

SAN JOSE DOWNTOWN

DESIGN GUIDELINES AND STANDARDS

NOVEMBER 15, 2018 DRAFT

City of San José
Adopted by City
Council: x.x.x



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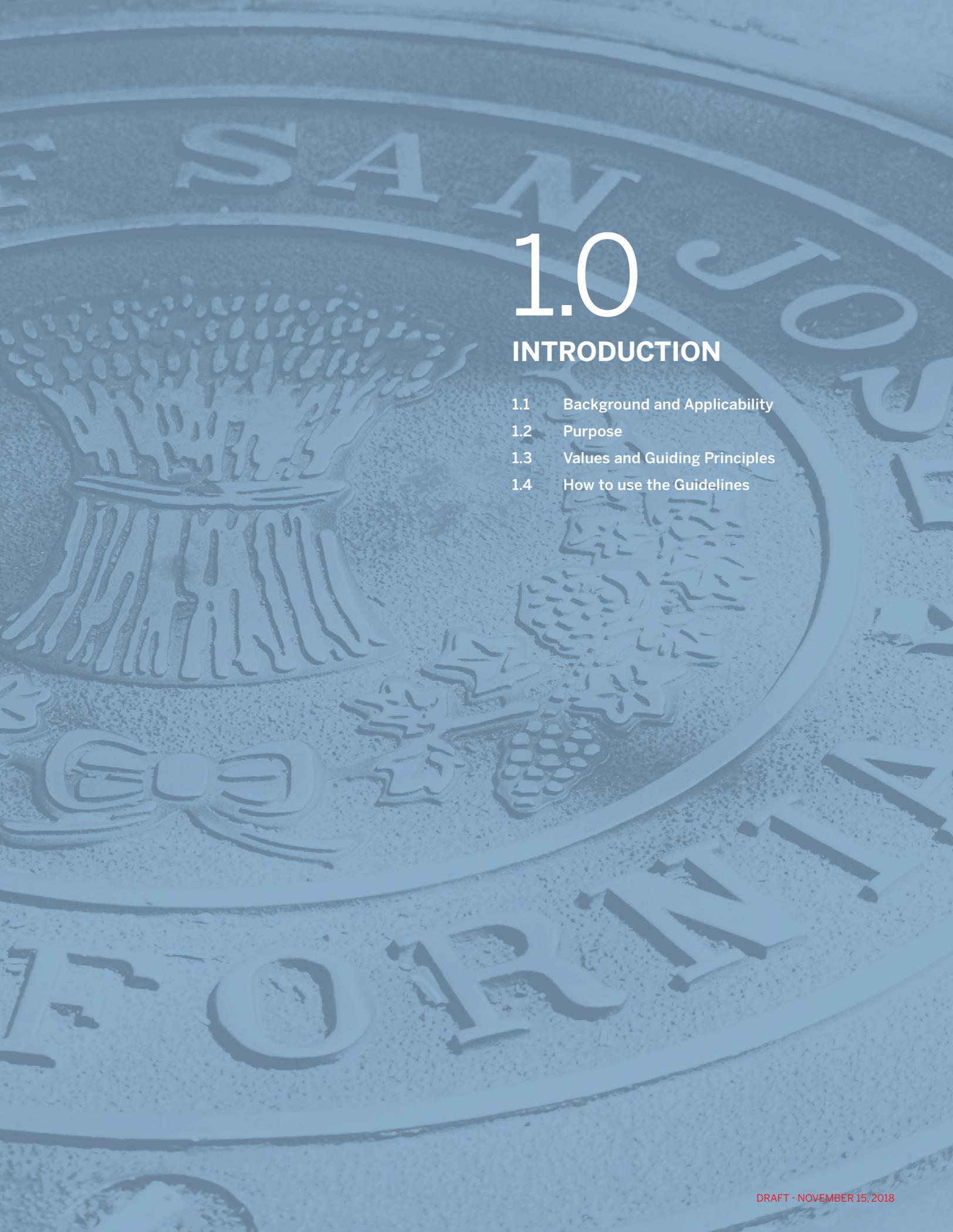
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City of San José
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The background of the page is a large, light blue-tinted image of the seal of the University of the Philippines. The seal is circular and features a central shield with a sunburst at the top, a book, and a laurel wreath. The words "UNIVERSITY OF THE PHILIPPINES" are inscribed around the perimeter of the seal.

1.0

INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Background and Applicability
- 1.2 Purpose
- 1.3 Values and Guiding Principles
- 1.4 How to use the Guidelines

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 placemaking that will further define San José as the capital of Silicon Valley.

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

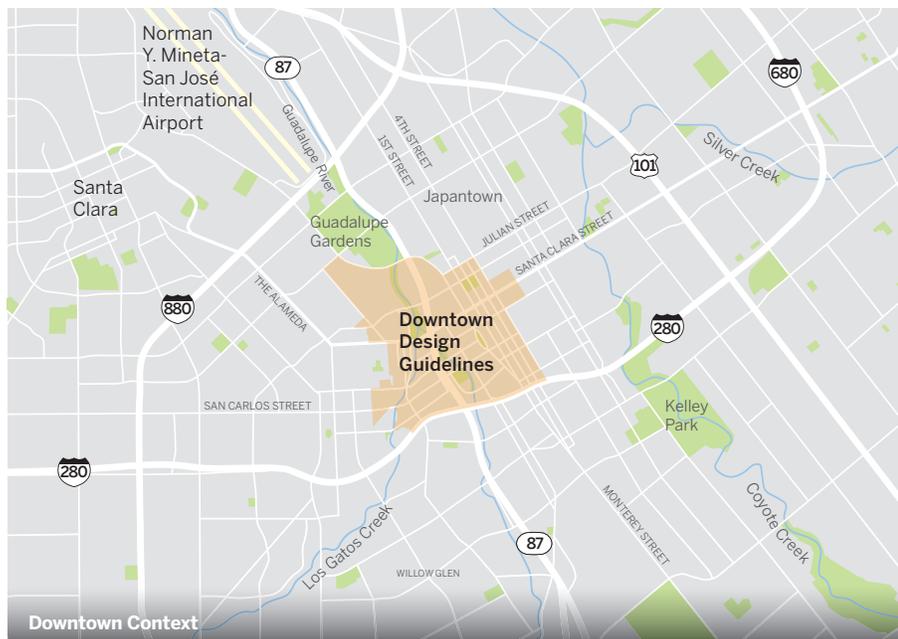
- A low airport flight path that limits building height
- A high groundwater table that favors placement of parking and other basement utilities above ground.
- Nearby highways that create access but also limit and divide the area.

The San José Downtown Design Guidelines and Standards (referred to in the document as the Downtown 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. These Guidelines define the design objectives for the elements that determine the image of Downtown. The Guidelines refine the concepts of other plans, translating them into an operational document that increases predictability for developers and their architects for development in Downtown.

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

ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTS TO CONSULT

- Downtown Street and Pedestrian Lighting Master Plan
- Downtown Streetscape Master Plan
- Diridon Station Area Plan
- Market Almaden Neighborhood Improvement Plan
- Draft South First Area (SoFA) Strategic Development Plan
- Draft Downtown Historic Design Guidelines
- 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



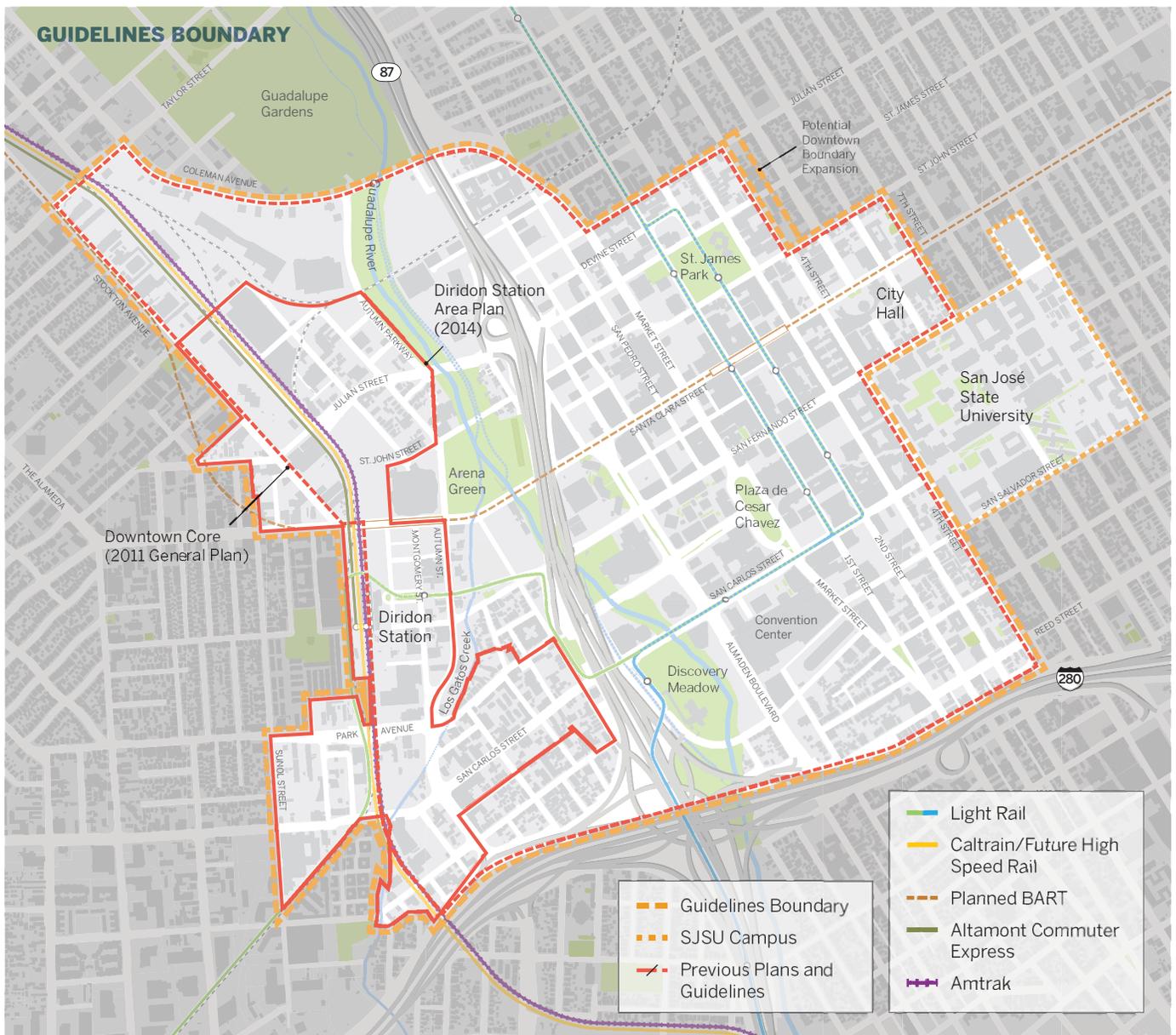
These guidelines apply to the areas of the General Plan Downtown Growth Area and the Diridon Station Area Plan. This includes the commercial and governmental core, retail districts like San Pedro Square and the South First Area, residential areas near downtown, civic institutions, and industrial, residential, and commercial areas near Diridon Station. 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.

SAN JOSE 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. For development proposals on the SJSU campus that

are for private-party purposes, the City has permitting authority, and such development may be subject to City review for consistency with the Urban Design Guidelines. The Urban Design guidelines could be applied to development for educational purposes on the SJSU campus at the discretion of the University.



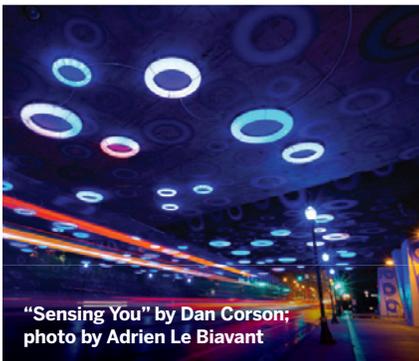
1.2 Purpose

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 are one tool to help achieve this vision.

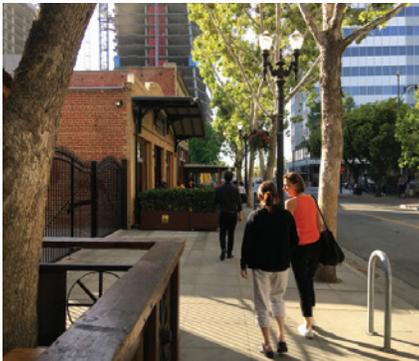
Many key elements of Downtown will be governed by other documents and public investments and actions. These guidelines, in coordination with other plans, work toward the vision with specific requirements and clear direction for **new buildings**. The Downtown Design Guidelines are intended

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.



SUSTAINABLE URBANISM

Downtown San José includes unique and growing residential neighborhoods with convenient access to urban activities and amenities, inviting families, 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 automobiles carefully managed. For long trips, public transit is the mode of choice, providing an advantage in accessibility to the region and beyond, moving past automobile dependence.



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 combination of weekday and weekend 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.

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:

- 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)

These guidelines are intended to help Downtown realize its greatest potential as a livable, pedestrian-oriented, sustainable city core.

| VALUE |
|-------------------|
| Guiding Principle |

| 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. |
| Focus on the Ground Floor | Promote a diverse, active, and attractive pedestrian environment at the ground level. |
| 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 | Utilize 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. |
| Create a Memorable Destination | Build on Downtown's unique strengths as the cultural, artistic, and creative center of the South Bay. |
| 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. |

1.4 How To Use the Guidelines

Guideline Name

Rationale

Illustrative graphics and photos

The screenshot shows a digital document interface with tabs for 1.0 Introduction, 2.0 Framework Plans, 3.0 Site, 4.0 Buildings, 5.0 Pedestrian Level, and A.0 Appendix. Two guideline pages are visible:

- 4.3.5 Sunlight:** Titled "USE PEOPLE-CENTERED DESIGN". The rationale states that sun and shade are important for public spaces. It includes a table with columns for "Sunlight", "Shade", and "Wind".
- 4.3.6 Wind:** Titled "BE SUSTAINABLE, GENERATE RESILIENCE". The rationale focuses on preserving and improving wind circulation. It includes a table with columns for "Wind", "Sunlight", and "Shade".

Both pages feature diagrams illustrating building footprints, wind flow, and shading patterns. A "GENERAL PLAN REFERENCE" section at the bottom of each page points to specific sections of the San José General Plan.

Guidelines

Standards

General Plan Reference

DOCUMENT STRUCTURE

These guidelines mirror the design process: they move from the site's location in Downtown; to the planning of the site; to the overall building design; to the design of the building's ground floor and its interaction with *public space*.

Chapter 2 - Framework Plans covers different characteristics of Downtown that may create specific guidance for a development project. The Framework Plans assign characteristics to different blocks and parcels in Downtown. It is necessary to know whether your site has one or more of these characteristics.

- Gateway Site
- Image-Defining Frontage
- Primary Addressing Street
- Secondary Addressing Street
- Paseo
- Urban Park Frontage
- Open Space Frontage
- Transit Gateway
- Pedestrian and Bicycle Gateway
- Adjacent to a Civic Icon building or other Historic Building
- Within a Historic or Landmark District
- Natural or Urban View Corridor
- Special Zone or Neighborhood
- Lighting Corridor
- Lighting Gateway

These characteristics will affect the treatment of urban design elements in chapters 3-6.

Chapter 3 - Site has guidance for 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 building transparency, different types of access, and service are essential to this topic.

GUIDELINE STRUCTURE

The typical guideline page contains three sections.

- **Rationale** describes the design principle addressed in the guideline and the reason for its importance.
- **Guidelines** give design guidance for the ideal situation. The Guidelines are qualitative, aspirational, and serve as overall design guidance.
- **Standards** give design guidance that is more specific, numeric, and verifiable. Typically the standard is the minimum expectation. Whether a design follows a standard can be determined with a simple yes or no.
- **General Plan Reference** gives sections of the San José General Plan that cover related topics and requirements.

STEPS FOR USING THE GUIDELINES

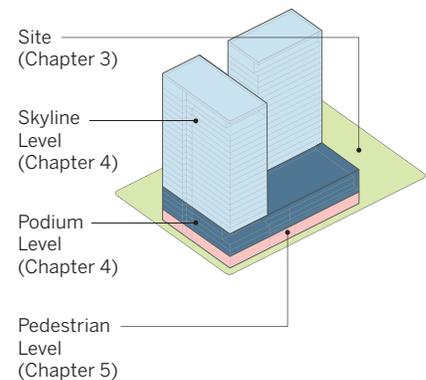
1. Framework Plans

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 an Urban Park Frontage (Section 2.2), the rules for Streetwalls (Section 4.3.3) are different.



2. Guidelines

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





2.0

FRAMEWORK PLANS

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

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**

If so, this will affect its treatment in the **Relevant Guidelines** (see the list below) in chapters 3 - 5.

RELEVANT GUIDELINES

Designations in this Framework Plan affect the following guidelines:

4.2 - Form, Proportion, and Organizing Idea

4.3.2 - Skyline Level Massing (Above 70')

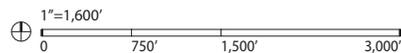
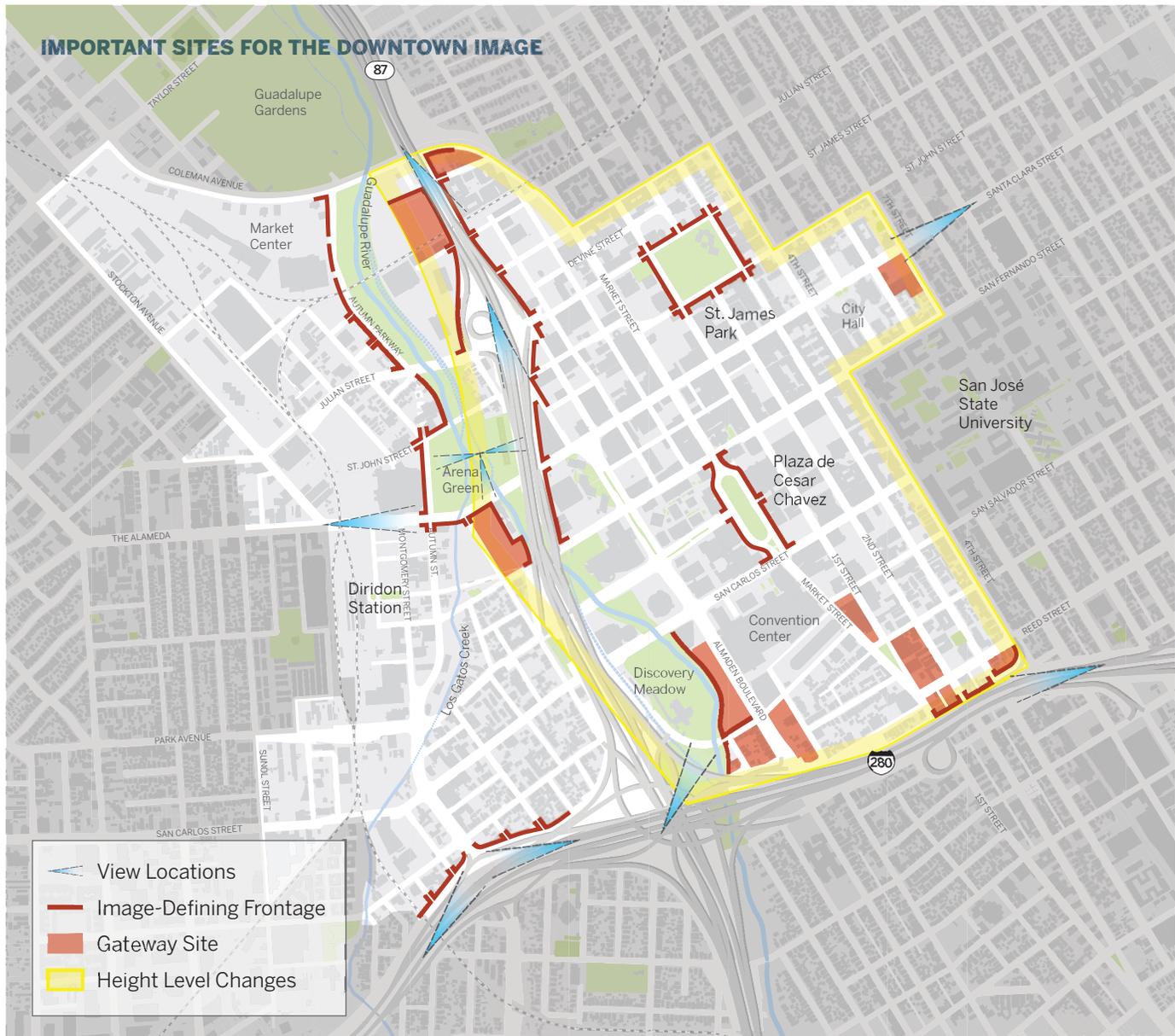
4.4.1 - Facade Pattern and Articulation

4.4.4 - Materials and Colors

4.4.7 - Parking Garages

4.6.1 - Lighting - Podium Level

4.6.2 - Lighting - Skyline Level





RATIONALE

The skyline and unusually visible building facades create the first impression of Downtown from other locations within San José and beyond. The skyline is also visible inside the area at 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

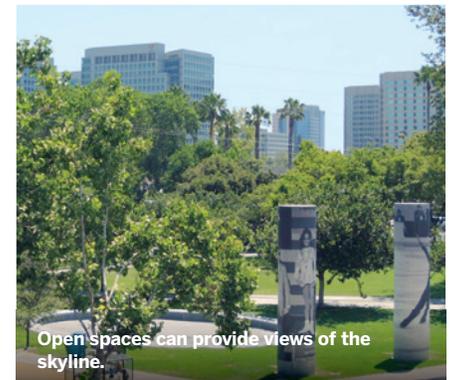
“mesa” shaped skyline, with most buildings at similar heights.

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

PROMINENT SITES

Due to the mesa 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 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 these guidelines in the following chapters.



2.2 Podium Level and Pedestrian Level Plan

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

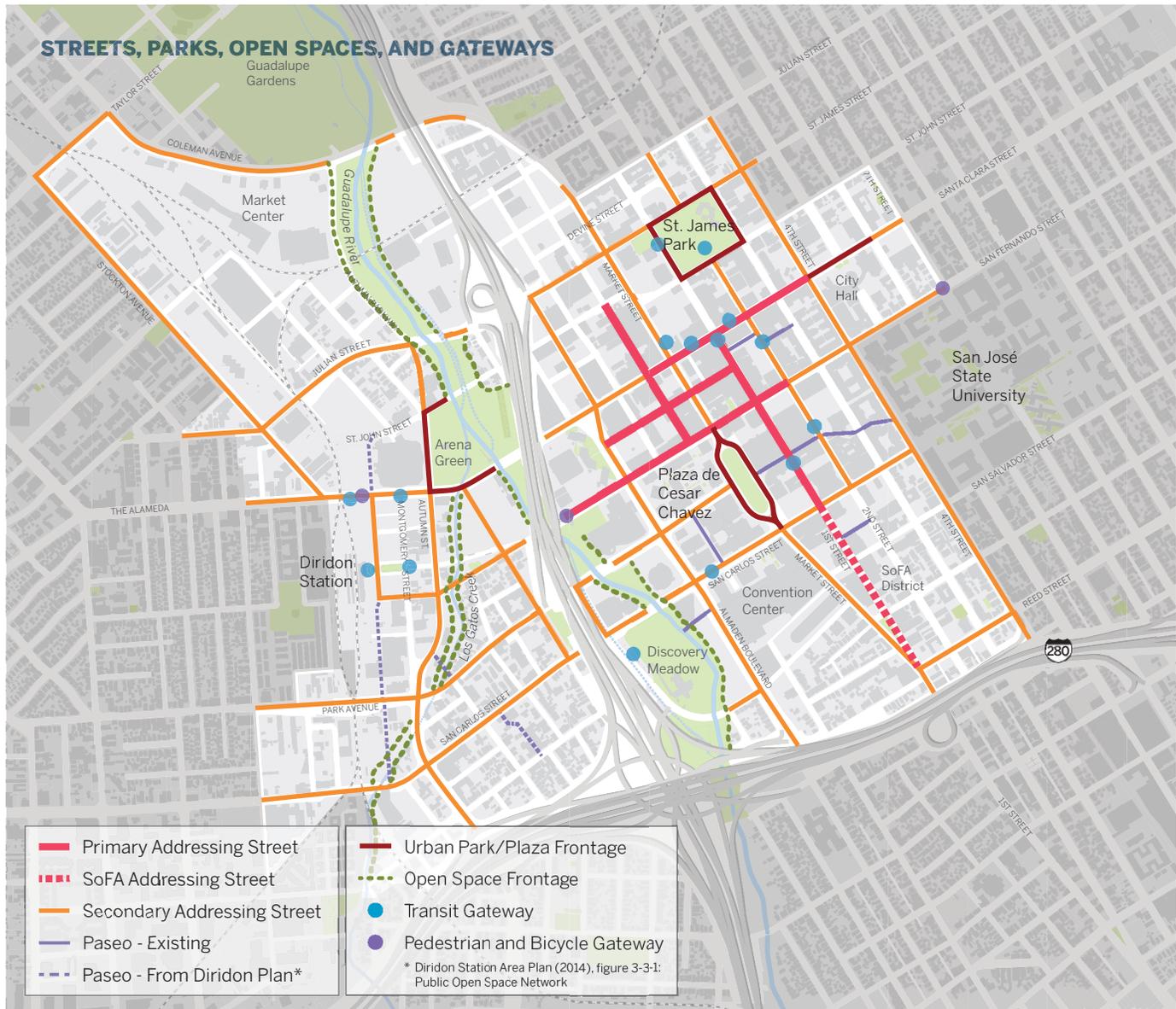
If so, this will affect its treatment in the **Relevant Guidelines** (see the list below) in chapters 3 - 5.

RELEVANT GUIDELINES

Designations in this Framework Plan affect the following guidelines:

- 3.3.8 - Parking Location
- 3.4.1 - Pedestrian Entrance Location
- 3.4.2 - Service Entrance Location

- 3.4.3 - Parking and Vehicular Access Location
- 4.3.1 - Podium Level Massing
- 4.3.3 - Streetwall
- 4.4.7 - Parking Garages
- 5.2 - Public Art in Private Development
- 5.3.1.a - Active Uses
- 5.3.2 - Ground Floor Non-Residential Space
- 5.8 - Lighting - Pedestrian Level
- 5.9 - 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 occurring 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 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 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.

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

PARKS AND OPEN SPACES

Urban parks and natural open spaces are amenities that form part of Downtown's ecological systems.

Urban Park/Plaza Frontage: These facades form the urban framework for the 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

Transit Gateway: Rail transit stops are key locations for entry into and exit from Downtown.

Pedestrian and Bicycle Gateway: Certain pedestrian and bicycle routes take on additional importance due to their high level of use.

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 at left. 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.” For properties in the **Downtown Core**, consult the most updated San José Downtown Historic 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, this Downtown Design Guidelines document sets rules for new buildings being built near and adjacent to historic and other key structures within the guidelines boundary. Two situations are significant, and a project may be subject to both sections, for Context and Adjacency, as below.

1. **Historic Context** - Generally, if 50% or more of the buildings fully or partially within 150 feet of a project are on the City of San José historic resource list (as shown in the map in this section as San José City Landmark, California Register of Historical Resources or Other State Designation, or National Register of Historic Places), refer to **Section 4.5.3 - Historic Context**. In this instance, a project may or may not be located immediately adjacent to a historic building but may still be in an area with historic importance.
2. **Historic Adjacency** - If a project is located immediately adjacent to a historic building of any type as shown on the map in this section, refer to **Section 4.5.2 - Historic Adjacency**.

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 provides the local historic designation process and the development review process for individual historic properties and historic areas.

The City Council adopted a policy on the preservation of historic resources. The local Historic Landmarks Commission and staff help to administer the City’s Historic Resources Program, which includes land use and financial incentives for eligible properties.

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.

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 |
| Downtown Core | San Jose Downtown Historic Design Guidelines (Draft) |
| 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 | Your Old House, Guide for Preserving San Jose Homes |

2.4 Civic Icon Buildings Plan

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.

If so, this will affect its treatment in the **Relevant Guidelines** (see the list below) in chapters 3 - 5.

RELEVANT GUIDELINES

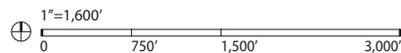
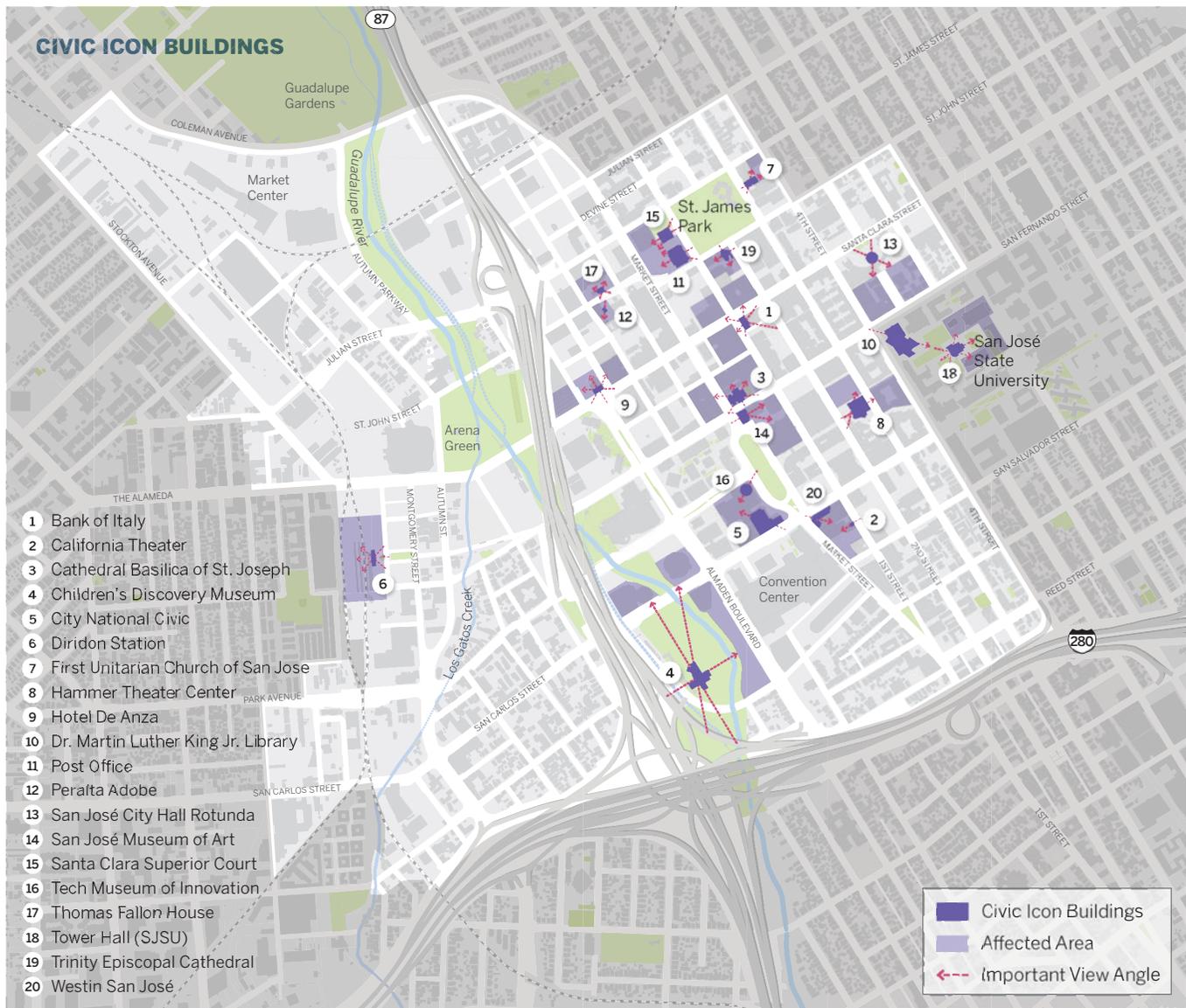
Designations in this Framework Plan affect the following guidelines:

4.5.1 - Civic Icon Adjacency

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 View Corridors Plan

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

If so, this will affect its treatment in the **Relevant Guidelines** (see the list below) in chapters 3 - 5.

RELEVANT GUIDELINES

Designations in this Framework Plan affect the following guidelines:

- 3.2.1 - Block Size
- 4.4.9 - Pedestrian Bridges

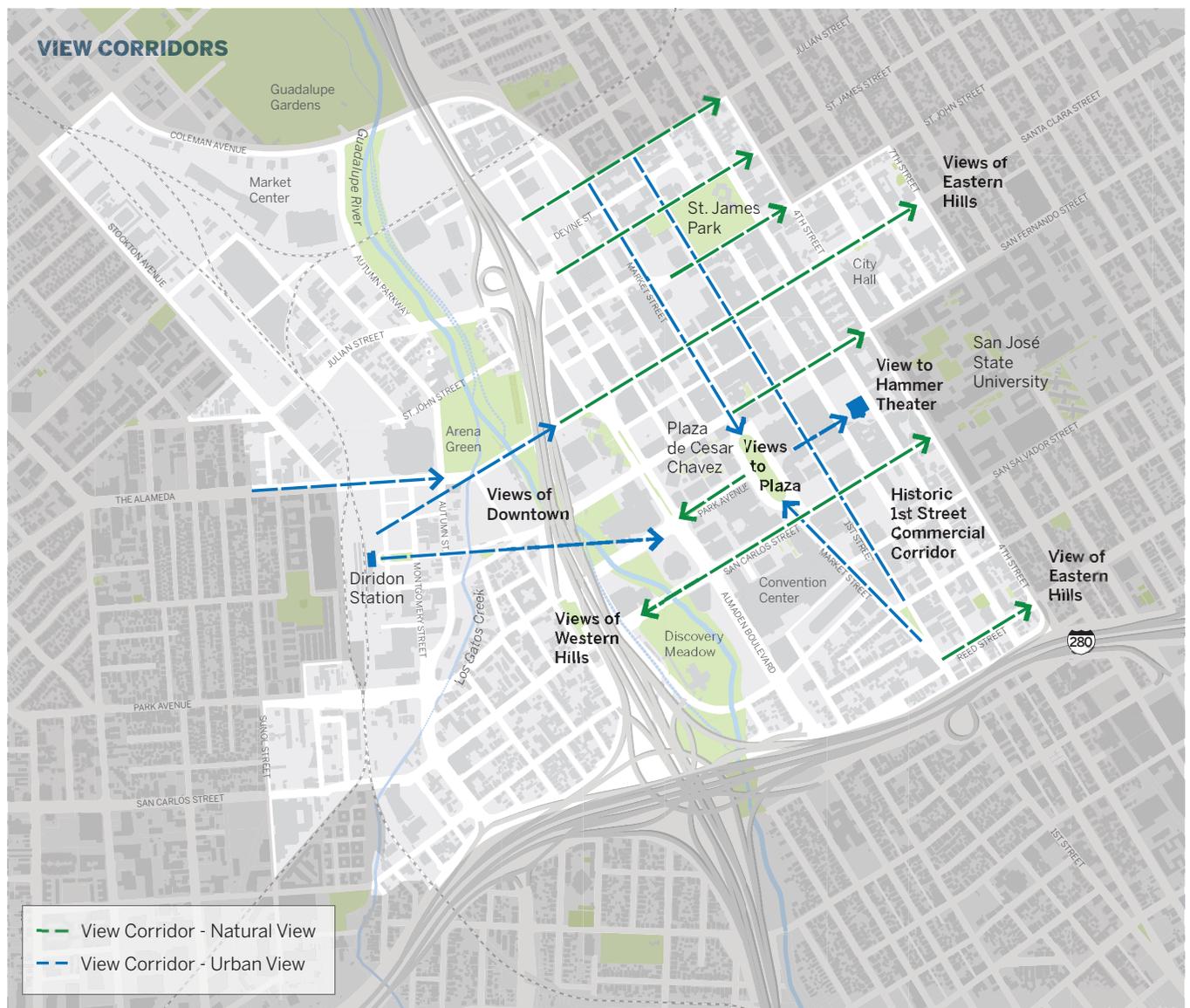
RATIONALE

Views are essential to orientation within Downtown and a way to connect to the surrounding landscape and with local buildings and spaces. The level topography

of Downtown makes these corridors even more crucial because there are few high vantage points except within buildings.

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

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



2.6 Podium Level and Pedestrian Level Lighting Plan

WHAT TO DO IN THIS SECTION

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

1. Enhanced Lighting Corridor
2. Lighting Gateway

If so, this will affect its treatment in the **Relevant Guidelines** (see the list below) in chapters 3 - 5. Note that lighting guidelines apply to all locations in Downtown, but Enhanced Lighting Corridors and Lighting Gateways have specific guidance.

RELEVANT GUIDELINES

Designations in this Framework Plan affect the following guidelines:

- 4.6.1 - Lighting - Podium Level
- 5.8 - Lighting - Pedestrian Level



RATIONALE

Lighting at the Podium and Pedestrian Levels is a placemaking 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.

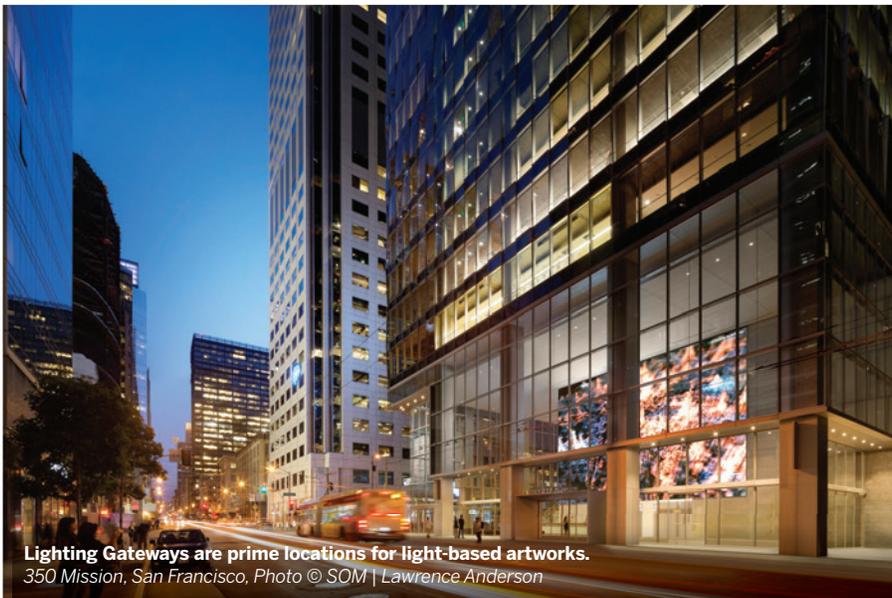
This framework plan creates lighting to enhance the experience of pedestrians. It does not apply to a building's contribution to Downtown's Skyline Level and distant image, which is guided by the property's classification as a Gateway Site in the Prominent Sites and Frontages Framework Plan in Section 2.1.

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.

LIGHTING GATEWAYS

These special points aid orientation by serving as markers for specific areas and as points of transition.



2.7 Block Structure Plan

WHAT TO DO IN THIS SECTION

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

RELEVANT GUIDELINES

Designations in this Framework Plan affect

the following guidelines:

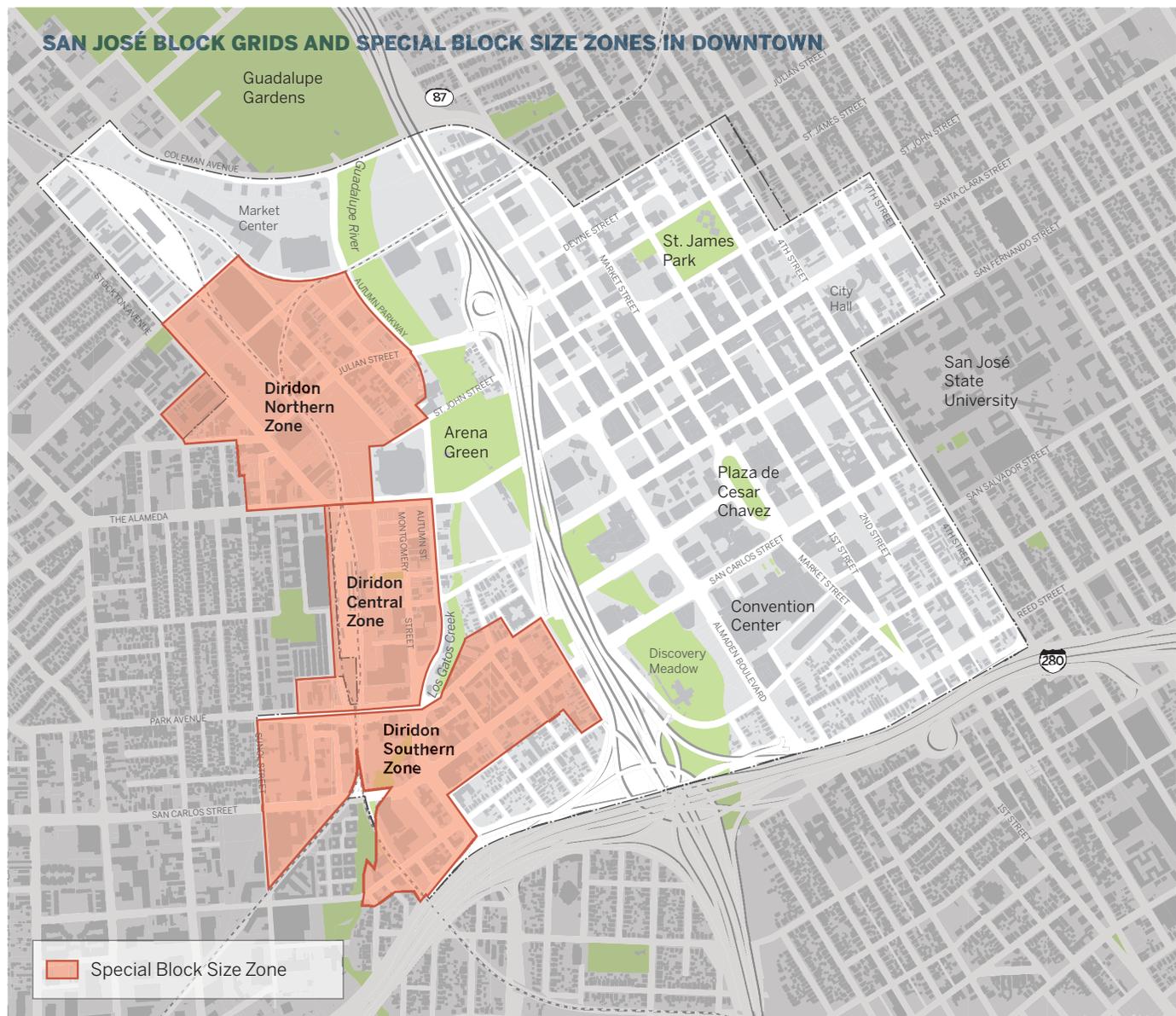
3.2.1 - Block Size

RATIONALE

Block size and orientation affects walkability, building size, views, street patterns, and circulation. Thus, block structure is key to the livability and efficiency of not only built form but also the transportation network. Block

structure also relates 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. This document includes the Diridon Station Area Plan's block size guidance in Section 3.2.1 and sets block size limits for the rest of the Guidelines area.



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 Connection to Streets and Open Space

3.3.3 Relationship to Transit

3.3.4 Paseo / Mid-Block Connection Location

3.3.5 Locating Privately-Owned Public Open Space

3.3.6 Locating Semi-Private Open Space

3.3.7 Locating Private Open Space

3.3.8 Parking Location

3.3.9 Bicycle Parking Location

3.4 Site Access

3.4.1 Pedestrian Entrance Location

3.4.2 Service Entrance Location

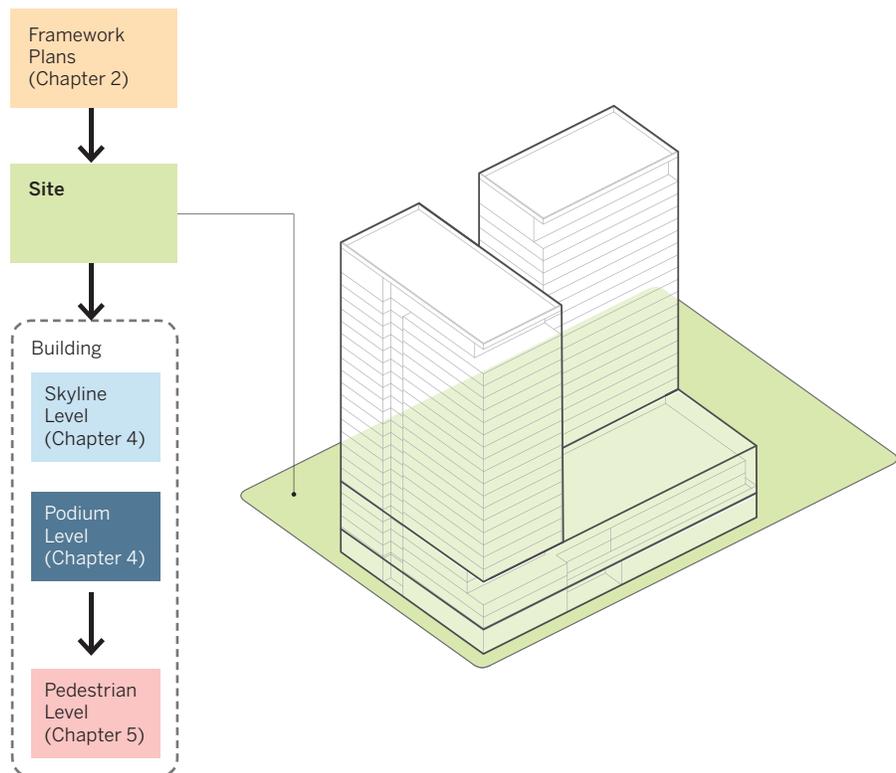
3.4.3 Parking and Vehicular Access Location

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.

Creating a system of appropriately-scaled blocks and a fine-grained *public space* network that responds to its context sets up the urban structure. Organizing the development by placing activities in the best locations in relation to this *public space* network enables interactions and interconnections between public and private. Appropriately-scaled and located 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 active corridors.



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.

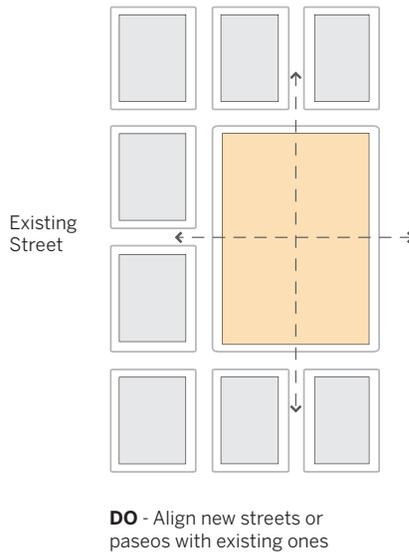
RATIONALE

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.



DO - A paseo that creates connections can be interesting and active. Photo © SPUR



GUIDELINES

- While there is a maximum allowable block size established in the Standards below, smaller block sizes are preferable. For this reason, do not consolidate existing blocks even if the new consolidated block would be less than the maximum size.

STANDARDS

- a. When developing more than 75% of the area of a block that exceeds the maximum sizes below, divide the block with new streets or paseos 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. **Diridon Central Zone** - 250 feet on a side
2. **Diridon Northern Zone** - 350 feet on a side
3. **Diridon Southern 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. The maximum area may be exceeded for the portions of blocks within 150 feet of these parcels.

- b. Align new streets or paseos with existing streets and paseos in adjacent blocks.
- c. If changing a street alignment, create a new alignment with the same or more connection value than the existing street right of way.
- d. Do not vacate an existing public right-of-way that lies along a view corridor (see Section 2.5).

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

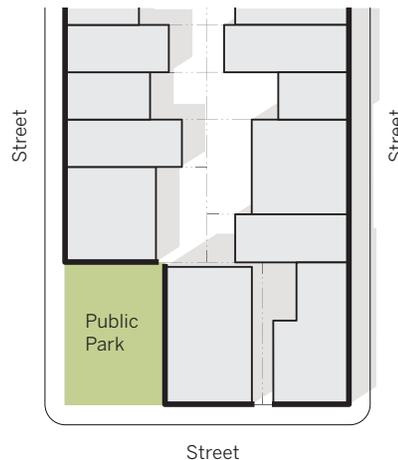
CREATE LEGIBILITY

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 expanses of parking or vegetation. Greater separation of buildings and more landscaping at block edges may appear “green” but are actually 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 create a public face of the building distinct from the private or semi-private facade facing the block interior. 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 blocks is already firmly set. New buildings in these areas can fit in by strengthening this configuration. In contrast, for parcels and blocks to be redeveloped within the Diridon area, it is critical to establish an urban framework of buildings lining the edges of streets and other public spaces.



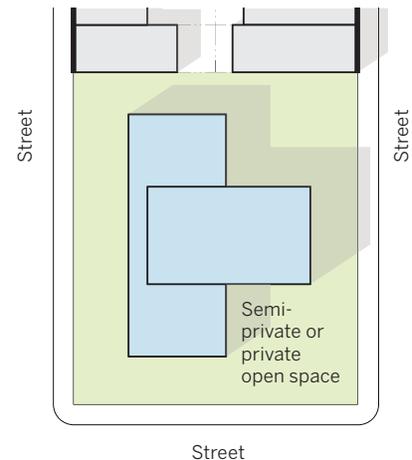
DO - Buildings lining the streets frame the public realm and create private space in the block interior. Small gaps in the built form do not diminish the overall structure.

GUIDELINES

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

STANDARDS

- Line at least 70 percent of each parcel's street-facing and public park-facing edges with buildings by placing a ground level building facade within 10 feet of street right-of-ways and public park parcel lines. Streets for this standard do not include Highways 87 or 280, a highway ramp, or a railroad alignment.



DO NOT - Buildings set back from adjacent streets leave undefined open spaces and have a poor visual relationship to the public realm.

RELATED GUIDELINES

- 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 Active Uses near to and visible from surrounding *public space* and internalizing activities and uses that detract from *public space*.

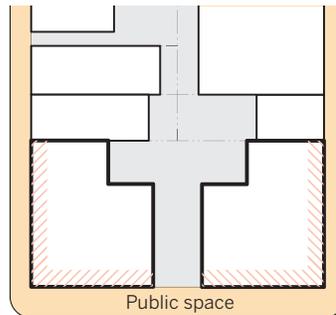
RATIONALE

The arrangement of activities on a site should support its surroundings by responding to the contextual patterns of land uses and *public space*. Placing the most active, least private, and least disruptive activities near the street, such as lobbies, hallways, company cafeterias, work-out areas, and meeting rooms, keeps the streetscape visually active, regardless of whether these activities are open to the public. Examples of rooms which are not appropriate for adjacency to *public space* are utility rooms, bathrooms, and ground floor bedrooms.

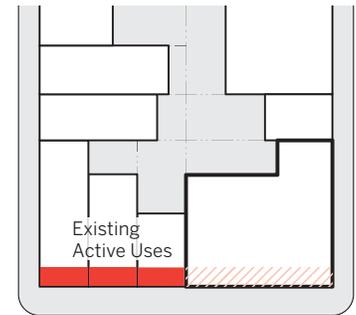
Building uses above ground level may also contribute to the attractiveness and safety of public spaces. Upper-level uses with visible activity such as residential, office, or vertical or horizontal circulation contribute to street safety with eyes-on-the-street and make *public space* more interesting.



DO - Active Uses keep the streetscape more interesting and safe.



DO - Place the most active uses toward *public space*.



DO - Place Active Uses to respond to context and transit.



GUIDELINES

- Arrange activities in new development to support existing or planned context, such as to continue an existing retail corridor, face an Active Use toward an existing park, or avoid the disruption of a quiet residential area with noisy activity.
- Locate Active Uses to respond to the pattern of surrounding streets and pathways (e.g., across from a mid-block street intersection) and to be near transit stops.
- Minimize disruption of active pedestrian areas by placing loading docks, service, and vehicle entries in less active locations.
- Internalize service areas, vehicular activities, and uses which do not add vitality to the streetscape.

STANDARDS

- Place Active Uses along the edges of adjacent *public space* at the Pedestrian Level and not toward internal site spaces, unless all requirements for Active Uses on *public space* have been met (see Section 5.2.1 for definitions and requirements).
- Arrange uses to place the most active uses on a site near the street intersections, paseo intersections, parks, plazas, and transit stops.

RELATED GUIDELINES

5.3.1 - Active Uses

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 Connection to Streets and Open Space

PUT PEOPLE FIRST

Connect buildings to public spaces with primary pedestrian entrances, bicycle entrances, and facades oriented to streets, parks, or paseos.

RATIONALE

Streets lined with building entrances are more interesting, vibrant, and safe than those without. Such street presence provides identity to individual buildings and makes navigation easier for visitors and deliveries. Resident and worker activities and views from buildings onto the street improve the area's safety and pedestrian comfort.

In particular, it is crucial for large developments and deep parcels to maintain an orientation to the street for all buildings. This helps maintain pedestrian and bicycle access and enables each building to contribute to the *public life* of the area.

GUIDELINES

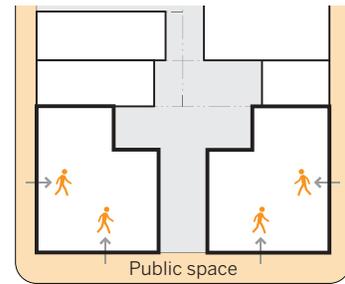
- Orient buildings and uses to connect to the street and public realm.

STANDARDS

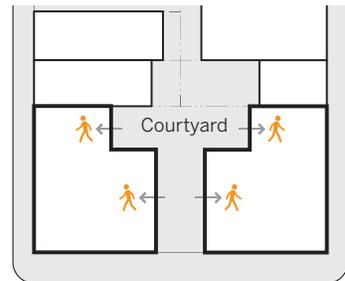
- Make all primary building entrances clearly visible from *public space*.
- Connect the primary building access directly to a public sidewalk, public open space, or paseo, uninterrupted by a parking lot or vehicular circulation area. In the event the building is located on both a street and a paseo, place the primary entrance on the street with any entry from the paseo secondary to that entry. See **Section 5.4.2 - Vehicle and Service Entry Design** for information about *porte cocheres* and primary pedestrian entries.
- 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 structure.

GENERAL PLAN REFERENCE

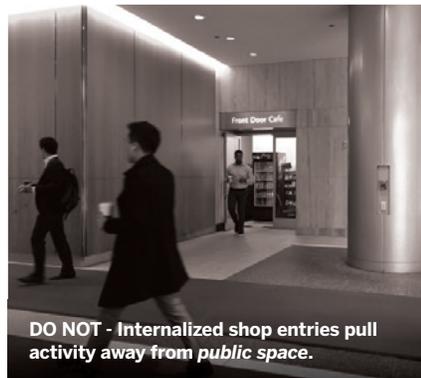
- CD-2.3(5), CD-1.9, CD-1.17, CD-2.8, CD-3.3, CD-1.11



DO - place primary entries along *public space*



DO NOT - place primary entries from internal courtyards or parking lots or structures. An entry from a paseo should also be secondary to the street entry, if there is one.



3.3.3 Relationship to Transit

CREATE CONNECTION AND ACCESSIBILITY

Emphasize transit by orienting activities and amenities to stations.

RATIONALE

Downtown is a growing center of major transit infrastructure. Existing transit at Diridon Station and multiple light rail lines 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 Uses and amenities nearby, improving the experience of transit users as well.

GUIDELINES

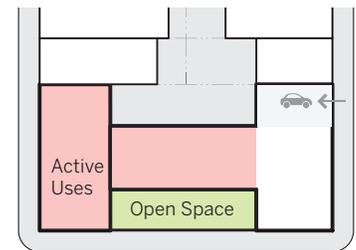
- Place the highest density of development near transit stations, particularly rail transit, to facilitate transit use.
- Keep transit station areas active to promote safety and integrate transit into the activity of nearby development.
- Locate commercial building lobbies near transit stations.
- Add benches and landscaping to benefit transit patrons and others near transit stops, stations, and entrances.

STANDARDS

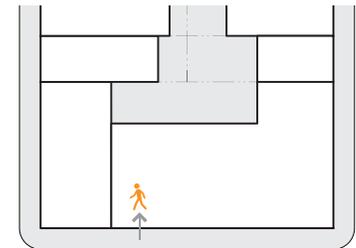
- Place a building's Active Uses (particularly retail) and amenities such as privately-owned public open spaces (POPOS) near transit stations.
- Locate vehicular entrances and parking as far away from transit stations as possible.
- To reduce impact on access to transit, avoid vehicular crossings of paseos or sidewalks along any Addressing Street (see Section 2.2 - Podium Level and Pedestrian Level Plan) within 200 feet of a light rail station (measured from the platform edges) and 80 feet of a bus stop (measured from the bus stop sign, or edges of the marked waiting area or canopy, if there is one).

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



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



DO - Place a pedestrian entrance near transit.



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

3.3.4 Paseo / Mid-Block Connection Location

CREATE CONNECTION AND ACCESSIBILITY

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

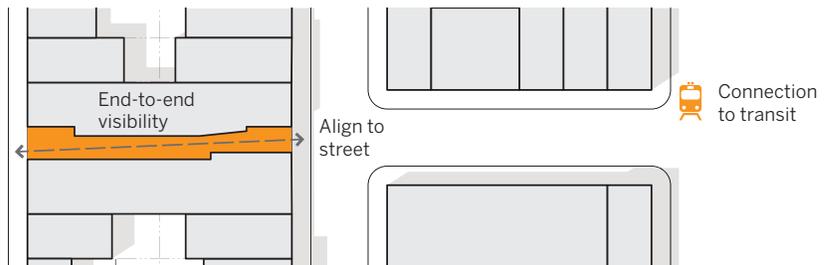
RATIONALE

The paseo network is unique element of Downtown. These paths provide shortcuts for pedestrians and bicyclists 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 receive enough use to be safe and inviting without absorbing so much pedestrian activity that they reduce the viability of retail on the public sidewalk network. 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 feet of sidewalk level to ensure visibility and accessibility.
- b. A paseo may have built space above and/or below the pedestrian surface as long as the paseo appears public and safe,



- 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.
- b. Make paseos accessible to people with disabilities.
- c. Meet requirements for floor level and width for any paseo to be used for building egress.
- d. Align and connect the ends of paseos with streets, other paseos, or paths in public open spaces.
- e. Unless it is to serve as emergency vehicle access, a paseo may be any width greater than 5 feet. A paseo's pedestrian through zone must be at least 5 feet wide.
- f. Preserve public access at all times in paseos.

RELATED GUIDELINE

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

3.3.5 Locating Privately-Owned Public Open Space (POPOS)

PUT PEOPLE FIRST

Use privately-owned public open spaces to provide locations for informal repose, relaxation, and gathering.

RATIONALE

Downtown has expansive open spaces and 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, which may range from a few to hundreds of square feet.

Successful POPOS promote a visually pleasing, safe, and active environment and emphasize views and solar access from the principal area of the open space. 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 © SPUR

GUIDELINES

- Site a ground level POPOS completely visible from at least one street.
- Site a ground level POPOS near at least one building entry.
- POPOS may be nestled within a building cluster as long as visually and physically connected to a pedestrian route and public space.
- 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.
- Create POPOS of any size.

STANDARDS

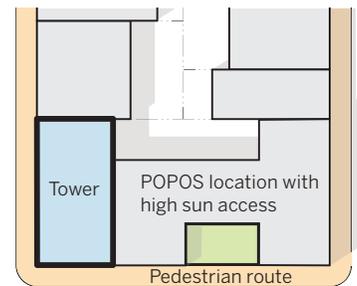
- Site a ground level POPOS adjacent to at least one active pedestrian route and maintain views to the route.
- Locate a ground level POPOS within four vertical feet of the sidewalk level with a clear route of entry.
- Place a POPOS to receive direct sunlight.
- Locate a POPOS to take advantage of views of historic structures when possible.
- When near a transit station, locate a ground level POPOS to provide transit patrons with shade and benches.

RELATED GUIDELINES

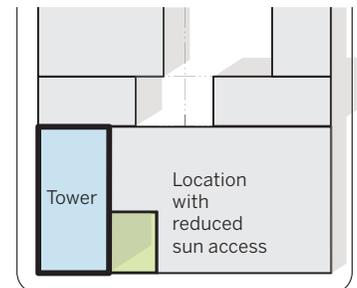
5.7 - Privately-Owned Public Open Space (POPOS) Design

GENERAL PLAN REFERENCE

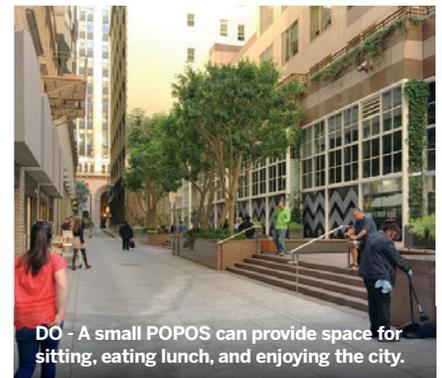
- CD-5.3, CD-6.3, CD-6.4, H-3.2(6), CD-1.5, CD-2.4, CD-7.8, PR-8.2, PR1.7, CD-1.6, MS-3.4



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



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.

3.3.6 Locating Semi-Private Open Space

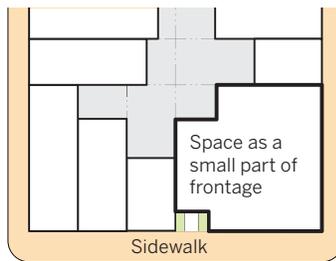
CREATE LEGIBILITY

Use small semi-private ground level open spaces to provide visual relief but do not create divisions between buildings and *public space*.

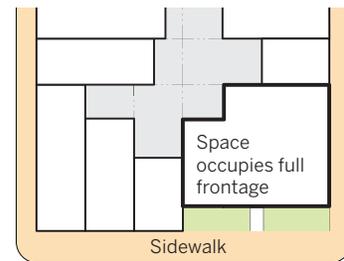
RATIONALE

A large area of semi-private open space (not meant for public access) between a building and the adjacent *public space* reduces the connection between the building and public realm. While common in suburban areas, 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 except in the case of a setback to provide stoop entries for ground floor residential units.



DO - create limited semi-private green spaces such as small gardens near building lobbies



DO NOT - create a continuous setback from the sidewalk

GUIDELINES

- a. Avoid creating semi-private open space except as small areas of visual relief.
- b. Use semi-private open space to create a buffer and transition zone between *public space* and ground floor residential units.

STANDARDS

- Avoid creating semi-private open space that occupies more than 25 percent of the Streetwall length between a building and *public space* except for stoop entries

and front yards for ground floor residential units.

RELATED GUIDELINES

- 3.3.7 - Locating Private Open Space
- 4.4.3.d - Balconies
- 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)



3.3.7 Locating Private Open space

CREATE LEGIBILITY

Locate private open space to avoid interfering with *public space* and public activities.

RATIONALE

Private open spaces such as fenced greens or patios may enliven private areas but may deaden public ones. Poorly sited open space can create a buffer, frequently a literal wall, between a building and public space.

High quality, usable, and accessible private open space for residents, workers, and visitors contributes to the livability of Downtown's dense urban environment. Placing private 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 private open space and nearby *public space* through a break in the building massing increases the vitality of both spaces.

GUIDELINES

- Maintain visual connections from *public space* to private open spaces.
- Site private open space to maximize sunlight exposure, particularly in areas for seating.



DO NOT - Private open space adjacent to the sidewalk reduces the interaction between the building and the street, creating a green (potentially) but visually sterile environment.

STANDARDS

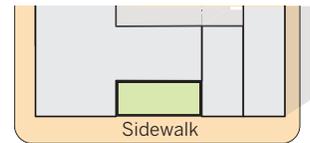
- Site ground level private open space internal to the site, away from *public space*.
- Do not site ground level private open space that is accessible only from inside the building between a building and the sidewalk.
- Create direct access for building occupants from the building to the private open space, not requiring travel through *public space*.

RELATED GUIDELINES

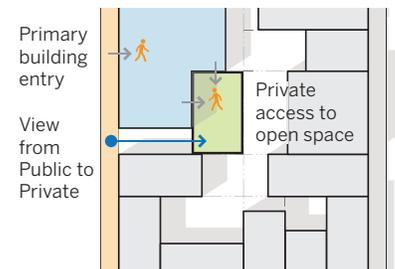
- 3.3.6 - Locating Semi-Private Open Space
- 4.4.3.d - Balconies
- 5.3.3 - Ground Floor Residential Space

GENERAL PLAN REFERENCE

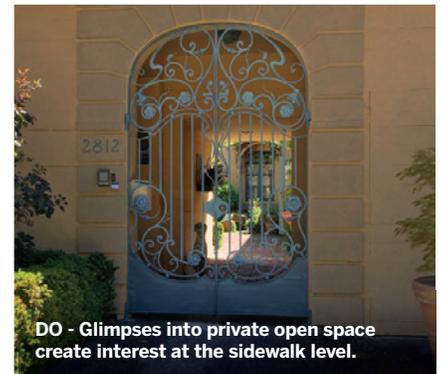
- H-3.2(6), CD-3.8, LU-9.6, LU-14.9



DO NOT - Private open space at the sidewalk creates a barrier between the building and the public realm.



DO - Provide entries, but not primary building entries, directly from the building into associated private open space.



DO - Glimpses into private open space create interest at the sidewalk level.

3.3.8 Parking Location

PUT PEOPLE FIRST

Locate parking away from public space.

RATIONALE

Despite the activity of moving cars, parking is largely a space for storage. Thus, it is an inactive use and unsuited to be located between Active Uses and *public space*.

Parking lots and parking structures can create a deadening effect on *public space* if located between the primary building activity and the sidewalk. Locate parking away from *public space*, or at least adjacent to a street or space of secondary importance.

GUIDELINES

- Minimize the site area dedicated to parking by using shared driveways between parcels and uses when possible.
- Enclose vehicle ramping so that it is not visible from outside the building.
- Route primary pedestrian access from parking into the building through the same lobby that is used for pedestrian access from the sidewalk.

- Locate structured parking inside the primary building mass away from any Addressing Street or Urban Park / Plaza Frontage (see Section 2.2), behind the building away from these frontages, or underground.

STANDARDS

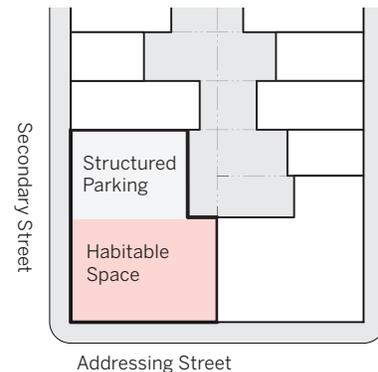
- Locate a surface parking lot at the side or rear of a building, away from the street.
- Avoid the placement of a surface parking lot with a frontage along any Addressing Street (see Section 2.2).

RELATED GUIDELINES

- 3.3.9 - Bicycle Parking Location
- 3.4.3 - Parking and Vehicular Access Location
- 4.4.7 - Parking Garages
- 5.4.2 - Vehicle and Service Entry Design
- 5.5 - Surface Parking Lots

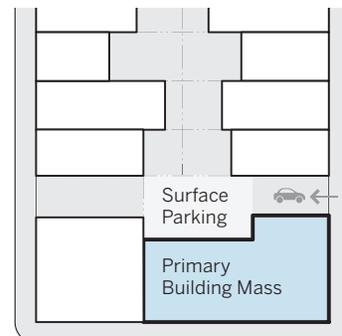
GENERAL PLAN REFERENCE

- 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



Addressing Street

DO - Locate structured parking inside a building along a secondary street.



DO - Place surface parking behind structures and away from *public space*.



DO - Place parking structures behind to reduce their effect on the streetscape.

3.3.9 Bicycle Parking Location

DESIGN FOR SUSTAINABILITY

Locate bicycle parking in a safe and convenient place suited to human presence.

RATIONALE

Accessible secure, and protected bicycle parking is a crucial step toward making bicycling a more popular transportation mode. Safe entry that does not require mixing with vehicles creates a more seamless connection. Bicycle parking near the same door that vehicle drivers enter a building also serves to alert those drivers of the presence of bicycle parking and thus the viability of bicycling as a transportation option to this location.

Increased usage of alternative transportation modes like bicycling is key to reducing reliance on the automobile. People bicycle more when it is as easy as driving a car. One way to achieve this is providing secure bicycle parking facilities everywhere.

New transportation devices such as electric skateboards and scooters can be parked safely within the "furnishing zone" of most streets where parking meters, hydrants, and utility infrastructure are located. Should off-street parking areas become necessary for these devices, they should follow the same Guidelines and Standards as listed in this section.

Note: Refer to the San José Valley Transportation Authority Bicycle Technical Guidelines for further definitions and guidance for bicycle facilities and parking.

GUIDELINES

- Locate bicycle parking to be part of the

pedestrian network, not as an appendage to vehicular parking.

STANDARDS

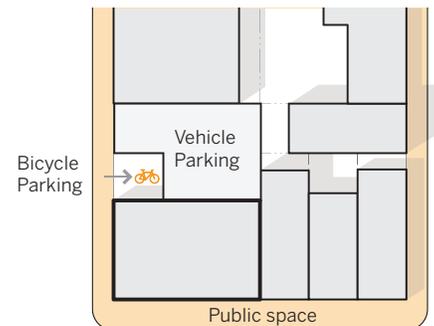
- Place bicycle parking so that bicyclists do not have to cross vehicular parking or drive aisles to enter the building.
- Locate bicycle parking near street edges and building entrances, especially retail and office entrances.

RELATED GUIDELINES

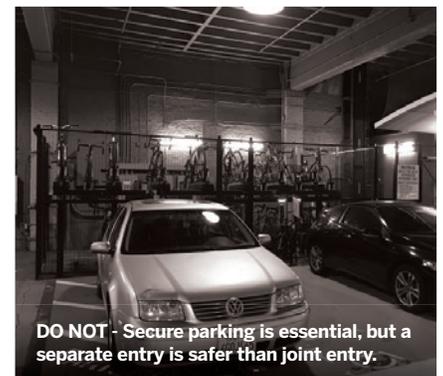
- 3.3.8 - Parking Location
- 3.4.3 - Parking and Vehicular Access Location
- 4.4.7 - Parking Garages
- 5.4.2 - Vehicle and Service Entry Design
- 5.5 - Surface Parking Lots

GENERAL PLAN REFERENCE

- LU-3.5, VN-1.8, CD-1.9, LU-5.4, TR-2.8, TR-3.8



DO - Bicyclists may enter the parking area without crossing vehicular space.



DO NOT - Secure parking is essential, but a separate entry is safer than joint entry.

3.4.1 Pedestrian Entrance Location

PUT PEOPLE FIRST

Make pedestrian entries from *public space* the primary entry and identity point 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

- 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.
- Avoid creation of a main pedestrian entrance from an internal private courtyard.

STANDARDS

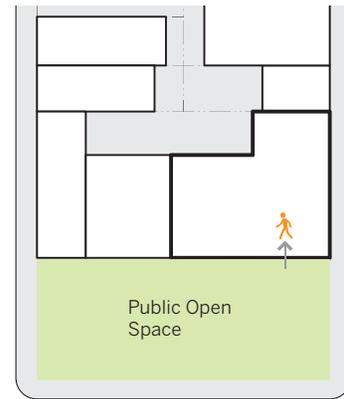
- Locate main pedestrian entrances of all buildings to be accessible from *public space* and not from parking areas.
- For buildings with multiple frontages, locate main pedestrian entrances on the frontages as defined in Section 2.2 based on the hierarchy as follows:
 - Urban Park / Plaza Frontage
 - Primary or SoFA Addressing Street
 - Secondary Addressing Street
 - Paseo
 - Open Space Frontage
 - Other Street
- In multi-story, mixed-use buildings with retail, place retail at the street intersection if the building is at one, and the residential or commercial lobby entry located toward the mid-block.
- Ground floor 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. This includes rowhouse-type units along the ground floor of multifamily buildings. Accessible access should be provided from inside the building.

RELATED GUIDELINES

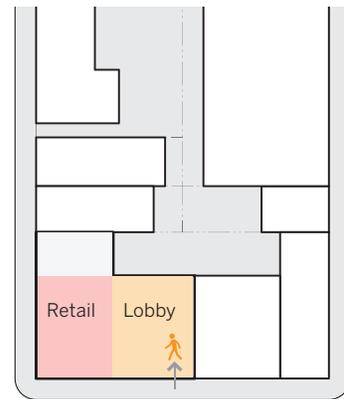
- 4.4.3.a - Windows and Glazing
- 5.3.1.b - Transparency
- 5.4.1 - Pedestrian and Bicycle Entry Design
- 5.4.2 - Vehicle and Service Entry Design

GENERAL PLAN REFERENCE

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



DO - The main pedestrian entry may be from a street or public open space.



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

3.4.2 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 adversely impact *public space* and create hazards for pedestrians, bicyclists, and autos. Services located away from building frontages or on secondary frontages avoid interfering with the potential for Active Uses. Service entrances in less visible locations for pedestrians and further from adjacent buildings and public open space are ideal.

Sensitive location of service functions will lead to more pleasant and safe public spaces that will be more amenable to retail and restaurants or simply for walking, bicycling, and taking transit.

GUIDELINES

- Locate trash and recycling bins within the building.



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

STANDARDS

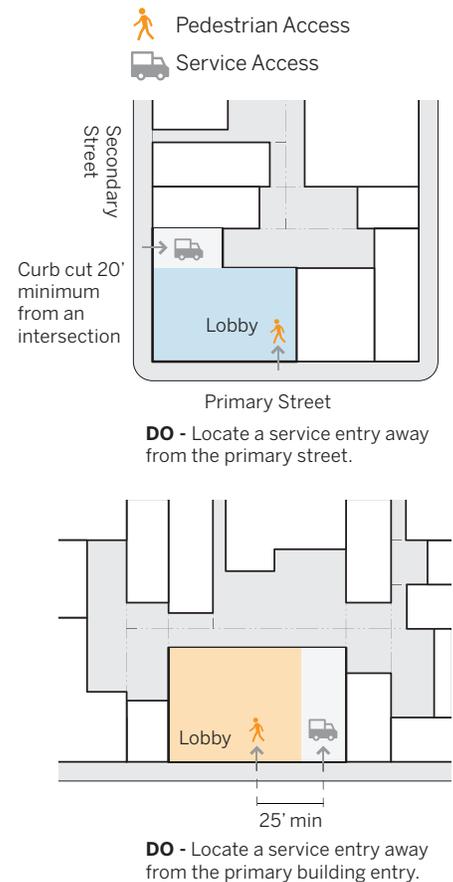
- Locate services including loading docks, delivery, trash, and infrastructure inside the building structure and at least 25 feet behind Active Use facades.
- Locate service entries and curb cuts at least 20 feet from street intersections.
- For a development with multiple frontages, place service entries on a separate frontage from the primary pedestrian and bicycle entrance.
- Locate service entrances at least 25 feet from the primary pedestrian and bicycle entrance (see Section 3.4.3 for parking and vehicular entries).
- 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:
 - Other street
 - Open Space Frontage
 - Secondary Addressing Street
 - Urban Park / Plaza Frontage
 - Any street with at-grade light rail transit
 - Primary or SoFA Addressing Street

RELATED GUIDELINES

- 5.4.2 - Vehicle and Service Entry Design
- 5.8 - Lighting - Pedestrian Level

GENERAL PLAN REFERENCE

- CD-1.18, CD-2.3



3.4.3 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.

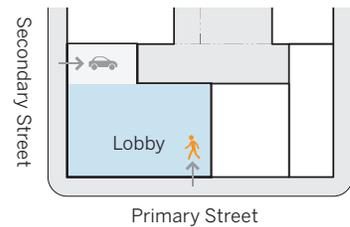
A building with facades on more than one street or public open space creates less pedestrian realm disruption if vehicle access is on the secondary street or open space. Likewise, narrow vehicular entries and ones distant from pedestrian entries minimize interruption of the pedestrian space.

GUIDELINES

- a. Avoid parking or vehicular access on streets with light rail or bus rapid transit.
- b. Use shared driveways to minimize curb cuts.
- c. Where pedestrians and bicyclists need access to parking areas, provide clear, convenient, and safe routes from the sidewalk and street.

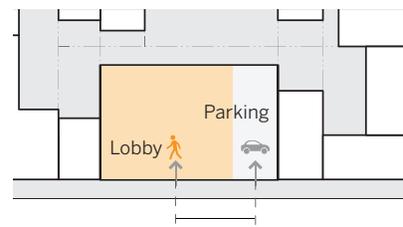
STANDARDS

- a. Locate parking and vehicle entries at least 20 feet away from public or publicly-accessible open space, street intersections, and pedestrian entries (except within *porte cocheres*) (see Section 3.4.2 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
 - 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 structure) is allowed as long as the vehicular entry to and exit



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

Pedestrian Access
 Parking & Vehicular Access



20' min
DO - Locate a vehicle entry away from the primary building entry.

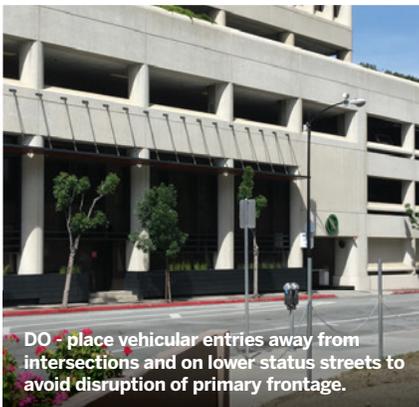
from the building meet other Standards of this document and the primary pedestrian access to the hotel lobby is directly from the sidewalk, not through the vehicular entry.

RELATED GUIDELINES

- 3.3.8 - Parking Location
- 3.3.9 - Bicycle Parking Location
- 4.4.7 - Parking Garages
- 5.4.2 - Vehicle and Service Entry Design
- 5.5 - Surface Parking Lots

GENERAL PLAN REFERENCE

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



4.0

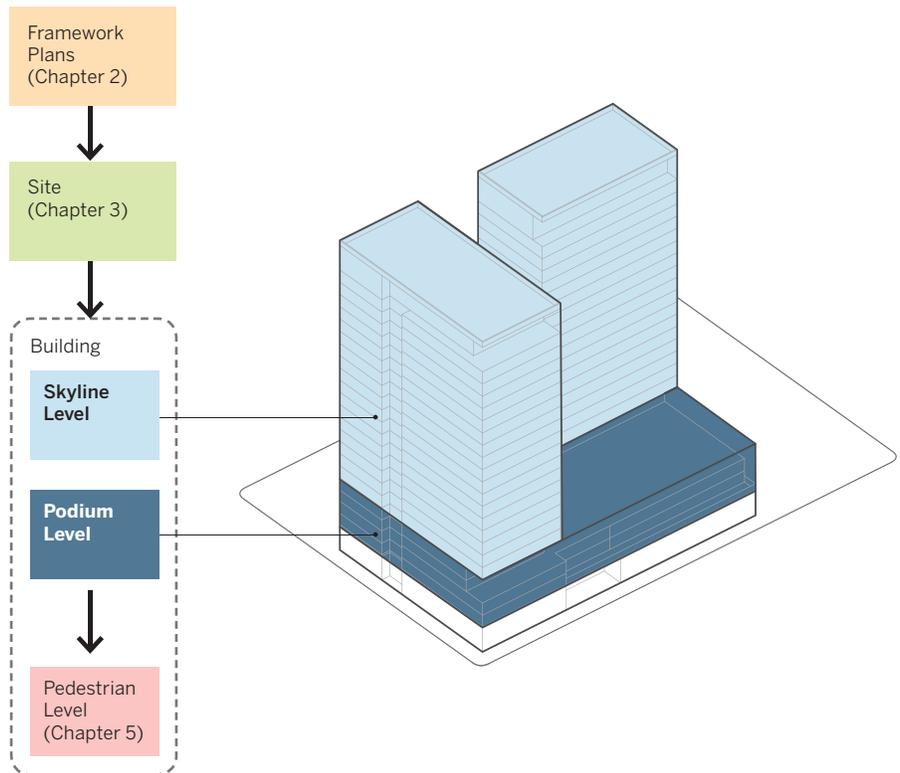
BUILDING

- 4.1 Buildings and the City
- 4.2 Form, Proportion, and Organizing Idea
- 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 Massing Relationship to Context
 - 4.3.5 Sunlight
 - 4.3.6 Wind
- 4.4 Building Elements
 - 4.4.1 Facade Pattern and Articulation
 - 4.4.2 Facade Relationship to Context
 - 4.4.3 a. Windows and Glazing
 - b. Bird Safety
 - c. Air Conditioners
 - d. Balconies
 - 4.4.4 Materials and Colors
 - 4.4.5 Mitigating Blank Facades
 - 4.4.6 Vertical Circulation
 - 4.4.7 Parking Garages
 - 4.4.8 Roofs
 - a. Rooftops and Mechanical Equipment
 - b. Green Roofs and Roof Decks
 - 4.4.9 Pedestrian Bridges
- 4.5 Context
 - 4.5.1 Civic Icon Adjacency
 - 4.5.2 Historic Adjacency
 - 4.5.3 Historic Context
- 4.6 Lighting
 - 4.6.1 Lighting - Podium Level
 - 4.6.2 Lighting - Skyline Level
- 4.7 Signage - Skyline Level

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 Form, Proportion, and Organizing Idea

PROMOTE HIGH QUALITY ARCHITECTURE

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

RATIONALE

Each building in Downtown should have a unified design, with clear relationships between the base, middle, and top. FAA height limits may lead to bulky proportions; reduce bulk with vertically-oriented massing.

Whether in the skyline or as visible from the street level, buildings require a level of moderation and order to form a coherent cityscape. While some buildings such as civic landmarks, religious buildings, and museums are meant to draw attention, the presence of too many other buildings which have a "look at me" design creates a confusing and unattractive urban experience.

GUIDELINES

- Use a strong and harmonious architectural concept and organizing idea.
- Create a coordinated and ordered facade with links between levels and with divisions reducing apparent bulk.
- Create proportion and scale that connect with the human scale of the Downtown environment.
- Create a clear relationship between building's Podium and Skyline Levels.
- Maintain a relationship between form and function.
- Emphasize street frontages and minimize parking presence.
- Differentiate the building top.
- Make the base pedestrian friendly.
- Create vertical facade divisions more significant than window mullions at horizontal intervals no greater than 50 feet to reduce apparent bulk.

STANDARDS

- Coordinate and link the building's Skyline Level, Podium Level, and Pedestrian Level with vertical elements.
- Design **Image-Defining Frontages** (see Section 2.1) with same level of detail and quality as the primary building frontage (if they are not the same frontage).

GENERAL PLAN REFERENCE

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

Note: diagrams and photos in the guidelines are for illustrative purposes and do not represent actual building designs. Nor would a similar design guarantee acceptance by the City.



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.

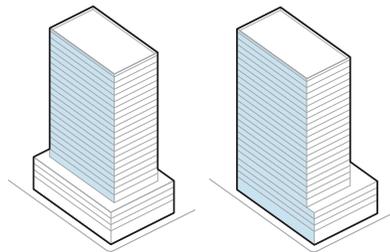
Podium Level massing requires attention to articulation and scaled elements. Height limits and upper level setbacks are used to create transitions in height, bulk, and scale. Extending towers to the ground (while acknowledging the lower levels) aids in creating verticality and visual lightness. Podium levels with towers above, like candles on a cake, leave the skyline unanchored from 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. Limit the height of Podium Level massing near public open space but retain a 1:2 height to width ratio (only up to the limit of the Podium Level) in order to frame the public open space.
- d. Use massing to enhance access to daylight and ventilation in interior spaces.

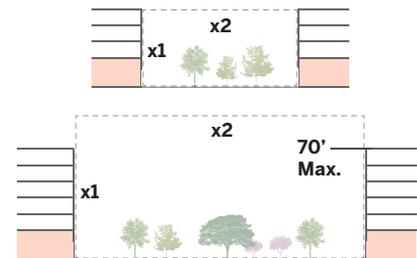
STANDARDS

- a. Continue the Skyline Level massing to the ground through the Podium Level for at least 30 percent of the Skyline Level's primary facade length.

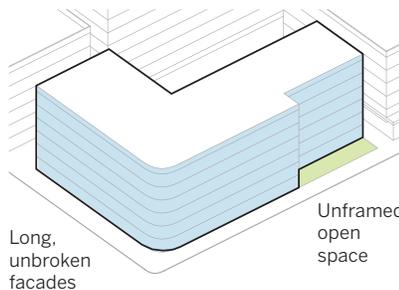


DO NOT - leave Skyline Level unanchored to ground.

DO - extend Skyline Level tower massing to ground level.



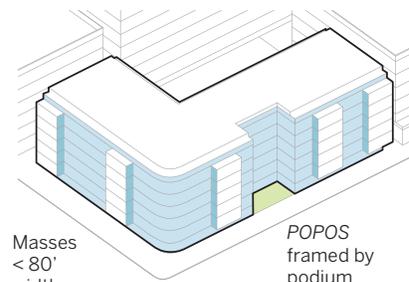
DO - use a height of 1/2 the distance between buildings to frame public open space, but only to the top of the Podium Level (70').



Long, unbroken facades

Unframed open space

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



Masses < 80' width

POPOS framed by podium

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

- b. Divide Podium Level building massing 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

GENERAL PLAN REFERENCE

- MS-2.11, CD-4.5

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.

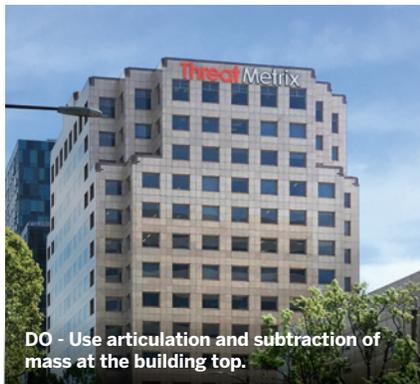
RATIONALE

While height limits in Downtown have resulted in many buildings of similar height and thicker proportions, 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 like shifts of the facade plane, articulating and offsetting tower massing, and preserving sky view corridors.

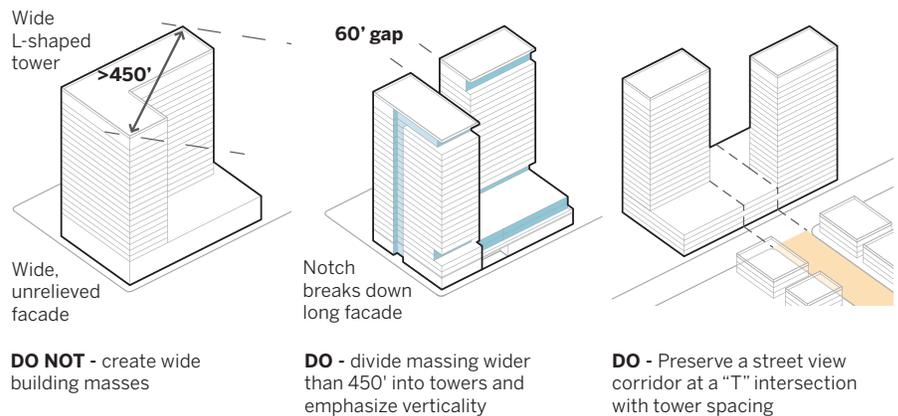
The presence of iconic buildings with unique shapes at key sites will create distinction and orientation. This distinction can come from massing strategies like articulated forms.

GUIDELINES

- Use Skyline Level massing strategies such as offsetting towers (avoiding direct face to face views) and using non-rectangular shapes to increase perceived tower



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



DO NOT - create wide building masses

DO - divide massing wider than 450' into towers and emphasize verticality

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

- separation both from towers and from other locations.
- 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.
- Use articulation and a gradual subtraction of mass toward the top of Skyline Level massing to reduce the overall bulk and produce a more interesting form.

STANDARDS

- Design separate towers instead of very wide buildings. Use a maximum of 450 feet for any horizontal dimension, including diagonally, in Skyline Level massing.
- Keep a minimum spacing of 60 feet between any portions of Skyline Level building masses (towers).
- 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.

- 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.
- For buildings on sites other than defined **Gateway Sites** (section 2.1), use massing for the tower top that maintains the overall tower form and has a generally flat roofline.
- For buildings on **Gateway Sites** (section 2.1), for approximately the top 1/4 of the building use sculpted massing such as shifts in building planes 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.

GENERAL PLAN REFERENCE

- CD-6.6

4.3.3 Streetwall

FOCUS ON THE GROUND FLOOR

Use the Streetwall to define the adjacent public realm and create an enclosed urban space.

RATIONALE

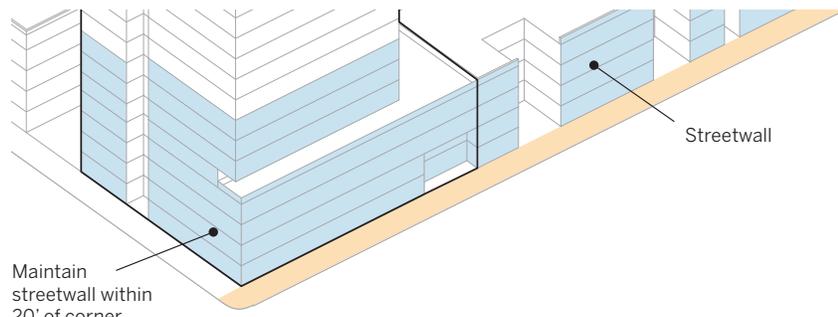
The Streetwall is the building facade along a public street, public open space, or paseo from ground level to 70 feet. For a portion of the facade to be a streetwall, it must lie within 10 feet of the property line or setback line, if there is one, for at least 60% of the distance from ground level to the top of the highest occupied floor of that portion of the building, to a maximum of 70 feet.

The streetwall integrates the building into pedestrians' experience of the street. More active, urban streets and open spaces benefit from more linear and visually defined streetwalls and a generally 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 allowed to create opportunities for mid-block pedestrian connections and privately-owned public open spaces (see section 3.3.5).

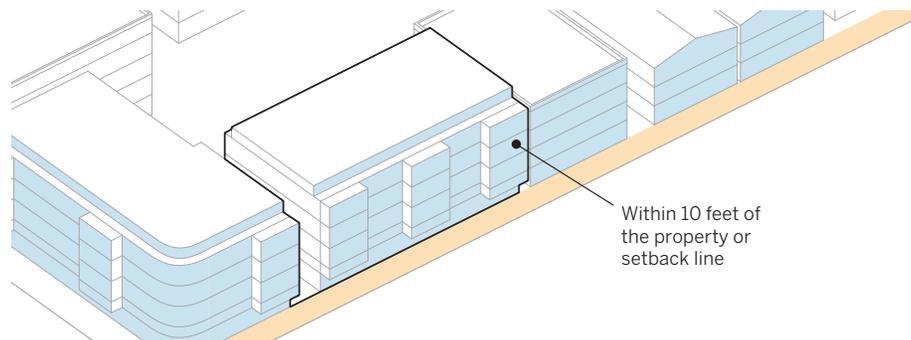
Encroachments over *public space* for habitable buildings space such as balconies, bay windows, and other projections can create a more interesting and varied streetwall. These guidelines give guidance for encroachments, but also refer to Section 13.37.230.C of the San José Municipal Code and Section 3202 of the Building Code for encroachment permit requirements.

GUIDELINES

- Orient buildings parallel to adjacent streets.
- Enhance streetwall facades with architectural details to create interest and variety for pedestrians.
- Utilize transparency and high quality, durable materials in streetwall facades.



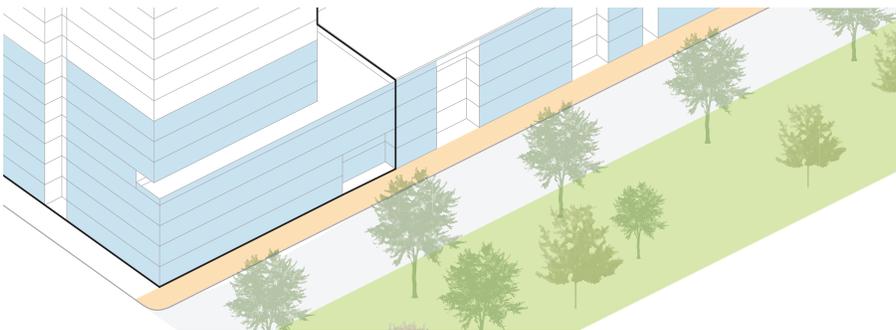
Primary Addressing Street (minimum 70% streetwall)



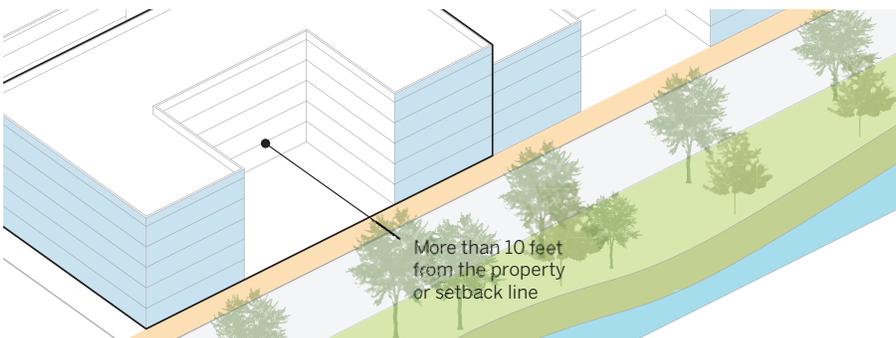
Secondary Addressing Street (minimum 50% streetwall)

STANDARDS

- Create a streetwall along a **Primary Addressing Street** (see Section 2.2) along at least 80% of the property or setback line.
- Create a streetwall along a **Secondary Addressing Street** (see Section 2.2) along at least 70% of the property or setback line.
- Create a streetwall along an **Urban Park/Plaza Frontage** (see Section 2.2) along at least 70% of the property or setback line.
- Create a streetwall along an **Open Space Frontage** (see Section 2.2) along **at most** 60% of the property or setback line.
- Create a streetwall along a street other than a **Retail** or **Secondary Addressing Street** or an **Urban Park or Open Space Frontage** (see Section 2.2) for at least 30% of the property or setback line.
- At the corner of intersecting streets, (excluding alleys), emphasize the intersection by maintaining the streetwall along both streets for at least 20 feet.



Urban Park/Plaza Frontage (minimum 70% streetwall)



Open Space Frontage (maximum 60% streetwall)

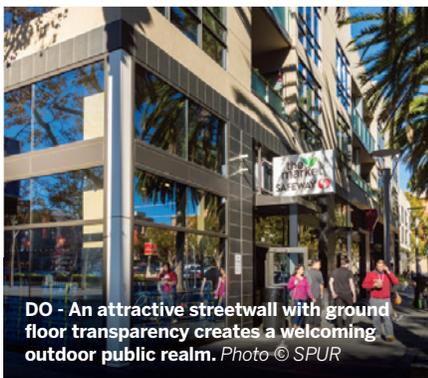
- g. Maintain a 20 foot minimum clearance above *public space* for an encroachment of habitable space.
- h. Limit encroachment to a maximum depth of 4 feet up to 40 feet over the sidewalk. Above 40 feet over the sidewalk, encroachment depth may be up to 6 feet providing the encroachment is an open balcony or, if enclosed, is at least 50 percent transparent on all exterior walls.
- i. Limit any individual encroachment width to maximum 25 feet, with spacing between encroachments no less than 50% of the width of the widest adjacent encroachment, with a minimum spacing of 5 feet.
- j. Create an encroachment over *public space* no closer than 3 feet to an adjacent property.

RELATED GUIDELINES

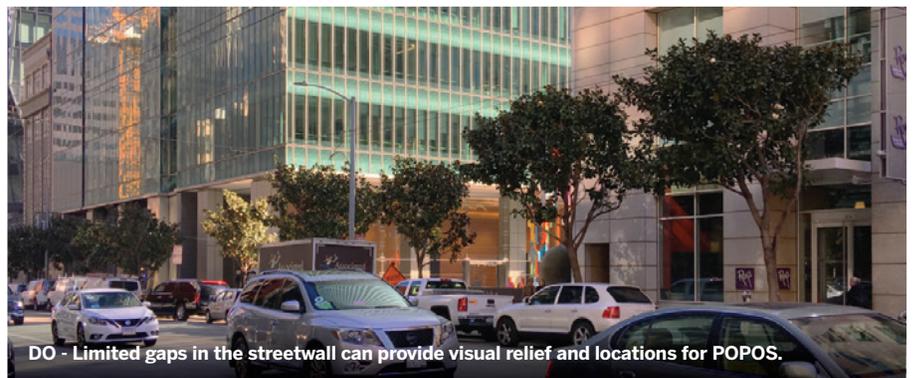
- 3.2.2 - Building Placement
- 4.3.1 - Podium Level Massing

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 © SPUR



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

4.3.4 Massing Relationship to Context

BE AUTHENTIC TO SAN JOSE

Create massing transitions to existing lower-scale residential development.

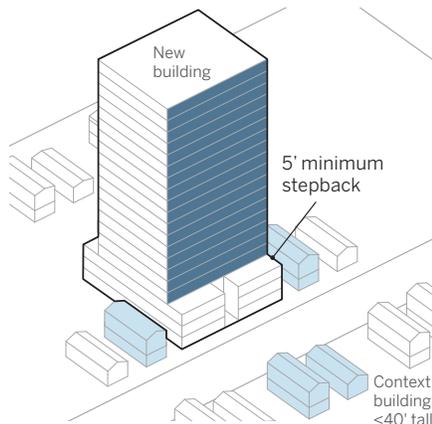
RATIONALE

Downtown has been an urban center for many years. With the coming of high speed rail and BART and the need for new housing and employment in accessible locations, the area is becoming more urban and dense. Tall buildings are appropriate here, as supported by zoning and the San José General Plan. The context areas surrounding Downtown are also zoned for tall buildings, 120 feet tall in most locations.

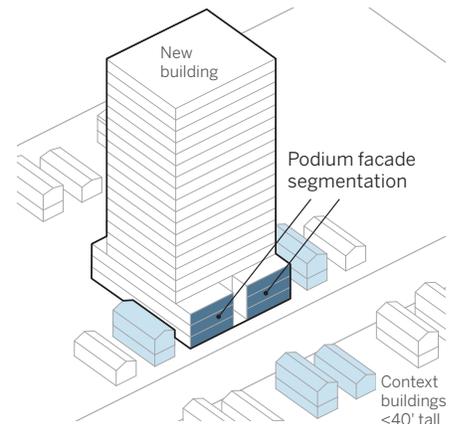
However, much existing small scale development remains within and adjacent to Downtown. Transitions between new dense development that matches existing plans and zoning and existing development built when Downtown was the center of a small city should be designed to moderate the visual differences between buildings. This strategy will ease the transition of the Downtown area to higher density.

GUIDELINES

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



a. Height Transition - Five foot Stepback at an elevation within 5 vertical feet of existing context building heights



b. Width Transition - New building Podium Level facade segmented into parts within 30 feet of the widths of existing context buildings

STANDARDS

a. Height Transition (see Illustration a):

A new building across the street from or adjacent to existing building(s) containing residential units, any of which are:

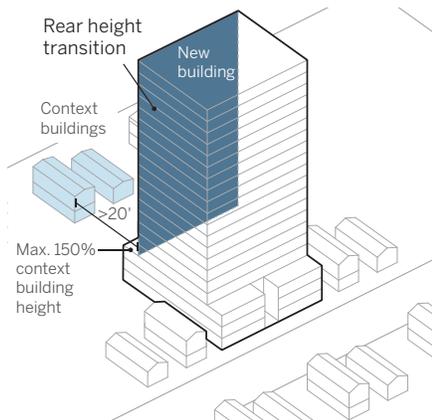
1. less than 40 feet tall, and
2. more than 40 feet shorter than the new building

must step back its street-facing facade 5 feet minimum from the front parcel or setback line at an elevation within 5 vertical feet of the height of the lowest existing building.

b. Width Transition (see Illustration b): A new building across the street from or adjacent to existing building(s) containing residential units, any of which are:

1. less than 40 feet tall, and
2. more than 40 feet narrower than the new building, unless any of the existing building's facades continue to within 5 feet of its parcel edges (e.g., a storefront)

must create gaps of 5 feet minimum width and depth to segment its street-facing Podium Level massing into segments within 30 horizontal feet of the width of the widest of the applicable existing buildings containing residential units.



c. Rear Transition - New building creates rear height transition at 150% of context building heights within 20' of existing building(s)



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

c. Rear Transition (see Illustration c): A new building across a rear parcel line interior to a block from existing building(s) containing residential units must maintain a height less than 150% of the height of the tallest applicable existing building containing residential to a minimum distance of 20 horizontal feet from the existing building.

RELATED GUIDELINES

- 4.4.2 - Facade Relationship to Context
- 4.5.1 - Civic Icon Adjacency
- 4.5.2 - 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

4.3.5 Sunlight

PUT PEOPLE FIRST

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

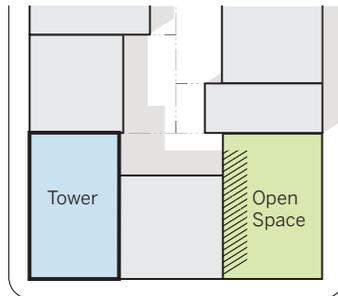
RATIONALE

San José has a warm and sunny summer climate and cool weather in winter, with July and January high temperatures averaging in the 80s and 50s, respectively. The presence of sunlight in public open spaces in different weather conditions may have a large effect on their usability. The need for sunlight is true especially in cooler periods.

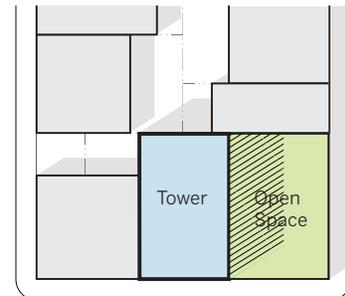
Shade provided by trees has a different and generally preferable quality than shade cast by buildings, which creates a flat, gray appearance. Building massing that balances shade, adequate sunlight access, views of the sky, and a sense of enclosure is preferable to highly shaded public parks and plazas.

GUIDELINES

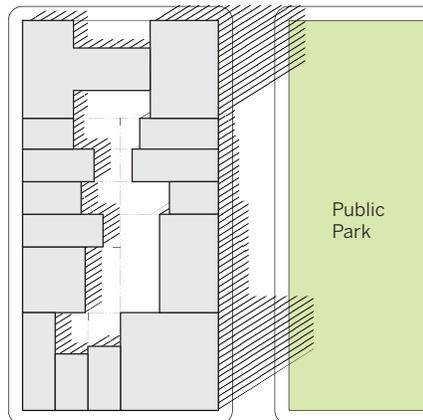
- Maximize potential thermal comfort and extend the usable time for public spaces by providing a range of sun exposure options throughout the day and year, maintaining sunlight exposure in public open space during periods of highest usage.
- Use sensitive open space and plaza design to provide sufficient tree cover for shelter from the sun in periods of warmer temperatures.
- Optimize building massing to preserve sun access on public open spaces and privately-owned public open spaces. Locate taller buildings selectively on one or two sides of open space to maintain sunlight exposure.
- Use slender building forms and articulated shapes, particularly at the Skyline Level, to avoid wide shadows on *public*



DO - Place tower to minimize shade on open space



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



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

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.

STANDARDS

None

RELATED GUIDELINES

- 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

4.3.6 Wind

DESIGN FOR SUSTAINABILITY, GENERATE RESILIENCE

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

RATIONALE

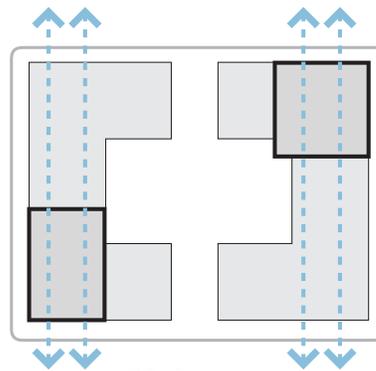
The presence of too much or too little wind is bad for health, comfort, and safety. While comfortable wind speed varies by personal preference, air temperature, shade, and other factors, there is an optimum range of wind speeds in an urban environment.

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 tend to slow the flow of air, potentially leaving it stagnant.

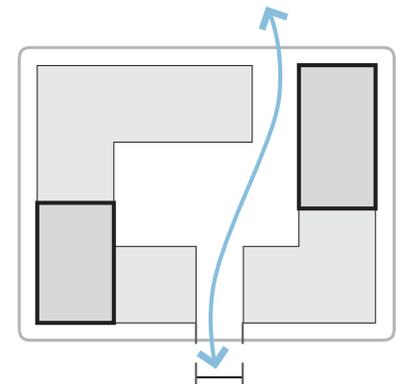
Groups of tall buildings with uniform heights tend to slow wind and leave ground level air still. Staggered tall building height and location creating an irregular overall area massing allows the wind to reconstitute itself and regain velocity. Breaks in the prevailing wind direction in block perimeter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

GUIDELINES

- Stagger the heights and locations of tall buildings in and between blocks to avoid blocking wind flows.
- Create gaps of 15-20 feet width in street 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.



DO - Stagger towers to preserve wind flow



DO - Create 15'-20' Gaps in massing to allow wind flow

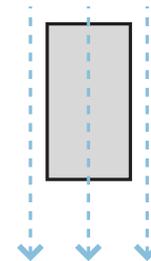
- Orient the narrowest Skyline Level building dimension within 30 degrees of perpendicular to the prevailing wind direction, defined here as the alignment of the runways at Norman Y. Mineta-San José International Airport, approximately 319 degrees clockwise from true north.

STANDARDS

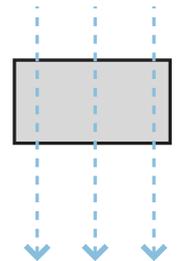
- None

GENERAL PLAN REFERENCE

- LU-17.4 (4)



DO - align building to wind



DO NOT - block wind with long side of building

4.4.1 Facade Pattern and Articulation

PROMOTE HIGH QUALITY ARCHITECTURE

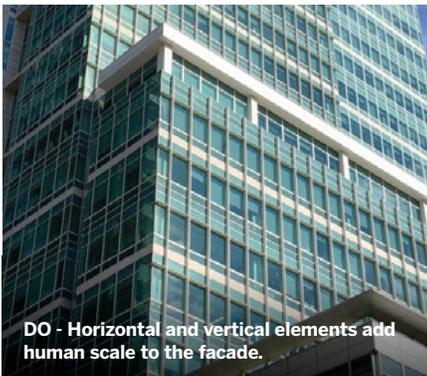
The buildings of Downtown should rely on simple, sophisticated design using contemporary architecture to achieve timeless appeal.

RATIONALE

Urban skylines composed of wildly varying forms and shapes quickly become dated and can create a visually discordant, unpleasant cityscape. Simple and contemporary building facades remain attractive and can become landmarks in a beautiful, timeless cityscape.

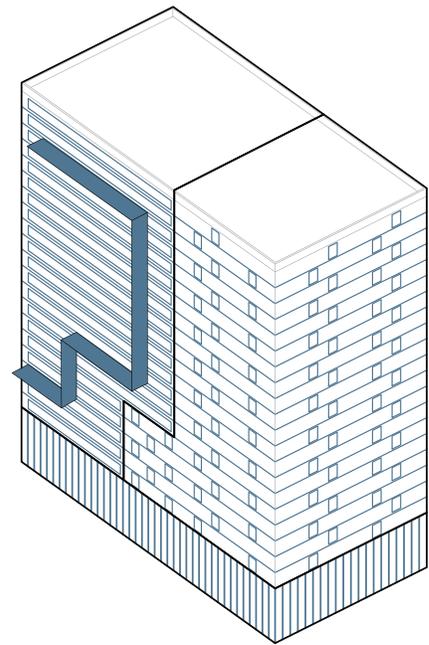
Elegant building designs use an overall concept of facade organization, simple patterns of varying horizontal and vertical elements, and variations to enrich the expression of individual facades. They avoid design using short-term trends and gimmicks and overt “look-at-me” qualities.

A key element of Podium and Pedestrian Level facades is continued reference to the human scale throughout the building with its architectural features, fenestration patterns, and material compositions. Buildings with facades scaled to reflect the activities performed within and composed of elements scaled to promote comfort, safety, orientation, and visual interest create a more interesting and active urban environment.

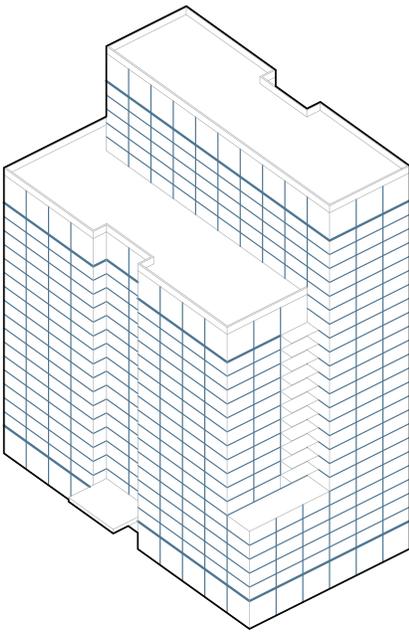


GUIDELINES

- For buildings on **Gateway Sites** (see Section 2.2), utilize more innovative and eye catching design, including more elaborate building tops.
- Incorporate horizontal and vertical scale definition of the facade.
- Eliminate decorative elements with no specific function.
- Create zones with and without balconies of 1/5 to 1/2 the facade width on residential buildings to break down the bulk and scale of towers.
- Create varied architecture and avoid flat facades by using recessed or projected entryways, bays, canopies, awnings, balconies, stepbacks, and other architectural elements.
- Maximize the number of windows facing public streets to increase safety.
- Design for solar conditions to promote sustainability in building operations and occupant comfort, such as providing shading on facades exposed to strong sun.
- Include elements to promote indoor/outdoor living and work, and use plant materials on the building exterior.
- Relate elements of the facade to the building's structural framework.



DO NOT - Use multiple visual organizing systems with little relationship to the building's structure or human context and super graphic facade elements with no specific function. Long expanses of facade create the impression that the building is over-scaled. Uncoordinated Podium and Skyline Levels reduce verticality, making the building appear squat and bulky.



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

STANDARDS

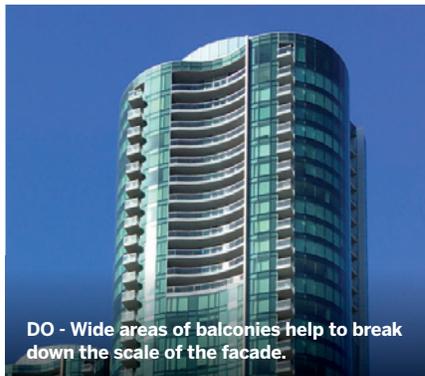
- Avoid super graphics - overly strong expressions of horizontal and/or vertical elements that emphasize the facade more than the overall building form.
- Use deep reveals to create shadow lines, taking advantage of strong sun conditions.
- Compose buildings over 70 feet tall of base, body, and top, including the uppermost floors of the Skyline Level as a building top, distinguishable from the building base and middle.
- Reflect the scale of neighboring buildings in the facade at the Podium Level and Pedestrian Level.

RELATED GUIDELINES

- 4.4.3 - Windows and Glazing
- 4.4.4 - Materials and Colors
- 4.5.1 - Civic Icon Adjacency
- 4.5.2 - Historic Adjacency
- 4.5.3 - Historic Context

GENERAL PLAN REFERENCE

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



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



DO NOT - Narrow balconies create facade divisions but do not reduce the impression of scale.

4.4.2 Facade Relationship to Context

MIX USES AND ACTIVITIES

New buildings should use facade design to fit comfortably within their surroundings.

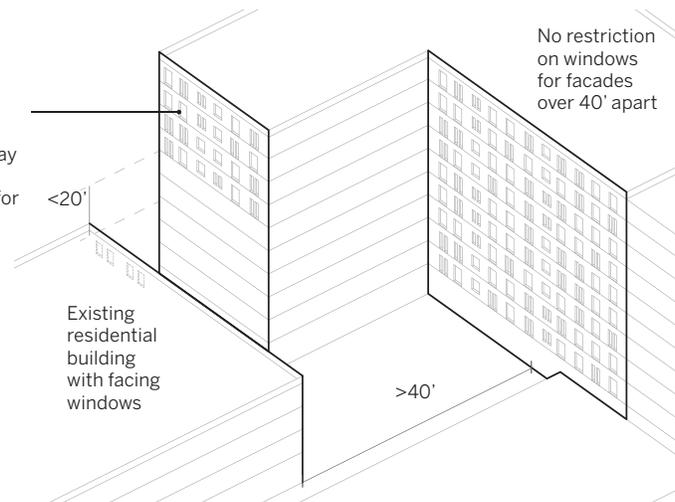
RATIONALE

The design of new buildings in Downtown can make them comfortable additions and improvements to the cityscape. New buildings that fit in well will make the downtown more coherent and attractive.

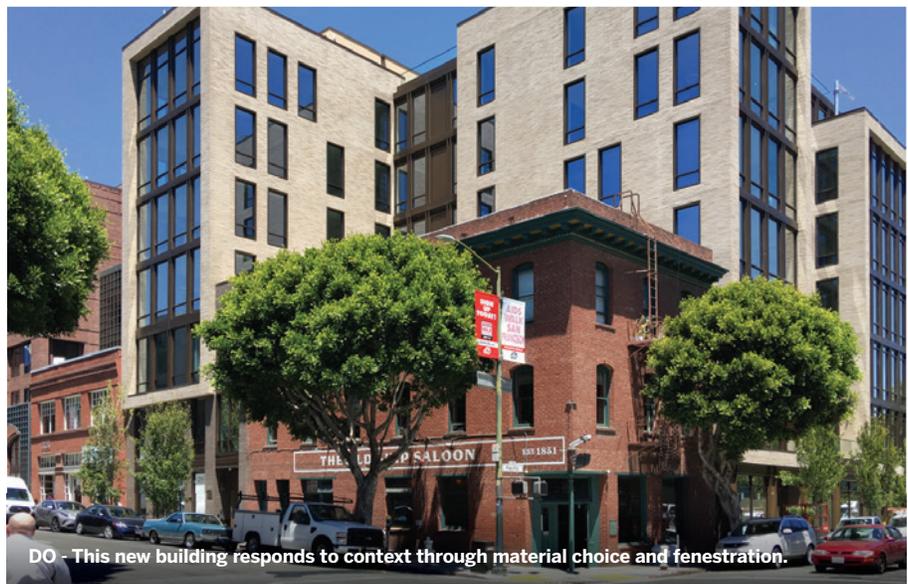
Rather than copy designs of existing buildings, a new building should create compatibility with its context by continuing essential aspects of adjacent and nearby building designs. Among the significant considerations are entrance location and design, cornice line, setback, color, materials, and fenestration.

Privacy is a concern for existing residential units when new development is created nearby. Sensitive treatment of window placement can preserve a sense of privacy without requiring large setbacks that reduce development capacity.

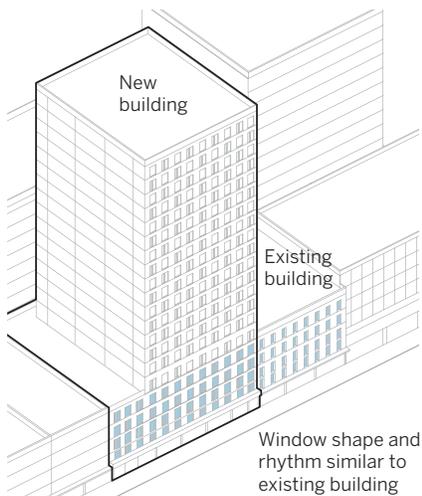
Windows in new building begin only more than 20' above facing windows in existing building. It may be necessary to use mitigation measures for a blank facade below the window level.



DO - Limit windows facing existing residential windows to preserve privacy.



DO - This new building responds to context through material choice and fenestration.



DO - Refer to elements of nearby building facades in new building design.

GUIDELINES

- a. Refer to key elements of nearby buildings in new building design, including entrance, cornice, massing, and fenestration. For corner sites, this includes buildings on both intersecting streets.
- b. Preserve, acknowledge, and exploit views to and from the site of noteworthy structures or natural features.

STANDARDS

- A new building adjacent to an existing building less than 70 feet tall that contains residential units must not have windows within the facade facing the existing building except at elevations greater than 20 feet above the top of the highest window of the existing building, unless:
 1. the existing building does not have residential windows facing the new building, or

2. the facade of the new building will be more than 40 feet distant from the existing building.

Any resulting blank facade may require mitigation per Section 4.4.4. Provide emergency escape and rescue openings on facades which are not subject to this requirement.

RELATED GUIDELINES

- 4.3.4 - Massing Relationship to Context
- 4.5.1 - Civic Icon Adjacency
- 4.5.2 - Historic Adjacency

GENERAL PLAN REFERENCE

- CD-1.11, CD-4.8

4.4.3.a Windows and Glazing

DESIGN FOR SUSTAINABILITY, BE AUTHENTIC TO SAN JOSE

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

RATIONALE

The use of directionless 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, which is environmentally wasteful and unsustainable. Sealed off spaces can be less healthy due to poor air quality and can foster lower worker productivity than spaces with fresh air.

Responding to context, climate and orientation will create a cityscape that is interesting and sustainable.

GUIDELINES

- Design the building's window size and location and the facade treatment to respond to the building's local environment such as long distance and local views, nearby buildings, and interesting elements of the ground level public realm.
- Use operable windows in office space to allow occupants to take advantage of San José's typically warm, sunny climate and potentially reduce the need for mechanical heating and cooling.



- Respond to the building's orientation by varying the fenestration on different facades. Use architectural elements such as shading devices or balconies to regulate solar gain on southern and western facades with passive solar design. Technological solutions such as windows with variable opacity may be used as an alternative.

STANDARDS

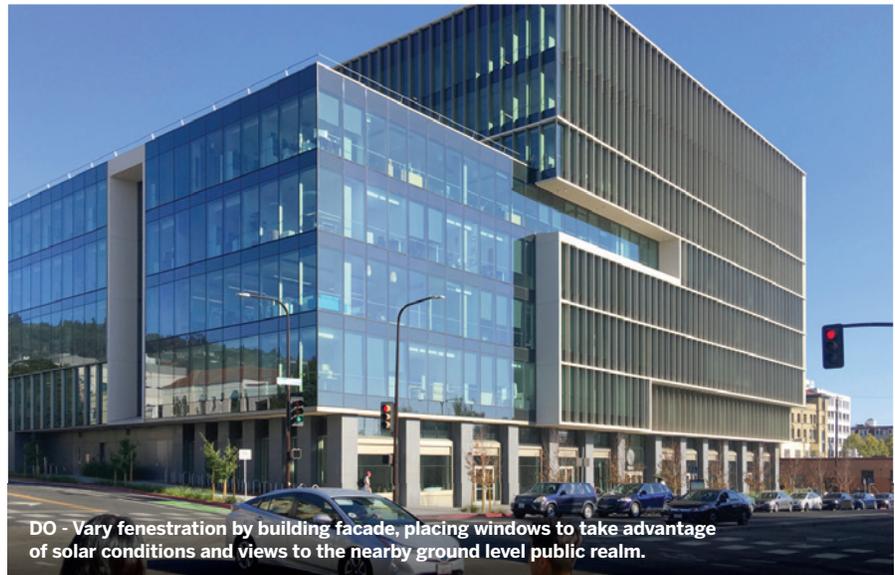
- Use operable windows in residential units to allow occupants to take advantage of San José's typically warm, sunny climate and potentially reduce the need for mechanical heating and cooling.

RELATED GUIDELINES

- 3.4.1 - Pedestrian Entrance Location
- 5.3.1.b - Transparency
- 5.4.1 - Pedestrian and Bicycle Entry Design

GENERAL PLAN REFERENCE

- Climate Smart San José
- CD-2.8, CD-1.11



4.4.3.b Windows and Glazing: 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 the San José Voluntary Bird-Friendly Building Design Fact Sheet.

Bird safety is a vital consideration in Downtown as well, particularly given the size and number of buildings and the presence of a riparian corridor. 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, and building design. The requirements of these guidelines are in addition to any resulting from environmental regulations about bird safety.

GUIDELINES

- Use exterior screens, grilles, shutters and sunshades to reduce large expanses of glass visible to birds.
- Add a bird-safe pattern to the glass, reducing the expanse of clear or highly reflective surfaces.

STANDARDS

- Do not use mirrored glass and avoid large areas of reflective glass.
- Avoid glass through which sky or foliage is visible on the other side or place landscaping in front of large glass areas to reduce views through glass.

GENERAL PLAN REFERENCE

- ER-7.6



DO - Highly reflective glass can be dangerous for birds, which may mistake it for sky and collide with the building.

4.4.3.c Windows and Glazing: Air Conditioners

PROMOTE HIGH QUALITY ARCHITECTURE

Avoid the use of in-window and through-wall individual air conditioning units.

RATIONALE

Over time individual air conditioning units typically age poorly, becoming dirty and lacking in external maintenance. Replacement of individual units with different models creates a haphazard appearance on the building facade. Noise and water condensation from operation reduce the enjoyment of balcony space and adjacent ground level *public space*. The energy efficiency of individual units is poor compared to centralized systems. Thus, individual in-window and through-wall air conditioning units are less desirable than other alternatives.

GUIDELINES

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

STANDARDS

- Avoid the use of individual through-window or through-wall air conditioning units on buildings over three stories tall.
- When individual air conditioning units are present, shield them from view with uniform facade elements.

GENERAL PLAN REFERENCE

- MS-4.1, MS-4.2



4.4.3.d Windows and Glazing: Balconies

PUT PEOPLE FIRST

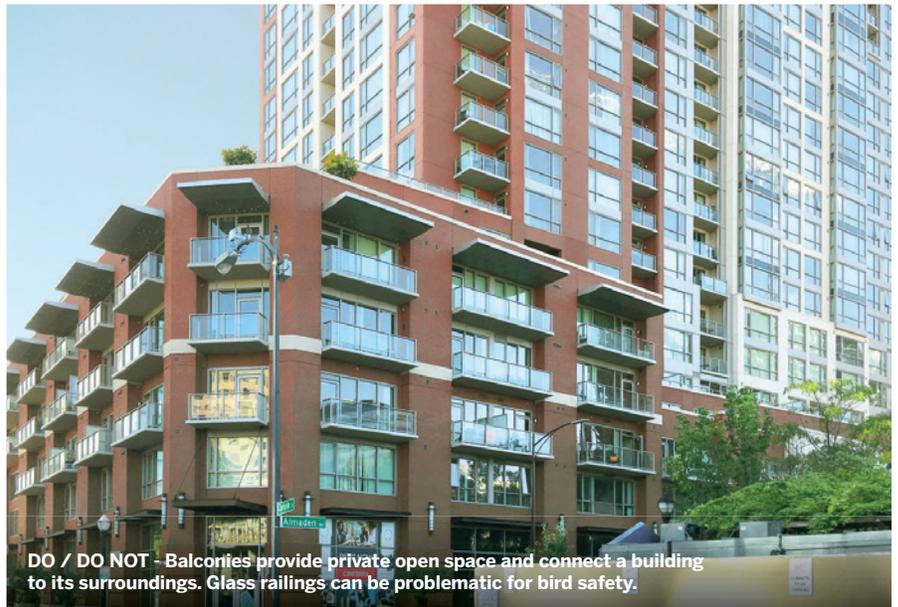
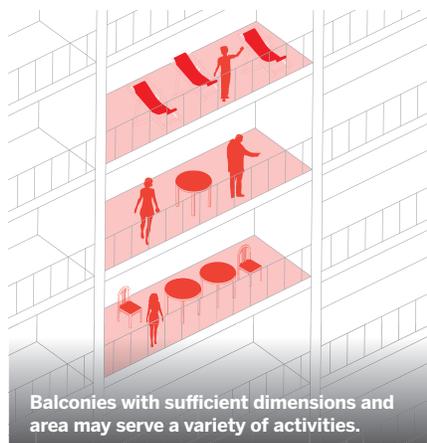
Improve appearance, increase occupant comfort and enjoyment, and make a building more efficient through well-designed balconies.

RATIONALE

Balconies create positive effects on both residential and commercial buildings. Balconies break down the apparent size of large facades and cast shadows that give the building a shifting appearance over the course of a day. Balconies may be located within street rights of way with appropriate permits. Refer to Section 13.37.230.C of the San José Municipal Code and Section 3202 of the Building Code for encroachment permit requirements.

Balconies' function in shading can improve the efficiency of cooling the interior spaces, as can the ability of occupants to use natural ventilation or to occupy outdoor space in the right environmental conditions.

In residential buildings, balconies provide valuable outdoor space and encourage the casual surveillance of the street by residents, which increases security. Balconies are particularly valuable for the interaction of interior and exterior spaces at lower levels of the building.



GUIDELINES

- Design balcony railings to shield objects, such as bicycles and barbecue grills on the balcony, from public view.
- Use glass railings sparingly to increase bird safety, reduce external light pollution from interior spaces, and increase shielding of balcony contents from public view.
- Create balconies for at least 50 percent of street facing residential units in the Podium Level.

STANDARDS

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

RELATED GUIDELINES

- 3.3.6 - Locating Semi-Private Open Space
- 3.3.7 - Locating Private Open Space
- 5.3.3 - Ground Floor Residential Space

GENERAL PLAN REFERENCE

- H-3.2, LU-14.9

4.4.4 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 are crucial to the look and feel of an urban area. Particularly when used at the ground level, high quality materials create a perception of permanence and civic pride. They also can be more economically and environmentally sustainable in the long term due to reduced maintenance, repair, and replacement costs. Materials have sustainability implications from their sourcing as well, including distance transported and the amount of processing required.

Facade and glass colors and the proportion of glass can help create a distinctive building. The interaction of colors between nearby buildings, particularly of tall buildings which will be seen with other buildings at a distance, may create distinction or harmony. Building materials and colors should generally match their context. Buildings that will play a more prominent role in the skyline (see **Guidelines s. and t.**) can use more eye catching color schemes.

The use of dark tint in window glass reduces interaction between the inside and outside of the building. Issues of heat gain can be addressed in other ways, such as by shading the window from outside or inside, which also make a building's facade more interesting, or smart glass.



DO - In this scene in Toronto, color is a prime method for highlighting landmarks.

GUIDELINES

- a. Use harmonious colors and materials.
- b. Avoid highly-reflective glass facades and other reflective materials. Avoid glass that will cause glare at the street level and from the view of neighboring structures.
- c. Use at least 15% non-glass materials on every facade.
- d. Use materials that are durable, low maintenance, and resistant to wear and vandalism.

FACADE COMPOSITION

- e. Use colors and cladding materials that create texture and scale that relate to the pedestrian realm.
- f. Integrate Skyline Level, Podium Level, and Pedestrian Level materials to create a coordinated composition.
- g. Create a composition of solid and transparent materials.
- h. Create an appearance of building slenderness with changes of textures, materials, and colors.
- i. Use colors and cladding materials to articulate the building's facades in intervals to provide a desirable scale in relation to building context.

SUSTAINABILITY

- j. Use materials derived from local, renewable sources which reference the Bay Area's naturally-occurring material colors and textures.
- k. Use materials with low embodied energy and low or no chemical emissions.
- l. Use materials with recycled content (both post-consumer and post-industrial).

- m. Use durable materials with low maintenance requirements, selected and designed for a 50-year life span (minimum 20 years for roofs), and 20 years of deferred maintenance.
- n. Use reused materials to lend character to the development.

PUBLIC SPACE LEVEL MATERIALS

- o. 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.

MAJOR AND ACCENT COLORS

- p. Use two basic categories of building colors: **major and accent**. Use major colors to cover the majority of the building's opaque surfaces and accent colors in smaller quantities in specific locations.
- q. Major colors can be in the color ranges of whites, light grays, and buff or sand colors to minimize solar heat gain, coordinate with the regional style, and reference natural building material colors. The exterior surfaces of Skyline Level massing should be predominately light in color. Do not use dark major building colors, including black, dark red, dark gray, and dark natural stone colors.
- r. Accent colors may occupy up to 15% of the building's opaque facade surface area. Greater freedom of color range from light to dark is allowed for accent colors, though the colors should not be excessively intense. Areas of less than 5% of the building's opaque facade surface may have intense colors for visual interest.

BUILDINGS ON GATEWAY SITES

(See Section 2.1 for Gateway Sites)

- s. Use colors with a higher level of contrast with surrounding buildings.
- t. Use accent colors with a higher level of contrast with the major color.

BUILDINGS ON SITES OTHER THAN GATEWAY SITES

- u. Use light colors.
- v. Avoid high contrasts in materials and colors.

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. Note: See Section 5.3.1.b for requirements for ground level transparency.
- e. Use glass above the ground floor with a maximum reflectivity of 8%, 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

4.4.5 Mitigating Blank Facades

CREATE A MEMORABLE DESTINATION

Avoid creating blank facades (above the Pedestrian Level) 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. The interaction between activities and casual surveillance enabled by windows and balconies is preferable to the unchanging aspect of a blank facade.

Where blank facades are unavoidable, reducing their size, changing materials for visual interest, adding vegetation, or creating private art can reduce their poor effect on the cityscape.

See Section 5.3.1.c - Mitigating Blank Walls for guidance on blank walls at the Pedestrian Level.

GUIDELINES

- Avoid the creation of a blank facade with the insertion of windows and/or balconies. When this is not possible, such as with zero-lot-line development, make the blank facade more attractive.
- Break down a blank facade into smaller areas by changing building massing.

STANDARDS

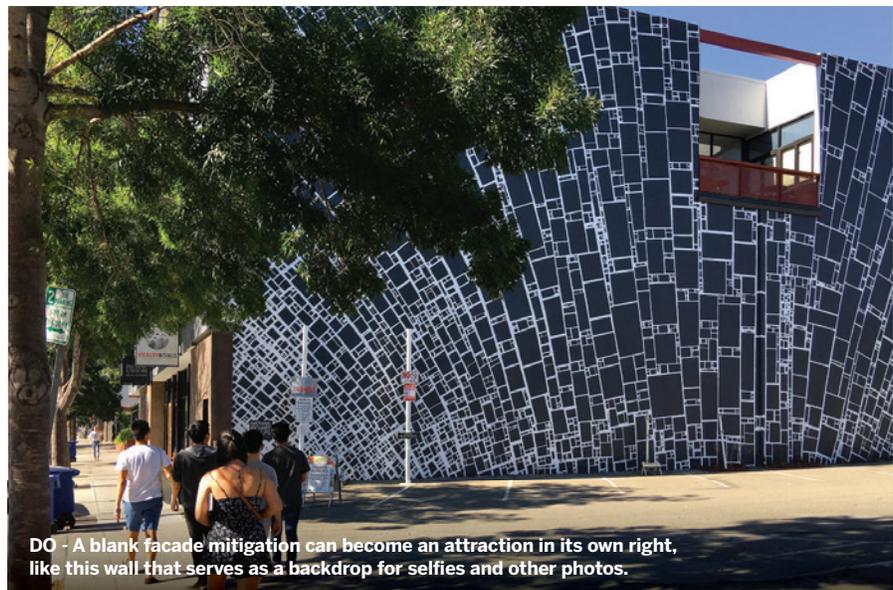
- Use architectural treatments (such as trellises, screens, or changes in materials), living vegetation, or art to create visual interest in facades over 300 square feet which do not have windows or balconies. Cover at least 50 percent of the blank facade surface. Commercial advertising or building-related signage does not count as an intervention.

RELATED GUIDELINES

5.3.1.c - Mitigating Blank Walls

GENERAL PLAN REFERENCE

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



4.4.6 Vertical Circulation

GENERATE RESILIENCE

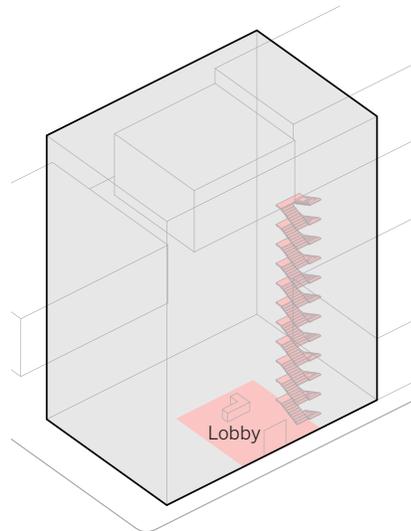
Locate and design stairs to be attractive and invite use.

RATIONALE

By making stairs inviting, people can be attracted to incorporate more activity into their routines, improving health.

Placing stairs in a prominent location, accessible from primary circulation routes and ideally visible from main building entries, makes their use convenient and reminds people that stairs are an available option.

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



Attractive and convenient stairs can entice more people to walk between floors.

GUIDELINES

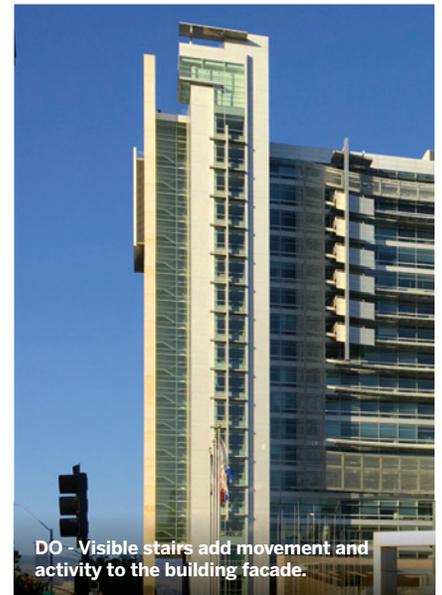
- Design stairs to be pleasant user friendly environments.
- Locate a primary stairway along the building exterior at the Podium Level.
- Create transparency from stairs to the exterior to give stair users interesting views and to make the location of stairs apparent to those outside the building.
- Design tall buildings such that stairs are convenient to use for vertical circulation of four floors or less.

STANDARDS

- Locate stairs to be convenient to the primary building entry.
- Use stair location to make stairs a convenient and obvious choice.

GENERAL PLAN REFERENCE

- CD-3.3



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

4.4.7 Parking Garages

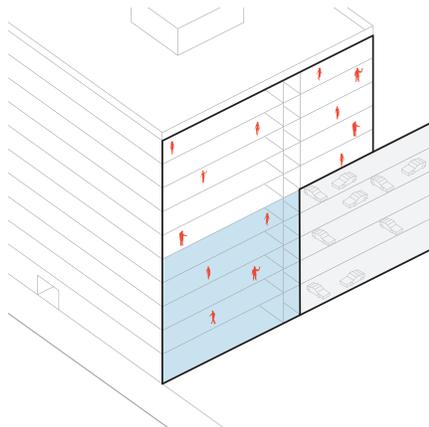
PUT PEOPLE FIRST

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

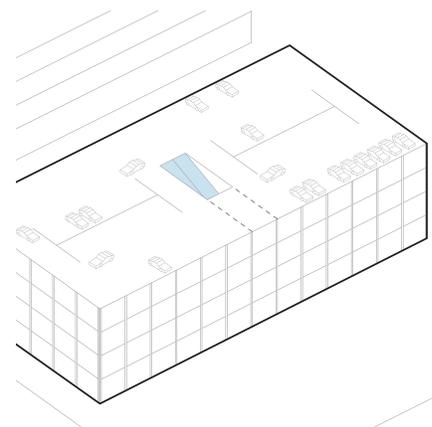
RATIONALE

Parking structures can create deadening effects on the surrounding urban fabric, a problem which is not eliminated by good parking garage architecture. Their size and location can spread apart Active Uses, making the city less walkable. They can also become locations for undesirable activities.

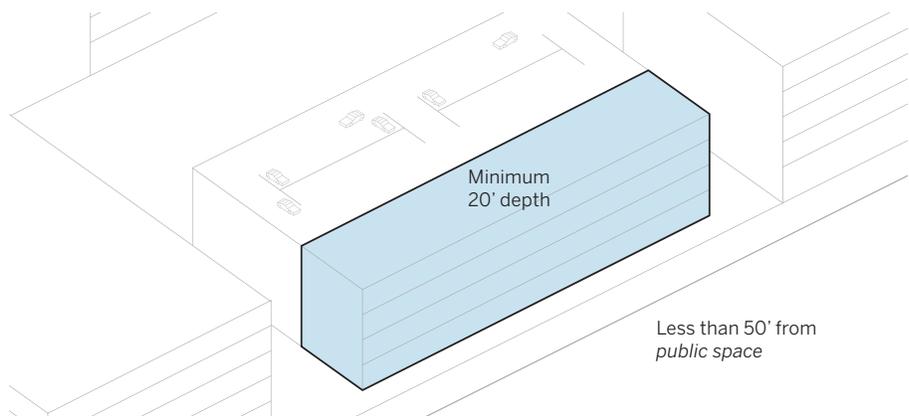
To make parking into a good neighbor and to avoid creating expensive structures that are not needed, or may not be needed in the future due to changes in transportation technology, reduce the visibility of a structure and use occupied space to bridge gaps in the urban fabric. Lining parking structures with Active Uses and occupied space puts the parking structure in the back and brings life to the street. Planning ahead for garage conversion into other uses avoids the expensive and disruptive need for demolition in case parking is no longer required.



DO - Line a parking garage within the building mass (Section 3.3.8) with habitable space along a Primary or SoFA Addressing Street or Urban Park/Plaza Frontage.



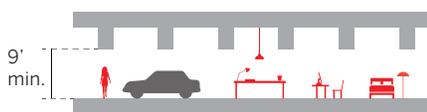
DO - "Future proof" parking structures by planning for transition to other uses, such as with structurally-separate vehicle ramps.



DO - Line a free standing parking structure near a Primary Addressing Street, SoFA Addressing Street, or Urban Park/Plaza Frontage with habitable space.

GUIDELINES

- Place landscaping, green roofs, decks, patios, gardens, solar power generation or other mitigating element on an exposed parking garage roof to reduce heat generation and water runoff.
- Provide a canopy, overhang, trellis or other element to mark the top of a standalone parking structure to avoid a stark, brutal appearance.
- 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, industrial appearance.
- Future proof parking structures to be convertible to other uses in the future. Design structured parking with:
 - Flat floors
 - Minimum 9 foot clear floor-to-finished ceiling heights
 - Structurally separate vehicle ramps to allow for total or partial removal



Future proof garages have sufficient height to accommodate other potential uses

- Sufficient structural strength to allow conversion to other uses
- 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

- If a parking structure is within 50 feet of a **Primary Addressing Street, SoFA Addressing Street, or Urban Park/Plaza Frontage** (see Section 2.2), line the structure with habitable space of at least the same height as the parking structure and of at least 20 feet depth.
- 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.
- Design the facade of any exposed or standalone parking garage that faces any street or paseo (but not alley) with an appearance similar to the facade of a commercial or residential building. Use window openings 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.

- Screen 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.
- Exhaust garage venting to the top of the garage, and if not possible then at least above the second level and directed away from *public space* and neighboring structures.
- Provide vehicles a place to stop while exiting a parking garage that gives drivers a clear view of pedestrians on the sidewalk.

Design a garage to avoid entry queuing across any *public space*.

RELATED GUIDELINES

- 3.3.8 - Parking Location
- 3.3.9 - Bicycle Parking
- 3.4.3 - Parking and Vehicular Access
- 5.3.3 - Parking and Vehicle Entries
- 5.6 - Surface Parking Lots

GENERAL PLAN REFERENCE

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

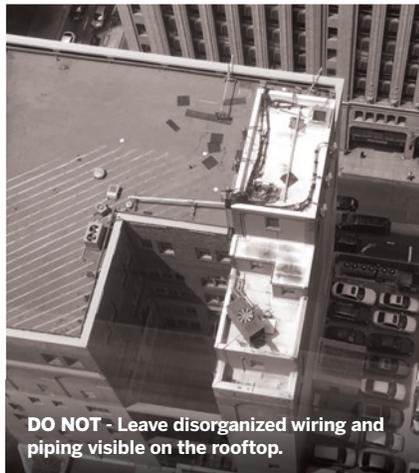
4.4.8.a Roofs: Rooftops and Mechanical Equipment

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, particularly on lower buildings, can create an unattractive view and give an impression of poor maintenance. High quality materials, occupiable active space, and rooftop mechanical equipment shielded or arranged with care can make the roof a neutral or even attractive part of the urban view.



GUIDELINES

- Design roofs that may be seen from higher buildings consistent with the architecture of the building.
- Organize and design rooftop equipment as a component of the roofscape and not as a leftover or add-on element.

STANDARDS

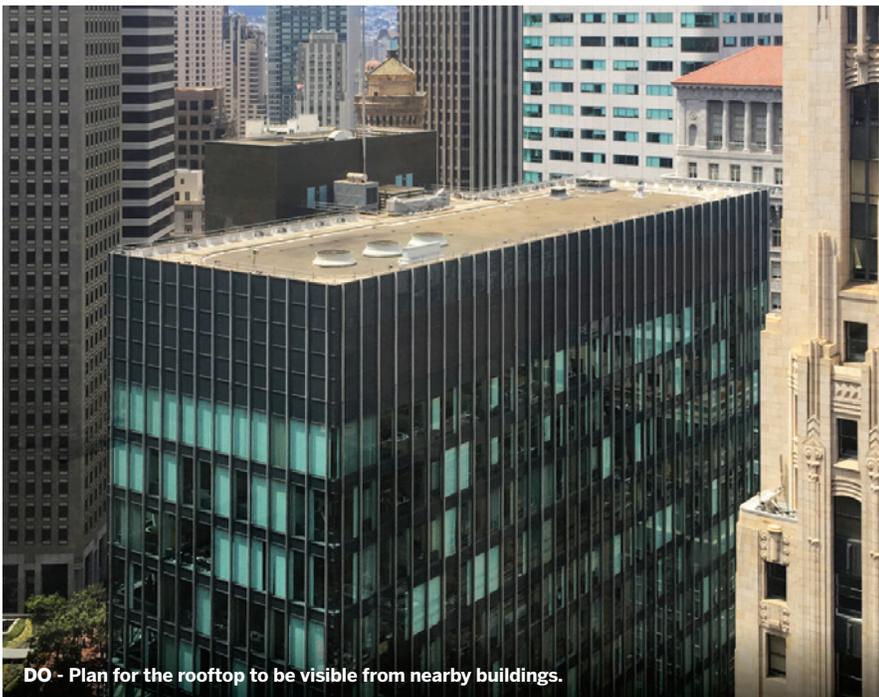
- Use non-reflective, low intensity (dull, not bright) roof colors.
- Screen vents, mechanical rooms and equipment, elevator houses, cooling towers, large vent projections, water tanks, or storage areas on the building elevation and rooftop from street level view with enclosures, parapets, setbacks, 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.
- Design enclosure or screening as a logical extension of the building, using similar materials and detailing.
- Group vents, exhaust fans, and other roof penetrations to avoid visual clutter.
- Design window washing equipment so it is incorporated into the building design, or so when not in use it is fully hidden from view from horizontally and below.

RELATED GUIDELINES

4.4.7 - Parking Garages

GENERAL PLAN REFERENCE

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



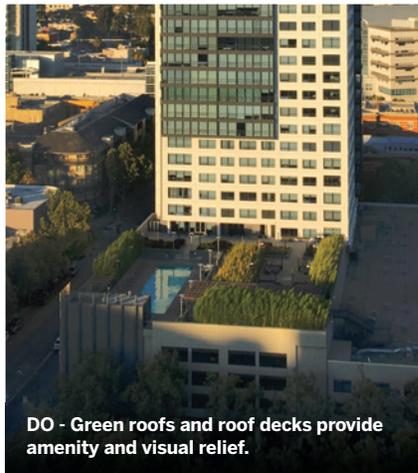
4.4.8.b Roofs: Green Roofs and Roof Decks

DESIGN FOR SUSTAINABILITY, GENERATE RESILIENCE

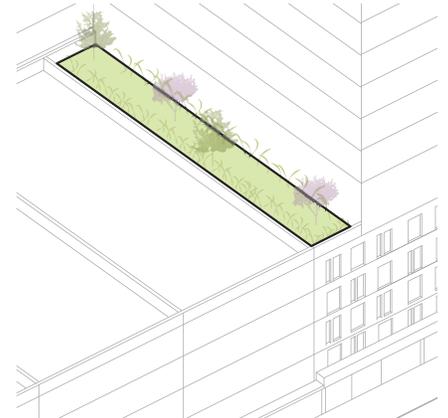
Include green roofs and occupiable decks for aesthetics, environmental benefits, and as building occupant amenities.

RATIONALE

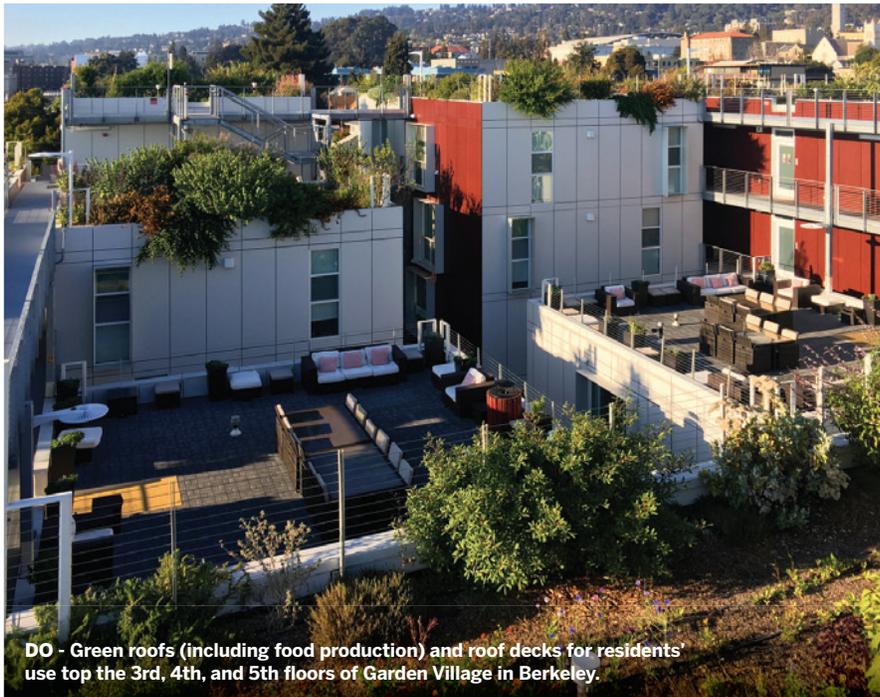
The benefits of green roofs include storm-water runoff reduction, energy conservation, and reducing urban heat island effects. They can also provide habitat for urban wildlife, improve views and air quality, and reduce noise pollution. Roof decks add life to the cityscape and create additional open space 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 - Provide green roofs on lower rooftops and podiums to create visual breaks in the cityscape.



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

- Use green roofs to reduce building heat loads as well as provide amenity for tower occupants. Use native plant species to ensure longevity and to minimize maintenance requirements.
- Provide usable space such as terraces, gardens, restaurants, pools, and decks on top of the building's Podium Level.
- Make rooftop gardens open to the public as an amenity.

STANDARDS

- Design a roof less than 150 feet above ground that is more than 2,500 square feet to include at least 20% coverage by 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

4.4.9 Pedestrian Bridges

FOCUS ON THE GROUND FLOOR

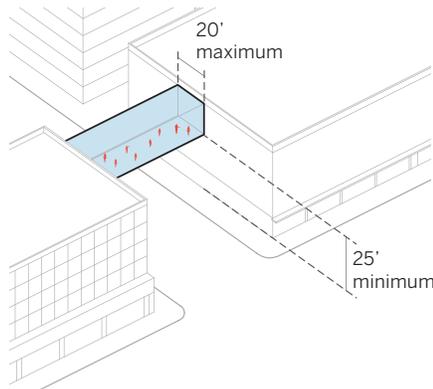
Avoid creating pedestrian bridges across public rights of way. Where unavoidable, design them to reduce their impact on the public realm.

RATIONALE

The use of pedestrian bridges tends to de-emphasize the public streets and sidewalks. Sidewalk pedestrian activity helps to create a more vibrant area, and supports retail and public spaces.

Particularly 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 in an office complex or hospital.

Note: If a project demonstrates the need for a private pedestrian bridge (typically due to safety concerns) an agreement with property owner may be required.



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

GUIDELINES

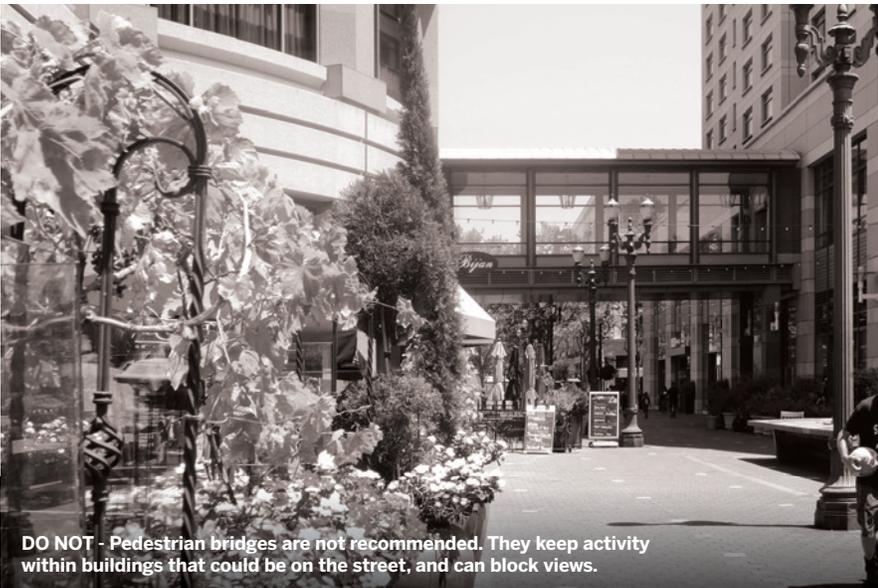
- Avoid the creation of pedestrian bridges in Downtown. Plan for movement between buildings on the public sidewalk.
- Design a pedestrian bridge to be as short as possible, ideally perpendicular to the street.
- Use lighting, art, and architectural elements to make a pedestrian bridge interesting.

STANDARDS

- Do not create pedestrian bridges across designated **View Corridors** (see Section 2.5 - View Corridors Plan).
- Design a pedestrian bridge a minimum of 25 feet clear above street pavement level.
- Design a pedestrian bridge a maximum of 20 feet in width in the greatest outside dimension.
- Make the side elevations of a pedestrian bridge at least 50 percent transparent in order to provide views into and out of the bridge. Ensure bird safety through glass patterning or other techniques (see section 4.4.3.b Bird Safety).

GENERAL PLAN REFERENCE

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



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

4.5.1 Civic Icon Adjacency

BE AUTHENTIC TO SAN JOSE

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

RATIONALE

Civic Icon buildings are landmarks and civic markers in Downtown. New buildings within the affected area, because of their positions, will have a strong affect on these structures. If done well, the juxtaposition of the two structures will enhance the look of both.

By creating a contrast with the materials and color of the Civic Icon building, maintaining a low contrast color scheme, and using a simple facade design, a new building can enable the existing structure to maintain its prominence. While treatment has consequence at lower levels, this design treatment is crucial at the height which will be visible above the Civic Icon building.

GUIDELINES

- Use a streetscape and landscape design that helps to unify the new and existing structure.

STANDARDS

- Design a new building in the Civic Icon building **Affected Area** (see Section 2.4 for the boundaries of Affected Areas) with facades facing the icon that contrast with but do not dominate the icon to allow the icon to stand out.
- Use uncomplicated, low relief, low contrast massing and facade treatments to provide a backdrop for the icon.
- Create contrast with the icon in color and materials to make the icon visible. For instance, use lighter materials and a plainer facade to contrast with a building with a heavier materials and a high level of detail.



DO - The light colors and simple facade of the rear building allows the unique shape of the church to stand out.

RELATED GUIDELINES

- 2.4 - Civic Icon Buildings Plan
- 4.3.4 - Massing Relationship to Context
- 4.4.2 - Facade Relationship to Context
- 4.5.2 - 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 are both historic and contemporary buildings.

4.5.2 Historic Adjacency

BE AUTHENTIC TO SAN JOSE

Create a complementary relationship when building next to a historic building.

RATIONALE

Historic buildings are a unique and irreplaceable feature of Downtown. New adjacent buildings need to respect and enhance these structures, not overwhelm them.

Historic buildings can be generally grouped into typologies as below. For each of the types, the preferred solution varies. Note that if a site falls within the Affected Area of a Civic Icon Building (in Section 2.4), the design requirements of Section 4.5.1 supersede this guideline.

TYPOLGY OF FORM

Public

These historic structures have civic importance and, typically, more individualized, free-standing massing with larger setbacks. Examples are schools and churches.

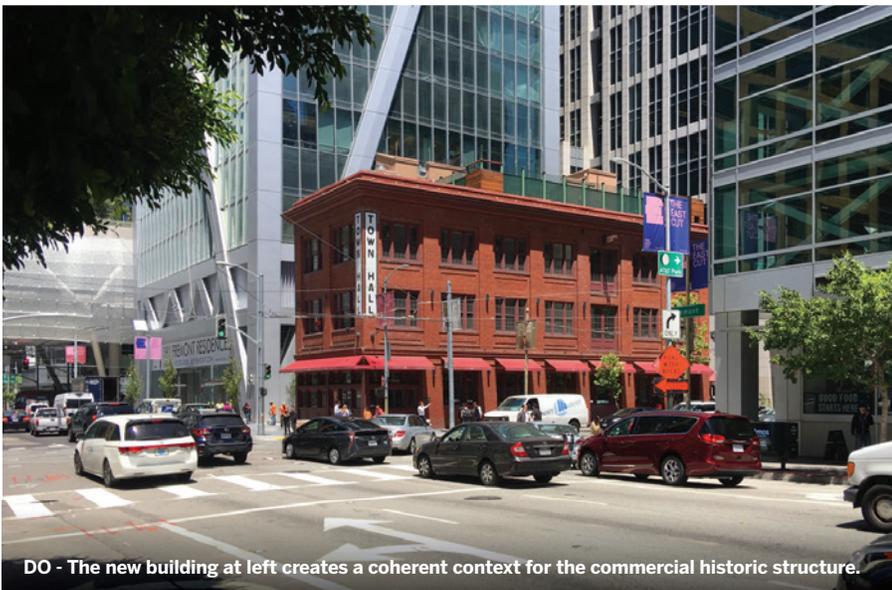
Note: Some of these buildings are also **Civic Icons** (Sections 2.4 and 4.5.1). If a building is a Civic Icon, those Standards apply and the standards in this section do not.

Commercial or Multi-Family Residential

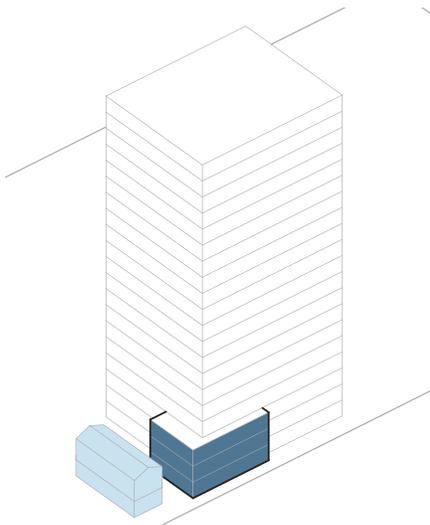
These historic structures are usually sited near the sidewalk with street-facing entries and frequently have ground floor retail.

Single-Family Residential

These historic structures are set back from the street and from neighboring buildings and have residential scale details.



DO - The new building at left creates a coherent context for the commercial historic structure.



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

GUIDELINES

- Use a streetscape and landscape design that helps to unify the new and old structure.

STANDARDS

- a. Design a new building adjacent to a historic **Public** building with a facade facing the icon and a street facing facade that contrast with but do not dominate the historic structure.
 - Use simple massing to provide a backdrop for the historic structure.
 - Create contrast with the historic structure in color and materials to make the historic structure visible. For instance, use lighter materials and a plainer facade to contrast with a building with a heavier materials and a high level of detail.
- b. Use a new building adjacent to a historic **Commercial or Multi-Family Residential** building to create a coherent context for the historic structure.
 - Continue characteristics of the historic structure such as the building setback (if within current guideline limits), cornice line, fenestration pattern, materials, and colors. Do not create a new facade that simulates a historic facade or roof form.
- c. Design a new building adjacent to a historic **Single-Family Residential** structure with transitional elements to reduce the contrast between the old and new structures.
 - Create **transition massing** relating to the historic building, typically in the form of a structure of similar scale as the historic structure projecting from the main new building structure.
 - Use simple and quiet architecture and facade treatments to avoid overpowering the historic structure.
 - Use light materials and light colors to create a simple, visually light neighbor to the historic structure.

RELATED GUIDELINES

- 2.3 - Historic Sites and Districts Plan
- 4.3.4 - Massing Relationship to Context
- 4.4.2 - Facade Relationship to Context
- 4.5.1 - Civic Icon Adjacency
- 4.5.3 - Historic Context

GENERAL PLAN REFERENCE

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

4.5.3 Historic Context

BE AUTHENTIC TO SAN JOSE

Incorporate essential urban and architectural characteristics of historic context.

RATIONALE

In addition to the direct interaction of a new building with an adjacent historic building, there are also situations where the common characteristics of nearby historic buildings should inform the design of a new building that is not directly adjacent. Buildings on sites with **Historic Context** (see Section 2.3) can extract prominent historic characteristics to improve their fit within such a context.

The key characteristics of historic buildings relate to building and pedestrian scale. It is not desirable to use architecture that simulates historic architecture to achieve these Guidelines and Standards.

GUIDELINES

- Use similar materials or distinctive architectural features in the Podium Level as historic context buildings. Examples are using similar window sizes and orientations and incorporating contemporary versions of distinctive features such as awnings, balconies, or tile work.
- Design simple tower facades to avoid overpowering historic buildings, with rectilinear rather than curved forms and visually lighter materials such as glass. Use facade elements with a scale that creates visual correlation with context historic building facades.
- Utilize a transition massing element (see Section 4.5.2) in the context of historic buildings below 40 feet in height. This may be a lower building portion forming the streetwall that has a similar height to lower historic context buildings, with a step back to the upper portion of the Podium and the Skyline Levels.

- Build street facades at the same distance from the right of way as nearby historic buildings.
- Avoid curved or diagonal facade elements.
- Use lighting to accentuate noteworthy features of the new building.

STANDARDS

- Use articulation that creates facade divisions with widths that are similar to the widths of historic context buildings (if the new building is wider). A variety of techniques can achieve this articulation, including facade design, material variations, and color variations.

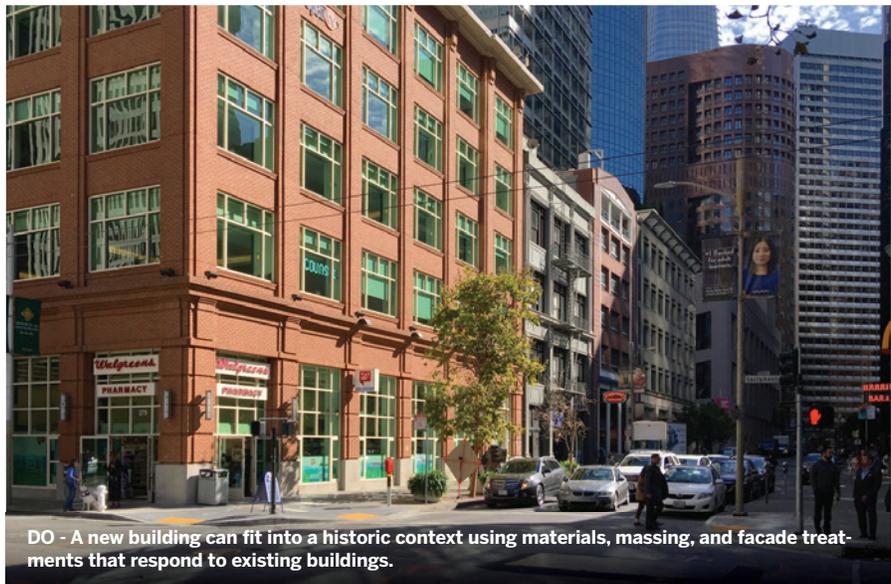
- Space pedestrian entries at similar distances to context historic building entries.
- Create a ground floor with a similar floor to ceiling height as context historic buildings.
- Use cornice articulation in the Podium Level at a height comparable to the heights of historic context buildings.

RELATED GUIDELINES

- 2.3 - Historic Sites and Districts Plan
- 4.5.2 - Historic Adjacency

GENERAL PLAN REFERENCE

- Chapter 6 - Historic Preservation



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

4.6.1 Lighting - Podium Level

CREATE LEGIBILITY

Create safe, inviting public spaces and highlight distinctive architecture with building lighting at the Podium Level.

RATIONALE

Lighting on interesting, high quality architecture 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. Good lighting helps to generate a feeling of safety and enables individual surveillance of *public space*, or “eyes on the street,” as a fundamental element of maintaining public security.

Buildings along the Highway 87 and Interstate 280 corridors have higher visibility than most buildings. In addition, several larger parks and open spaces within Downtown provide good views of surrounding buildings. Buildings in these locations along the highways and around major parks have an opportunity to help define the image of the area with accentuated lighting.

One method of creating accentuated building lighting is bathing a building’s facade in a relatively even level of light, emphasizing its materiality and massing. This is referred to as wall washing.



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

GUIDELINES

- Illuminate distinctive features of the building, including entries, signage, canopies, and areas of architectural detail and interest.
- Illuminate distinctive features inside the building so that they are visible from the outside.
- For buildings in locations not covered in Standards d., e., or f., use soft and understated Podium Level exterior lighting.

STANDARDS

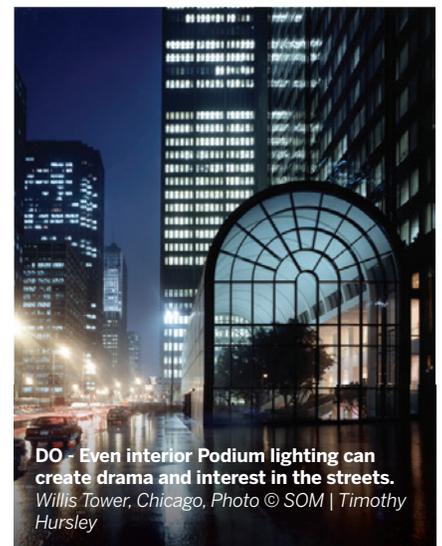
- Provide outdoor lighting using fixtures that yield low light pollution and glare.
- Orient exterior lighting fixtures primarily downward.
- Shield all lighting to prevent light intrusion into private and public building uses, especially residential units.
- For **Image-Defining Frontages** (see Section 2.1) accentuate Podium Level lighting from ground level to the top of the Podium Level, including the use of Wall Washing.
- For facades along **Lighting Corridors** (see Section 2.6) accentuate the Podium Level with lighting to illuminate architectural features and Wall Washing.
- 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

- 4.6.2 - Lighting - Skyline Level
- 5.8 - Lighting - Pedestrian Level

GENERAL PLAN REFERENCE

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



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

4.6.2 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

Like most of its buildings, Downtown's nighttime skyline has a simple and peaceful quality. This is in large part a good thing, but the low mesa (table) shape of the skyline and few dramatic viewing locations also mean that the skyline does not serve its function of identity and orientation as it could.

While most buildings in Downtown should continue the area's simple look, the addition of landmark and creative lighting on buildings in a limited number of locations could help to create a nighttime identity, animate the city at night, and create visual excitement. Too many iconic buildings would create visual noise, so only a few are needed. These buildings will be those located such that they have higher prominence in the skyline.

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.

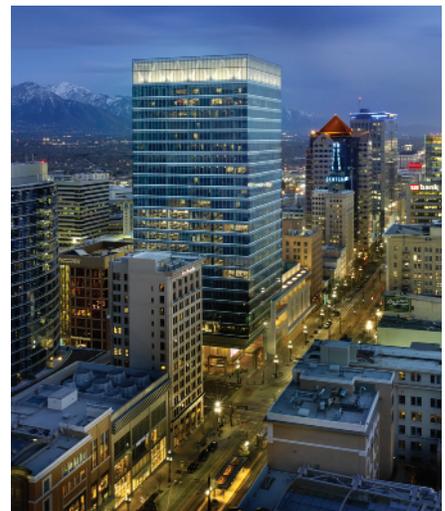
- **Outline** - An Outline is a series of lights that outlines all or part of a building and key building massing elements.
- **Color** - A Color technique utilizes lighting of unusual color to create individuality in the building's appearance.
- **Artistic** - An Artistic technique includes working with an artist or artist team to combine art and high-tech to create a unique illumination platform.

GUIDELINES

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

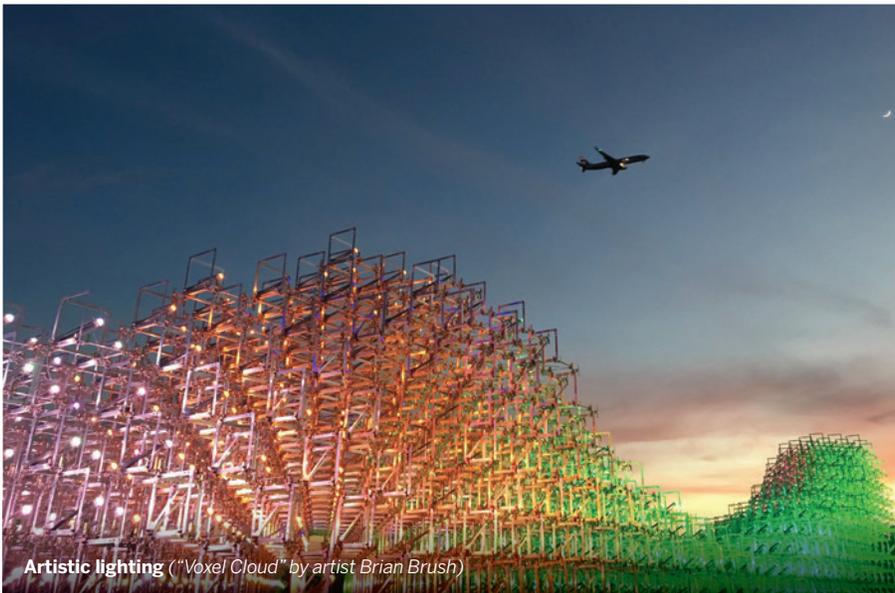
STANDARDS

- 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.
- Buildings on **Gateway Sites** (see Section 2.1) should utilize Skyline Level lighting Techniques at the Skyline Level to mark their special locations in the area.
- Coordinate Skyline Level lighting with Podium Level and Pedestrian Level lighting to create a unified composition.
- 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).



DO - These Lantern building tops create memorable elements on the skyline without dominating the view.

Top: St. Regis, San Francisco, Photo © SOM
Bottom: 111 Main, Salt Lake City, Photo © SOM | Cesar Rubio



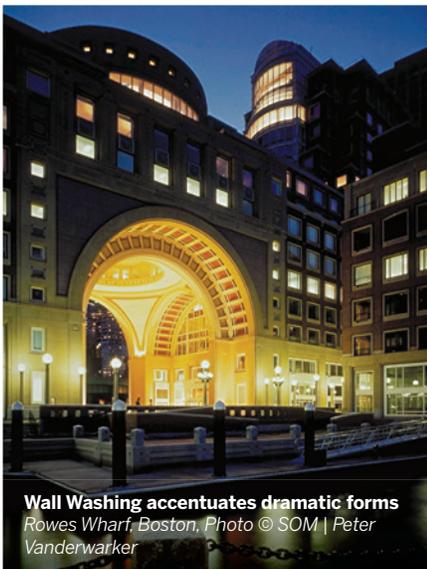
Artistic lighting ("Voxel Cloud" by artist Brian Brush)

RELATED GUIDELINES

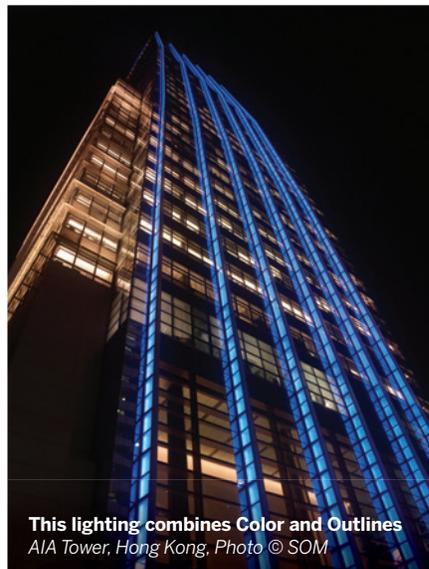
- 4.6.1 - Lighting - Podium Level
- 5.8 - Lighting - Pedestrian Level

GENERAL PLAN REFERENCE

- CD-6.9



Wall Washing accentuates dramatic forms
Rows Wharf, Boston, Photo © SOM | Peter Vanderwerker



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

4.7 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 necessarily further the identity of Downtown but rather 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 these guidelines.

GUIDELINES

- 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.
- 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 such as a billboard.

RELATED GUIDELINES

- 4.3.2 - Skyline Level Massing
- 4.6.2 - Lighting - Skyline Level
- 5.9 - 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

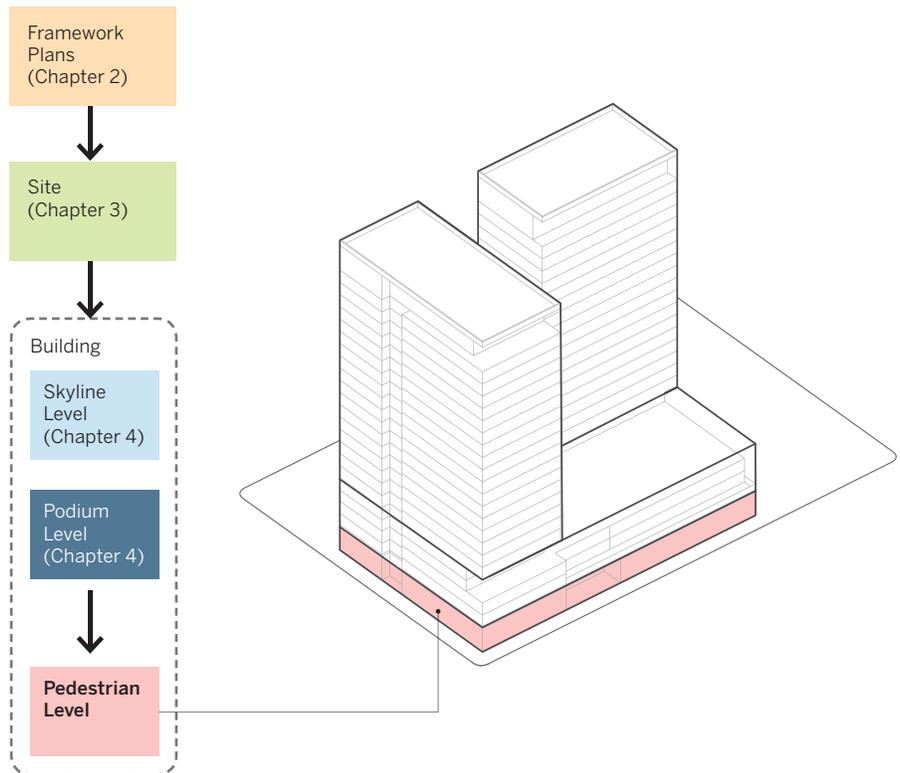
- 5.1 Street Life, Commerce, and the Public Realm
- 5.2 Public Art in Private Development
- 5.3 Ground Floor Treatments and Uses
 - 5.3.1 a. Active Uses
 - 5.3.1 b. Transparency
 - 5.3.1 c. Mitigating Blank Walls
 - 5.3.1 d. Service and Utility Design
 - 5.3.2 Ground Floor Non-Residential Space
 - 5.3.3 Ground Floor Residential Space
- 5.4 Entrances
 - 5.4.1 Pedestrian and Bicycle Entry Design
 - 5.4.2 Vehicle and Service Entry Design
- 5.5 Surface Parking Lots
- 5.6 Paseo Design
- 5.7 Privately-Owned Public Open Space Design
- 5.8 Lighting - Pedestrian Level
- 5.9 Signage - Podium Level and Pedestrian Level

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 area is the Pedestrian Level, the area within 20 feet above ground. The elements necessary for a successful public realm are safety, comfort, interesting buildings that provide human scale, complexity, and variety.

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.

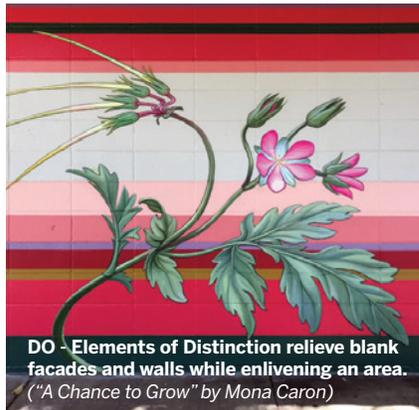
PUBLIC ART TYPOLOGIES

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

- 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.
- Integrate permanent and temporary public art into communal and gathering spaces at commercial and residential development projects.
- To aid in recognition and wayfinding, create artwork to mark the end points of a paseo where it meets *public space*.
- Use Elements of Continuity to lead people through a paseo.
- Integrate lighting into public art that is supportive of the **Podium Level** and **Pedestrian Level** lighting strategy (see Sections 4.6.1 and 5.8).
- Utilize interactive elements in public art that engage audiences actively and passively.
- Incorporate art displaced by development (such as an existing mural) into the new building.

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

STANDARDS

- For a development project at a **Transit Gateway** or **Pedestrian and Bicycle Gateway** (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.
- At a **Lighting Gateway** (Section 2.6), create an Element of Distinction or Element of Change with lighting art.

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



5.3.1.a Ground Floor Treatments and Uses: Active Uses

WELCOME ALL OF SAN JOSE

Attract people with Active Uses facing the *public realm*.

RATIONALE

Active, vibrant street life comes from activity related to both *public space* and the uses in adjacent buildings. Ground floor commercial activity generates foot traffic, which increases safety through informal surveillance. Entrances, store fronts, small usable open spaces, and other elements promote use of the street, invite people to linger, and provide opportunities for friendly interaction.

The most active uses are those that are accessible to the general public, open during established shopping hours, generate walk-in pedestrian clientele, and contribute to a high level of pedestrian activity. Examples are retail stores, cafes, and small offices.

Office lobbies and other less active uses bring fewer people over shorter periods, but still activate the public realm. An even lower level of activation comes from simple visibility between inside and outside, such as from corporate amenities like a fitness center. Nonetheless, these all make *public space* more interesting and safe.

These guidelines address the design of a building and the locations of different uses within the building but do not govern land use, which is regulated by the General Plan and zoning code.

ACTIVE USE LEVELS

While many functions and building features can create positive effects on the street, some are more beneficial than others and are more appropriate in streets targeted to high levels of pedestrian traffic. Uses are classified below, where Level 1 uses are most

active and Level 2 uses are less active and better in settings without a retail focus.

Unless otherwise stated elsewhere, all Active Uses must:

- Have a floor level within three vertical feet of ground level;
- Be visible from *public space*; and
- Have an accessible entry directly from *public space*.

LEVEL 1 - LONGER USE PERIOD, HIGHER TRAFFIC

- Retail shop or office under 5,000 square feet
- Restaurant or cafe
- Hotel lobby
- Fitness center
- Office lobby or residential lobby

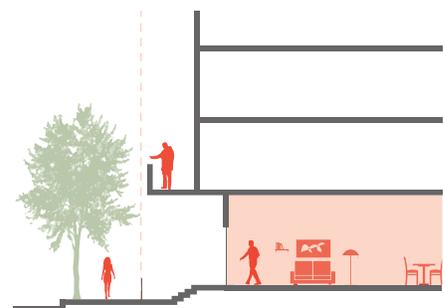
LEVEL 2 - SHORTER USE PERIOD, LOWER TRAFFIC

- Commercial office windows, including educational use, with the office entered from *public space* or inside the building
- Individual residential entry or stoop (activates 30 horizontal feet) (may be up to 3 vertical feet from ground level; accessible access may be provided from an internal building entry)
- Residential balcony with a floor height 10 feet or less above the sidewalk level (activates 20 horizontal feet) (direct entry from *public space* not required)
- Daycare center
- Community space, such as exhibition or meeting space

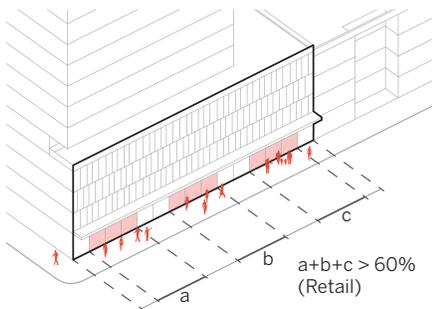
- Residential amenity entered from *public space* or inside the building. Examples: laundry, fitness center, or library
- Commercial office amenity such as a fitness center, cafeteria, daycare center, bike kitchen, clinic, etc. entered from *public space* or inside the building

EXAMPLES OF NON-ACTIVE USES

- Blank wall
- Structured parking
- Uses masked by reflective or tinted glass
- Driveway or garage entrance
- Service entrance
- Fire exit
- Utility connections



Active Uses are near ground level with visibility to and entry from *public space*



Primary Addressing Street (minimum 60% Level 1 Active Uses)



Secondary Addressing Street (minimum 60% Level 1 or 2 Active Uses)



Not an Addressing Street (minimum 20% Level 1 or 2 Active Uses)

GUIDELINES

- Locate new retail uses along street frontages with existing storefronts to reinforce existing concentrations of retail.

STANDARDS

These standards refer to Active Uses, and some of these are present in every building. If a building does not have enough of Level 1 Active Uses to fulfill a requirement, Level 2 Active Uses may be used instead.

- Place Level 1 Active Uses along at least 60% of the width of the streetwall of a building facade on a **Primary Addressing Street** or **SoFA Addressing Street** (see Section 2.2). A publicly-accessible fitness center or residential lobby may count as no more than 50% of the total facade Active Use length.
- Place Level 1 or 2 Active Uses along at least 60% of the width of the streetwall of a building facade on a **Secondary Addressing Street** (see Section 2.2).
- Place Level 1 Active Uses along at least 60% of the width of the streetwall of a building along an **Urban Park/Plaza Frontage** (see Section 2.2). A publicly-accessible fitness center or residential lobby may count as no more than half of the total facade Active Use length.
- Place Level 1 or 2 Active Uses along at least 60% of the width of the streetwall of a building along an **Open Space Frontage** (see Section 2.2).

- Place Level 1 or 2 Active Uses along at least 20% of the width of the streetwall of a building facade along a street not an **Addressing Street** or **Frontage** from Standards a.- d. above (including a paseo but not including an alley).

- On an Addressing Street of any type, do not continue a Pedestrian Level facade without an Active Use longer than 30 feet, or more than 15 feet in the 50 feet closest to a street intersection.
- On a non-Addressing street (including a paseo but not including an alley), do not continue a Pedestrian Level facade without an Active Use longer than 50 feet, or more than 25 feet in the 50 feet closest to a street intersection.

GENERAL PLAN REFERENCE

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

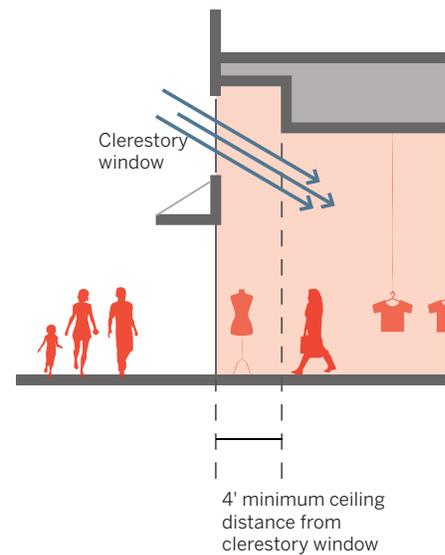
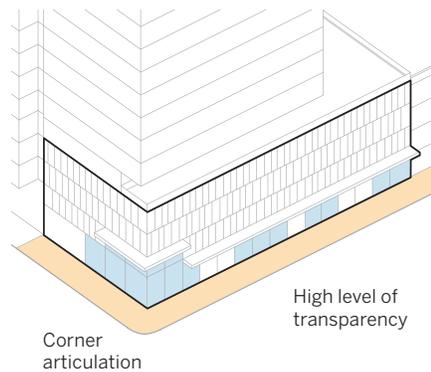
5.3.1.b Ground Floor Treatments and Uses: Transparency

MIX USES AND ACTIVITIES

Maintain building transparency between *public space* and building uses to enable the creation of the positive effects of Active Uses on the urban environment.

RATIONALE

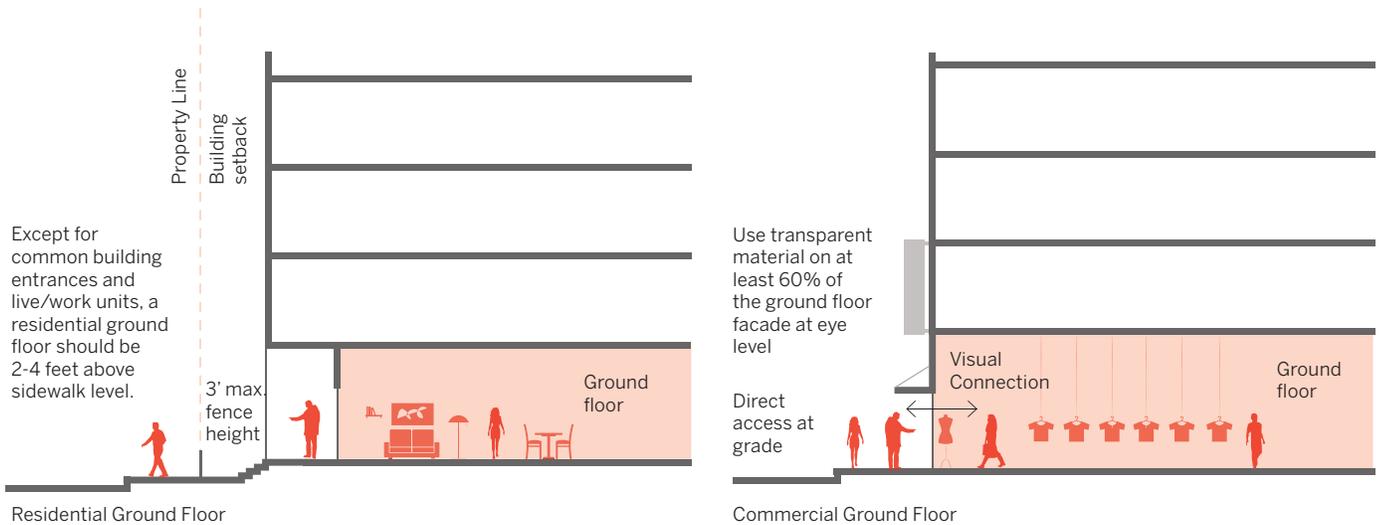
Transparency includes both visibility into the building and ease of access and creates an interesting and interactive urbanity. Sensitive design can mediate the interaction between private and public space, such as ground floor residential facades with the dual functions of protecting occupant privacy and activating the street. A level of transparency is part of every building's contribution to the vibrancy and safety of the urban environment.



GUIDELINES

- Avoid opaque facades at corners to offer visual transparency.
- Use glazing that does not obscure commercial activity from the sidewalk.
- In the transition area between the public sidewalk and ground floor residential, include human-scaled elements that contribute to the residential and urban character of the street, such as porches, stoops, seating, and gardens.





STANDARDS

- Use transparent materials for at least 60% of ground floor commercial facades between 3 and 7 feet above ground level.
- 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 3.3.6) and to screen service functions and equipment.
- Fences and plantings (except those screening garbage and utilities) may not be greater than 3 feet tall.
- Do 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.
- Maintain at least 4 feet between a dropped ceiling and a clerestory window (see graphic).
- If security gates are used, they must be at least 50% transparent to allow a view into storefront windows to maintain pedestrian interest during non-business hours.
- For ground floor retail space at the level between 3 and 10 feet above ground, when using panes of glass less than 5 feet in width or height use mullions no wider than 1 inch to maintain transparency.
- Use panes of glass no less than 3 feet wide and 4 feet high in the area between 3 and 7 feet above ground level.

RELATED GUIDELINES

- 3.4.1 - Pedestrian Entrance Location
- 4.4.3 - Windows and Glazing
- 5.4.1 - Pedestrian and Bicycle Entry Design

GENERAL PLAN REFERENCE

- VN-1.10, CD-1.11

5.3.1.c Ground Floor Treatments and Uses: 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 Uses. This includes walls with windows to a non-active use, such as a parking garage. Blank walls deaden the street environment, make *public space* less safe and inviting, and reduce a retail area's potential by creating a break between activities. They provide opportunities for defacement with graffiti and other undesirable activities.

Where a building has a blank wall for unavoidable programmatic 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 may make the space more interesting for pedestrians but do not create the safety and usefulness that comes with an Active Use.

GUIDELINES

- Use architectural treatments like reveals, small setbacks, indentations, or other architectural means to break up a blank wall surface along *public space*, but use care to 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 exposed without an abutting building.
- Use different textures, colors, or materials to break up a blank wall's surface.



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 - Small retail spaces such as these on the San Pedro Market Parking Garage reduce the length of a blank facade.



DO NOT - An unmaintained merchandising display window does little to mitigate a blank wall.

STANDARDS

- Where a Pedestrian Level facade is not an Active Use for more than 30 feet, mitigate 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 display window or regularly-changing public information display case

- Special lighting, canopy, awning, horizontal trellis, or other pedestrian-oriented feature as appropriate to building function.

RELATED GUIDELINES

4.4.5 - Mitigating Blank Facades

GENERAL PLAN REFERENCE

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

5.3.1.d Ground Floor Treatments and Uses: Service and Utility Design

FOCUS ON THE GROUND FLOOR

Design service functions for efficient operations that impact public realm street life and building operations as little as possible.

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 reduce their impact.

GUIDELINES

- Minimize frontages used for utilities, storage, and services and integrate them into the overall articulation and fenestration of the facade by continuing design elements across these areas or by otherwise enhancing the visual interest of the service areas for pedestrians.
- Integrate public infrastructure, such as for public signalization (when possible), signage, communications and security equipment, electrical transformers, generators, meters, backflow preventers, irrigators, grease interceptors, and ventilation with development and make them as unobtrusive as possible.
- Incorporate utilities, including utility cabinets, into the building within the property line, not at a corner, and not visible to passersby within *public space*.
- Integrate lighting, signage, emergency egress, ADA access, ventilation structures, transformers, and other mechanical equipment for transportation systems into existing or future development. For example, design ventilation shafts to be set back from the development frontage to allow for continuous activity.

STANDARDS

- Incorporate generators into a parking level or rooftop, not ground floor space.
- In a commercial development, place horizontal, through-the-wall venting to the street above the third building story.
- In a residential development, integrate horizontal venting with the architectural design in a pattern that will not draw attention.
- Screen services and loading elements that cannot be located within the building envelope and are located within 30 feet of and otherwise visible to *public space*.
- Use enclosures or doors to confine odors from trash and recycling and vents to direct odors away from the sidewalk.
- Provide internal building access to loading, trash and recycling areas.
- Enclose equipment for power, utilities, waste, and other building services within the building envelope.

RELATED GUIDELINES

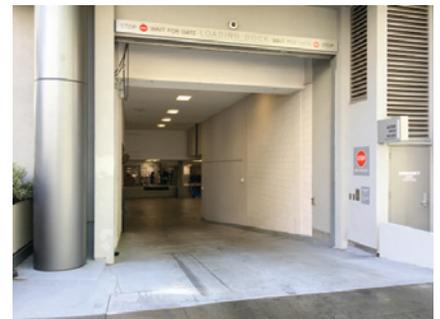
3.4.2 - Service Entrance Location

GENERAL PLAN REFERENCE

- CD-1.18



DO NOT - Even screened, utility equipment along the sidewalk reduces active frontage.



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 Uses.

RATIONALE

Because of the importance of Active Uses and the long life spans of most buildings, buildings' Pedestrian Levels should include a high level of flexibility to accommodate not only present but future needs for high quality active space.

Retail and Active Use locations are prescribed by the Downtown Ground Floor Space Overlay Area zoning. These guidelines guide the locations of such retail and other Active Uses within buildings based on street classifications (see Section 2.2 for classifications).

GUIDELINES

- Create retail bays and entries every 25 to 35 feet to allow multiple storefronts, even if initial retail tenants occupy more than one bay.
- For flexibility, anticipate restaurant requirements in the design of ground floor retail space, including incorporating venting to the roof in the design, even if it is not actually installed during construction.
- Design accommodation for restaurant sewerage utilities into the building, such as grease traps and interceptors.
- To preserve transparency, avoid placing a structural column over two feet wide directly on a street corner.
- 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.

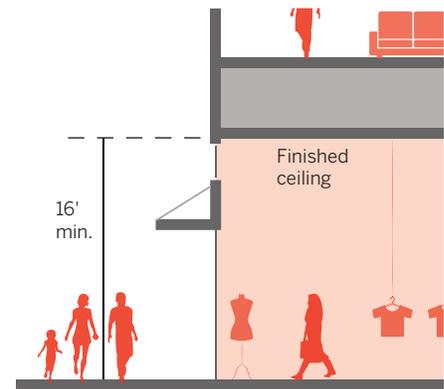
- Create a distinctive architectural character with higher arcade height, cornice line height, and/or ceiling height at street corners.

STANDARDS

- Create entries every 35 feet or less along the **SoFA Addressing Street** (see Section 2.2).
- Provide a minimum 16 feet clear height (18 feet optimal) to finished ceiling in ground floors with Active Uses except along the **SoFA Addressing Street** (see Section 2.2). Where fire issues would require additional emergency water storage for 16 foot ceilings, 14 feet may be used.
- Provide a minimum 20 feet clear height to finished ceiling in ground floors with Active Uses along the **SoFA Addressing Street** (see Section 2.2).
- Design at least 50 percent of a building's Level 1 Active Use space (see Section 5.3.1.a) a minimum of 50 feet deep (60 feet optimal) behind the building facade. Design the remaining Level 1 Active Use space a minimum of 25 feet deep.

GENERAL PLAN REFERENCE

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



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



Use 50 foot minimum depth for 50% of space for Level 1 Active Use.

5.3.3 Ground Floor Residential Space

FOCUS ON THE GROUND FLOOR

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

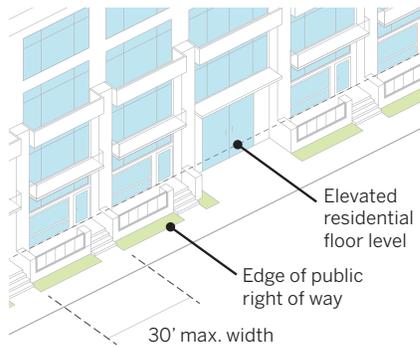
RATIONALE

As noted in Section 3.4.1, 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.

The presence of residential units with a close physical and visual relationship to the street keeps the street safer and more active through the observation of residents as well as the arrival and departure activity 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.

GUIDELINES

- Design townhouse units to highlight their individual identity.
- 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.
- For units with stoops, setbacks between 6 - 10 feet allow space for transition between the public and private realms. Landscaping such as bushes may provide additional separation.
- Do not expose partially below grade parking toward the front of a residential building.



Ground floor residential units humanize the streetscape and add activity and visual connection. Elevated residential floors create a necessary separation between public and private space. Narrow unit widths promote the creation of multiple unit entries.

STANDARDS

- Use a maximum width of 30 feet per ground floor residential unit.
- 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 San José Public Works Department requirements. Accessibility requirements may be met with unit entries from the building interior.

RELATED GUIDELINES

- 3.3.6 - Locating Semi-Private Open Space
- 3.3.7 - Locating Private Open Space
- 4.4.3.d - Balconies

GENERAL PLAN REFERENCE

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



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

5.4.1 Pedestrian and Bicycle Entry Design

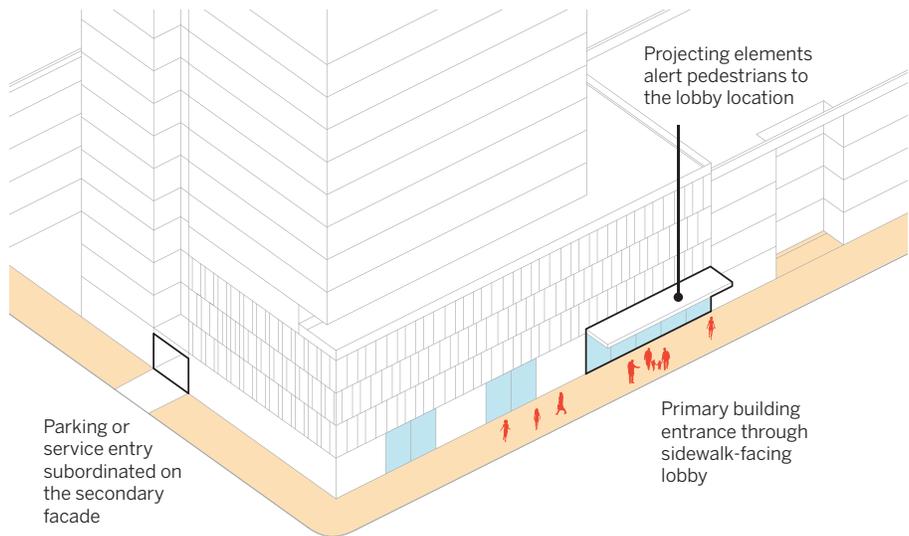
DESIGN FOR SUSTAINABILITY, WELCOME ALL OF SAN JOSE

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.



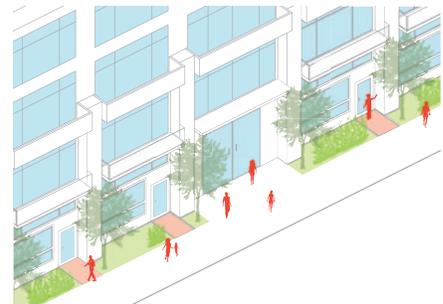
Place a building's primary entry to activate *public space* and allow building occupants easy access to the public realm.



DO - Stoops and porches create outdoor open space for ground level units.



DO - Stoops create a transition between private residential unit entries and *public space*.



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

- Provide a formal lobby entered directly from the street for each building.
- Identify private residential unit entrances with recessed doorways, changes in color and materials, and alternative paving.
- Use size, prominence on the streetscape, location, and design emphasis to make the pedestrian entrance more prominent than the garage entrance.

STANDARDS

- Emphasize common entries for pedestrians and bicyclists with architectural features such as:
 - extra-height lobby space
 - distinctive doorway
 - distinctive entry canopy
- Clearly identify the primary building entry by a horizontal projection (such as a canopy) visible from 100 feet along the adjacent sidewalk.
- Provide internal access from bicycle parking to the building lobby.
- Create transition space between ground level private residential unit entries and

public space with features such as stoops, porches, and landscaping. An alternative is an at-grade entry with an internal stair to the elevated floor level.

- Design first floor loft or live/work units with at-grade (accessible) access to the street.

RELATED GUIDELINES

- 3.4.1 - Pedestrian Entrance Location
- 4.4.3 - Windows and Glazing
- 5.3.1.b - Transparency
- 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 - Celebrating common entries with distinctive features identifies the primary entry from along the sidewalk. (Photo © SPUR)

5.4.2 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

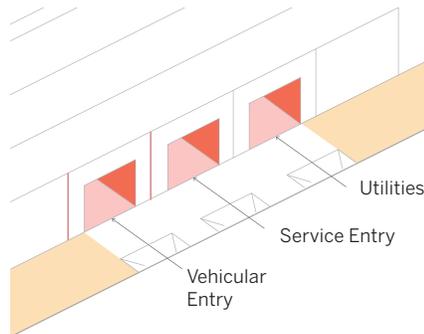
Vehicular entries can create negative effects on building facades and streetscapes. Entries create gaps in Active Uses, intimidate pedestrians and bicyclists with vehicle crossings, degrade the sidewalk with additional slope, and create soiling through oil drips and tire marks. Minimizing these effects 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 Uses.

GUIDELINES

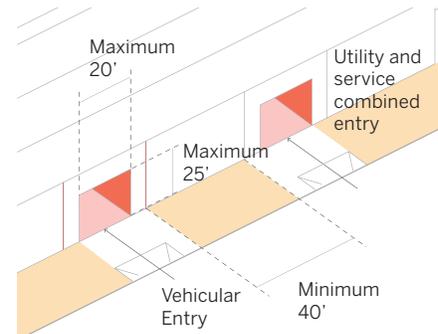
- Combine service and vehicular entries to avoid impacting long sections of sidewalk, or separate service and vehicular entries by at least 40 feet.
- Limit a vehicle or service access width to a maximum of 20 feet, including both an entry into a building and a drive aisle to a parking structure or parking lot.
- Limit vehicle and service building entry height to a maximum of 25 feet.

STANDARDS

- Locate passenger loading and unloading areas, including space for passengers awaiting rides, to avoid blocking the sidewalk.
- Do not create a *porte cochere* along any street except as part of a hotel or medical use.
- A *porte cochere* cannot be the primary



DO NOT - Adjacent service and vehicular doors create severe impacts on *public space*.



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 Use.

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.

RELATED GUIDELINES

3.4.2 - Service Entrance Location

3.4.3 - Parking and Vehicular Access Location

4.4.7 - Parking Garages

5.5 - Surface Parking Lots

GENERAL PLAN REFERENCE

- CD-1.18, CD-1.17, CD-2.3 (5)

5.5 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 generally inappropriate in dense urban environments like Downtown. They can become unsafe and unpleasant holes in the urban fabric, and 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 Uses (see Section 5.3.1.a) at edges of parking lots that are visible to the public realm.

GUIDELINES

- Avoid the creation of surface parking lots. Where necessary, locate them behind buildings to avoid diminishing the public realm.
- Screen at least three sides of a parking lot with buildings to avoid views from streets.
- Use water-permeable pavers or pavement and landscaping to reduce stormwater runoff.

STANDARDS

- 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,



Divide a large parking lot with a street-formatted drive aisle.

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.

- Create walkways at least every 120 feet within a parking lot to provide safe pedestrian travel to either the building entrance or a public sidewalk.
- Screen with landscaping any surface parking lot within 50 feet of a street or Paseo. Do not create unsafe blind spots.
- 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

- 3.3.8 - Parking Location
- 3.3.9 - Bicycle Parking Location
- 3.4.3 - Parking and Vehicular Access Location
- 4.4.7 - Parking Garages
- 5.4.2 - Vehicle and Service Entry Design

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.

5.6 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 interesting, typically less formal *public space* than streets, in some cases evolving from alleys or service lanes. At their best, they create additional pedestrian routes and the locations for exciting small public spaces within an urban area.

However, paseos have specific needs in order to remain safe and accessible. By relying on pedestrian traffic alone, they can feel less safe during periods of low pedestrian traffic, which requires additional efforts at activation. Building articulation and detailing also help to create appropriate scale, and additional efforts at activation such as programming and temporary and permanent art may also bring life to paseos. The character of a paseo may vary over its length from formal to informal, and its width and shape may vary, but it must remain a safe and well lit route throughout.

GUIDELINES

- Include pedestrian-scale public art in paseos through incorporation into amenities, building enhancements, wayfinding, the paseo ground surface, and standalone artworks.
- Include pedestrian amenities and street furniture such as benches.
- Extend the fenestration and facade treatment of street-facing retail space around the corner into the paseo.
- Create interesting facade treatments along the paseo frontage, treating the paseo as a building front and not a subsidiary elevation.



DO - Buildings should form continuous edges along a paseo. *Photo © SPUR*

- Lighting within paseos is particularly important for safety. Ensure that lighting is bright enough for safe access in all parts of the paseo. See also Section 5.8.

STANDARDS

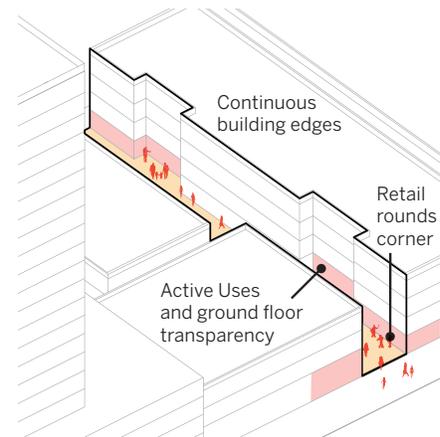
- Shape buildings along a paseo to form continuous edges. No more than 20% of a parcel's boundary along a paseo should consist of a standalone wall or fence.
- A building facade along a paseo must have Level 1 or 2 Active Use (refer to Section 5.3.1.a) along at least 60% of the building length and no more than 40 feet of blank wall between Active Uses.

RELATED GUIDELINE

3.3.4 - Paseos / Mid-Block Connection Location

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 for the Millennial Generation through a collection of informal art.

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

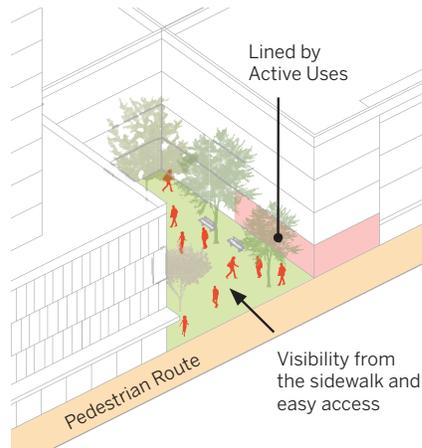
A dense and interesting area requires a variety of public spaces to thrive. POPOS can provide ground level amenity, flexibility of use, and proximity to residents, workers and visitors in Downtown.

Design these spaces as intentional amenities, and avoid creating “leftover” spaces which serve only as underutilized buffer space which will spread out urban activity. Smaller, better-designed, hardscaped, bright spaces are preferable to larger, green-but-undisigned, poorly-placed ones. POPOS can feature art work, street furniture, and landscaping that invite users or enhance the building’s setting.

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. 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

- 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.
- Distinguish between parts of the POPOS used for through traffic (paths) and parts that are destination spaces (nodes).



DO - A POPOS should be active and visible from the street.

- 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).
- Provide mobile seating to allow users of the space to find the combination of sun and shade to suit their comfort level and to form seating groups to suit their needs.
- Enliven the space with site furniture, art work, or amenities such as fountains, and kiosks.
- 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.
- In rooftop POPOS, emphasize visual connection to the surroundings, including to the street level.



DO - Mobile seating and a mix of sun and shade allows POPOS users to find a comfortable spot in a variety of weather conditions.

STANDARDS

- A ground level POPOS must be lined by an Active Use on at least 1/4 of the building frontage forming its perimeter.
- A POPOS should include temporary or permanent seating.
- Design landscaping, walls, railings, and other street elements to retain visibility into and out of a ground level POPOS.
- 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

3.3.5 - Locating Privately-Owned Public 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

5.8 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 an additional element of illumination and clarity, encouraging pedestrian activity. Lighting can also create points of interest in the broader cityscape where given a unique treatment.

GUIDELINES

- Use pedestrian-scaled lighting as an integral element of all building facades, designed and located to accentuate ground floor uses.
- Light a minimum zone of 4 feet in front of the building and a zone of 2 feet within the storefront with building-mounted lighting.
- 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.
- Orient outside lighting toward building surfaces or directly downward and shield exposed bulbs to minimize glare within *public space*.
- Install lighting in display windows that spills onto and illuminates the sidewalk.



STANDARDS

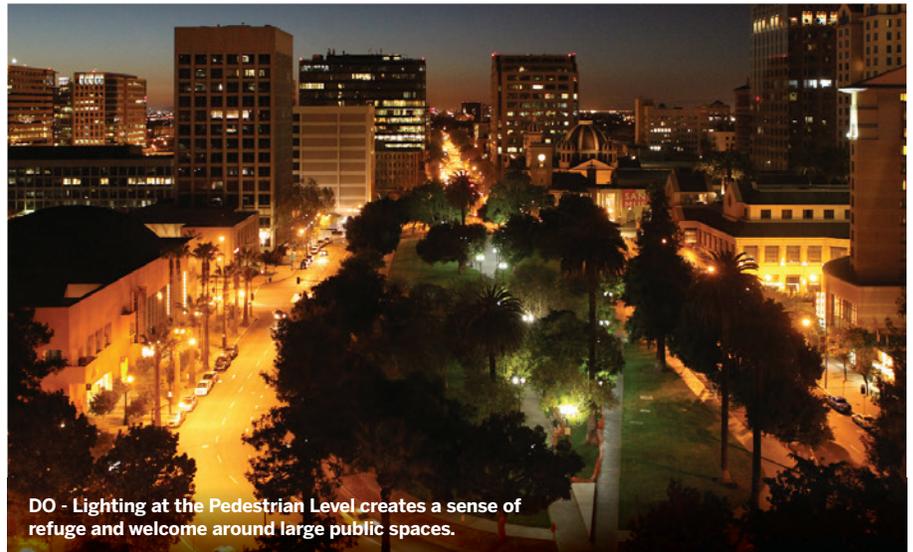
- a. Use lighting to accentuate pedestrian and bicycle entries.
- b. For facades at a **Transit Gateway or a Pedestrian and Bicycle Gateway** (see Section 2.2), provide pedestrian-scale lighting that creates an overall illumination of the street level public realm, with a lighting fixture every 25 feet or less.
- c. For facades along a **Lighting Corridor** (see Section 2.6), provide pedestrian-scale lighting that creates an overall illumination of the street level public realm regardless of the use within the building at that location, with a lighting fixture every 30 feet or less.
- d. For facades facing any paseo, provide pedestrian-scale lighting, with a lighting fixture every 40 feet or less.
- e. Use lighting at the Pedestrian Level to promote safety and pedestrian comfort.
- f. Provide outdoor lighting using fixtures that yield low light pollution and glare.
- g. Orient lighting fixtures primarily downward.
- h. Shield all lighting to prevent light intrusion into private and public building uses, especially residential units.
- i. Fully light service areas and service entries.

RELATED GUIDELINES

- 4.6.1 - Lighting - Podium Level
- 4.6.2 - 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



5.9 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

Signage is an essential component of a commercial area. At its best, building signage strikes a balance between attracting attention to the businesses it serves and contributing to a unified streetscape. The size and variety of signs can itself be a unifying element of commercial areas and can as a whole become an attractor and an element of neighborhood character.

Design signage to be appropriate for the scale and character of the project and immediate neighborhood. Signs at the Podium Level and Pedestrian Level should be oriented to pedestrians and persons in vehicles on streets within the immediate neighborhood.

Signage in Downtown retail corridors should be larger, more prominently located, of brighter colors, and more brightly lit than in other areas. Signs in these corridors can help to visually activate *public space* and can inform people of the presence of higher levels of public activity. Other areas of Downtown will also have signage but it should be 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.

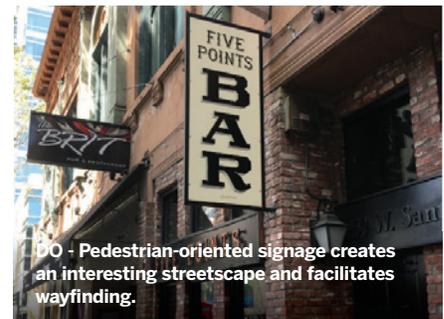


DO NOT / DO - Avoid internally illuminated signs at the podium level. Neon signs are preferred in Primary Addressing Streets.



GUIDELINES

- Use neon signs on **Primary Addressing Streets** and the **SoFA Addressing Street** (see section 2.2) to create visually vibrant streetscapes.
- Avoid internally illuminated signs at the Podium and Pedestrian levels.
- Do not cover or obscure a building's architectural features with a sign.
- Use materials and colors for signs that are compatible with the building's materials and colors.
- Minimize light impacts on residential windows from signs, particularly from flashing or otherwise changing lights.



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

- Use signage to make clear the location of the primary entrance for bicyclists and of bicycle parking.

RELATED GUIDELINES

4.7 - Signage - Skyline Level

GENERAL PLAN REFERENCE

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

STANDARDS

- Create signage that is perpendicular to the adjacent sidewalk, and thus more visible to pedestrians.
- Signage oriented parallel to the street, more visible to vehicles and people on the opposite sidewalk, is allowed but not required.

The background of the page is a monochromatic blue-tinted photograph of a field of flowers and foliage. The plants are out of focus, creating a soft, textured background. The text is overlaid on this background.

A.0

APPENDIX

A.1 Glossary

BUILDING PARTS

Pedestrian Level - The 20' of a building above grade. This part is the most critical for creating a good pedestrian environment.

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.

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.

TYPES OF PRIVATE AND PUBLIC SPACE

Private Open Space - Privately owned or controlled outdoor space for use by building residents, workers or customers, accessible by secured access only.

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. For purposes of this document, a POPOS is defined as a space at ground level.

Public Open Space - Publicly-owned parks, plazas, and other spaces meant for repose and recreation.

Public Space - All publicly-owned, publicly-accessible space, including but not limited to streets, parks, and paseos but not including Highways 87 and 280 and their associated ramps.

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).

Semi-Private 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 Space - Privately owned or controlled outdoor space accessible to limited subset of the public, e.g., cafe.

Street - The publicly-accessible space within a street right of way, including space dedicated for vehicular, bicycle, pedestrian, and any other activity.

STREET CLASSIFICATIONS

Primary Addressing Streets - Buildings along these streets may include both commercial and residential uses on upper floors, with retail strongly encouraged on the ground floor. These blocks are intended to have a high volume of pedestrian traffic and to support public activity throughout the day and evening.

Secondary Addressing Streets - These streets are primarily lined with non-retail commercial uses or with housing. Retail may also occur on these streets, and corner retail is encouraged.

Other Streets (not Addressing streets) - These streets are lined with non-retail commercial uses or with housing. Service functions such as loading and vehicular entries are most appropriate on these streets.

FRONTAGE TYPES

Image-defining Frontage - A building frontage located in a highly-visible location that helps to define the image of Downtown, as defined in 2.1 - **Prominent Sites and Frontages**.

Open Space Frontage - A building frontage that faces a natural open space, as defined in these guidelines.

Urban Park/Plaza Frontage - A building frontage that faces a major park or other civic space, as defined in these guidelines.

OTHER DEFINITIONS

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.

Block Face - The row of front facades, facing the street, for the length of one block.

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.

Context - The characteristics of the buildings, streetscape, and landscape that supports or surrounds a given building, site, or area such as predominance of period architecture or materials, wide sidewalks, or continuous and overhead weather protection, or consistent street trees.

Cornice - A molded and 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.

Facade - Any vertical, exterior face or wall of a building, usually the front, often distinguished from other faces by architectural details.

Fenestration - The arrangement and design of windows and other openings on a building's facade.

Frontage - The building facade facing a street or other public space.

Gateway - A principal or ceremonial point of entrance into a district or neighborhood.

Massing - The three dimensional bulk of a structure: height, width, and depth.

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.

Public Life - social life and activity that happens in the public realm.

Public Realm - the area outside buildings accessible or visible to the public including streets and open spaces.

Setback - The required or actual placement of a building a specified distance away from a road, property line, or other structure.

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.

Streetscape - The visual character of a street as determined by elements such as structures, access, greenery, open space, view, etc. The scene as may be observed along a public street composed of natural and man-made components, including buildings, paving planting, street hardware, and miscellaneous structures.

Streetwall - The combination of the building facades along both sides of a public street, public open space, or a paseo from ground level to 70 feet above. For a portion of the facade to count as a Streetwall, it must lie within 10 feet of the property line or setback line, if there is one, from ground level to the top of the highest occupied floor of that portion of the building.

Transparency - A Pedestrian Level design standard that defines a requirement for visibility and permeability between the building and the adjacent sidewalk or other public space.

Wall Washing - A type of lighting that focuses light onto the facade of a building, emphasizing interesting architectural elements.

A.2.1 Skyline Studies



In order to understand what might shape the visual image of Downtown from nearby and around the city, the guideline formulation process included a study of multiple factors and of the skylines of other cities. In this process, **Skyline** refers to the larger image of a building or set of buildings that provide a foreground or background view from a prominent location or site entry. The guidelines are also focused on **ground level urbanism**, which refers to the lower portion of a building as it is experienced by a pedestrian who is within about 30 feet of the building.

GATEWAY SITES

The heights of buildings in Downtown are limited by the General Plan and by the presence of the Mineta-San José International Airport to the north. Note: all heights are approximate and for the purposes of this study only; consult the City of San José to determine allowed building heights.

Within the “Downtown Zoning Area” outlined at left, heights are governed by FAA regulations relating to aircraft flight patterns. Because the aircraft generally rise as they go to the southeast, away from the airport, the allowed heights rise in that direction as well. Approximate building height limits are marked on the map.

The area near Diridon Station, at left in the map, are also governed by airport operations, in this case lower than downtown due to the need to preserve a flight path for aircraft with one inoperative engine. Areas surrounding the study area generally have a height limit based on zoning alone, not related to flight operations. These height limits are generally 120 feet, as marked.

These height limits have created a line around the Downtown Zoning Area with a large change in height, as marked. Thus, buildings in these locations will be highly visible and will serve as gateways into Downtown. See Section 2.1 for the locations of Gateway Sites.

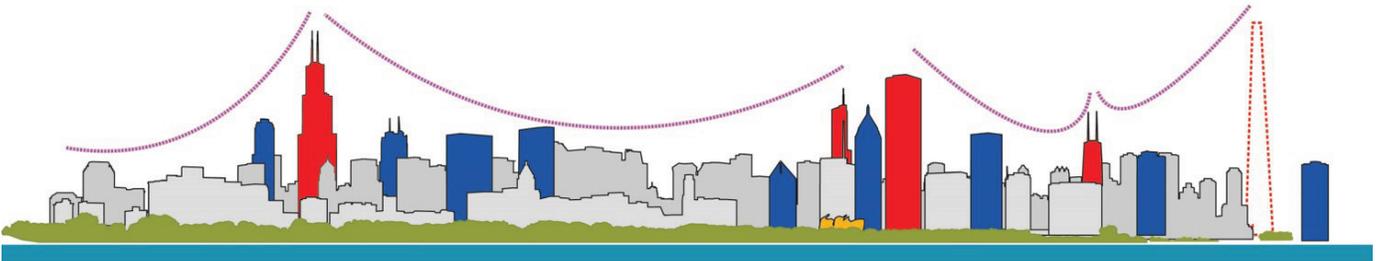
VIEW POINTS

A study of entry points into Downtown/Diridon yielded a variety of notable locations. Among these are transit stations such as Diridon Station and large parks. Even the highways create views to the buildings of Downtown that will shape the area’s image. See Section 2.1 for the locations of these Image-Defining Frontages.



Entry points to Downtown such as the exit from Diridon Station can provide key view points for the skyline.

A.2.1 Skyline Studies (continued)



- Landmark
- Marker
- Low Icon
- Context

BUILDING ROLES IN THE SKYLINE

In addition, the study included an evaluation of the roles that buildings may play in a skyline, and how those add up to create something that is unique and memorable. Among American downtowns, few have a height limitation similar to San José, and many are on a waterfront, but study of their different conditions provide 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. Markers provide more 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 (see examples below of building top design), location, or color.



101 Second, San Francisco
Photo © SOM | Hedrich Blessing



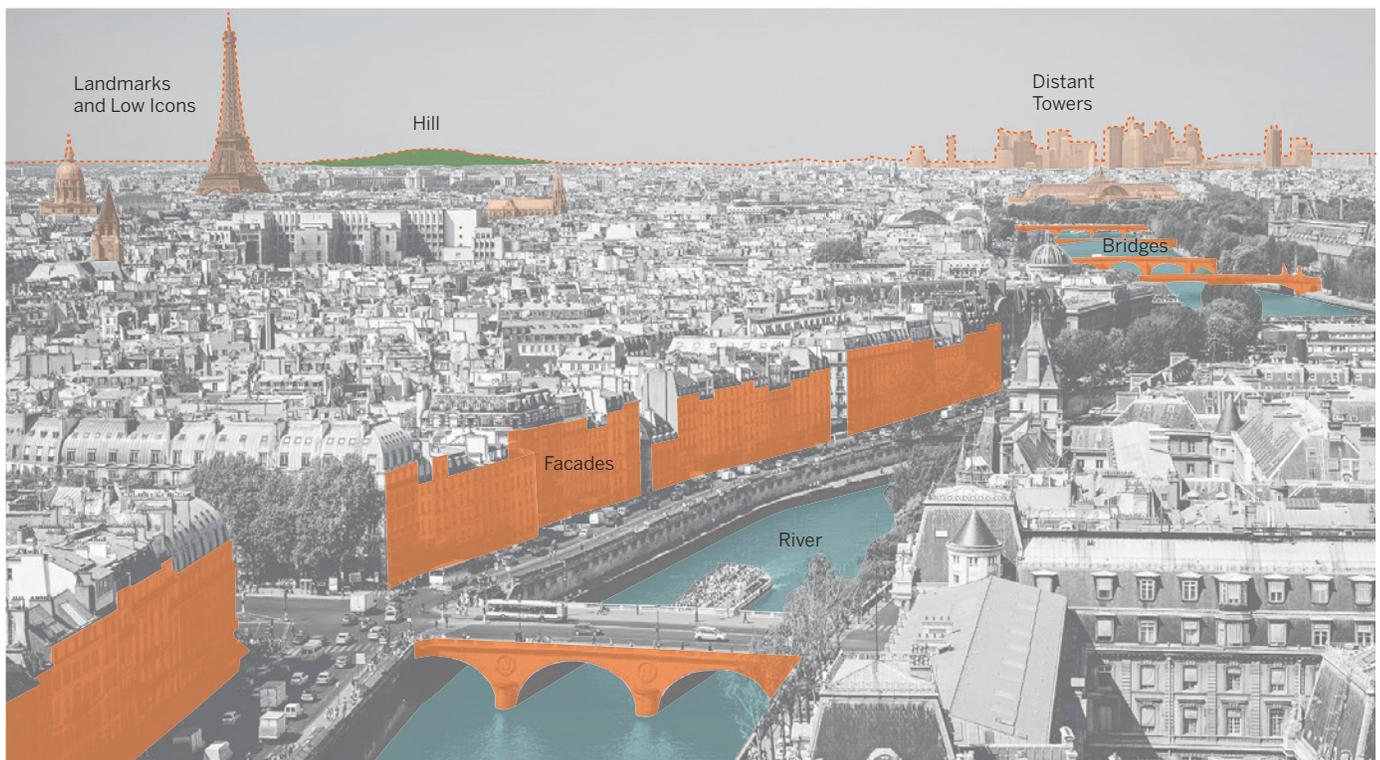
One Canada Square (Pelli Clark Pelli), London, Photo © SOM



50 South 6th, Minneapolis
Photo © SOM



Pan Peninsula, London
Photo © SOM | Bernard McDonagh



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 at right. 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

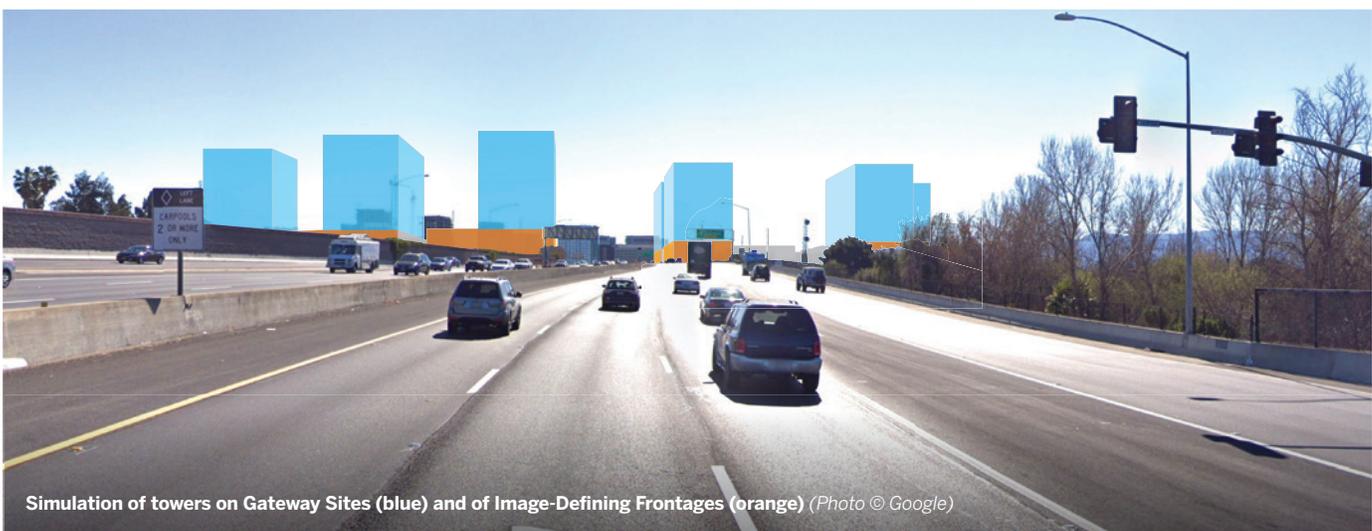
For San José's Downtown guidelines, these studies provide many lessons and ideas. Some apply to private development, and a some that may instruct actions of the City. Among these are:

- Utilize the iconic value of infrastructure (e.g., bridges, highway gateways).
- Well-designed building facades along urban edges (e.g., parks) can create identity.
- 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)

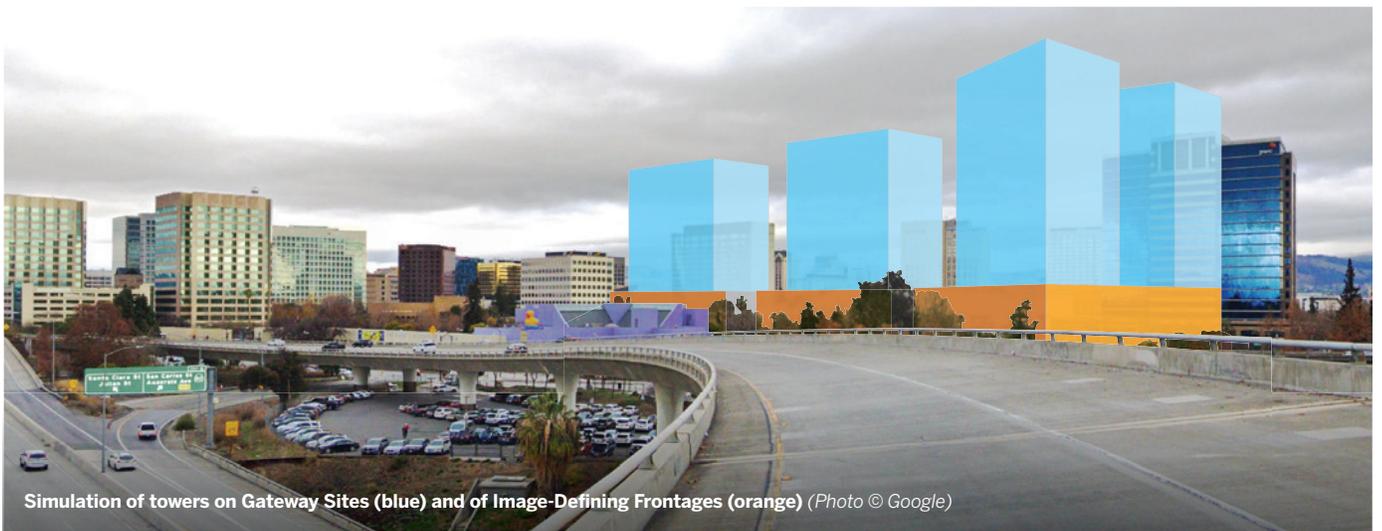
Including the information and lessons learned from the skyline studies, the design guidelines for building form and massing work to create a memorable skyline for Downtown. The image pairs on the pages below show the results of modeling of potential development scenarios for two notable views, from the north along Highway 87 and from the highway ramp entering south

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 San José from the highway ramp to Highway 87, facing northeast (Photo © Google)



Simulation of towers on Gateway Sites (blue) and of Image-Defining Frontages (orange) (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 automobiles.

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.

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.



Level 1 (red) and 2 (pink) laneways in Melbourne's Hoddle Grid (above). The system is dense in many locations, which is enabled by a highly dense downtown core (below, Photo © Google).



- **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.

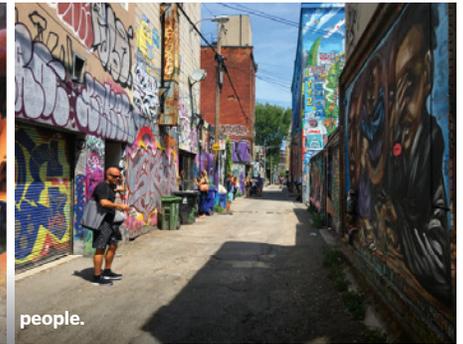
(Local Planning Policies, Melbourne Planning Scheme)

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 can activate an alley.

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)

