



City of San Buenaventura  
Department of Community Services  
Planning Division  
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# DESIGN GUIDELINES

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planning • economics • public policy

and



**R R M   D e s i g n   G r o u p**  
S a n   L u i s   O b i s p o   •   O a k d a l e

*Architecture • Planning • Engineering • Surveying • Interiors • Landscape Architecture*

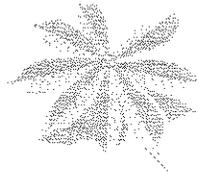
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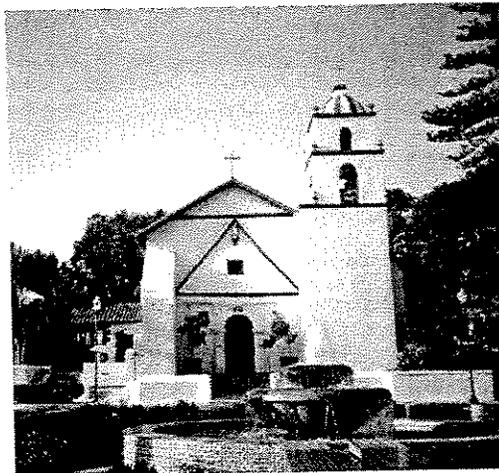
# Overview



❖ Purpose

The City of San Buenaventura (Ventura) is blessed with a beautiful coastal setting framed by the foothills of the Los Padres National Forest, the rich agricultural land of the Oxnard Plain and the Pacific Ocean. Within this scenic setting, the City has grown from a small seaside village to a vibrant urban community of over 100,000 residents, and a key player in the regional economy.

The City's natural beauty is reflected in its rich architectural heritage. Since the founding of Mission San Buenaventura in the late 18th century, each successive period of growth has added a new chapter to the form, character and image of the City. From the adobe and wood-framed buildings of the mission era, to elegant turn-of-the-century Victorian residences, to post-war housing tracts and commercial buildings, the City of today is an eclectic mix of architectural styles each possessing a unique charm and attractiveness.



Mission San Buenaventura

These Design Guidelines are an outgrowth of the community's role as stewards of these natural and human-made resources. They are intended to aid designers, the public and decision-makers by expressing the community's shared vision for the quality and attractiveness expected in new development, both public and private. In some instances the Guidelines are fairly precise. However, they are not rigid and inflexible, nor are they intended to stifle creativity. Their main goal is to ensure that new development enhances the quality

of life in Ventura and preserves its image as a desirable place to live, work and visit.

These Design Guidelines respond directly to Program No. 2.0.2 of the Community Design Element of the City's Comprehensive Plan, which directs the City to "Develop further guidelines consistent with this Element", as a way to achieve the Element's goals and objectives.

Lastly, the vision implied by these Guidelines can only be achieved through a cooperative effort among the City, private property owners and the community at large. In this sense, the Guidelines are a statement of each participant's shared responsibility. The City has a responsibility to implement public improvements that foster private development consistent with these Guidelines, and to provide timely review of private development. These Guidelines will help achieve this goal by providing a greater measure of predictability to the process. Likewise, through participation in the review process, the community



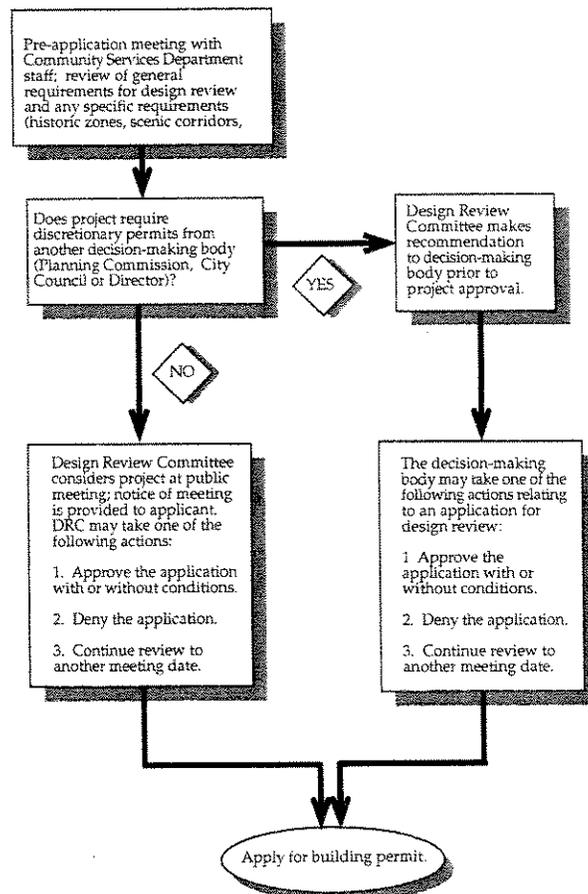
❖ The Design Review Process

should make sure that decision-makers are holding new development accountable to the expectations embodied in these Guidelines.

The City's design review process is illustrated by Figure 1. As with all other development-related matters in Ventura, design review is handled by the Planning Division of the Community Services Department. Anyone considering a development project within the City should first make an appointment to discuss the project and these Guidelines with a member of the Planning Division staff. The staff member can help explain the City's development procedures and determine if design review is required (see discussion on page 4). The staff member can also provide an approximate timetable for the processing of the project and describe any other permits or approvals that may be required. To the extent allowed by the City's codes and ordinances, any additional planning permits will usually be processed concurrently.

Application forms and a complete list of application submittal requirements are available at the Community Services Department.

Figure 1: Design Review Process





❖ **When is Design Review Required?**

Generally speaking, design review is required for all new construction or exterior modifications to buildings except individually-constructed single family and duplex residences (except that alterations to landmark buildings may also require design review). Other types of new construction are exempt from design review, such as minor alterations to commercial properties and most types of agricultural operations.

Design review is governed by Section 15.845 of the City's Zoning Ordinance (see Appendix A). The provisions of this section should be discussed with Planning Division staff before an application for design review is submitted.

❖ **Who Does the Reviewing?**

To handle the task of design review, the City created the *Design Review Committee* (DRC), consisting of five members appointed by the City Council who are design professionals from the community; two of the members are also members of the City Planning Commission and one is a member of the Historic Preservation Committee. When other project approvals are required, the DRC serves in an advisory role to the decision-making body.

The DRC is aided by the staff of the Planning Division of the Community Services Department. Planning staff will prepare a written report to the DRC providing an analysis of the overall design of the project, its consistency with applicable City development codes and standards, and an evaluation of the project's consistency with these Guidelines.

Final decisions of the DRC may be appealed to the City Council. A fee is charged for such appeals.

❖ **What Standards Will Be Used to Judge My Project?**

Design review, by its nature, involves subjective judgements: one person's idea of artistry may appear ugly to another. That is, in part, why the City prepared these Guidelines and also why persons contemplating a development project should meet with City staff to discuss the City's design review process.

In its role as design review authority for the City, the DRC looks at the entire design of a project, considering such factors as how the project relates to the natural features of the site and to surrounding development. The DRC will also try to judge the quality of the experience people will have when living, working or shopping in the development, as well as the effect the development will have on the visual character of the community and quality of life in Ventura.



• *How does the project contribute to the quality of life in Ventura?*

• *Does the design of the project suit the proposed site?*

• *Does the project respect history?*

• *Does the project follow basic principles of good design?*

• *Does the project suit its purpose?*

When considering an application for design review, staff and the DRC will ask the following fundamental questions:

Since buildings and other site development will be a part of the community for years to come, it is important that it contribute in a positive way to the enjoyment of living, working or shopping in the community.

For example, does the project accommodate the natural features of the site, such as views, trees, rock outcroppings, topography, barrancas, the beachfront or shoreline etc.?

One of the goals of the City's design review process is to preserve and enhance buildings and districts that have historical value by virtue of its architecture, historic association or age. For example, when converting a Victorian house to offices, it would usually be unacceptable to replace wood-sash windows with modern materials such as aluminum, and signs would need to respect the style of the building and neighborhood.



Preserve historic architecture.

New development should project a sense of harmony, proportion and balance among its various different components, and should relate to its site and surroundings in a functional and pleasing way.

Does an apartment project look friendly, homelike and livable? For example, if families are expected to live in a development, are there safe, usable outdoor areas? If the project is a commercial building, does it look like a place to shop or do business? Is the design functional?



• Does the project make good use of the site?

• Are materials, forms and other elements of a project suitable for their uses?

❖ How to Use These Guidelines

“Good use” of a site implies taking advantage of the opportunities provided by its natural features. For example, are interior spaces oriented to take advantage of views? Are natural topography, trees and other features preserved and protected? Does the orientation of the building and landscaping provide opportunities for passive solar heating and cooling?

Has maintenance been considered in the choice of materials and finishes? Will trees provide shade where and when it is needed?

These are not the only criteria to be assessed by the DRC in considering the design of new development. Each project and project site is unique and presents its own constraints and opportunities for a good design solution.

These Guidelines are composed of two parts. Part I contains general guidelines that apply to all new development subject to design review. These general guidelines address the following topics:

- Site Design
- Hillside Development
- Architecture
- Landscaping
- Parking lots/Driveways
- Signs
- Walls, Fences and Screening
- Streetscape Improvements

Where appropriate within each design topic, specific guidelines for residential, commercial and industrial development are identified.

Ventura possesses commercial districts, residential neighborhoods, street corridors, and key entryways that are unique and, in some cases, historically significant. Part II provides specific guidelines to address the design challenges in these areas. New chapters may be added from time to time to address design concerns in various focus areas of the City. For example, the City previously adopted a *Downtown Specific Plan* to provide guidance for new development in the downtown area.



# General Guidelines for New Development



❖ Introduction

This chapter provides general guidelines for the design of development in all areas of the City. These general guidelines address the following topics:

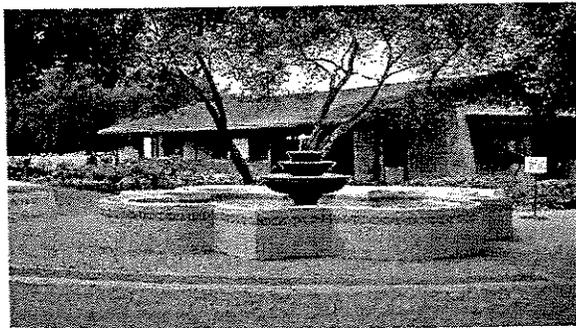
- Site Design
- Hillside Development
- Landscaping
- Parking/Driveways
- Architecture
- Signs
- Walls, Fences and Screening
- Streetscape Improvements

Specific guidelines for different areas of the City may also apply, depending on the location of the property (see Chapter III for maps of areas governed by specific guidelines).

❖ Intent of General Guidelines

The intent of these general guidelines is to result in new development that:

- Is compatible in size, scale, and appearance with the character of Ventura.
- Is attractive and functional, and an asset to the community.
- Provides amenities such as shade, open plazas, seating, fountains and the like, for the enjoyment of the community and visitors.



Fountains and open plazas.

- Preserves natural features of a site, such as native trees, to the extent possible, and protects views of the ocean and the foothills.

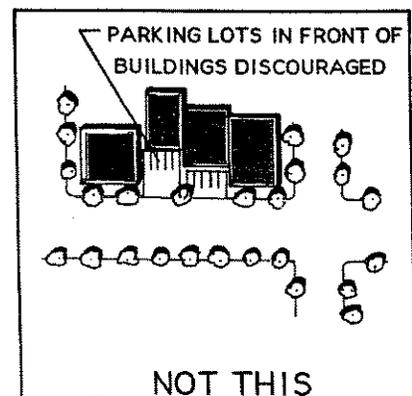
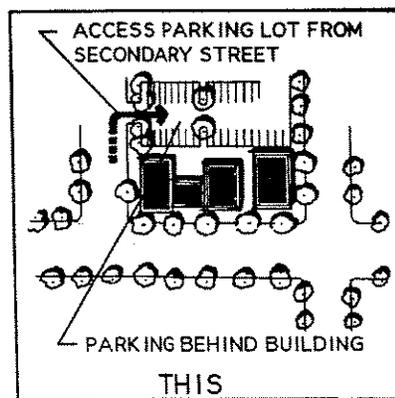


### ❖ Site Design

Site design refers to the arrangement of buildings, parking, landscaping, open spaces and other features on a given development site. Good site design should be sensitive to the context within which the development takes place, mindful of the scale and orientation of surrounding development, and should consider such site-specific factors as slope, existing vegetation, access for vehicles and pedestrians, and the presence of natural hazards. Good site planning should also consider the privacy of surrounding properties, and where possible, take advantage of opportunities for natural lighting and heating.

#### General Guidelines

1. Buildings, landscaping, parking and other development features should be arranged in a manner that is *compatible with the size, scale and appearance of nearby development*.
2. Areas of a site not used for parking, circulation (both pedestrian and vehicular), storage or other uses, should be landscaped with drought tolerant plantings.
3. *Parking should be screened* and visually subordinate to the development. Parking lots should not overwhelm views of a site or views from the site and should incorporate landscaping for all areas not used for vehicle storage, access or circulation.



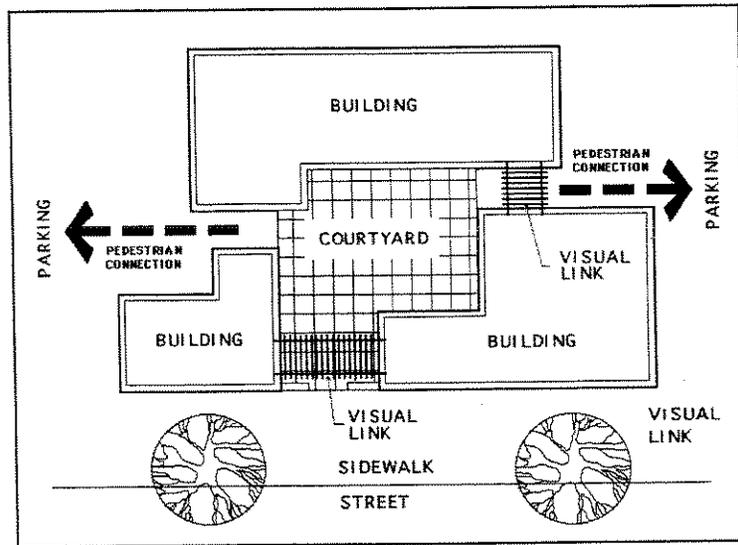
Parking behind buildings.

4. *Site planning should emphasize a strong relationship to the adjoining street(s) and encourage pedestrian circulation and access. Pedestrian access should be separate from vehicular access, where feasible.*
5. Buildings, parking and other improvements should be located in a manner that *protects the natural features of a site, such as barrancas and significant vegetation.*



*Guidelines for Commercial Development*

- 6. Site plans should provide safe and *well-defined pedestrian connections* from buildings to parking areas, from buildings to the adjoining street(s), and among buildings on the same site. Pedestrian connections between commercial development and surrounding residential neighborhoods should also be provided.
- 7. Landscaped areas should be clustered on a site to maximize their effect on the public view.
- 8. *Mixed use development*, with ground-floor retail and upper floor residential, should be encouraged where permitted by zoning.
- 1. Buildings, sidewalks, paths and parking lots should be located to minimize conflicts between pedestrian and vehicular circulation on a site.
- 2. Whenever possible, new commercial buildings should be arranged on a site to *create outdoor "rooms" or courtyards* to prevent rows of barracks-like structures. When this type of arrangement is not practical, buildings on a site should be linked visually through architectural style, colors and materials, signage, landscaping, design details like light fixtures, and the use of an arcade, trellis or other open structure.



Create outdoor "rooms" or courtyards.

- 3. *Loading and trash facilities should be screened* from view and located at the rear of the structures, away from the street.



4. In general, buildings on a site should be oriented with the main entrance toward the street where primary vehicular access is provided. Exceptions may include commercial or office "centers" that orient around parking or shared open space. The design of these projects should also consider the appearance from the streets. In such cases, the building should have its major facade parallel to the street.



Entrance oriented to street.

5. In commercial districts, where no street yard is required, the lower floors should be built at the required setback line. Upper floors may be appropriate for varied setbacks to accommodate balconies, seating and other architectural treatments. A plaza or alcove may be provided at ground level for the benefit of pedestrians and /or to allow outdoor seating or dining. However, pedestal buildings (in which the upper floors project over the first floor) should be discouraged.



Outdoor seating and pedestrian activity.



**Guidelines for Multi-Family Residential Development**

1. The following techniques should be considered in the design of multi-family residential development:

- *Varying front yard setbacks within the same structure.*
- *Staggered and/or reversed unit plans to provide variability in the outward appearance of the building(s).*
- *Variety of orientations to the buildings to avoid monotony.*



Varying setbacks and hidden parking.

2. Long rows of garages or parking spaces should be avoided.
3. Parking areas in multi-family residential projects should be located behind the building where possible.
4. Landscaped islands should be provided on the average of one for every ten spaces in parking lots.
5. Safe and efficient access to usable open space should be incorporated into housing projects. Private usable open space should be provided for every dwelling unit.

**Guidelines for Industrial Development**

1. Site design for industrial development should consider the following:

- *Controlled site access*
- *Service, storage and loading areas located at the rear or side of buildings*
- *Screening of storage and outdoor work areas and equipment*
- *Landscaping, signage and other features to emphasize the main entrance*
- *Landscaping for all areas not developed for parking, storage, buildings, etc.*



2. Landscaping should be provided around the main entrance to the building and between the main entrance and adjoining parking areas.
3. Where industrial development abuts non-industrial uses, appropriate buffering techniques should be employed such as setbacks, screening and landscaping, or some combination of these.
4. On-site circulation should be designed to provide safe and efficient access for delivery vehicles, visitors and employees, and pedestrians.
5. Loading and delivery areas should be clearly marked with directional signage where multiple access points are provided.
6. Loading areas should be screened from view and designed to accommodate trucks without having to back onto or otherwise use the adjoining street.



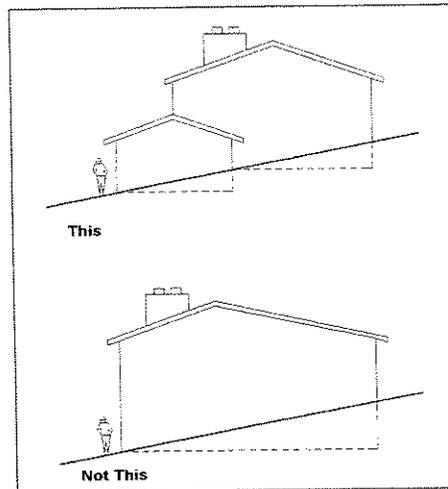
❖Hillside Development

Guidelines

The foothills of the Los Padres National Forest reach the coast along the northern boundaries of the City. Hillside neighborhoods enjoy panoramic views of the ocean and the Channel Islands. In addition to providing spectacular views, the hills provide an important visual backdrop that should be preserved.

1. Factors to be considered in hillside development include:

- Protection of people and property from unstable natural or manufactured slopes.
- Preservation of views from the hills and views to the hills.
- Protection of privacy.
- Drainage and erosion.
- Grading and disruption of the natural topography.
- Protection of animal and plant life.
- Fire protection and prevention and emergency access.



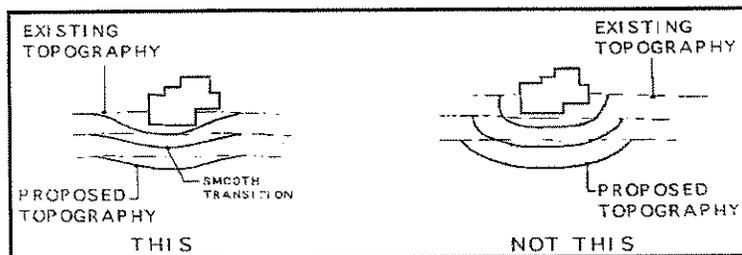
Stair step foundations.

2. Grading should generally conform to the following guidelines, which are based upon the natural slope of the site prior to grading.

- A. Slope between 0-15%. Large portions of a building site may be graded, so long as all applicable provisions of the City's grading standards are strictly complied with.
- B. Slopes 15+ - 25%. Some grading may occur but the overall natural character of a site should be retained. Padding of lots is discouraged in favor of custom or split-level foundations which step down the hillside and conform to the natural topography of a site.



- C. Slopes 25+ - 30%. Limited grading may occur, however major topographic features should be retained in their natural form. Development should employ special architectural design features and techniques to maximize the extent to which new development conforms to the natural topography.
  - D. Slopes greater than 30%. Development should generally be prohibited on this slope category. Limited grading may be allowed to provide access to legal lots of record if it can be clearly demonstrated that safety, environmental, and aesthetic impacts can be avoided or minimized.
3. Grading should be designed to:
- A. Conserve natural topographic features and appearances by means of land sculpturing to *blend graded slopes and benches with natural topography*.



Blend graded slopes with natural topography.

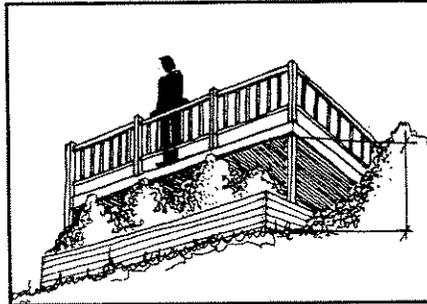
- B. Retain natural topographic features such as arroyos and creeks, and natural vegetation.
4. All graded areas should be protected from wind and water erosion through acceptable slope stabilization methods such as planting, retaining walls and netting. *Interim erosion control plans should be required* and should be certified by a qualified grading engineer.
5. *Manufactured slopes should not exceed 50% or 2:1 unless a soils report and stabilization study are prepared that demonstrate how a greater slope may be safely created while complying with the intent of these Guidelines and all other applicable provisions of the City's grading regulations.*
6. *All hillside development should comply with the City's fire safety regulations including, but not limited to, the number of access points; driveway length and width; distances between dwellings; fuel management; water flow and hydrant placement; and fire retardant materials.*



7. Erosion should be minimized through the *use of proper site drainage* directed to catch basins or siltation basins, as well as energy absorbing devices.
8. *Natural drainage courses should be protected* from grading activities.
9. The maximum coverage of a building site with impervious materials in a hillside area should generally not exceed 40% of the gross building site area.
10. *Native trees and other significant natural vegetation should be preserved* on a site whenever possible. If removal of native vegetation is required, reestablishment of comparable plant material should be required at a ratio of at least 2:1.
11. Water and energy conservation techniques, such as drip irrigation and drought tolerant plants, should be used in hillside areas.
12. Landscaping within hillside areas should make maximum use of textures and colors to *blend new development with existing native vegetation* and to soften the appearance of retaining walls, buildings and pavement.
13. The exterior finish of *buildings should blend with the natural surroundings* by using earth tone colors and avoiding reflective materials and finishes.
14. Buildings should be sited in a manner that will:
  - A. *Retain outward views from each building;*
  - B. *Preserve or enhance vistas, especially those from public places.*
  - C. *Preserve visually significant rock outcroppings, barrancas, native plants, and areas of historic significance.*
  - D. *Be compatible with the topography and vegetation.*
15. To preserve views of the hills, the highest point of any *structure should not be located above the ridgeline*, which should be used as a backdrop for buildings. The structure should be placed to help conceal manufactured slopes.

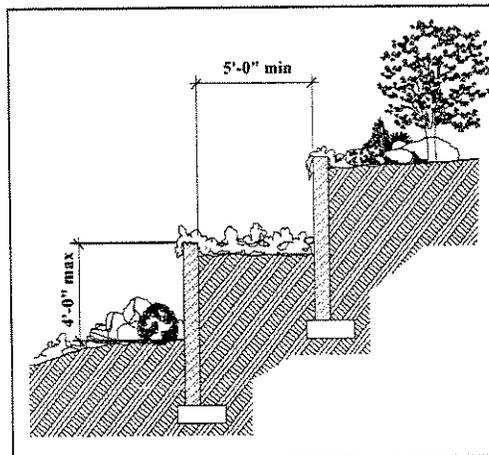


- 16. Exposed pole-type of supports greater than 5 feet above finish grade are discouraged.



Screen deck supports.

- 17. Retaining walls outside the building footprint should generally be a maximum of 4 feet high.



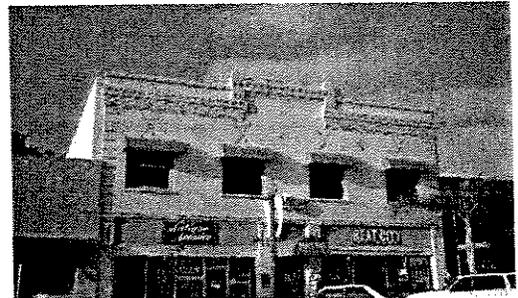
Terrace retaining structures.

- 18. Retaining walls should be no closer than 5 feet to another retaining wall or building wall.
- 19. Exposed retaining walls facing roadways should be no greater in height than 5 feet and should be faced with natural materials such as rock.



❖ Architecture

No single architectural style prevails in Ventura. The City's eclectic mix of architecture reflects distinct eras of the City's development, including "mission" style buildings, Victorian, post-war tracts, and modern glass and steel. The absence of a dominant style underscores the importance of considering the context within which new development takes place. For example, areas with an identifiable architectural character should be reinforced and enhanced. In all cases, new development should employ the highest quality craftsmanship and materials.



Various architectural styles.

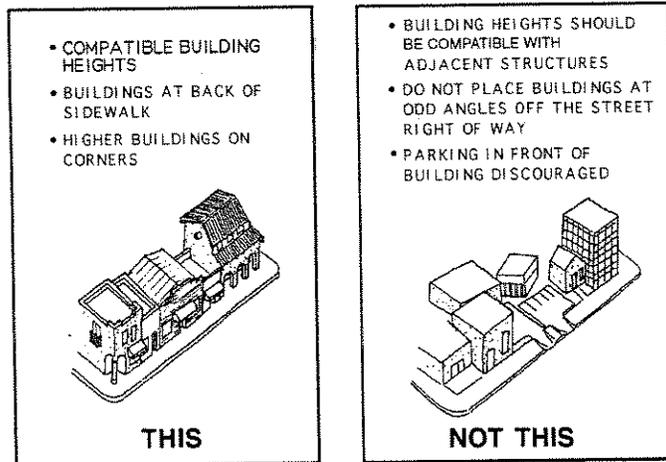
General Guidelines

1. *The design of new buildings should respect the City's scale and character. Architecture should emphasize variety and diversity so that the fabric of the community's architectural character is expanded and enhanced. Moreover, buildings should possess a human scale and be "pedestrian friendly".*
2. *Desirable design elements and qualities that should be incorporated into new development includes:*
  - *Variety of surface texture.*
  - *Significant wall articulation (awnings, trellises, etc.).*
  - *Large windows at street level for commercial buildings that provide display areas and allow shoppers to see inside the store.*
  - *Roof overhangs and arcades.*
  - *Regular rhythm of windows.*
  - *Significant landscaping that complements the buildings.*
  - *A comprehensive sign program that is incorporated into the building design.*
  - *Detailing such as tile accents, pop-outs or window trim*

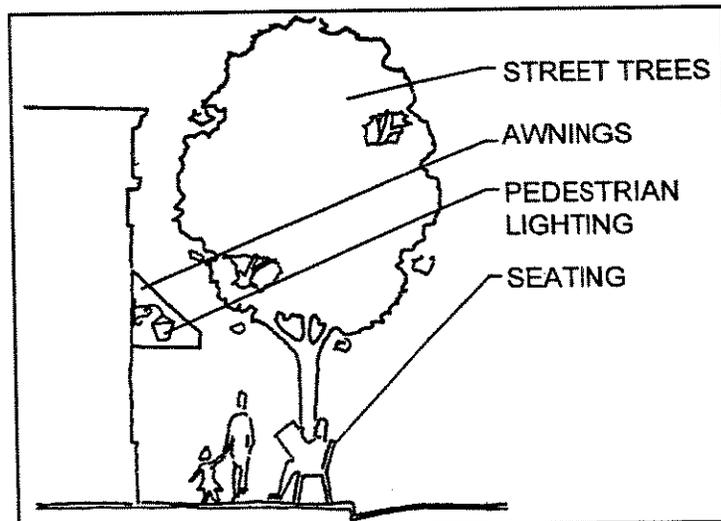


3. Architectural scale, for purposes of these Guidelines, is the relationship between the size of the new buildings and the size of surrounding buildings. Where an area has an established scale, new development should generally match this scale, or at least provide a transition between adjacent or nearby structures and new development.

Also, scale refers to how the size of the building relates to the size of a human being (human scale). The apparent scale of a building can be reduced through the proper use of window patterns, roof overhangs, equipment bays that screen unsightly elements, awnings, moldings, fixtures, the use of darker or subdued colors, upper story setbacks, building and roof articulation and other details.



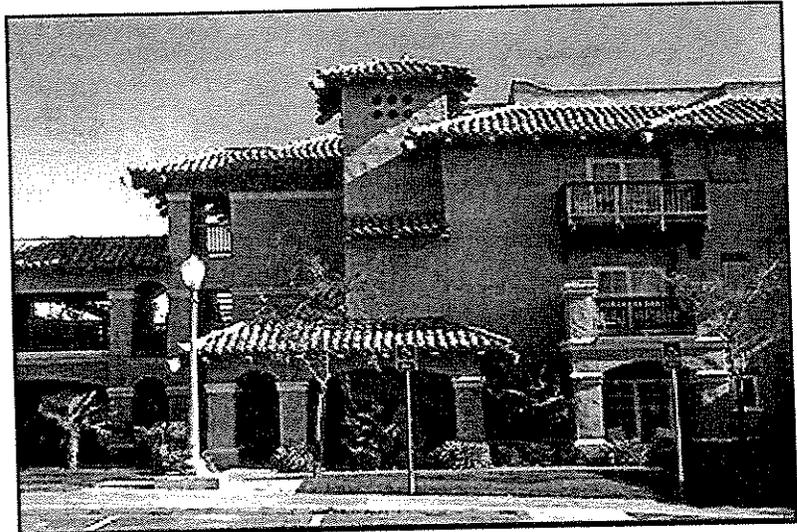
Architectural scale and orientation.



Pedestrian scale.



4. The height and *scale of new development should be compatible with that of surrounding buildings* where an established character is apparent. New development should provide a transition from the height of adjacent structures to the maximum height of new development.



Building details and articulation help provide scale.

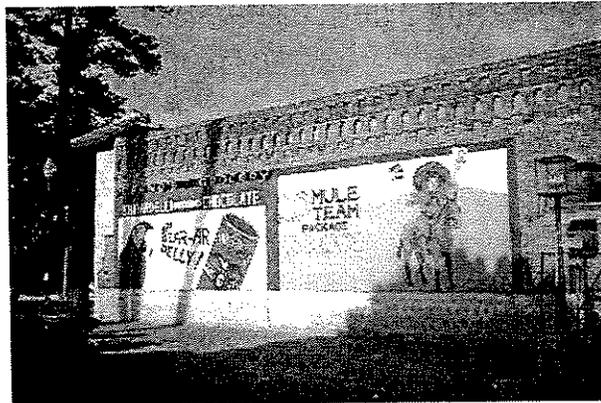
5. Tall dominating *structures should be broken up by creating horizontal emphasis* through the use of trim, adding awnings, eaves or other ornamentation, and by using a combination of complimentary colors.
6. The *roofline of large structures should be articulated* and not run in a continuous plane.



Varied roof line.

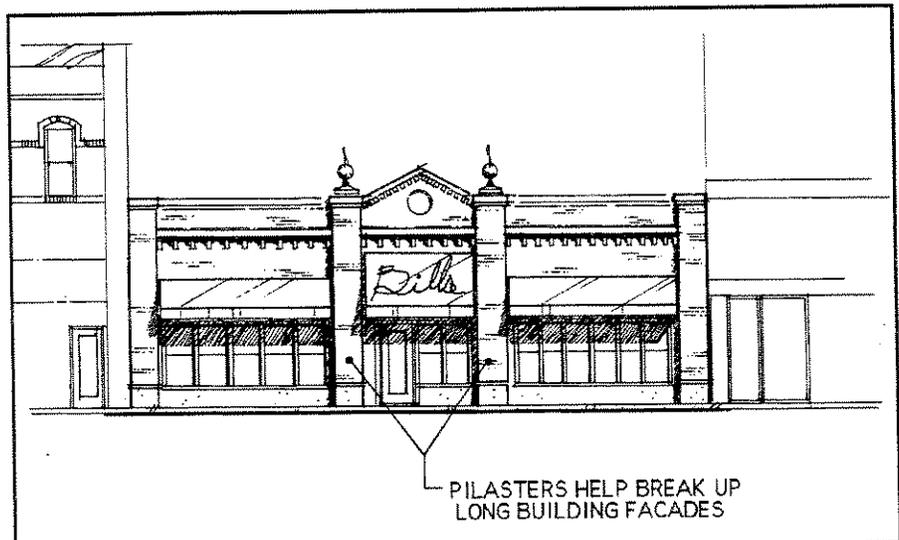


7. Large blank walls should be avoided where possible. Where large blank walls adjacent to pedestrian areas are unavoidable, they should be treated with architectural detailing and landscaping or other elements such as art work to help soften their impact.



Murals and architectural detailing.

8. Long building facades should incorporate vertical elements, such as pilasters, to help break the facade into sections.

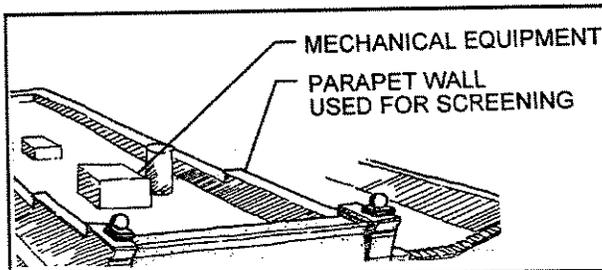


Vertical elements break facade into proportional segments.



*Guidelines for  
Commercial  
Development*

9. *All roof-top equipment should be screened from view.*

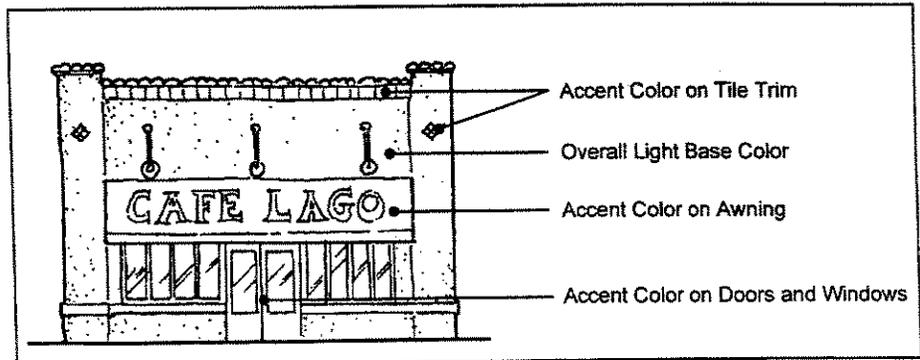


Screen rooftop equipment.

10. Roofing materials such as corrugated metal and other *highly reflective surfaces are discouraged*. Where easily visible from above, "built up" roofs are discouraged in favor of more attractive roof types and materials.
11. *New development should express its own uniqueness* of location, tenant, or structure, designed especially for the particular building site and not a copy of a generic building type which might be used anywhere.
1. *Large buildings should be designed to reduce massiveness* by using such features as recessed facades and articulation in the building mass.
2. *Taller buildings* (with two or more stories) *should be stepped back at the upper levels* so that the pedestrian scale of the street is not overwhelmed.
3. *The main entry to a building should be oriented to the adjacent street*. An exception would be large centers that orient around a shared parking lot or other common feature. Entries should be emphasized with planters, special lighting fixtures, textured paving and similar features.
4. The use of standardized "corporate" architectural styles is strongly discouraged.



5. Large areas of intense light color should be avoided. *Subdued colors usually work best for the base color, while bright accent colors are appropriate for trim, windows, doors and key architectural elements.*



Building colors.

6. Building colors should be complimentary, with contrasts provided by accent detailing or trim. Exceptions may be approved when bright or contrasting colors are deemed appropriate to the building's context, and architectural character.

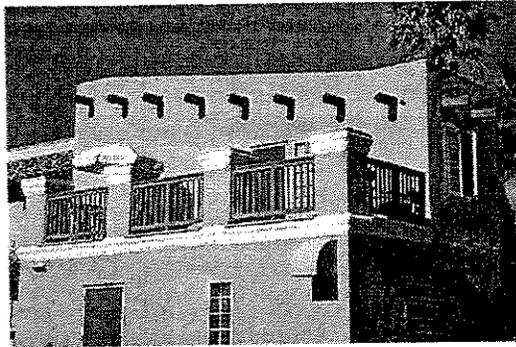
**Guidelines for Industrial Development**

1. *Long unarticulated facades should be avoided* in industrial buildings, especially on the street elevation.
2. The entry to an industrial building should be architecturally tied to the form and mass of the main building and not appear as an "add-on" or afterthought.
3. *Windows and doors should be in scale with the building elevation* on which they appear. Recessed openings, windows and doors provide depth and can help break up the apparent mass of a large wall.
4. Design elements to be avoided include:
  - *Highly reflective surfaces.*
  - *Large, blank unarticulated wall surfaces.*
  - *Materials with high maintenance costs.*
5. When mansards roofs are employed, they should wrap around the entire perimeter of the building.



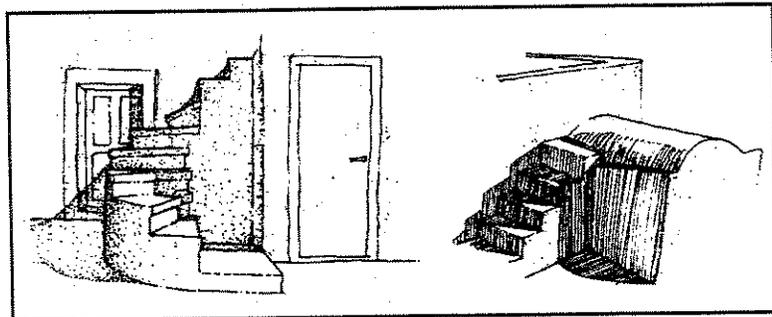
*Guidelines for  
Multi-Family  
Residential  
Development*

1. Multi-family residential buildings should include design elements to add visual interest and to *avoid a "box-like" appearance*. Elements such as balconies, porches, arcades, dormers, and cross gables should be considered. Hipped or gable roofs are preferred to mansard-type roofs.



Balconies add interest.

2. Large multi-family residential projects should be broken up into smaller groups of structures.
3. To the extent possible, the entrances to individual units should be visible from nearby parking areas. Building entrances should be emphasized through the use of lighting and landscaping.
4. Exterior stairways should be architecturally integrated into the design of the building. Thin, open metal, prefabricated stairs are discouraged.



Stairs integrated with design.

5. Carports, detached garages and *accessory structures* should be *architecturally integrated into the overall design* of the project with similar materials and details as the residences.
6. Mechanical equipment, whether on the roof or the ground, should be adequately screened from view.
7. New multi-family development in existing neighborhoods should be consistent with the style, character and scale of surrounding development.



**Guidelines for  
Single Family  
Residential  
Development**

1. Garages should be subordinate to the main living area when viewed from the street. Where possible, *the garage should be recessed behind the dwelling* and not located between the main living area and the street.
2. Dwellings should *incorporate porches, trellises, landscaping and other features* in the front yard to help extend the living area toward the street and help soften the transition between the street and the dwelling.
3. Landscaping, windows, fences and other features in the front yard should be chosen to provide views of the front yard and to provide defensible space.



❖ Landscaping

Landscaping plays a key role in new development by providing shade and protection from the elements, by helping to soften the transition between the street and developed areas, by providing color and texture, by providing privacy and buffers between buildings and by providing relief from the more developed urban environment in the form of open space and parks.

Landscape materials must be appropriate to the local climate and soil conditions, and should be drought tolerant so that scarce water resources are preserved. Street trees must be capable of withstanding sea breezes and should be inexpensive to maintain. Landscaping in public places should be ornamental and not produce undesirable by-products such as nuts and fruits that will add to maintenance and liability costs.

Guidelines

1. Landscaping should achieve the following objectives as relevant to a particular project.
  - *Enhance the aesthetic appearance of development.*
  - *Help buffer the transition between residential and abutting non-residential development.*
  - *Help control erosion.*
  - *Screen incompatible land uses*
  - *Preserve the visual integrity of neighborhoods and commercial districts, and enhance pedestrian and vehicular traffic and safety by clearly distinguishing walkways and access points.*
2. Landscaping and other open spaces should be integrated into the overall site design for a project. *Landscaping should enhance and complement the design of the building(s), preserve and enhance views, provide buffers, transition areas and screening.*
3. All areas not occupied by buildings, parking and access and other features should be landscaped.
4. Landscaping should employ drought-tolerant varieties of plants.
5. Native and other *mature trees should be preserved* and incorporated into the design of a project, to the extent practical.
6. Landscaped areas should *incorporate a hierarchy of plantings* from grasses and ground covers to shrubs to trees.



7. Some commonly used planting design concepts include:
  - *Grouping specimen trees and providing rows at major focal points and entries.*
  - *Flowering vines on walls and arbors.*
  - *Pots, vases, window boxes and raised planters.*
  - *Trees to create canopy and shade, especially in parking areas and along pedestrian ways.*
  - *Flowering trees or seasonal flowers to provide color.*
  - *Berms, plantings and low walls to screen parking areas.*
  
8. Turf areas are water intensive and require a high degree of maintenance. For these reasons, turf areas should be minimized and used primarily to provide usable open space areas. The design and location of turf areas should consider such factors as accessibility, ease of maintenance and water conservation. Guidelines for turf use include the following:
  - *Limit turf to 10%-20% of the total landscaped area of a site.*
  - *Do not use turf in areas narrower than about 4 feet.*
  - *Locate turf in active play areas such as common areas, play fields and other usable open space areas.*



❖ Parking

**P**arking is a critical design component for new development, especially commercial businesses. Parking must be convenient to the businesses being served and provide safe and efficient access from adjoining street(s). The portion of a site devoted to parking should be kept to a minimum so long as adequate storage of vehicles is provided. Site planning should not be driven by the need for parking, but rather should be integrated into an overall concept that provides adequate, attractive landscaping and maintains pedestrian and bicycle access as well.

*General Guidelines*

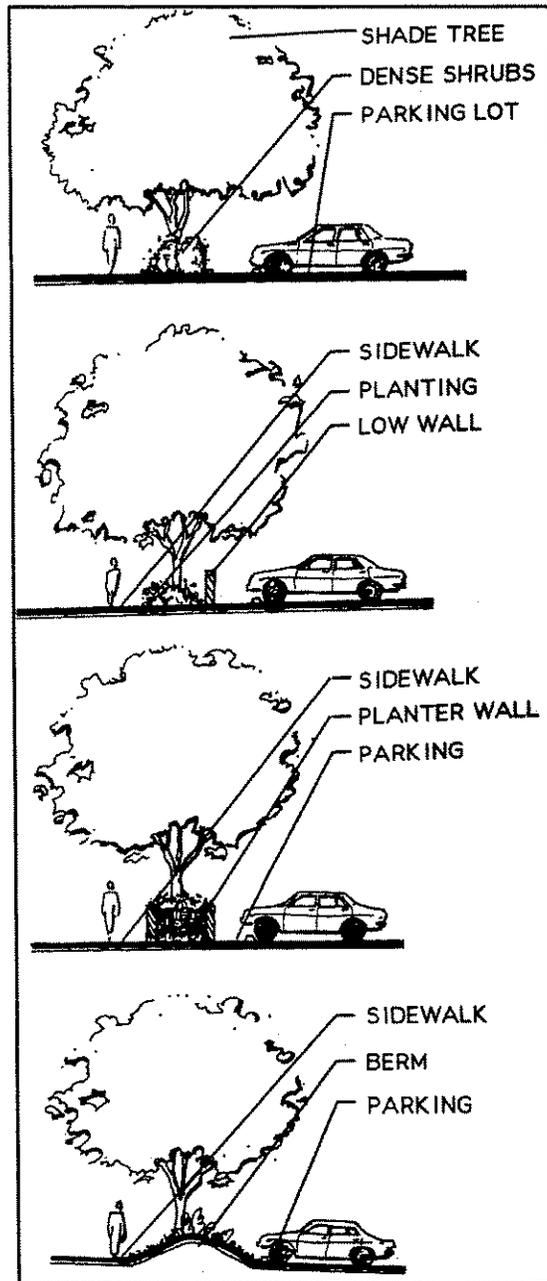
1. *Separate circulation systems for vehicles and pedestrians* should be provided where practical. Pedestrian linkages among buildings on a site is especially important to facilitate customer safety and minimize the use of vehicles on the site.
2. *Parking lots should be landscaped* both on the interior and around the perimeter. In general, a planter should be provided after every sixth parking stall and should generally have minimum dimensions of four feet by fifteen feet. However, there should be flexibility to this requirement to reflect site constraints, especially on smaller parcels.
3. Driveways to parking lots should be located as far from street intersections as possible so that adequate stacking room along the street is maintained.
4. Where possible, the entrance to *parking lots should be located on side streets* to maintain the pedestrian flow and avoid conflicts between vehicles and pedestrians.
5. Parking areas should be designed to link the buildings with the street sidewalk system, creating an extension of the pedestrian environment. Design features such as textured paving, trellis or special landscaping can help emphasize these connections.

*Guidelines for Non-Residential Development*

1. *Trees should be located throughout a parking lot* and not merely at the ends of parking rows.
2. Landscaping within parking areas should be protected from encroaching vehicles by concrete curbing or raised planting areas.



- Plants, berms and low walls, or a combination of these features, should be used to help screen parking from adjoining streets. Lowering the grade of the parking lot from the street may help block views of parked cars.

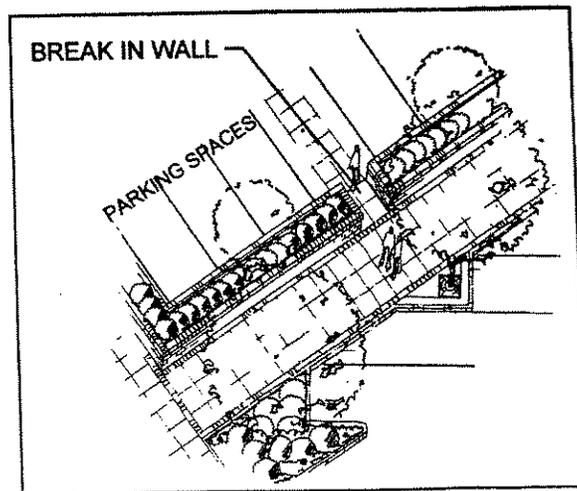


Various methods to screen parking.

- Parking areas should be designed so that pedestrians walk parallel to moving vehicles.



5. *Parking should be located at the rear of buildings* whenever possible to help screen parked cars and pavement areas and to emphasize pedestrian access.
6. Pedestrian aisles should be separated from vehicle circulation routes in parking areas, whenever possible.
7. *Common driveways* that provide access to more than one site are encouraged.
8. Parking stalls oriented at 90° generally provide the most efficient parking design. However, angled parking should be encouraged for large parking lots if it helps to accommodate more landscaping between rows of stalls and at the ends of rows.
9. Shared parking between adjacent businesses and/or developments is encouraged so long as parking for businesses does not adversely impact adjacent residential areas.
10. When walls are used to screen parking, breaks should be provided to allow pedestrian circulation.



Pedestrian connection from parking to street.



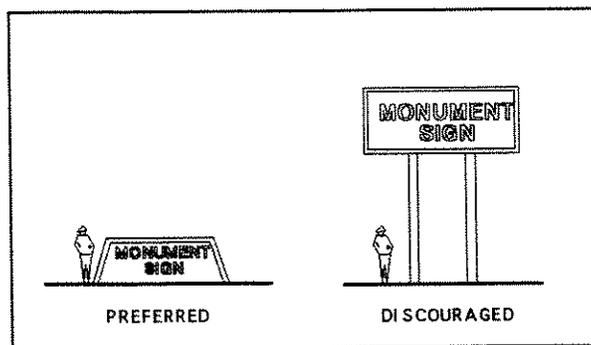
❖Signs

Signs play an important role in the success of any business by providing identification and needed advertising. When signs are integrated into the architectural design of buildings they provide a personal quality that contributes to the ambiance of a commercial district, especially those with unique and/or historical character. Conversely, signs may intrude upon otherwise pleasant surroundings when they are applied as an afterthought. The guidelines that follow are intended to balance the legitimate advertising needs of businesses with the need to prevent visual clutter that detracts from the character of the City and the overall business environment.

These guidelines are intended to supplement the City's Sign Regulations contained in Chapter 15.620 of the City Zoning Ordinance.

Guidelines

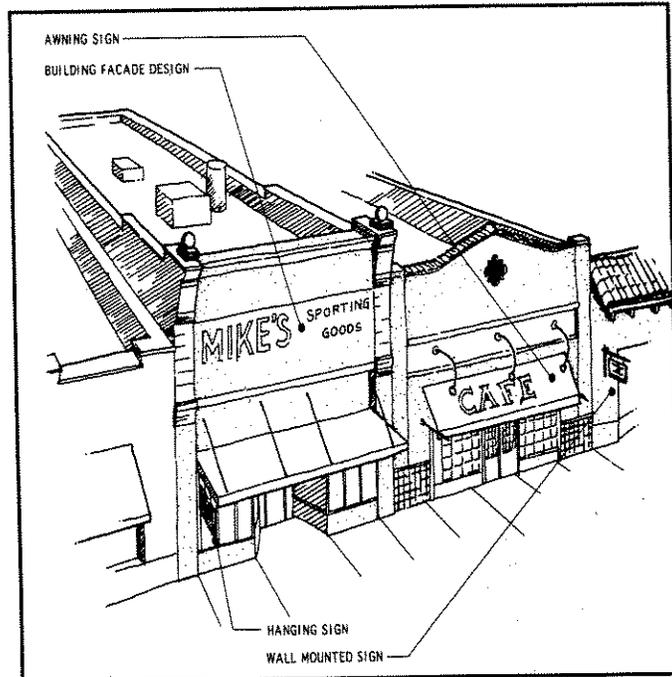
1. Buildings should be designed with a precise concept for adequate signage. *Signs should be integrated into the design of buildings* and should compliment the architecture.
2. Provisions for the placement of signs, the scale of signage in relation to the building, and sign readability should be considered in developing the sign concept for a project.
3. All signage should be compatible with the building and site design relative to colors, materials and placement, and should respect established architectural and/or historical character.
4. *Alternatives to internally-illuminated sign cabinets* are strongly encouraged.
5. Stark contrasts in signs should be avoided.
6. *Monument-type signs are preferred over tall pole signs* for business identification whenever possible. Where several tenants occupy the same site, individual wall mounted signs are appropriate in combination with a monument sign identifying the development address.



Example of a pedestrian-scale monument sign.



7. In commercial and retail districts, *hanging signs and awning signs* should be used to provide information for pedestrians.



Awning and signage integrated with building.

8. Custom signs which are unique and creative are encouraged, provided that the style of the sign complements the style and design of the building. Historic or nostalgic signs that are in themselves architectural features should be retained.

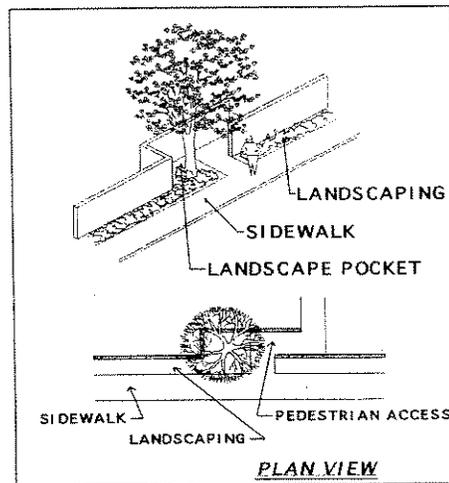


❖ Walls,  
Screening  
and  
Lighting

Guidelines

**W**alls and fences provide needed screening in addition to privacy and security. When integrated with landscaping and other site development details, they combine attractiveness with utility.

1. Walls should be kept *as low as possible* in commercial areas so long as their effectiveness for screening and/or privacy is not impaired.
2. Screen walls should be designed to be *compatible with the style and materials of the architecture* of a site. Landscaping should be used in combination with such walls whenever possible.
3. Long expanses of walls or fences should be *interrupted with offsets* and provided with accents to prevent monotony. *Landscape pockets and pedestrian access* through walls should be provided.



Example of offset wall with landscaping.

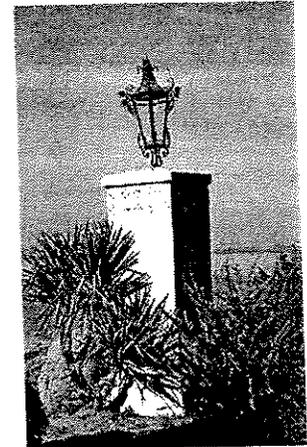
4. Screening of outdoor storage should generally be solid, with a minimum height of six feet and a maximum height of 10 feet, in accordance with the City's fence height regulations. Chain link fencing with redwood slats may be appropriate for screening when not visible from the street.
5. Where screening is required, a *combination of elements* should be used, including solid fences, walls, landscaped fences, landscaped berms and other landscaping.
6. Exterior equipment should be screened from view whether on the roof, on the side of a building or on the ground. Where screening is impractical, such equipment should be painted to be as unobtrusive as possible. Screening should be architecturally compatible with the building.



- 7. Lighting should be designed to *confine the light within the site boundaries* and to provide safety and security. All building entrances and pedestrian ways should be adequately lighted.
- 8. Light fixtures should be designed to be *architecturally compatible* with the main structures on a site.



Up-lighting of sign.



Example of lighting.

- 9. Lighting should be *shielded from neighboring properties* and directed at a specific task or target. Exposed bulbs should be prohibited.
- 10. Up-lighting of building elements, details and trees are effective and attractive lighting techniques that should be encouraged.

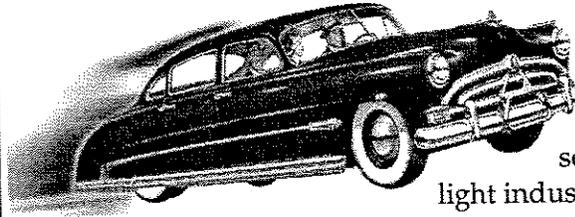


# Design Guidelines for Thompson Boulevard



❖ History

Thompson Boulevard has had a long history in the City and that has contributed heavily to its present day look. Originally designed to serve as the coastal State highway, Thompson Boulevard was wide, straight and contained few stops and traffic signals. Many highway-oriented uses were developed along the corridor including motels, auto repair and sales, service stations, fast food, and a variety of light industrial and service uses.



Today, Thompson Boulevard remains one of the City's primary thoroughfare streets that conducts large volumes of traffic between the downtown and outlying residential neighborhoods. Portions of the street are still used for "cruising", and there still remains a significant number of auto-related business and light industrial uses. Thompson also serves as a neighborhood shopping area for many of the surrounding residential neighborhoods. Thus, Thompson Boulevard is a unique blend of historic automobile related businesses and a residential neighborhood with traditional neighborhood conveniences. It is an area in transition with high potential to become an exciting mixed use area.

❖ Organization

The guidelines that follow were developed with input from residents and business owners. They are intended to support the historic architecture and highway era look of Thompson Boulevard.

This chapter provides guidelines for both new development and renovations to existing structures along Thompson Boulevard between San Jon Road and Main Street. The stretch of Thompson Boulevard that this chapter addresses is shown in shaded tones in Figure 1. These guidelines address the following topics:

- Site Design
- Building Design
- Landscaping
- Signs
- Maintenance

Each topic will include general guidelines for Thompson Boulevard, as well as more specific guidelines for two sub-areas: 1) Residential, and 2) Commercial, with a "transition area" between. Figure 1 shows the location of sub-areas. However, there are no specific boundaries between sub-areas. Though each sub-area attempts to create a unique overall character, there will be a combination of both within the "transition area". In the "transition area", the residential-looking buildings should follow residential-area guidelines and the commercial buildings should follow the commercial area guidelines.



❖ **Character and Image**

The overall intent of the Thompson Boulevard guidelines is to encourage new development and renovations that reflect the historic highway era architecture. Some existing historic buildings include the Bandar Building, Mission Bell Café, and Firestone Building.

The desired architectural character along Thompson Boulevard includes: 1) Traditional single-family residential homes, 2) Multi-family apartment buildings, and 3) Nostalgic highway-oriented buildings. Single-family residences should be consistent with early 1900's architecture, including California Bungalow, Spanish Mission, and Tudor styles. Multi-family and commercial buildings should portray a more flamboyant highway era oriented theme.

"Nostalgic car culture theme" and "highway era" have been used to describe the desired character of this unique street. The images that these statements bring to mind are those of the 50's cruising strip or highway. Architecture and design of the 50's largely revolved around the automobile. It also borrowed geometric, streamlined, rounded, neon, glass block, and bright polished surfaces from the Art Deco period (1920's and 1930's). These elements fit well with the car culture and were blended to create a uniquely 50's look.

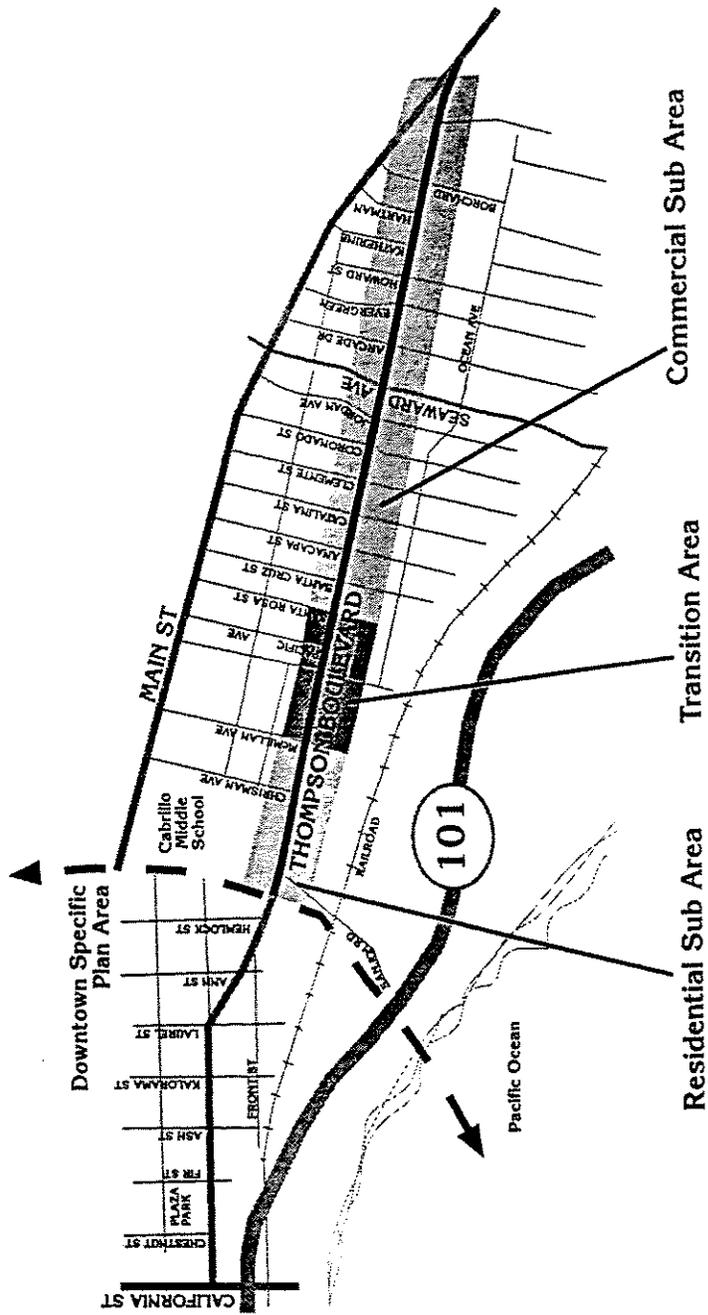


Figure 1

VENTURA DESIGN GUIDELINES Thompson Boulevard

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❖ Site Design

Site design refers to the arrangement and relationship of buildings, parking, pedestrian spaces and landscaping to each other, as well as to roadways such as Thompson Boulevard. The scale of buildings, the size of the outdoor spaces between buildings, and space between buildings and parking should be designed to provide a comfortable pedestrian environment while creating the desired commercial character described earlier.

General Guidelines

1. Orient buildings toward Thompson Boulevard. New buildings should be located at back of sidewalk with minimal setback. Refer to page 19 of Citywide Guidelines for graphic examples.
2. Parking should be concentrated in areas away from the street, behind buildings when possible. Refer to page 9 of Citywide Guidelines for graphic example.
3. Low walls, berms and/or planting should be used to buffer parking lots from the street scene.



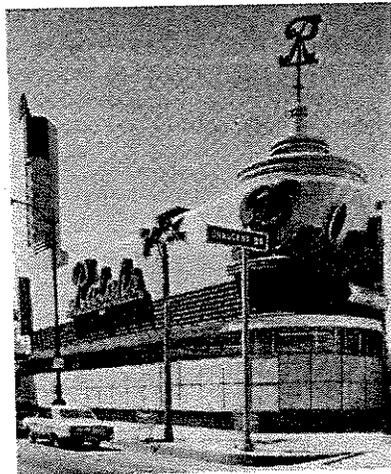
Landscaped berm helps buffer parking lot.

4. Parking lot entrances should be shared with adjacent properties where possible to minimize the number of driveway entrances along Thompson Boulevard.
5. Service, utility, loading, and trash areas should be carefully screened and integrated into the site plan in a way that does not detract from the public viewshed.



**Commercial  
Area  
Guidelines**

1. Building setbacks are encouraged when they provide pedestrian spaces such as plazas, courtyards, entry nooks, and outdoor cafe seating.
2. On larger sites, *develop focal points* to create a sense of identification. Plazas, landscaping, fountains, art work, textured pavement, changes in pavement levels, and building tower features may be combined to create focal points.
3. Significant buildings with prominent, detailed architecture should be located near corners and intersections.



Building with tower and finial at corner.

4. When parking lots or service stations are located at street intersections, small structures such as flower stands, landscaping or produce markets are encouraged at the corners.
5. Create a *clear and well designed entry into the project site*. Use walls, signage, paving and planting to accent entries, creating a visual link to the buildings.
6. Entrances for autos to motels, fast food, diners, etc., should incorporate a *gateway or portico features*. Features with historic highway era (Art Deco / 50's) architecture and signage are encouraged.

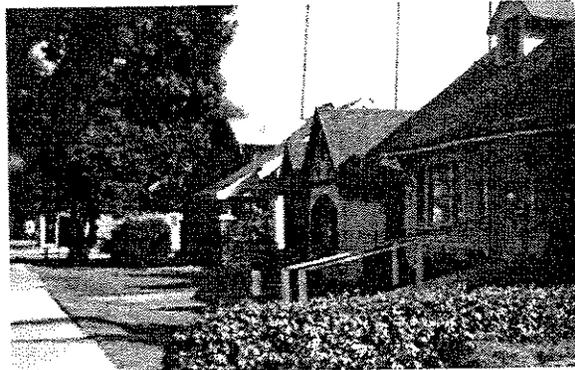


Building form creates focal point at entry.



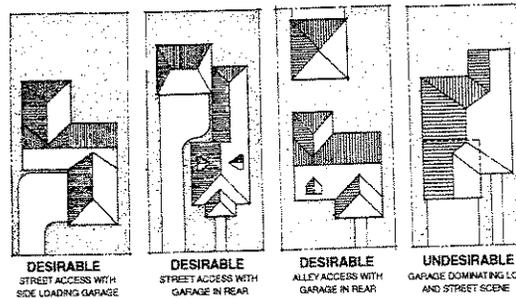
**Residential Area Guidelines**

1. Residential structures should be set back from Thompson Boulevard with a lawn, planting or front porch in the setback.



Residential units set back from street.

2. Fences and low walls should be a *maximum of three feet high*. They may be used in yards along Thompson Boulevard and adjoining streets.
3. Garages should be located in the rear yard or setback five feet from the front of the main structure to preserve the street scene.



Garage location examples.

4. *Driveways should be kept narrow*. Employ tire strips or use special paving to diminish visibility and add character. Drive openings at the street should be kept to a maximum of 10 to 12 feet wide.
5. Residential buildings which are converted to office uses or other small business uses should conform to all residential area guidelines and City parking requirements.
6. Garage access from alleys and side streets is encouraged.



❖ Building Design

General Guidelines

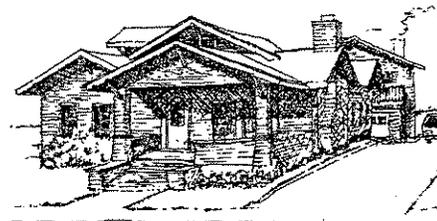
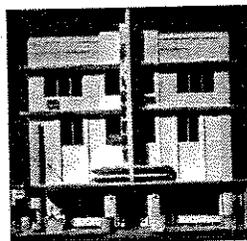
**B**uilding design refers to the architectural character which is created by combining key elements, form, massing, color and materials. In this section the guidelines for the commercial area and the residential area will be distinctively different.

1. Many buildings with valuable historic character exist on Thompson Boulevard. Wherever possible, these buildings and their architectural elements should be *preserved, restored, and enhanced.*



Examples of historic buildings.

2. Improve street scale and proportion by building two stories high with some three story elements.
3. *Corner buildings should be larger and more ornate.* Use key elements such as towers and detailed parapets to help define street ends.
4. Reduce building mass through use of *multiple roof lines, second story setbacks, windows, awnings, vertical and horizontal elements and balconies.* Refer to page 20 in Citywide Guidelines.



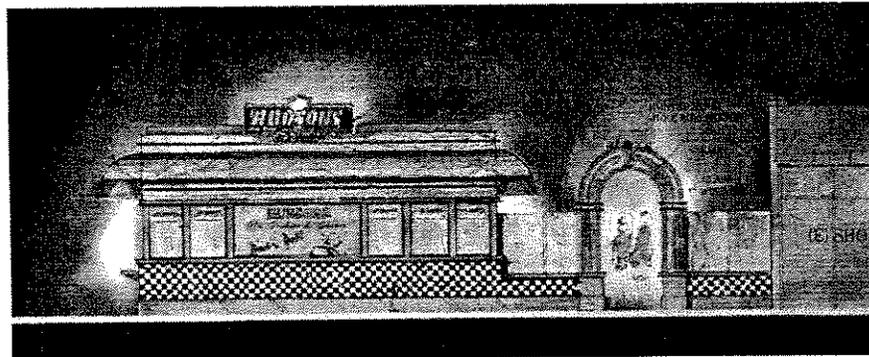
Massing of commercial and residential buildings.

5. The use of *quality building details and materials* will help minimize the ongoing need for maintenance, improving the overall image along Thompson Boulevard.



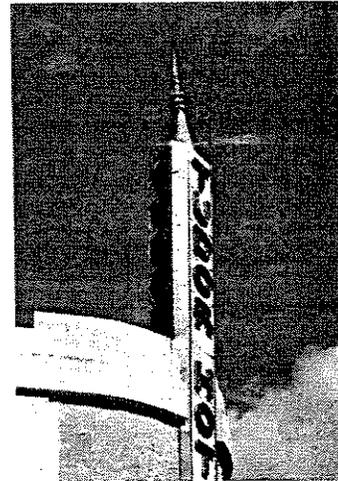
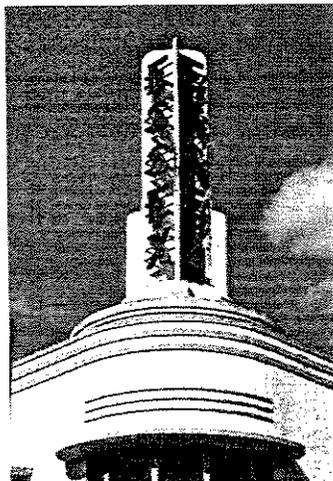
**Commercial  
Area  
Guidelines**

6. Lighting should be integrated into the building design, complementing and enhancing architectural and landscaping elements.



Lighting and signage integrated into building design.

1. In the commercial areas along Thompson Boulevard, create the desired architectural character described in the introduction by *incorporating architectural elements, lighting, and signage.*
2. Parapets, finials, and towers elements help characterize the gregarious style of Art Deco through 50's architectural styles. These elements should be consistent with the building's overall architectural style.

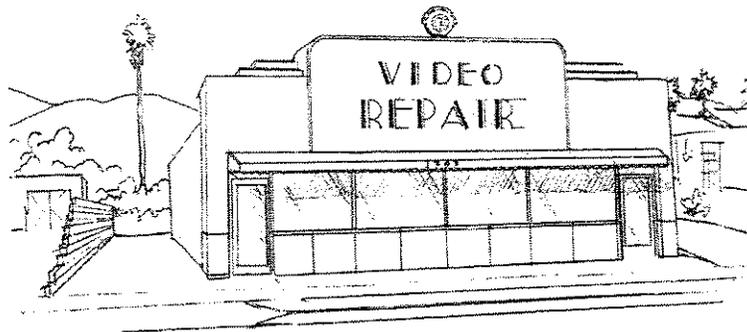


Sculptured towers with finials and prominent vertical signage.

3. *Enhance pedestrian ambiance by using bulkheads, large storefront windows, pronounced entrances, transom windows, awnings, balconies, arcades, etc.*



- 4. *Articulated storefronts* rather than blank walls should face onto pedestrian spaces, creating interesting and friendly areas for pedestrians. Blank walls can be broken up with storefront windows, doors, balconies, awnings, landscaping and art murals.
- 5. To be consistent with the desired historic theme, *signage should be slightly enlarged and an integral part of the building facade.*

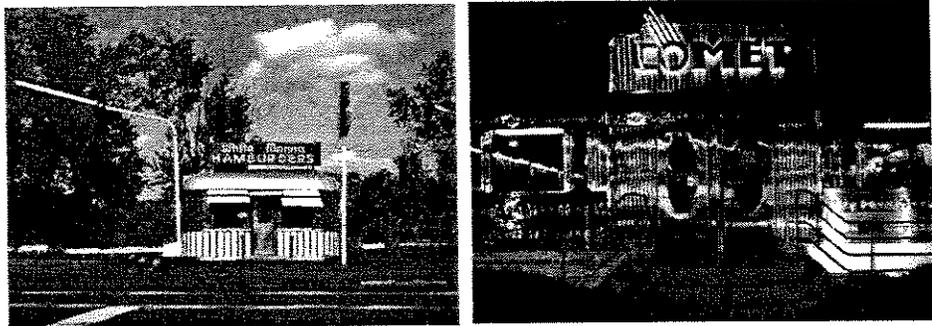


Before and after renovation example. Existing building (below) renovation example (above).

- 6. Each building should have a definable *base* (wainscot / bulkhead), *roof-line* (or parapet cap detail), and *entry*.



7. Large commercial projects should be *broken up into a series of smaller buildings* or incorporate elements to help articulate massing. Long building facades should incorporate vertical elements, creating a rhythm of bays generally between 15 and 35 feet wide. These bays can be designed as multiple facades on a single structure giving the appearance of several smaller buildings. Refer to page 21 in Citywide Guidelines for graphic example of vertical elements.



Diner style architecture.

8. Architecture reflecting the old nostalgic diners with rounded corners, large signs, and neon will reinforce the desired Thompson Boulevard theme.
9. Roof forms should be primarily *low profile roofs* with detailed parapets to reinforce the desired architectural theme.



Facade signage and marquee signage are incorporated into building designs as key architectural elements.

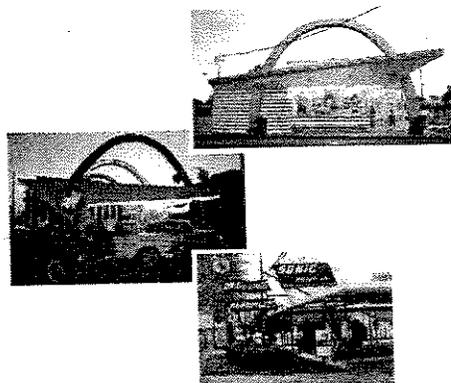


10. Signage is probably the most identifiable element of this particular architectural theme. *Large unique marquee-like signs with neon lights* become key architectural elements and are encouraged. Prominent and elaborate vertical marquees which extend above the roof-line work well with the commercial theme. Integrate large symmetrical horizontal signs into an awning-type structure above the building entries or into parapet roof forms.
11. Key architectural elements to reinforce the desired image along Thompson Boulevard would include rounded building corners, bold graphics and signage, clocks, neon lights, glass block, finials, towers, marquee signs, and aluminum trim of the Art Deco and Fifties eras. Refer to photo examples on previous pages.



Neon lights and strong geometric elements accentuate building form.

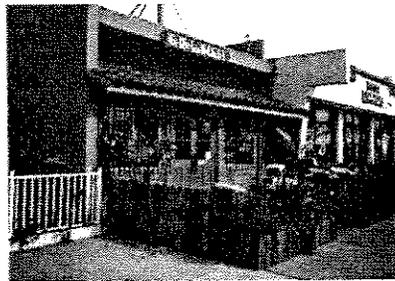
12. *Nostalgic "drive-in" and "car-hop" architecture* will reinforce the desired commercial character along Thompson Boulevard.



Nostalgic "car hop", "drive-in" architecture.



- 13. Color palettes consistent with the desired architectural character would be typical colors used on 1950's architecture and art deco architecture such as yellow, pink, turquoise, sea green, peach, pale blue, red, gray and black.
- 14. Keep a balanced color palette using the correct proportions between the lighter base colors and the brighter / darker accent colors on each building. Accent colors, base and trim colors may be added with tile and neon lighting as well.
- 15. Buildings with large walls should have a more subtle base color. The base color on smaller buildings, or those with more elaborate detail, can use stronger, brighter tones.
- 16. Appropriate materials for walls and facades include, but are not limited to, stucco, tile, brick, glass block, neon lights, stainless steal, and aluminum trim.
- 17. Discouraged building materials include unpainted or smooth, monolithic concrete, T-111 wood siding, and speed block or non-textured block.
- 18. Building form should provide plazas and seating areas for outdoor dining when possible.



**Residential Area Guidelines**

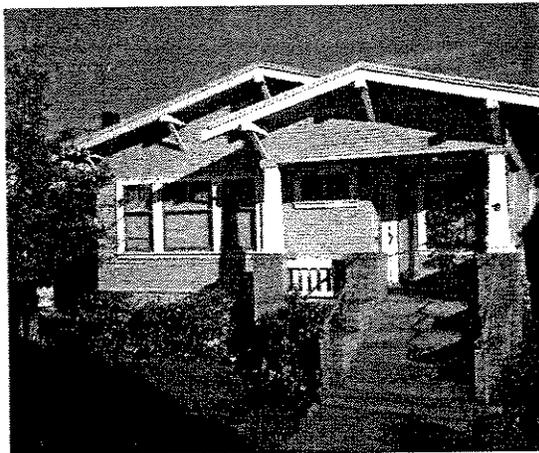
- 1. New buildings as well as building additions and renovations should be consistent with the existing early 1900's residential architecture in the surrounding neighborhood. Modern interpretations of these styles are also acceptable if they maintain proportionate massing and blend with the surrounding neighborhood.



Residential architecture.

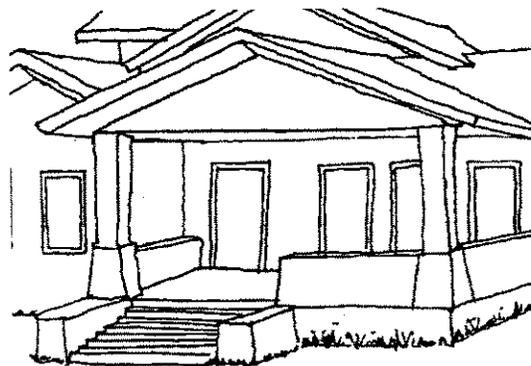


2. Building additions and expansions should be of similar form and proportionally massed with the existing structure.
3. *Appropriate roof forms* include gable, shed, and hip roofs with lower pitches for Bungalow, Craftsman and Spanish style architecture or a steeper pitch for Tudor, Cape Cod and Early Colonial style architecture.
4. Dormers, eaves, exposed rafter tails, exposed roof beams, and triangular knee braces are common roof elements of this early 1900's era.



Roof form.

5. *Building color should be compatible with the surrounding neighborhood.* Use lighter colors as the base color and brighter accent colors to accentuate architectural details.
6. *Stairs, stoops, and porches are recommended* to emphasize the entries and create attractive semi- public spaces. Raised porches will help blend new buildings with the existing early 1900's architecture of the neighborhood.



Porch example.



7. Carports, garages, and other accessory buildings should be architecturally compatible yet not dominate the main building.
8. *Appropriate building materials* include horizontal siding, vertical wood siding, or stucco of varying surfaces. Brick and stone may occasionally be used as accents, particularly along the building base.
9. *Appropriate roofing materials* include architectural grade asphalt shingles, concrete tile slate, clay or integrally colored concrete roof tiles. Shake roofs are discouraged due to high fire hazard.
10. *Windows should be multi-paned and vertically oriented* rather than horizontally oriented to reinforce the desired early 1900's architectural style of the surrounding neighborhood.



❖ Landscaping

Well-designed landscapes will help enhance and revitalize the image of the Thompson Boulevard project area. Incorporating public art and site furnishings along sidewalks and plazas will be more welcoming and pedestrian friendly. Public art and site furnishings could include sculpture, fountains, murals, benches, street lights, banners, trash cans, and movable pots or planters.

General Guidelines

1. Use landscaping to *soften the street edge* while providing a shade canopy for sidewalk, parking and streetscape.
2. Use *colorful accent planting at entries, courtyards, and along pedestrian ways* to help identify entries and beautify key public spaces.

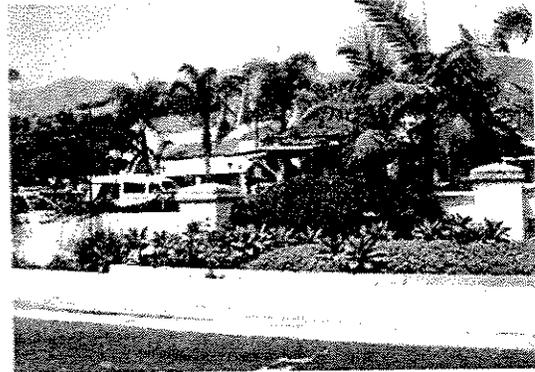
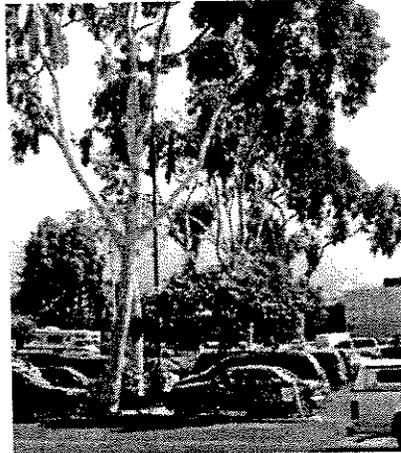


Accent planting.

3. *Incorporate landscaping into building design.* Trees, bushes, and vines can be used to add interest to blank building walls.
4. *Street trees should be used along Thompson Boulevard* to add scale and to bring a vertical edge along the street.
5. Plants with *low water and maintenance requirements* are encouraged.
6. Landscaping should be regularly maintained and should have an appropriate irrigation system installed.



7. Trees and planting should be incorporated into parking lots for shade and to soften the impact of the paving.



Trees, planting and wall help screen parking lot.

8. Planting can be used with low walls, planters, and berms to screen parking, service, and trash areas.
9. Pedestrian ways should be incorporated in parking lots, where possible, using accent paving, trellises, and lighting.

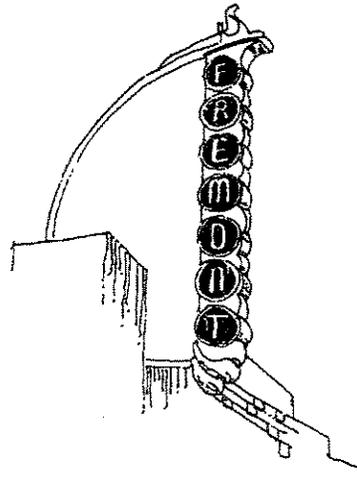


Pedestrian access in parking lot.



❖ Signs

Signs will play an important role in developing the desired nostalgic car culture theme described in the introduction. In the 1920's and through the 1950's the nostalgic image of buildings and towns were exemplified and strengthened by the large neon signage. The character along Thompson Boulevard will be greatly shaped by the signage design, location and materials.



An example of a marquee sign.

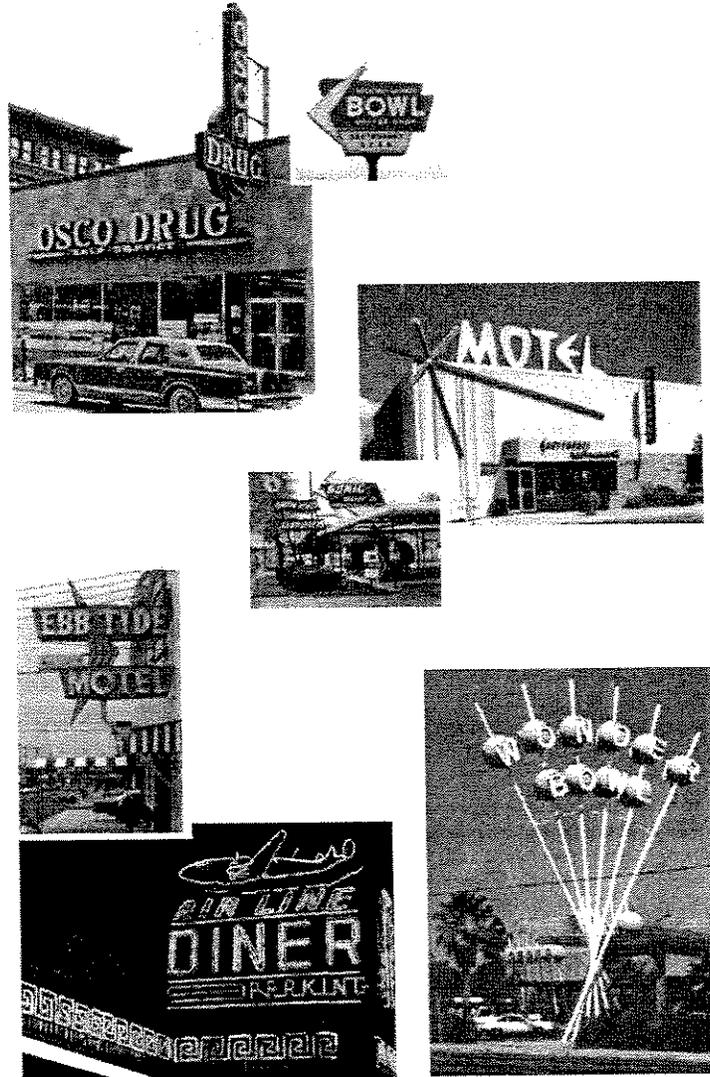
**Commercial Guidelines**

1. Vertical marquee signs extending above the roof line are encouraged when carefully designed to complement the building.
2. Horizontal signs incorporated into the building facade or into an awning-type structure are also encouraged.
3. To embrace the Art Deco and 50's theme, building signs should typically be of large strong graphics, centered on facade often accompanied by a mounted marquee type sign, clocks, or free standing pole signs.





4. *Bold graphics with neon lights reinforce the desired nostalgic theme.*



Sign examples.

5. Art Deco (1920-1930) and fifties style graphics, fonts, materials and colors are encouraged in sign designs. Streamline fonts such as Future and Broadway are commonly used fonts of this era.
6. *Retain existing historic or nostalgic pole and neon signs.*
7. *The design of signs should support the overall architectural style of the building.*



8. *Pedestrian oriented signs along sidewalks such as hanging signs and temporary sidewalk signs are encouraged.*



Hanging sign.

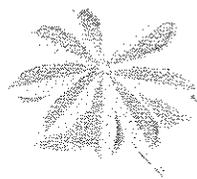


❖ Maintenance

**M**aintenance of buildings, sidewalks, and public spaces is critical in promoting a clean appearance along Thompson Boulevard. Cleaning up trash, removing debris, repairing cracks and general cleanup will enhance the street scene.

**General Guidelines**

1. Painted and stained surfaces should be *cleaned* regularly and maintained. Metal windows and doors are to be *treated for rust protection* or finished in a permanent color.
2. Business owners should *sweep up trash and debris* daily around their buildings.
3. Owners of vacant lots should *cut weeds and eliminate trash* on a regular basis. Screen vacant lots with low walls and vegetation.
4. *Store front repairs* such as old, cracked wood, cracks in stucco, chipped paint, broken windows, damaged signs, etc. should be repaired.
5. *Maintain trees and landscaping* on a regular basis.
6. Repair pedestrian walk ways, plazas, and courtyards.



# Design Guidelines for Seaward Avenue



❖ Introduction

Seaward Avenue represents a distinctively unique neighborhood in the City. Peppered with an eclectic mix of beach-type residential architecture, restaurants, motels, shops and residences, Seaward Avenue is an authentic traditional neighborhood. Residents of the Seaward Avenue neighborhood, as well as other City residents, are drawn to this area for its casual and relaxed atmosphere and beach climate.

Historically, Seaward Avenue had an even greater connection to the beach in the form of a boardwalk and pier which provided fishing and boating opportunities. Although the boardwalk and pier are no longer in existence, the area retains a strong beach-front attraction.

The eclectic character is expressed through varying roof and building forms, while similar materials and beach elements bring a cohesiveness to the neighborhood. The architectural character along Seaward emphasizes the fishing, boating, beach, and surf history through nautical materials and elements. Beach related elements such as heavy timber, pier pilings, rope, boat relics, fishing artifacts, and surf boards, help reinforce this desired beach character.

These guidelines address the following topics:

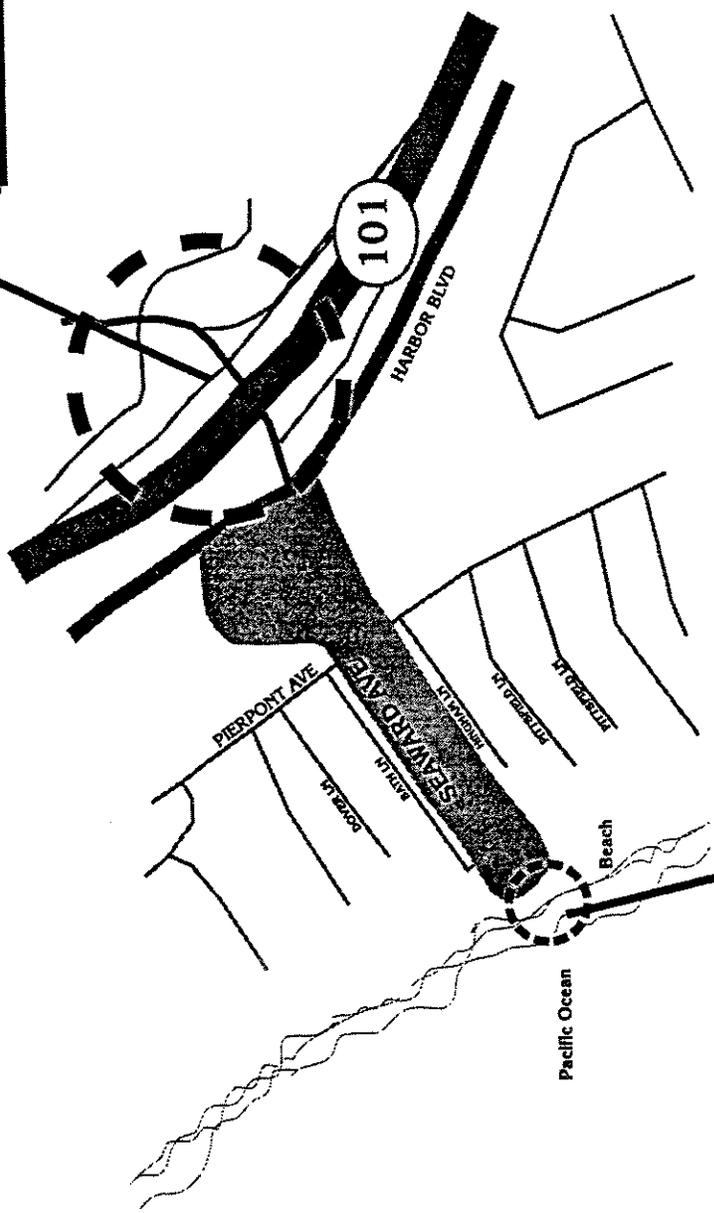
- Site Design
- Building Design
- Landscaping
- Signs
- Maintenance

The design guidelines that follow were developed with input from the community and represent the views and wishes of area residents and businesses:

- Retain and enhance the funky beach atmosphere
- Reinforce the village feeling
- Create even better opportunities for pedestrian oriented spaces and activities
- Expand sidewalks
- Outdoor eating and sitting areas
- Custom signs
- Eclectic beach type architecture

The design guidelines for this focus area thus promote a variety of private and public improvements that support these goals.

Interchange Beautification  
Plan Area



Beachfront Plaza Area

Figure 1

VENTURA DESIGN GUIDELINES Seaward Avenue



❖ Site Design

Site design refers to the arrangement and relationship of buildings, parking, pedestrian spaces, and landscaping, to each other and to roadways such as Seaward Avenue. The scale of buildings and the size of the outdoor spaces between buildings, and between buildings and parking, should be designed to provide a comfortable pedestrian environment while creating the desired eclectic beach character.

General Guidelines

1. To strengthen the street scene, buildings should be *oriented toward Seaward Avenue*.
2. Buildings should abut front and side property lines unless space is being provided for seating, outdoor dining, or recessed entry.
3. *Outdoor dining areas and storefronts* which open up onto the sidewalk are strongly encouraged.



Outdoor dining.

4. Parking should not dominate the site in areas adjacent to any street. Parking should be concentrated in areas away from the street, behind buildings when possible.
5. Low walls, berms, and or planting should be used to *buffer parking lots from the streetscene*.



6. Parking lot entrances should be shared with adjacent properties and accessed from side streets where possible to *minimize the number of entrances*.
7. Service, utility, loading, and trash areas must be carefully screened. Integrate them into the site plan in a way that does not detract from the public viewshed.
8. *On larger sites, develop focal points to create a sense of identification.* Plazas, landscaping, fountains, art work, textured pavement, changes in pavement levels, and building tower features may be combined to create focal points.

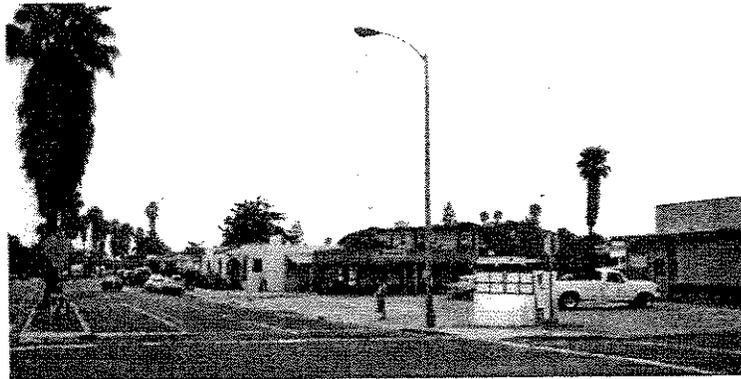


Focal point, nautical design.

9. Each project site is encouraged to develop its own identity, yet the site plan must work with adjacent properties. Provide efficient automobile and pedestrian circulation within, as well as between properties.
10. Create a *clear and well designed entry into the project site*. Use walls, signage, paving and planting to accent entries. Create a visual link to the buildings.
11. Main building entrances should be oriented toward Seaward Avenue or a courtyard.
12. Provide bike racks where possible.



13. Significant buildings with prominent or more detailed architecture should be *located near corners and intersections* whenever possible. When parking lots or service stations are located at street intersections, small structures housing flower stands, food vending, or produce markets are encouraged at the corners.



Create a visual edge at street corners.

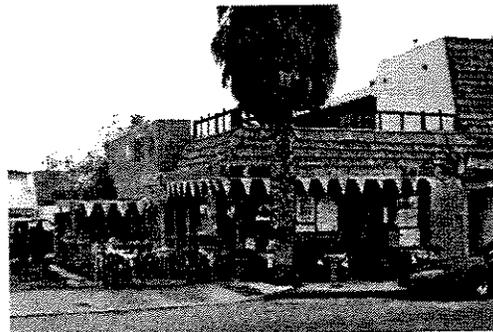


❖ Building Design

**B**uilding design refers to the architectural character which is created by combining key elements, form, massing, color and materials. It is currently and will continue to be the architecture that gives Seaward Avenue the unique eclectic beach character we are striving for.

General Guidelines

1. Break up large commercial projects into a series of smaller buildings or incorporate elements to help articulate massing. Long building facades should incorporate vertical elements, creating a rhythm of bays generally between 20 and 30 feet wide. These bays can be designed as multiple facades on a single structure giving the appearance of several smaller buildings.
2. *Reduce building mass through use of multiple roof lines, second story setbacks, vertical elements and balconies.*
3. Buildings should be one to two stories high with upper floors stepping back from the street.
4. *Outdoor seating and dining areas are strongly encouraged.* Window-walls which open up to the street also promote the outdoor dining and active street-life atmosphere that is desired.



Outdoor dining and eclectic architecture.



Murals add color and interest to blank walls.

5. *Articulated storefronts, not blank walls, should face onto pedestrian spaces creating interesting and friendly areas for pedestrians. Blank walls can be broken up with windows, doors, balconies, awnings, landscaping and art murals.*
6. *Preserve, restore and enhance historic architectural elements. New buildings should support character and scale of existing buildings.*



7. Buildings should take on their own identity adding to the uniqueness of the street. *Architectural variety is strongly encouraged* through style, eclectic architecture, color, materials, and interesting massing.
8. The personality of the business can be expressed in a recessed entry and in the sidewalk with special paving, movable signs, banners, and sidewalk sales.
9. Roof forms may be flat with parapets, shed, gable, hip, or pitched with dormers. *No specific style should dominate the street scene* so as to add to the eclectic character of Seaward.
10. Each building should have a definable *base* (wainscot /bulkhead), *roof-line* (or parapet cap detail), and *entry*.
11. Enhance pedestrian ambiance by using bulkheads (building base), large storefront windows, bay windows with usable floor area for dining, pronounced entrances, transom windows, awnings, balconies, arcades, etc.
12. Buildings can be embellished by using *beach related elements* such as thatched roof awnings, wood detailing, boat relics, surf boards, rope, driftwood furniture, bamboo elements, fishing artifacts, etc.



Incorporate beach-related elements in building design.

13. Use rich detailing on buildings such as unique signs, lighting, multi-paned windows and doors, stairs, heavy timber posts, and trellises.
14. *Lighting should be integrated into the building design* complementing and enhancing architectural and landscaping elements.



15. Awnings, balconies, porches, and arcades are encouraged to further *promote the pedestrian scale* between buildings and pedestrian areas.
16. The use of *quality building details and materials* will help minimize the ongoing need for maintenance, improving the overall image along Seaward Avenue.
17. The use of *natural materials* such as wood siding (board and batten), stone, wood shake, heavy timber, wood boardwalk planking, and brick are encouraged.
18. Building colors should be the common colors found in beach communities: either natural stained wood or pastel colors such as light blues, peaches, pinks, yellows, grays, and sea greens.
19. *Backs of buildings facing residential uses* should be treated in a similar manner as the front. Quality materials and detailing are encouraged.
20. Building backs that face onto alleys are also encouraged to incorporate quality materials and detailing.



Architectural details.



❖ Landscaping

Well-designed landscapes will help beautify and revitalize the image of the Seaward Avenue project area. Incorporating public art and site furnishings along sidewalks and plazas will be more welcoming and pedestrian friendly. Public art and site furnishings could include sculpture, fountains, murals, benches, street lights, banners, trash cans, movable pots or planters.

General Guidelines

1. Use landscaping to soften the street edge while providing a shade canopy for sidewalk, parking and streetscape.
2. Use colorful accent planting at entries, courtyards, and along pedestrian ways to beautify key public spaces.



Accent planting, palm trees and nautical elements add interest.

3. Incorporate landscaping into building design. Trees, bushes, and vines can be used to add interest to blank building walls.
4. Street trees should be used along Seaward Avenue to add scale and to bring a vertical edge along the street.
5. Carefully choose planting materials that can survive in the beach front environment.
6. Planting different varieties of Mediterranean and tropical plants such as palm trees, bougainvillea and bamboo will support the desired character along Seaward Avenue.



- 7. Trees and planting should be *incorporated into parking lots* to provide shade and to soften the impact of the paving.



Nautical landscape feature.

- 8. Planting can be used with *low walls, planters, and berms* to screen parking, service, and trash areas.
- 9. Planters incorporating pier pilings, timber, recycled wood and rope also reinforce the beach theme.
- 10. Art, benches and other outdoor furniture can be made from nautical relics, boat remnants, surf boards, rope, bamboo, driftwood, fishing artifacts, etc.



Surfer mural acts as additional signage with personality.



❖ Signs

Signs provide identification and necessary advertisement for businesses, they also play an important role in promoting an image and personality of the business. Well detailed, unique signs provide a personal quality that contributes to the ambiance of the commercial complex or streetscape.



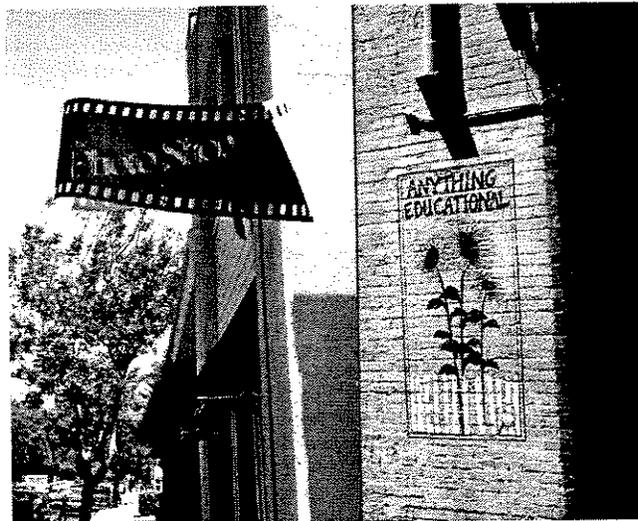
Mural adds character to blank wall.

General Guidelines

1. Existing historic and/or nostalgic signs should be repaired and preserved.
2. Promotional window and door advertising should be minimized to avoid a cluttered look. Temporary promotional window and door advertising should not occupy more than 10% of the display area to prevent blocking views into stores.
3. Kiosks and information booths are good ways to direct pedestrians. They should be located in pedestrian gathering areas and near parking lots.
4. Signs should be integrated into the building design, complement the architecture, and be compatible with the building colors and materials.
5. Specially designed logos, symbols and icons add individuality to businesses. They are encouraged.
6. Pedestrian oriented signs should be located along sidewalks and walkways to help reinforce a more intimate pedestrian scale.



7. Larger parcels are encouraged to buffer the impact of large parking lots by:
  - Breaking large parking lots into several smaller lots
  - Creating interior "street-like" circulation for pedestrians and vehicles
  - Incorporate landscaping with trees and low walls
8. Monument signs, awning signs, hanging signs, and wall-mounted signs should be *treated as a design element*, reflecting the project character.
9. *Artistic, playful, three-dimensional and custom crafted* signs will further emphasize the eclectic and unique quality of Seaward Avenue.



Artistic, playful signs.

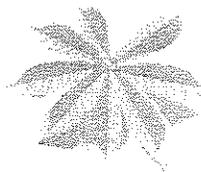


❖ Maintenance

**M**aintenance of buildings, sidewalks, and public spaces is critical in promoting a clean appearance along Seaward Avenue. Cleaning up trash, removing debris, repairing of cracks and general cleanup will beautify the street scene.

*General Guidelines*

1. Painted and stained surfaces should be *cleaned regularly*. Metal windows and doors are to be treated for rust protection or finished in a permanent color.
2. Business owners should *sweep up trash and debris* daily around their buildings.
3. Owners of vacant lots should *cut weeds and eliminate trash* on a regular basis. Screen vacant lots with low walls and vegetation.
4. Old, cracked wood, cracks in stucco, chipped paint, broken windows, damaged signs, etc. should be repaired.
5. *Maintain trees and landscaping* on a regular basis.
6. Repair pedestrian walkways, plazas, and courtyards.



# Appendix



❖ **Implement-  
ation**

The vision implied by these Guidelines will be achieved over time in two fundamental ways. First, it is expected that the Guidelines will be used by designers and decision-makers in the review of new development on private property. This process is described in the introductory chapter of these Guidelines.

Second, as funding becomes available the City should undertake streetscape improvement projects to help achieve the objectives of the individual corridor plans. These improvements would follow the preparation of design plans with detailed project descriptions and cost estimates for budgetary considerations and to help set priorities among the individual improvement projects. To help minimize cost and disruption, the City should coordinate public improvements with private development so that the selected street corridors occur in a coordinated fashion.

Implementation may also require amendments to the zoning ordinance or other relevant standards to insure consistency with these Guidelines. For example, the guidelines for signage along Thompson Boulevard would, in some instances, allow roof-mounted signs which are not normally allowed by the City's sign regulations.

Achieving the vision embodied in these Guidelines will require a cooperative effort among the City, project designers, property owners and the public. To encourage the incorporation of elements described in these Guidelines in the design of new development, the City may consider offering incentives to property owners. Examples of such incentives include:

- Faster processing of applications that incorporate the elements described in these Guidelines.
- Waiver or reduction of processing fees or other fees.
- Implementation of streetscape improvements as an inducement for private reinvestment.
- Greater certainty for project approval.
- Adopting provisions for the relaxation of certain development standards if the overall design of the project meets or exceeds the design objectives described in these Guidelines.

Incentives that involve the reduction of fees or the relaxation of development standards will need to be considered carefully so that other public objectives are not compromised.

The steps leading to implementation of these guidelines are summarized below.



1. Adopt Guidelines after public review and hearings before the relevant decision makers.
2. Review and amend as necessary relevant sections of the zoning ordinance and other standards to insure consistency with these Guidelines.
3. Apply Guidelines through the design review process.
4. Consider adopting incentives for implementation that are applicable City-wide and/or for particular street corridors.

For public improvement projects along street corridors, the process would include the following steps.

1. Identify funding source for design plans and public improvements (redevelopment, general fund, CDBG, others).
2. Set priorities for which street corridor (or portion of a street corridor) is to be improved first.
3. Distribute Request for Proposals to prepare detailed design plan for street corridor.
4. Prepare and adopt detailed design plan for street corridor public improvements. Such plans should include cost estimates for improvements that coincide with the priorities established in Step 2, a potential funding source for the improvements, operating costs and funding sources to sustain the improvements following construction, and the department or person(s) responsible for managing the project.
5. Prepare construction plans consistent with the design plan and award construction contract for improvements.

The process of deciding which elements of the corridor plans to implement first necessarily involves setting priorities. Regardless of how the projects are ranked, it should be with the understanding that the priorities established are not hard and fast, recognizing that the City must be opportunistic and take advantage of private development and/or public funding sources that become available. To help with this ranking process, the design plans for the street corridors should include a detailed description of the various design elements with a preliminary cost estimate for each project, and a potential source of funding.

Funding may be derived from a number of sources, including the following:

**City Capital Improvement Program (CIP).** The City may include streetscape improvements as part of a five-year capital improvement program. The CIP is



funded through fees charged to new development and from taxes collected by the State and distributed to local governments, such as the gas tax and Measure "D" funds.

**Community Development Block Grants( CDBG).** The Housing and Community Development Act of 1974 established federally-administered block grants which may be used by cities for housing, public facilities, and economic development. The activities funded by CDBG must address at least one of three objectives: serve lower income people, eliminate blight, or resolve urgent community development needs. The federal CDBG program (through HUD) grants funding for urban renewal, water and sewer systems improvements, rehabilitation and neighborhood facilities development.

**Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) Funding.** The federal government provides monies to the State of California for the purpose of enhancing the efficiency of surface transportation, including motor vehicles, pedestrian, bicycle, rail, and other forms of transportation. The ISTEA monies are allocated by the State to the various local councils of government (COG). Each jurisdiction may submit an application to the COG for an ISTEA grant to fund various transportation enhancement projects, such as bike lanes, landscaping along highways and the acquisition of right-of-way. For projects other than pedestrian and bike path enhancement, a 12% match of local funds is required.

**Lighting and Landscaping District (LLD).** Although the formation of new assessment districts has become more difficult in the aftermath of Proposition 218, a landscaping and lighting district may be formed along certain street corridors where property owners may wish to help participate in the funding of improvements that directly benefit their properties.

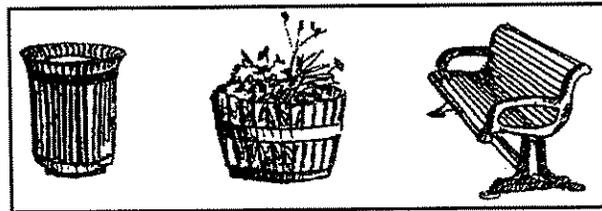


❖ Streetscape Improvements

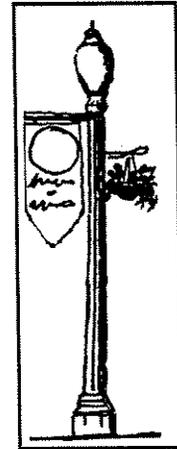
Streetscape improvements are elements to be incorporated into the public right-of-way to complement and enhance surrounding development. Such elements include street furniture, plantings, sidewalk and pedestrian amenities, and street trees. Streetscape improvements are intended to be implemented as a cooperative effort among the City and private development.

Guidelines

1. Street furniture (benches, banners, lighting, fountains, public art, etc.) should be *incorporated into streetscape improvements* at appropriate locations.



Street furniture.



2. Boxed and tubbed plant containers, such as clay pots or wooden planters, should be used to enhance sidewalks, plazas and courtyards.
3. Street trees should be provided at appropriate intervals in accordance with City standards. Street trees should be carefully chosen to provide shade while allowing visibility to storefronts and minimizing organic litter.
4. The width of new commercial and residential streets should be the minimum required to provide safe, efficient vehicular access, emergency access, and where necessary, on-street parking. *The needs of pedestrian and bicycle circulation* should have equal consideration in the design of streets.
5. *Expanded sidewalks at intersections and mid-block crossings* reduce street crossing distance, provide small street plaza spaces, allow opportunities for variety in street paving treatment and help to screen on-street parking.
6. *Tree grates* provide room for safe pedestrian sidewalks and room for retail in public spaces.



*Streetscape  
Improvements  
for  
Thompson  
Boulevard*

The guidelines that follow are intended to assist both the City as well as the public in the design and construction of improvements along Thompson Boulevard within the public right-of way. The improvements may be installed by the city or the private sector but should reflect the desired nostalgic commercial character described in the introduction.

6. Prepare a detailed streetscape Master Plan for Thompson Boulevard which is consistent with the following guidelines for public improvements. The Master Plan should contain an implementation plan which identifies projects or programs; prioritizes projects and programs; identifies possible funding for improvements; designates who will be responsible for improvements out of the project; and provides an estimated cost to implement each project or program.
7. *Reduce visual clutter* by relocating or under-grounding utility lines, eliminating billboards and screening vacant lots. Screen vacant lots by installing temporary solid fencing or planting rows of low shrubs or trees.
8. Plant street trees to provide shade and bring a human scale to the street scene. Trees should be planted 30-50 feet apart and be regularly spaced. Use a variety of suitable street trees that provide a broad shade canopy and flower color, and foliage colors. Specimen tree types should be selected to highlight important intersections and special places on the street.
9. Create parkway landscaping between street and sidewalk in residential areas.
10. Create *well defined, inviting pedestrian crossings* with special paving, bulb-outs, and signage. Where appropriate, install pedestrian crossing signals.
11. Expand sidewalks at intersections to improve pedestrian flow (bulb-outs) and to further screen cars in the parking lane.
7. *Create pleasing street edges* in front of auto sales lots and parking lots with berms, landscaping, low walls and kiosks.
8. Remove unsightly chain-link fences at vacant lots and schools. Replace, if necessary, with wrought iron or wrought iron type fencing, vinyl coated chainlink, combinations of low walls or decorative fencing.
9. *Replace out of scale street lights* and signs with historic type signage (see the earlier discussion of signs).
10. Add bike lanes and bike racks where possible.
11. Add raised landscaped medians where possible.



12. Unify Thompson Boulevard with *street furnishings* (i.e. benches, lights, trash cans, signs, logos, etc.).
13. Promote public art and murals.
14. Repair damaged portions of Thompson Boulevard and adjacent sidewalks.
15. Create a more *intensive maintenance program* for street trees and public landscaping.
16. Consider land use and zoning modifications that will help create a compatible mix of uses.
17. *Provide an entry/gateway at ends of the corridor.*



*Streetscape  
Improvements  
for Seward  
Avenue*

The guidelines that follow are intended to assist both the City and the public in the design and construction of improvements along Seaward Avenue within the public right-of way. The improvements may be installed by the City or the private sector. They should reflect the desired eclectic beach architectural character described in the introduction.

1. Add a raised landscaped median from Pierpont Boulevard to 101 with appropriate left turn lanes. Trees and landscaping must not obstruct sight distances.
2. Remove existing median and widen sidewalks from Pierpont Boulevard to the beach, making room for landscaping, street trees, street furniture, walking, dining, and sidewalk activities.
3. Create an entry monument with landscaping at Highway 101 and Seaward Avenue.



Possible location for a Harbor Boulevard entry monument.

4. Expand sidewalk at intersections and enhance pedestrian crossings. Accent crosswalks with special paving, planting, and signage.
5. Provide additional off-street public parking along Pierpont Boulevard.
6. Use Zephyr Court and alleys parallel to Seaward Avenue for better vehicular circulation.
7. Provide bike parking and pedestrian connections to surrounding neighborhoods and streets with approval of new development.
8. Strengthen connection to beach with adequate signage.



9. Create *public space with plaza, paving, fountain, etc., at beach head* which acts as a terminus of Seaward Avenue.
10. Install decorative lighting, street trees, benches, and street furnishings, in the sidewalk area. All street furniture should be consistent with the desired beach character described in the introduction. (See the landscape guidelines.)



Sidewalk example with street trees, lighting and planters.

11. Plan for public services such as restrooms, phones, information kiosk, transit, and directional signage.
12. *Develop a Seaward Avenue logo* that can be used for promotion on signs, banners, flyers, etc.
12. *Provide directional signs for visitors* to parking, beach, services etc.
14. Promote public art and murals in both public and private areas.
15. Prepare a detailed streetscape Master Plan for Seaward Avenue which is consistent with these guidelines.
16. Create a landscape beautification plan along Seaward Avenue between the Highway 101 off-ramp and Harbor Boulevard.



Design Review Chapter of the City's  
Zoning Ordinance



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