5.3.1.b - Mitigating Blank Walls

GENERAL PLAN REFERENCE

- CD-1.18

DO NOT - Even screened, utility equipment along the sidewalk reduces connection to *Public Space*.



DO - Internal access to trash, recycling, and loading through a narrow doorway (16' in this photo) reduces impact on the sidewalk.

5.3.2 Ground Floor Non-Residential Space

MIX USES AND ACTIVITIES

Configure non-residential ground floor space for Active Frontage, character, and human scale.

RATIONALE

Because of the importance of *Active Frontages* and the long life spans of most buildings, a building's *Pedestrian Level* should include a high level of flexibility to accommodate not only present but future needs for high quality *Commercial Space*.

GUIDELINES

a. Create retail bays and entries at least every 25 to 35 feet to allow multiple storefronts, even if initial retail tenants occupy more than one bay.

b. Design accommodation for restaurant sewerage utilities into the building, such as grease traps and interceptors.

c. For flexibility, anticipate restaurant requirements in the design of ground floor retail space, including incorporating venting in the design, even if it is not actually installed during construction.

d. To preserve *transparency*, do not place a structural column over two feet wide within 8 feet of a street corner.

e. Design buildings along any *Addressing Street* (see Section 2.2) without structural features that would prevent the reconfiguration of the ground floor to at-grade retail use at some future time.

f. Create a distinctive architectural character with features like higher arcade height, *cornice* line height, and ceiling height at street corners.

g. Incorporate elements of nearby buildings such as recessed doorways or distinctive fenestration patterns.

h. If used, integrate a security gate architecturally with the ground floor facade.

i. Create vertical and horizontal *human-scale* with elements such as window proportions, facade articulation, canopies, and awnings.

STANDARDS

a. Create entries every 35 feet or less along the *SoFA Addressing Street* (see Section 2.2).

b. Provide a minimum 16 feet clear height (18 feet optimal) to *finished ceiling* in ground floor *Commercial Space* except along the *SoFA Addressing Street* (see Section 2.2).

c. Provide a minimum 20 feet clear height to finished ceiling in ground floor *Commercial Space* along the *SoFA Addressing Street* (see Section 2.2).

d. Maintain clearance of at least 4 feet between a dropped ceiling and a clerestory window (see Diagram a).

e. Design at least 50 percent of a building's *Commercial Space* along a *Primary Addressing Street* or *SoFA Addressing Street* a minimum of 50 feet deep (60 feet preferred) behind the building facade. Design the remaining *Commercial Space* a minimum of 25 feet deep.

f. Do not use permanent fences between the building and *Public Realm* except to screen service functions and equipment.

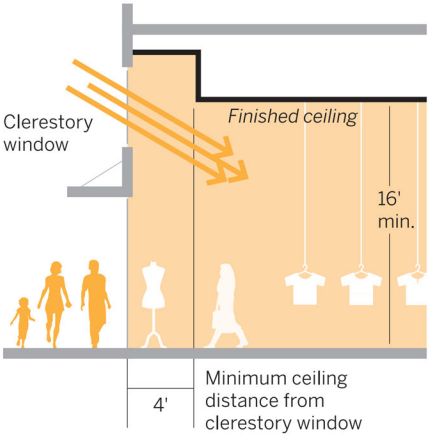
g. Fences and plantings (except those screening garbage and utilities) may not be greater than 3 feet tall.

RELATED GUIDELINES

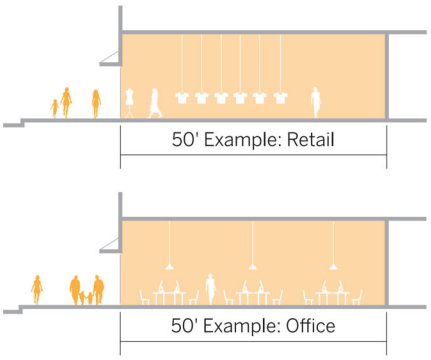
4.4.3 - Materials and Colors

GENERAL PLAN REFERENCE

- CD-2.8, CD-1.11, CD-1.12, LU-5.7



a. Frequent entries into leasable space and high floor-to-ceiling clear heights create a flexible space able to host many potential users.



b. **DO** - Use 50 foot minimum depth for 50% of *Commercial Space* along a *Primary Addressing Street* and *SoFA Addressing street*.

DO - Create frequent commercial entries even if the space is initially occupied by a single tenant.

5.3.3 Ground Floor Residential Space

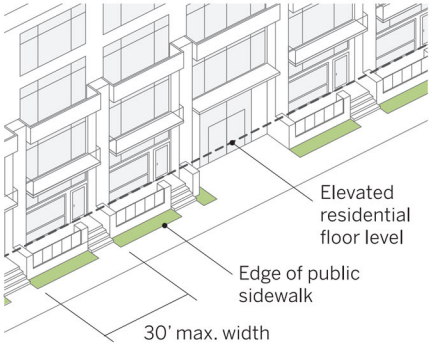
FOCUS ON THE GROUND FLOOR

Design ground floor residential space to provide privacy and access and create a 24-hour presence on the street.

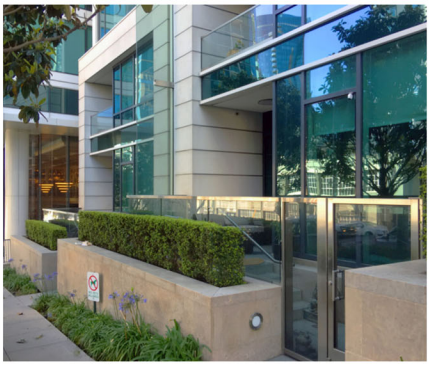
RATIONALE

The presence of residential units with a close physical and visual relationship to the street keeps the street safer and more active through activities of residents and visitors. Residential windows, porches, and balconies overlooking the street create the opportunity for observation of the street and for interaction with neighbors, shopkeepers, and passerby.

As noted in Section 3.5.1, a ground floor residential unit must have its primary entry directly from the street. This ground floor residential space should create a consistent residential edge along the street or *paseo*, with the potential for small *setbacks* for stoops, porches, and front gardens.



Ground floor residential units humanize the *Streetscape* and add activity and visual connection. Narrow unit widths promote the creation of multiple unit entries.



DO - An elevated floor level creates additional privacy for ground floor residential units.

GUIDELINES

a. Incorporate residential uses and amenities that activate the street into the ground floor of a residential building fronting any *Addressing Street* (see Section 2.2). Examples are a library, fitness center, community space, exhibition space, or bike kitchen.

b. Design townhouse unit facades to highlight their individual identity.

c. Use porches (with direct entry from the street), balconies (without direct entry from the street), and windows to allow residents to view the street while protecting resident privacy.

d. For units with stoops, use *setbacks* between 6 and 10 feet to transition between the public and private realms. Include human-scaled elements that contribute to the residential and urban character of the street, such as porches, seating, and gardens.

e. Do not expose partially below-grade parking toward the street-facing side of a residential building.

STANDARDS

a. Use a maximum width of 30 feet for each ground floor residential unit.

b. Elevate a residential unit ground floor between 2 and 3 feet above grade to provide adequate separation from *Public Space* while maintaining a visual connection to the street. A unit may be elevated higher if required due to a designated flood zone or other safety or engineering requirements. Accessibility requirements may be met with unit entries from the building interior.

c. Do not use permanent fences in any space between the building and *Public Realm* except for ground floor residential *Semi-Private Open Space* (see section 3.4.2) or to screen service functions and equipment.

d. Fences and plantings between a building and Public Space (except those screening garbage and utilities) shall not be greater than 3 feet tall.

RELATED GUIDELINES

3.4.2 - Locating Ground Level Semi-Private Open Space

3.4.3 - Locating Ground Level Building Open Space

3.5.1 - Pedestrian and Bicycle Entrance Location

4.4.2.c - Balconies (Private Open Space)

4.4.3 - Materials and Colors

5.5.1 - Pedestrian and Bicycle Entry Design

GENERAL PLAN REFERENCE

- CD-3.9, LU-3.1, VN-1.7

5.3.4 Lighting - Pedestrian Level

FOCUS ON THE GROUND FLOOR

Create distinctive, safe, and inviting Public Spaces with building lighting at the Pedestrian Level.

RATIONALE

While public street lighting within the City's *Public Spaces* is crucial, building lighting near the street can add additional illumination and clarity, encouraging pedestrian activity. Lighting can also create points of interest in the broader cityscape.

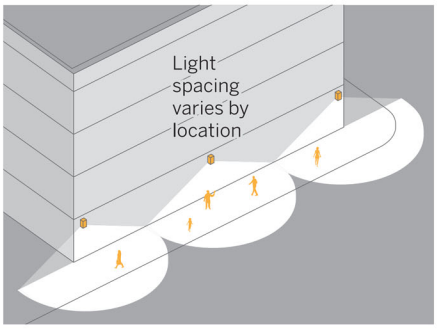
GUIDELINES

a. Use pedestrian-scaled lighting as an integral element of all building *facades*, designed and located to accentuate ground floor uses.

b. Orient outside lighting toward building surfaces or directly downward and shield exposed bulbs to minimize glare within *Public Space*.

c. Install lighting in display windows that spills onto and illuminates the sidewalk.

DO - Pleasant lighting at the *Pedestrian Level* makes stores and restaurants inviting and creates a feeling of increased safety. *Photo © Sergio Ruiz for SPUR*



DO - Place pedestrian-scale lighting at a maximum separation based on the street typology. Illuminate the adjacent sidewalk as required.

DO - Pedestrian scale lighting and *transparency* make this sidewalk inviting and interesting.

STANDARDS

a. Use lighting to accentuate pedestrian and bicycle entries.

b. For a storefront, light a minimum zone of 4 feet in front of the building and a zone of 2 feet within the building with building-mounted lighting.

c. Provide separate power switches for interior and exterior lighting of active ground floor uses so that these can remain lit after hours, including for retail tenant signage and storefront areas.

d. For a *facade* at a *Transit Gateway* or a *Pedestrian and Bicycle Gateway* (see Section 2.2), provide pedestrian-scale lighting that creates an overall illumination of the building-adjacent sidewalk, with a lighting fixture every 25 feet or less.

e. For a *facade* along an *Enhanced Lighting Corridor* (see Section 2.6), provide pedestrian-scale lighting that creates an overall illumination of the building-adjacent sidewalk regardless of the use within the building at that location, with a lighting fixture every 30 feet or less.

f. For a *facade* facing any *paseo*, provide pedestrian-scale lighting with a lighting fixture every 30 feet or less.

g. For a *facade* that is a *Blank Wall* (see Section 5.3.1.b), provide pedestrian-scale lighting with a lighting fixture every 20 feet or less.

h. Provide outdoor lighting using fixtures that yield low light pollution and glare.

i. Orient lighting fixtures primarily downward.

j. Shield all lighting to prevent light intrusion into private and public building uses, especially residential units.

k. Fully light service areas and service entries.

RELATED GUIDELINES

4.4.9.a - Lighting - Podium Level

4.4.9.b - Lighting - Skyline Level

GENERAL PLAN REFERENCE

- CD-1.2, CD-1.7, CD-2.1 (2), CD-2.3, CD-5.6, IP-15.1

DO - Provide frequent light fixtures to create additional, more pedestrian-scale lighting than that from street lamps.

DO - Lighting at the *Pedestrian Level* creates a sense of refuge and welcome around large *Public Spaces*.

5.3.5 Signage - Podium Level and Pedestrian Level

CREATE LEGIBILITY, PUT PEOPLE FIRST

Inform and attract while enhancing the appearance of Downtown with well-designed and located Podium Level and Pedestrian Level signage.

RATIONALE

The best building signage strikes a balance between attracting attention and contributing to a unified *Streetscape*. Signs can be a visually unifying element and an attractor to a commercial area.

Signs at the *Podium Level* and *Pedestrian Level* should be oriented to pedestrians and other people nearby. Signs in Downtown retail corridors should be larger, more prominently located, of brighter colors, and more brightly lit than in other areas to visually activate *Public Space* and inform people of the presence of higher levels of public activity. Other areas of Downtown will have signage that is more subdued, with smaller sizes, less intense colors, and lower light levels.

Signage in San José, including historic signs, is regulated by the *San José Zoning Code, Chapter 23.04 - Sign Regulations*. Much of Downtown is covered by Part 2 - Downtown Sign Zone. The guidelines and standards in this section are in addition to the rules of the Zoning Code.

DO - Use signage perpendicular to the sidewalk. Signage parallel to the street is allowed but not required.

DO NOT use internally illuminated signs at the *Podium Level or Pedestrian Level*.

GUIDELINES

a. Use neon signs on *Primary Addressing Streets* and the *SoFA Addressing Street* (see Section 2.2) to create visually vibrant *Streetscapes*.

b. Do not use internally illuminated signs at the *Podium Level* and *Pedestrian Level*.

c. Do not cover or obscure a building's architectural features with a sign.

d. Use materials and colors for signs that are compatible with the building's materials and colors.

e. Minimize light impacts from signs on residential windows, particularly from flashing or otherwise changing lights.

STANDARDS

a. Create signage that is perpendicular to the adjacent sidewalk, and thus more visible to pedestrians.

b. Signage oriented parallel to the street, more visible to vehicles and people on the opposite sidewalk, is allowed but not required.

DO - Neon signs are preferred in *Primary Addressing Streets*.

DO - Pedestrian-oriented signage creates an interesting *Streetscape* and facilitates wayfinding.

c. Use signage and addressing to make clear the location of the primary entrance for pedestrians, bicyclists, bicycle parking, and emergency responders.

RELATED GUIDELINES

4.4.10 - Signage - Skyline Level

GENERAL PLAN REFERENCE

- CD-1.20, CD-1.29, CD-6.5, CD-2.3 (1), LU-13.7

5.4 Surface Parking Lots

INNOVATE AND SUPPORT CREATIVITY

Avoid creating surface parking lots. Where created, ensure they are not large inactive areas that form barriers to walkability and urban vitality.

RATIONALE

Surface parking lots are inappropriate in dense urban environments like Downtown. They can become unsafe and unpleasant in the urban fabric, and they reduce the amount of activity taking place by occupying land and dividing uses from each other. When a small surface parking lot is needed for accessible, short-term, or other parking, reduce the negative impacts with good design.

Strategies for creating better surface parking include reducing the real and perceived size of the lot, creating visual relief from the large expanse of cars or vacant spaces, reducing the local environmental effects through landscaping, and providing *Active Frontages* at edges of parking lots that are visible to the *Public Realm*.

GUIDELINES

a. Screen at least two sides of a parking lot with buildings to reduce visibility from streets, while incorporating consideration of ingress and egress for trucks and other large vehicles.

b. Use water-permeable pavers or pavement and landscaping to reduce stormwater runoff, and use landscaping to filter surface water runoff.

STANDARDS

a. Divide any surface parking area length exceeding 240 feet into multiple zones divided by a drive aisle designed as a street, including sidewalks and parallel parking on both sides. This improves pedestrian, bicycle, and vehicular circulation in and across the site. These divisions will make it easier to redevelop portions of the parking lot at a later date.

b. Create pedestrian walks at least every 120 feet within a parking lot to provide safe pedestrian travel to either the building entrance or a public sidewalk.

c. Screen with landscaping any surface parking lot within 50 feet of and visible from a street or *paseo*. Do not create unsafe blind spots.

d. To improve comfort and environmental quality and reduce the heat island effect, plant a minimum of one shade tree per eight parking spaces or one coniferous or ornamental tree per four parking spaces. A mix of tree types at these ratios is allowed. The center of the tree must be at least 15 feet from the center of the nearest tree to count under this standard.

RELATED GUIDELINES

3.4.4 - Vehicle and Bicycle Parking Location
3.5.3 - Parking and Vehicular Access Location
4.4.6 - Parking Garages
5.5.2 - Vehicle and Service Entry Design
5.3.4 - Lighting - Pedestrian Level

GENERAL PLAN REFERENCE

- MS-1.6, MS-3.5, VN-1.9, CD-2.11, CD-3.9

DO NOT - Large surface parking lots deaden and divide the cityscape.

5.5.1 Pedestrian and Bicycle Entry Design

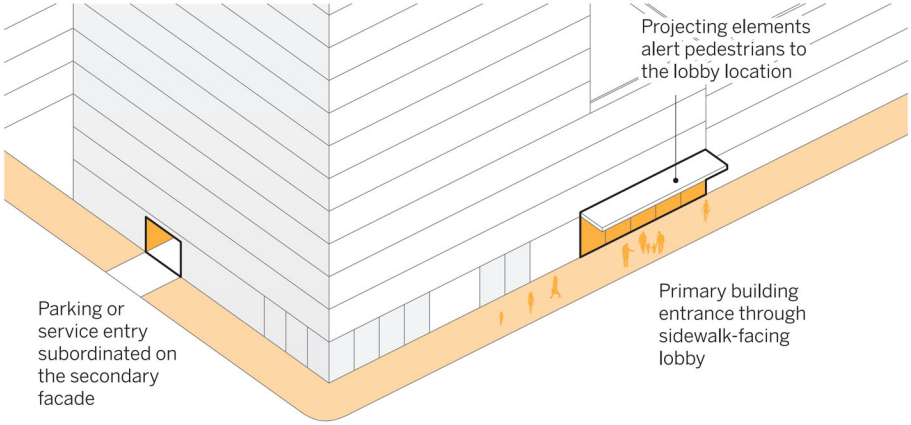
DESIGN FOR SUSTAINABILITY, WELCOME ALL OF SAN JOSE

Make walking and bicycling pleasant, convenient, and safe with pedestrian and bicycle entrances that are high quality, easy to access, and easy to find.

RATIONALE

Walking and bicycling are sustainable, healthy ways to travel to and around Downtown. Building entry design should recognize their importance.

Lobbies should be clearly identifiable and visible from the street, easily accessible, and inviting to pedestrians. Private entries to individual residential units should help create an inviting and active *Streetscape*, while providing residents with privacy and security.



a. Place a building's primary entry to activate *Public Space* and allow building occupants easy access to the *Public Realm*.

DO - Stoops and porches create outdoor open space for ground level units.

b. **DO** - Stoops create a transition between private residential unit entries and *Public Space*. See Section 3.4.2 for guidance on Ground Level *Semi-Private Open Space*.

c. **DO** - An alternative to stoops for ground floor residential units is an at grade entry and internal stairs to the elevated ground floor level. Note the ground floor must still be elevated per Section 5.3.3.

GUIDELINES

a. Provide a formal lobby entered directly from a street for each building.

b. Identify private residential unit entrances with recessed doorways, changes in color and materials, and alternative paving.

c. Use size, prominence on the *Streetscape*, location, and design emphasis to make the pedestrian entrance more prominent than the garage entrance.

d. Place the building street number near the main entrance and easily visible from the sidewalk.

e. Integrate *Green Stormwater Infrastructure* such as bioswales or other stormwater management into residential entry landscaping.

STANDARDS

a. Emphasize common entries for pedestrians and bicyclists with architectural features such as:

- Extra-height lobby space
- Distinctive doorway
- Distinctive entry canopy
- Projected or recessed entry bay
- Artwork integrated into the *facade* or sidewalk
- A change in paving material, texture, or color within the property line
- Distinctive landscaping, including plants, water features, and seating
- Ornamental glazing, railings, and balustrades
- Visibility from the street into the lobby

b. Clearly identify the primary building entry by a horizontal projection (such as a canopy) visible from 100 feet along the adjacent sidewalk.

c. Provide internal access between bicycle parking and the building lobby when indoor bicycle parking is provided.

d. Create transition space between ground level private residential unit entries and *Public Space* with features such as stoops, porches, and landscaping. An alternative to a stoop is an at-grade entry with an internal stair to the elevated floor level.

e. Design first floor loft or live/work units with at-grade (accessible) access to the street.

RELATED GUIDELINES

3.4.2 - Locating Ground Level Semi-Private Open Space

3.5.1 - Pedestrian and Bicycle Entrance Location

4.4.2.a - Windows and Glazing

5.3.1.a - Active Frontages

5.3.2 - Ground Floor Non-Residential Space

5.3.3 - Ground Floor Residential Space

GENERAL PLAN REFERENCE

- CD-1.11, CD-1.9, CD-3.9, CD-1.12, CD-6.8, CD-2.3, CD-6.8

DO - Create visibility into the lobby to welcome pedestrians. A recessed entry and canopy provide protection from the elements.

DO - Celebrating common entries with distinctive features identifies the primary entry from along the sidewalk. *Photo © Sergio Ruiz for SPUR*

5.5.2 Vehicle and Service Entry Design

PUT PEOPLE FIRST

Design parking and vehicular entries to avoid degrading the quality of the Streetscape and creating gaps between uses that reduce walkability.

RATIONALE

Vehicle entries can create negative effects on building *facades* and *Streetscapes*. Vehicle entries create gaps in Active Frontages, intimidate pedestrians and bicyclists, degrade the sidewalk with additional slope, and create soiling through oil drips and tire marks. Minimizing these effects promotes livability and safety. Building design should limit the number of sidewalk interruptions and reduce the size and visual disruption of vehicle entries. Minimum spacing between entries avoids long visually-inactive zones and maintains space for *Active Frontages*.

GUIDELINES

None

STANDARDS

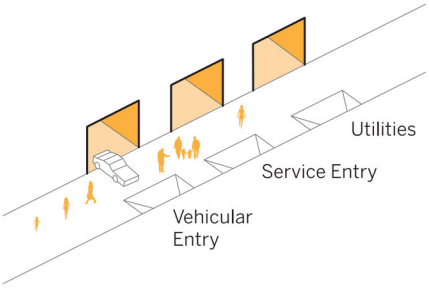
a. Provide a single access for both service and vehicles. Separate driveways may be accepted with a minimum separation of 10 feet, subject to City review.

b. Limit a vehicle or service entry width to a maximum of 26 feet, including both an entry into a building and a drive aisle to a parking garage or parking lot. Subject to City review, wider driveways may be permitted for non-residential buildings with larger vehicles, for driveways that are used by trucks, or for driveways that are signalized.

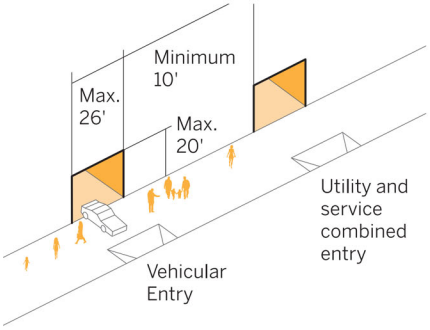
c. Limit vehicle and service building entry height to a maximum of 20 feet.

d. Locate passenger loading and unloading areas, including space for passengers awaiting rides, so these activities do not block the sidewalk.

e. Locate service loading and unloading areas, such as for garbage, so these activities do not block the sidewalk.



a. **DO NOT** - Adjacent service and vehicular doors create severe impacts on *Public Space*.



b. **DO** - Properly sized and spaced service and vehicular entries minimize impact.

DO NOT - Adjacent entry and loading doors create a long zone where pedestrians are in danger from vehicles and with no *Active Frontage*.

f. Do not create a *Porte Cochere* along any street except as part of a hotel or medical use.

g. A *Porte Cochere* cannot be the primary pedestrian entrance. Create a separate entrance from the sidewalk that does not require pedestrians or bicyclists to pass through the *Porte Cochere* to enter the building.

h. Do not locate a driveway where it will create a new crossing of the light rail tracks on First or Second streets.

RELATED GUIDELINES

3.3.2 - Relationship to Transit

3.5.2 - Service Entrance Location

3.5.3 - Parking and Vehicular Access Location

4.4.6 - Parking Garages

5.4 - Surface Parking Lots

5.3.4 - Lighting - Pedestrian Level

GENERAL PLAN REFERENCE

- CD-1.18, CD-1.17, CD-2.3 (5)

5.6 Paseo Design

CREATE CONNECTIONS AND ACCESSIBILITY

Provide interesting and active building frontages along paseos to maintain and promote pedestrian activity and safety.

RATIONALE

Paseos are typically more informal *Public Spaces* than streets, in some cases evolving from alleys or service lanes. *Paseos* create additional pedestrian routes and the locations for exciting small *Public Spaces* within an urban area.

The *articulation* and detailing of adjacent buildings help create appropriate scale and should avoid creating isolated areas. Efforts at activation such as programming and temporary and permanent art bring life to *paseos*. The character, width, and shape of a *paseo* may vary, but it must remain a safe and well-lit route throughout.

GUIDELINES

a. Incorporate pedestrian-scale public art into amenities, building enhancements, wayfinding, and the *paseo* ground surface, and as standalone artworks in *paseos*.

b. Include pedestrian amenities and street furniture such as benches.

c. Extend the *fenestration* and *facade* treatment of street-facing retail space around the corner into the *paseo*.

d. Create interesting *facade* treatments along the *paseo frontage*, treating the *paseo* as a building front and not a subsidiary elevation.

e. Use water-permeable paving surfaces in *paseos* and design them to collect stormwater runoff to increase natural percolation and on-site drainage.

STANDARDS

a. Shape buildings along a *paseo* to form continuous edges. No more than 20% of a parcel's boundary along a *paseo* should consist of a freestanding wall or fence.

DO - Buildings should form continuous edges along a *paseo*. *Photo © Sergio Ruiz for SPUR*

b. A *paseo* that does not serve as emergency access may be any width greater than 5 feet. A *paseo* that serves as emergency access must comply with minimum requirements of the City's Public Works and Fire departments.

c. A *paseo's* pedestrian through zone must be at least 5 feet wide.

d. Lighting within *paseos* is important for safety. Ensure that lighting is bright enough for safe access in all parts of the *paseo*. See also Section 5.3.4.

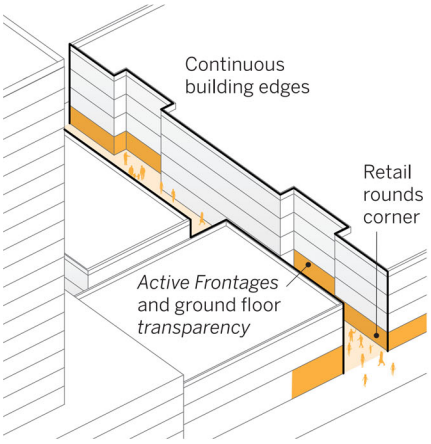
RELATED GUIDELINE

3.3.3 - Paseo / Mid-Block Connection Location

5.2 - Public Art in Private Development

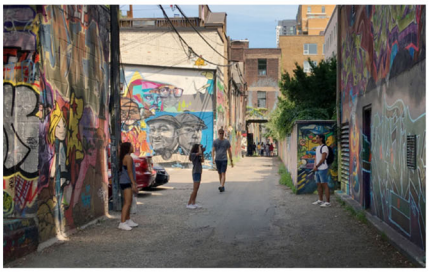
GENERAL PLAN REFERENCE

- AC-2.1, CD-1.2, CD-2.3 (5), CD-1.7, CD-1.9, CD-1.11, CD-6.8, TR-3.8



DO - A *paseo* should be active for safety and have interesting architecture and landscaping.

DO - *Paseos* can provide interesting small spaces for relaxation and can have integration into a retail or cafe experience.



DO - Graffiti Alley in Toronto has become a tourist attraction through a collection of informal art. See also the image of public art in a plaza in Section 5.2.

5.7 Privately-Owned Public Open Space (POPOS) Design

WELCOME ALL OF SAN JOSE

Create Privately-Owned Public Open Spaces (POPOS) that are interesting, useful, flexible, active, safe, and durable common spaces for Downtown.

RATIONALE

A dense and interesting area requires a variety of *Public Spaces* to thrive. POPOS can provide amenity, flexibility of use, and proximity to residents, workers, and visitors in Downtown.

POPOS are for both occupation and visual amenity. Smaller, better-designed, hard-scaped, bright spaces are preferable to larger, green-but-uninhabited, poorly-placed ones. POPOS can feature art work, street furniture, and landscaping that invite users or enhance the building's setting.

The primary function of any Downtown open space between buildings and the sidewalk is to provide access into the building and opportunities for outdoor activities such as resting, sitting, or dining, not to create a visual and physical barrier.

GUIDELINES

a. Where a commercial or mixed-use building is set back from the property line, treat the resulting space as an integral part of the *Public Realm*.

b. Design POPOS for passive and active use with a variety of elements such as water features, canopies, trees, planting, public art installations, and play facilities.

c. Avoid creating "leftover" spaces which serve only as underused buffer space and spread out urban activity.

d. Distinguish between parts of the POPOS used for through traffic (paths) and parts that are destination spaces (nodes).

e. Define sub-areas within a POPOS to enable multiple uses of the space.

f. Use trees, overhangs, and umbrellas to provide shade in the warmest months. For guidance on trees, refer to the *San José Tree Policy Manual and Recommended Best Management Practices (2013)*.

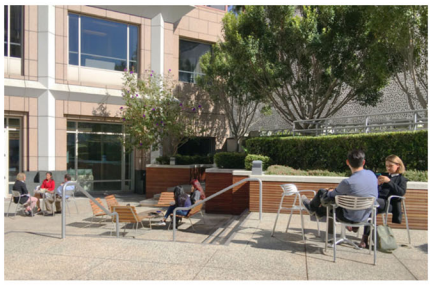
g. Provide mobile seating to allow users of the space to find a comfortable combination of sun and shade and to create flexible and multifunctional spaces.

h. Enliven a POPOS with art work, amenities such as fountains, and kiosks.

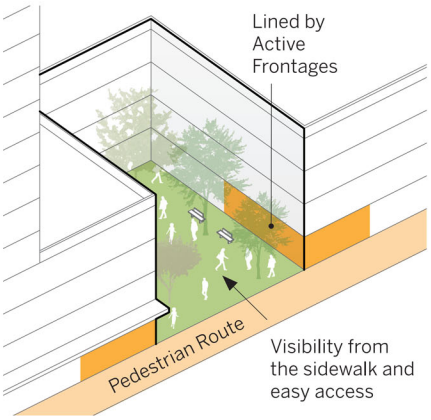
i. Create areas for vendors (in ground level POPOS) and outdoor dining, including facilities to accommodate pop-up retail such as removable bollards and power outlets.

j. In rooftop POPOS, create visual connection to the surroundings, including to the street level.

k. Incorporate attractive and artistic natural drainage designs with functions of *Green Stormwater Infrastructure* such as bioretention in POPOS to retain and filter stormwater runoff.



DO - Mobile seating and a mix of sun and shade allows POPOS users to find a comfortable spot in a variety of weather conditions.



DO - A POPOS should be active and visible from the street.

STANDARDS

a. A ground level POPOS must be lined by an Active Frontage on at least 25% of the building *frontages* forming its perimeter.

b. Include temporary or permanent seating.

c. Design landscaping, walls, railings, and other street elements to retain visibility into and out of a ground level POPOS.

d. Make the entry to a rooftop POPOS clear and apparent from *Public Space* and make obvious that the POPOS is intended for public use.

RELATED GUIDELINES

3.4.1 - Locating Privately-Owned Public Open Space

3.4.2 - Locating Ground Level Semi-Private Open Space

GENERAL PLAN REFERENCE

- PR-1.7, CD-2.3, AC-1.9, AC-2.3, CD-2.7, MS-3.4, CD-2.4

A.0

APPENDIX

A.1 Glossary

A.2 Background Studies

A.2.1 Skyline Studies

A.2.2 Paseo Precedents

A.3 Resources and References

Photo credit: Sundry Photography / Shutterstock.com

A.1 Glossary

Active Frontage - A building frontage that meets the requirements of Section 5.3.1.a. Generally, these are ground level building facades that have visible activity inside and that help to create activity on the street, such as restaurants, stores, and building lobbies.

Active Use - Activities in Pedestrian Level Occupied Space that support the creation of an Active Frontage.

Addressing Street, Primary - See Primary Addressing Streets

Addressing Street, Secondary - See Secondary Addressing Streets

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.

Bird-safe Pattern - A pattern on glass intended to reduce bird collisions. The pattern must have circular or square markers at least 0.25" in diameter, spaced at most 4" apart horizontally and 2" apart vertically.

Bird Safety Treatment - Treatments may include exterior screens, louvers, grilles, shutters, sunshades, bird-safe patterns, or other methods to reduce the likelihood of bird collisions as suggested by the American Bird Conservancy.

Blank Wall - A wall at the Pedestrian Level that is not Active Frontage.

Blank Facade - A wall above the Pedestrian Level that has a large area without windows or balconies. See Section 4.4.4 for detailed size and mitigation information.

Block - The area bounded by public street right-of-ways, by publicly-owned open space, or by utility or transportation parcels (such as railroads).

Block Face - The row of front facades, facing the street, for the length of one block.

Building Open Space - Open space usable only by building residents, businesses, or customers, with secure access. Includes both Common Open Space and Private Open Space.

California Register of Historical Resources - See subsection under Eligible for Historic Resources Inventory (HRI) listing.

California Points of Historical Interest - See subsection under Eligible for Historic Resources Inventory (HRI) listing.

California Historical Landmarks - See subsection under Eligible for Historic Resources Inventory (HRI) listing.

City Landmark - See subsection under Eligible for Historic Resources Inventory (HRI) listing.

City Landmark District - See subsection under Eligible for Historic Resources Inventory (HRI) listing.

Clerestory Window - A window in a high section of wall, above eye level.

Commercial Space - Any Occupied Space that is not used as private or common residential space (such as a residential building hallway).

Common Open Space - Privately owned or controlled outdoor space for shared use by building residents, workers, or customers, accessible by secured access only. Common configurations are rear yards, courtyards, and Roof Decks.

Compatibility - The size and character of a building element relative to other elements around it. For example, the size and proportion of windows in a building facade are usually related to one another, the spaces between them, and the scale of surrounding buildings.

Conservation Area - See subsection under Eligible for Historic Resources Inventory (HRI) listing.

Context - The characteristics of the buildings, Streetscape, and landscape that supports or surrounds a given building, site, or area such as a predominance of period architecture or materials, wide sidewalks, continuous overhead weather protection, or consistent street trees.

Contributor - See subsection under Eligible for Historic Resources Inventory (HRI) listing.

Cornice - A projecting horizontal feature that crowns a facade.

EIFS - A generic product name standing for Exterior Insulating Finish System, which consists of an acrylic finish applied to a foam base anchored to a building facade. Brand names include Dryvit.

Eligible for Historic Resources Inventory (HRI) listing - A property, object, site, or structure that meets the criteria or definition of one or more of the classifications listed in the City of San Jose's Historic Resources Inventory.

> **Contributor** - A resource that contributes to the significance of a district, grouping, context, or theme. See definition in the Historic Preservation section of Chapter 6 of the City's General Plan. Local, State, and National level historic resource identification.

Identified Structure - A resource identified through historic resource survey work. See definition in the Historic Preservation section of Chapter 6 of the City's General Plan. Local, City of San José, historic resource identification.

Structure of Merit - A resource of lesser significance. See definition in the Historic Preservation section of Chapter 6 of the City's General Plan. Local, City of San José, historic resource identification.

City Landmark - A resource that meets the definition and criteria of the San José Municipal Code. See criteria in the San José Municipal Code, Title 13, Historic Preservation Ordinance. Local, City of San Jose, historic resource identification.

Conservation Area - A geographical area or thematic grouping with cohesion that meets the definition in the San José Municipal Code. See criteria in the San José Municipal Code, Title 13, Chapter 13.48 (Part 5), Historic Preservation Ordinance. Local, City of San José, historic resource identification.

City Landmark District - A geographical area or thematic grouping with cohesion that meets the definition and criteria of the San José Municipal Code. See criteria in the San José Municipal Code, Title 13, Chapter 13.48, Historic Preservation Ordinance. Local, City of San José, historic resource identification.

California Register of Historical Resources, California Points of Historical Interest, and California Historical Landmarks - A property, object, or district that meets the criteria of the applicable State historic register program. See California Office of Historic Preservation. State level historic resource identification.

National Register of Historic Places, National Historic Landmarks - A property, object, or district that meets the criteria of the applicable National historic register program. See U.S. National Parks Service. National level historic resource identification.

Eyes on the street - The concept that streets with a density of activity and people at many times of day and that are overlooked by windows of nearby buildings will naturally be safe. Popularized by Jane Jacobs, journalist and advocate, in her book *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*.

Facade - Any vertical, exterior face or wall of a building.

Fenestration - The arrangement and design of windows and other openings on a building's facade.

Finished Ceiling - The lowest ceiling surface, typically hanging below the structural elements of the floor or roof above, not including light fixtures, fans, ducts, or electrical fixtures. The finished ceiling would not include small lower sections of the ceiling, to cover a beam for instance, if that section is less than 5% of the total ceiling area.

Frequent Network - The Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority (VTA) core transit routes that provide scheduled service every 15 or fewer minutes all day on weekdays. VTA's Frequent Network includes all light rail lines, Rapid lines, and routes 22, 23, 25, 26, 57, 60, 61, 64, 66, 68, 70, 72, 73, and 77.

Frontage - The building facade facing a street or other Public Space.

Gateway - A principal or ceremonial point of entrance into a district or neighborhood.

Gateway Site - A site, as defined in Section 2.1, located in a highly-visible location that serves as a gateway into Downtown.

Green Stormwater Infrastructure - Landscape elements such as bioswales that retain rainwater near where it falls rather than immediately conveying it away from the site. This creates benefits such as improved water quality due to on-site filtering, reduced flooding, and improved aesthetics.

Historic Context - The building(s) that cause a new building to have Historic Adjacency. See 4.2.4 Historic Adjacency for details.

Historic Property - A building or structure listed on the City of San José Historic Resource Inventory (HRI) or found to be eligible for the HRI based on an updated evaluation.

A.1 Glossary (continued)

Human Scale - Either of the below:

1. The presence of building components or other environmental elements that suggests a relationship to human size. For instance, most doors are of similar dimensions, so the presence of a door in a building facade gives an observer a superficial understanding of the scale of the facade based on the implied relationship to the typical size of a human being.

2. The use of materials and elements in buildings and the built environment that suggest the expectation of human presence and human interaction. For instance, the presence of fine levels of detail and high quality in materials and building detailing (on a storefront, for example) suggest the expected presence of people in close proximity.

Identified Structure - See subsection under Eligible for Historic Resources Inventory (HRI) listing.

Image-defining Frontage - A building frontage, as defined in Section 2.1, located in a highly-visible location that helps to define the image of Downtown.

Level, Pedestrian - See Pedestrian Level

Level, Podium - See Podium Level

Level, Skyline - See Skyline Level

Massing - The three dimensional bulk of a structure: height, width, and depth.

Mirrored Glass - Glass with greater than 30% reflectivity.

National Register of Historic Places - See subsection under Eligible for Historic Resources Inventory (HRI) listing.

National Historic Landmarks - See subsection under Eligible for Historic Resources Inventory (HRI) listing.

Occupied Space - An enclosed space in a building intended for human activities, including bathrooms and circulation, but not including vehicle parking or space for supportive functions such as storage, trash storage, equipment, or computer servers.

Open Space, Building - See Building Open Space

Open Space, Common - See Common Open Space

Open Space Frontage - A building frontage, as defined in Section 2.2, that faces a natural open space.

Open Space, Private - See Private Open Space

Open Space, Privately-Owned Public - See Privately-Owned Public Open Space

Open Space, Public - See Public Open Space

Other Streets - Streets within the Design Guidelines area without the designation of Primary Addressing Street, SoFA Addressing Street, Secondary Addressing Street, Paseo, Alley, Urban Park/Plaza Frontage, or Open Space Frontage, as defined in Section 2.2. Service functions such as loading and vehicular entries are most appropriate on these streets.

Paseo - A through-block walkway designated as a Paseo on Framework Plan 2 in Section 2.2 or that meets the requirements of Standard A in Section 3.3.3.

Pedestrian Level - The first 20' of a building above grade. This part is the most critical for creating a good pedestrian environment.

Placemaking - A process and philosophy that makes use of urban design principles in planning, design, and programming to create unique, community-centered, and active Public Spaces.

Podium Level - The portion of a building below the Skyline Level. This part of a building helps to create the relationship between the upper-level activities of the building and the street and forms the wall of the City's Public Space.

POPOS - See Privately-Owned Public Open Space

Porte Cochere - A covered structure at a building entrance through which a motor vehicle can pass to load or unload passengers, frequently used at hotels.

Primary Addressing Streets - Streets, as defined in Section 2.2, intended to have a high volume of pedestrian traffic and to support public activity throughout the day and evening. Buildings along these streets may include both commercial and residential uses on upper floors, with retail strongly encouraged on the ground floor.

Private Open Space - Privately owned or controlled outdoor space for use by a single unit's residents or a single business's workers or customers, accessible by secured access only. Common configurations are rear yards and balconies.

Privately-Owned Public Open Space (POPOS) - A privately-owned outdoor space that functions as a Public Space, but may have limited hours of availability, e.g., plaza, sidewalk extension.

Public Life - Social life and activity that happens in the Public Realm.

Public Open Space - Publicly-owned parks, plazas, and other spaces meant for repose and recreation.

Public Realm - The area outside buildings accessible or visible to the public including streets and open spaces.

Public Space - All publicly-owned, publicly-accessible space, including but not limited to streets and parks, also including paseos but not including Highways 87 and 280 and their associated ramps.

Riparian Corridor - Defined in the San José Municipal Code 20.200.1054: any defined stream channel, including the area up to the bank full-flow line, as well as all characteristic streamside vegetation in contiguous adjacent uplands. Stream channels include perennial and intermittent streams shown as a solid or dashed blue line on USGS topographic maps. (Ord. 29785.)

Roof Deck - Privately owned outdoor space not at ground level, above habitable indoor space or other built space (such as a parking garage), and accessible to the public or a defined group (such as building occupants, restaurant patrons, or occupants of a single dwelling unit).

Secondary Addressing Streets - Streets, as defined in Section 2.2, with a commercial or residential focus, primarily lined with non-retail commercial uses or with housing. Retail may also occur on these streets, and corner retail is encouraged.

Semi-Private Open Space - Privately owned or controlled outdoor space accessible from Public Space but not intended for public use, e.g., setback to ground floor residential space; landscaped setback to ground floor office space.

Semi-Public Open Space - Privately owned or controlled outdoor space accessible to limited subset of the public, e.g., cafe.

Setback - The required or actual placement of a building a specified distance away from a road, property line, or other structure.

Skyline Level - The portion of a building higher than 70' above grade. This part of a building relates less to the adjacent street and more to the overall Downtown skyline.

SoFA Addressing Street - Street, as defined in Section 2.2, within the SoFA District and intended to have a high volume of pedestrian traffic and to support public activity throughout the day and evening. Buildings along this street may include both commercial and residential uses on upper floors, with retail strongly encouraged on the ground floor.

Stepback - The required or actual placement of a building a specified distance away from a road, property line, or other structure at a level above the first floor level.

Street - The publicly-accessible space within a street right of way, including space dedicated for vehicular, bicycle, pedestrian, and any other activity. A paseo is not a street.

Streetscape - The visual character of a public street as determined by elements such as structures, access, greenery, open space, view, paving, street hardware, etc.

Streetwall - The building facade(s) along a public street, Public Open Space, or a paseo from ground level to 70 feet above. See Section 4.3.3 for detailed requirements.

Structure of Merit - See subsection under Eligible for Historic Resources Inventory (HRI) listing.

Transparency - Pedestrian Level design that creates visibility and permeability between the building and the adjacent sidewalk or other Public Space.

Urban Park/Plaza Frontage - A building frontage, as defined in Section 2.2, that faces a major park or other civic space, as defined in this Design Guidelines document.

Walkway - A pedestrian path on private land.

Wall Washing - Lighting that bathes a building facade in a relatively even level of light, emphasizing its materiality and massing.

A.2.1 Skyline Studies

- Landmark
- Marker
- Low Icon
- Context

BUILDING ROLES IN THE SKYLINE

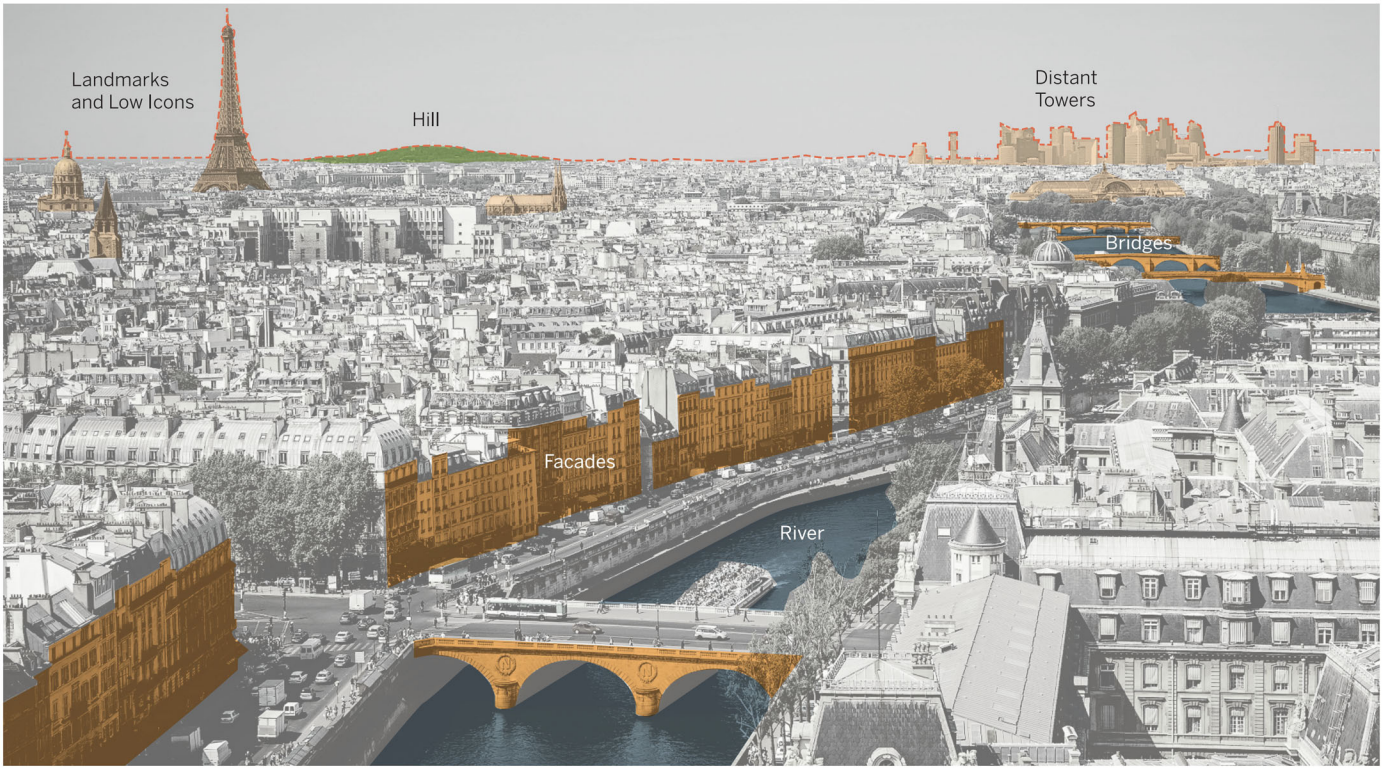
Tall buildings play a role in a city's skyline and together with other buildings may create something that is unique and memorable. Among American downtowns, few have a height limitation similar to San José, and many are on waterfronts, but a study of their different conditions provides useful lessons nonetheless.

Cities like Chicago, pictured and diagrammed above, have four overall building types. Landmarks are the most memorable buildings in the skyline, distinguished by their height, shape, or both (see examples below of building top design). Markers provide localized orientation, but stand out for some feature such as height, design, or location. Low Icons are buildings of lower heights, distinguished by their civic importance (such as a museum), design, location, or color.

101 Second, San Francisco
Photo © SOM | Hedrich Blessing

One Canada Square (Pelli Clark Pelli), London, *Photo © SOM*

50 South 6th, Minneapolis
Photo © SOM



Unlike Chicago, San José will retain a low overall form. A few American cities such as Washington, DC provide similar examples of low heights, and many European cities have low skylines. An instructive example is Paris, pictured above. For these cities, landmarks, assemblies of building *facades* in *Public Spaces* and along transportation routes (such as rivers), and infrastructure all play a role in the image of the city.

DERIVED LESSONS

These and other studies provided many lessons and ideas for San José's Downtown Design Guidelines. Some apply to private development, and some may instruct actions of the City. Among these are:

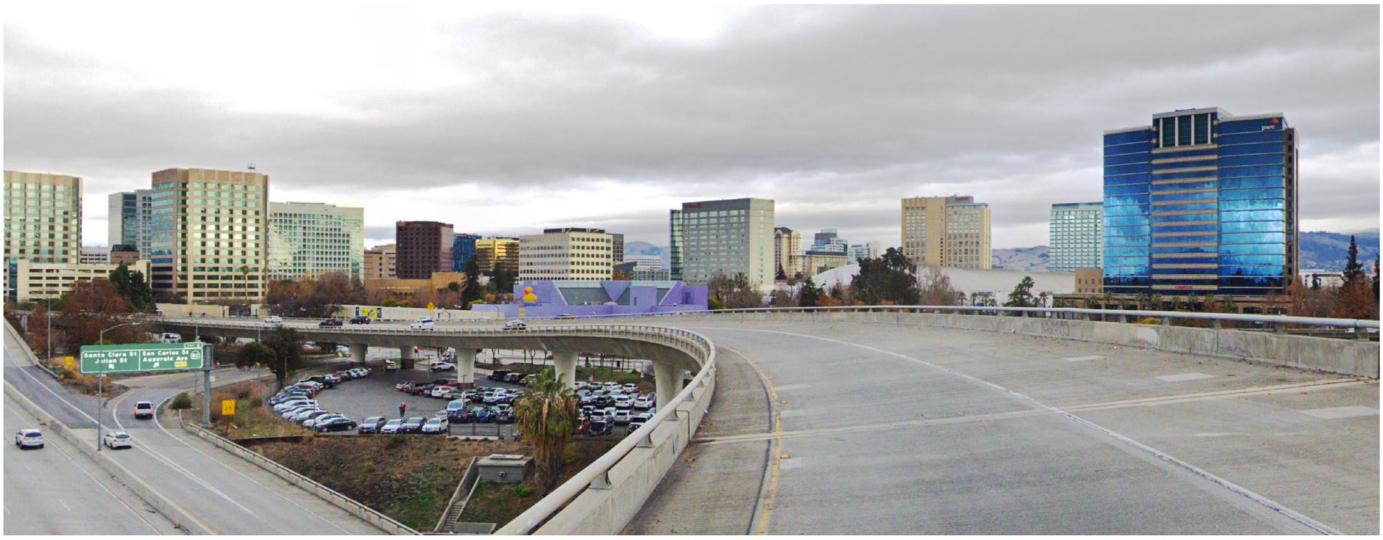
- Use the iconic value of infrastructure (e.g., bridges, highway gateways).
- Create identity with well-designed building *facades* along urban edges (e.g., parks).
- Recognizable landmarks are extremely significant in a "flat" skyline.
- Low icons also help create a memorable skyline and retaining their visibility and emphasis is key.
- Uniform buildings can create a high quality cityscape but not, by themselves, a memorable one.

A.2.1 Skyline Studies (continued)

The design guidelines for building form and massing use the information and lessons learned from the skyline studies to create a memorable skyline for Downtown. Image pairs on the pages below model potential development scenarios for two notable views, from the north along Highway 87 and from the highway ramp entering Highway 87 from the south. In absence of an adjacent waterfront, these views will be among the most memorable ones of Downtown for many people.

Downtown from Highway 87 facing south *(Photo © Google)*

Simulation of towers on *Gateway Sites* (light gray) and of *Image-Defining Frontages* (dark gray) *(Photo © Google)*



Downtown San José from the highway ramp to Highway 87, facing northeast *(Photo © Google)*

Simulation of towers on Gateway Sites (light gray) and of *Image-Defining Frontages* (dark gray) *(Photo © Google)*

A.2.2 Paseo Precedents

Paseos are a unique part of Downtown San José and several city planning documents propose their expansion within Downtown and into the Diridon area. *Paseos* can help to create a fine grained pedestrian network and provide interesting alternative paths that are away from the dominating influence of vehicles.

However, it is critical that *paseos* remain safe and active. Because retail shops are suffering from competition with online shopping and are in many places declining in number, there may not be enough retail available to activate new *paseos*. *Paseos* should not take activity away from existing street *frontages*, which also need activation.

Thus, alternative methods are required to create interesting and safe *paseos*. A study of several other cities' pedestrian routes provided some instruction.

Level 1 and 2 laneways (dark and light orange) in Melbourne's Hoddle Grid (above). The system is dense in many locations, which is enabled by a highly dense downtown core (below) *Images © Google Earth*

A RATING SYSTEM - MELBOURNE, AUSTRALIA

Melbourne has a system of "laneways" in its downtown core. These are part of a network of alleys through long blocks, and have come to be a large pedestrian system over time as they have been improved and repurposed from service functions.

To understand the importance of the different laneways, the City uses four core value characteristics of laneways as pedestrian environments:

- **Connectivity** – physical connection through a city block.
- **Active frontages** – *frontages* that provide for visual and physical interaction between the *Public Space* of the lane and the ground floors of the buildings.

- **Elevational articulation** – architectural character of the buildings adjoining the lane and the degree to which this provides aesthetic and spatial interest.
- **Views** – views towards a connecting lane, street or landmark.

Using these values, the laneways may be graded into classes 1 through 3:

- **Class 1** lanes show signs of all four core value characteristics and support a high level of pedestrian activity.
- **Class 2** lanes show signs of three out of the four core value characteristics.
- **Class 3** lanes show sign of two or less of the four core value characteristics. These lanes generally provide vehicular access to the rear of buildings for loading and service requirements or access to car parking areas.

(Local Planning Policies, Melbourne Planning Scheme)

ACTIVATION WITH ART - TORONTO, CANADA

Graffiti Alley in Toronto, Canada is a short series of alleys which have an impressive collection of graffiti. While the alley still serves its service functions and has received little improvement of the *Public Realm*, it has become an attraction in its own right. Groups of people visit the alley to enjoy the graffiti and to take photos of the art and of themselves. Contrary to those of some more formal art installations, the demographic of alley visitors appears to be quite young.

Graffiti Alley in Toronto is full of graffiti art and people.

INFORMAL OPEN SPACE AND FOOD - SAN FRANCISCO

Trinity Place in San Francisco is a one block alley connection between two streets. Its function as a short cut brings some foot traffic through, as do several window food stands and cafes. Vehicular traffic is allowed, but the surface makes clear that the area is for pedestrian priority. And the presence of secondary entries to several office buildings makes the alley a good place to come outside to make a phone call or smoke.

Small interventions such as food windows activate Trinity Place.

A.3 Resources and References

PRIMARY SAN JOSE PLAN SOURCES

- Diridon Station Area Plan (2014)
- Downtown Design Guidelines (2004)
- Greater Downtown Strategy for Development (2000)

OTHER SAN JOSE PLANS

- Bike Plan 2020 (2009)
- Downtown Historic District Design Guidelines (2003)
- Downtown Street and Pedestrian Lighting Plan
- Downtown Streetscape Master Plan (2003)
- Draft Downtown Historic Design Guidelines (2004)
- Envision San José 2040 General Plan (2011)
- Guadalupe River Park & Gardens Urban Design Guidelines (2003)
- North San José Urban Design Guidelines (2010)
- St. James Square Historic District Design Guidelines (1989)
- Santana Row / Valley Fair Urban Village Plan
- South First Area Strategic Development Plan (2002)
- Tree Policy Manual and Recommended Best Management Practices (2013)

OTHER CITY PLANS

- Los Angeles Downtown Design Guide (2017)
- San Francisco Ground Floor Residential Design (undated)
- San Francisco Standards for Storefront Transparency (2013)
- San Francisco Urban Design Guidelines (2018)
- Seattle Design Guidelines (2013)
- Toronto Tall Building Design Guidelines (2013)
- Transbay Redevelopment Project Development Controls and Design Guidelines (2005)

REPORTS AND STUDIES

- Active Design Guidelines (New York City, 2010)
- Active Design: Shaping the Sidewalk Experience (New York City, 2013)
- Bird-Friendly Building Design (American Bird Conservancy, undated)
- Cracking the Code (SPUR, 2015)
- The Future of Downtown San Jose (SPUR, 2014)
- Getting to Great Places (SPUR, 2013)

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