

APPENDIX VII

DESIGN GUIDELINES

The purpose of these design guidelines is to encourage new development and building rehabilitation in a manner that respects the desert environment, addresses the details, and relates to the human-scale. These guidelines establish a high standard for design quality yet are flexible to allow for individual expression.

In addition to recommendations for each node found in **Chapter 4.0**, this section outlines guidelines that provide parameters for site planning and architectural design for the entire study area. These guidelines are in addition to those contained in the City of Cathedral City Design Guidelines, and they address the following:

- Architectural character and massing
- Open space network
- Building entries and service access
- Compatibility with surrounding development and between uses on the Site
- Access
- Landscaping & irrigation
- Innovative, well-designed parking and access
- Signage
- Green design techniques
- Sidewalks/multi-use path
- Blocks

Design Guidelines

are recommendations that guide how a project is designed.



Architectural Character and Massing

- **Emphasize each street as an urban space:**
 - ✧ Building placement and design should consider its relationship to the street:
 - ✧ Tenants on the ground level and outdoor activities should be selected to enliven the street.
 - ✧ Large structures could be designed to appear to be a series of smaller buildings through building articulation, color and materials.



Outdoor dining and articulated facades activate the streetscape

- **Contemporary, pedestrian-friendly design:** Buildings should be designed to be visually attractive and fit with the vision of a pedestrian-friendly, vibrant streetscape. Materials and colors should be selected to add visual interest and unify building appearance. Contemporary interpretation of California Spanish architecture with glass storefronts is encouraged.
- **Energy efficient designs:** Buildings design and site planning shall consider passive solar and ventilation techniques, as well as specification of “green” materials.
- **Visual interest at the street level:** Architecture and urban design should be designed with human scale in mind and respond to how humans behave in a public space. The form of buildings and architectural details should be designed to create visual interest at the street level using various techniques. These techniques include staggering the building frontage, recessing doors and windows, providing varied display windows, providing awnings and canopies for weather protection and shade, and visually extending interior spaces outside through paving and glazing. In addition, transparent clear glass rather than dark tinted glass or reflective glass should be incorporated along ground-level frontages.



A mixed use project with a restaurant and corner plaza provides a human-scale pedestrian-friendly environment.



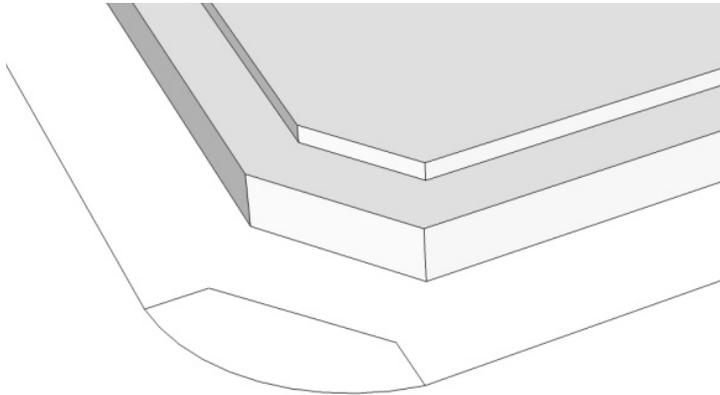
Clear glass display windows, awnings, and architectural articulation provide visual interest at the street level

- **Equal design treatment on facades:** Buildings should be designed to be attractive in all directions. Where the rear or sides of the buildings are visible from streets and alleys, these facades should receive design treatments equal to the main façade.
- **Articulated building facades:** Building forms should be articulated to avoid large bulky façades and blank walls. Techniques include stepping back upper floors, stepped terraces, changes in plane, recessed windows, bay windows, balconies, trellises, varied roof lines, and changes in color, textures and materials.



Step-backs, color, balconies, and recessed windows reduce the mass of large structures

- **Variety in building facades:** Building form and facades should vary from building to building and from project to project to create interest along the street.
- **Building shaped at corners:** A building should reflect the corner of an important intersection or a focal point by using a variety of techniques such as strong vertical mass or a tower at the corner, a diagonal setback at the intersection, a corner plaza at the intersection, and/or a recessed building entrance at the corner.



In areas where there is heavy pedestrian crossings shape buildings to form corner plazas.



A diagonal corner at a busy intersection provides an attractive waiting space for pedestrians.

- **Awnings:** Awnings are encouraged for sun protection for a distinctive identity and for visual interest along the pedestrian center. Awnings should be mounted so as to respect the architecture and character of a building and its function. Awnings should project over doors and windows and not blank walls. Open ended awnings are preferred over closed-in awnings. Creative steel, canvas, and glass awnings with signage incorporated are encouraged.



Awnings project a distinctive identity and visual interest for pedestrians.

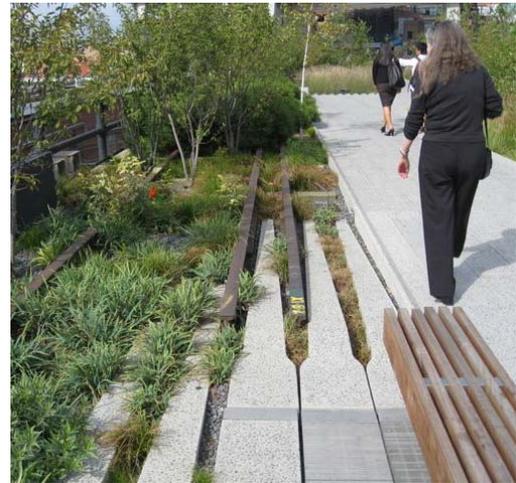
Open Space Network

- **A network of open spaces:** In addition to the pedestrian network along public sidewalks and multi-use path, well-proportioned outdoor open spaces such as landscaped sidewalks, paseos, plazas, terraces, courtyards, gardens, and decks should be incorporated into developments and connected together, where possible, forming an open space network on a site and between sites.
- **Location and character of common open spaces:** Common recreational areas should be centrally located and preferably be designed as courtyards, plazas and outdoor rooms. The location and character of an outdoor space should consider its function, the size of the project, and the surrounding environment.
 - ❖ Plazas are for public gathering and social interaction and should be designed with visibility from the sidewalk, to address the solar orientation and prevailing winds, and to include pedestrian amenities such as ample eating places, plants, trees, fountains, sculptures and other public art. Small plazas are appropriate at corners and adjacent to bus stops to provide additional space for waiting near the intersection. Plazas should be designed at or near the grade of sidewalks and designed not to interrupt the street wall. Outdoor dining and other uses that enliven the space should be located adjacent to or be a part of a plaza.
 - ❖ Courtyards should be well defined by buildings and/or landscape elements and provide quiet areas for residents of a project and active recreational uses such as places for children’s playgrounds, pools, spas, and fountains. Courtyards are typical of traditional Southern California architecture and provide opportunities for residential windows to face internal attractive spaces away from the busy traffic on the street and provide opportunities for pedestrian amenities and public art.
 - ❖ Gardens, patios, terraces, and decks are opportunities for smaller open space areas. These should be landscaped and appropriately planted to provide outdoor spaces for individual use.



Well defined courtyards provide quiet areas for day and night time use. Shared alleys are encouraged.

- **Pedestrian connections through buildings to the pedestrian realm:** Pedestrian connections adjacent to a building are encouraged, especially at or near mid block, to connect the sidewalk to parking in the rear.



Pedestrian connections through buildings to the pedestrian realm are encouraged.

- **Human-scale walkway design:** Textured human-scaled paving materials and generous landscaping should be provided on pedestrian walkways through and adjacent to new projects which are complimentary or of the same design as the treatment of the pedestrian realm.
- **Special features:** Activate a public space and provide a unique identity for an area with special features such as public art. Water elements would also be considered but only at selected locations to conserve water. Water features such as interactive fountains could introduce a sense of relaxation or festive atmosphere and mask traffic noise, if designed appropriate to the desert environment.



Special features such as water elements activate a public space.

- **Lighting:** Lighting should be used to guide pedestrians through the open space, to eliminate “dead” areas, and to accent special features without interfering with adjacent residential uses. Energy-renewable and conserving sources such as solar or LED lighting should be considered. Lighting is also encouraged to accent facades at night and provide

security and wayfinding for public and private open spaces. Avoid lighting that interferes with residential uses.

Building Entries and Service Access

- **Entries oriented to street frontage:** Each individual tenant or business establishment and residential lobbies should be oriented to and be accessible to the major street frontage to promote active pedestrian-friendly streets.
- **Entries emphasized:** Pedestrian entries to shops and residential lobbies should be prominently highlighted with a two-story height, unique awnings, overhangs, trellises or other distinctive features. Shop and major building entries may be recessed to create a gracious entry provided that the continuity of the street wall along the street frontage is maintained.
- **Service areas concealed:** Where possible, service areas should be located at the rear of the building unless these areas can be concealed within the interior of the building design. Loading docks, service and storage areas should be screened from public streets and neighborhoods.

Compatibility with Surrounding Development and Between Uses on the Site

- **Privacy between land uses:** The design should address privacy between residential units and non-residential uses on the site and on adjacent properties.
- **Private development to complement the public realm:** The design of structures and landscaping should complement the street pedestrian realm with plazas, pocket parks, public gathering spaces and street furniture.
- **Public spaces distinguished from private spaces:** The design should provide visual and physical cues that demark the public space from the private space.
- **Passageways for light and air:** Integrate new buildings with the surrounding area by providing passageways that allow for light and air to adjacent buildings and that connect to the pedestrian realm.
- **Noise mitigation adjacent to arterials:** Noise insulation techniques should be used in residential units adjacent to heavily traveled corridors.

Access

- **Access from side streets and alleys:** Vehicular access to buildings and parking areas should be provided from side streets, adjacent alleys, and parallel streets, and traffic calming techniques should be provided to minimize intrusion of traffic into adjacent neighborhoods.
- **Pedestrian amenities at street crossings:** Pedestrian crossings at arterials should include items such as curb extensions, decorative crosswalk paving, shortened turning radii for cars, complementary plant materials and pedestrian lighting, public art and bus shelters. Raised intersections should also be considered for intersections inside developments.



Curb extension and crosswalk paving at street crossings add to a pedestrian-friendly environment.

Landscaping & Irrigation

- **Compatible landscape:** The overall concept is to create landscaping that will blend in with and enhance the surrounding neighborhoods while providing a design that will minimize maintenance.
- **Mix of native and adapted plants:** Landscaping should include a mix of appropriate native and adapted drought-tolerant plants throughout the project to insure visual continuity, respond to local design context conditions, and resource conservation goals. Whenever possible, existing indigenous, native vegetation should be preserved and integrated into the design.
- **Shade trees:** Shade trees should be provided to shade pedestrians, to break, guide and deflect wind and to filter out dust and dirt.
- **Hydro-zones:** Plants should be grouped into specific “Hydro-Zones” allowing for efficient irrigation scheduling and sustainability.



A mix of drought-tolerant landscaping would insure visual continuity

- **Criteria for selection of plant materials:** Considerations for the selection of plant materials shall include: initial costs; local availability; attractiveness; growth rate; tolerance to drought, wind, pollutants and abuse; public safety; hardiness; soil and drainage conditions; sun/shade preferences; maintenance characteristics, including leaf and limb litter; potential damage to adjacent paved areas by roots; and attraction of rodents and insects.
- **Edible landscaping:** Edible landscaping could be encouraged in some areas within the private realm to support the local economy and employment, as the produce can be sold at the local grocery stores and served in the restaurants and eateries. Only plants and trees with year-round vegetative mass compatible with the desert environment should be installed.
- **Parking lot landscaping:** Landscaping in parking lots will typically receive the most amount of wear. For this reason, the most resilient shrubs should be specified. A mix of deciduous and evergreen trees, compatible with the desert environment, should be specified that provide a maximum amount of shade for parked cars as well as pedestrian paths, while minimizing vegetative leaf fall on vehicles as much as possible. Design should minimize landscape maintenance. Ground covers and trees should be utilized in small island planters.
- **Irrigation system:** An automated soil-moisture monitoring irrigation system should be installed which addresses water conservation. A soil-moisture monitoring irrigation control system uses feedback on the soil water status to bypass a time-based pre-programmed schedule or to maintain soil water content within a specified range to ensure that landscaping is watered only as needed.

In addition to a smart irrigation system which includes a weather-based controller, in-line drip and bubbler systems should be used rather than overhead spray. Where overhead spray is used, heads should have low-precipitation nozzles to reduce run-off.

Innovative, Well-Designed Parking and Access

- **Location of parking:** On-site parking is discouraged adjacent to the sidewalk along major streets to emphasize the pedestrian realm. It should be located at the rear of the development or underground, if feasible, with convenient pedestrian access to non-residential and/or residential uses.
- **Screening of Parking:** Existing or new parking spaces in lots which face a street should be screened from view from the street by landscaping or a low masonry wall with landscaping. Parking garages should be designed with generous landscaping and canopy trees surrounding them.



Public parking should be located at the rear of the parcels with convenient pedestrian access or should be screened.

- **Interconnected parking:** Where possible, link the new parking with that of adjacent development to facilitate vehicular and pedestrian movements.
- **Surface Parking Lots:** Surface Parking Lots should use pervious paving materials to reduce storm run-off.
- **Parking access:** Access to parking should be from side streets and from alleys when available. To minimize traffic congestion and breaks in the pedestrian realm, multiple parking access points along major streets are discouraged. Shaded (trees, pergolas, canopies, etc.) pedestrian paths should be provided through parking lots to minimize pedestrian movement on roads and in between cars.
- **Parking garage design:** Parking structures design should be compatible with the design of the main building.
- **Parking structures located away from street frontage:** Above-ground parking structures should not front on major streets unless there is no feasible alternative. If parking structures

are located on a major street, the ground floor street frontage should be devoted to pedestrian-friendly retail, service and restaurant uses with visual interest.

- **Drop-off and valet:** Spaces for drop-off, “kiss and ride”, and valet parking should be provided in major projects where appropriate.
- **Avoid visible sloping floors:** An above-grade parking structure should not have sloping floors visible from adjacent streets.

Signage

- **Clear distinctive signage:** Signage should be distinctive and clear and uniformly and consistently applied. Signage may operate at least three scales: identification of individual stores, restaurants, entertainment centers and offices; identification of a “project” or group of such businesses, and identification of residential units.



Project signage should be distinctive and clear.

Green Design Techniques

- **Permeable space:** Lot coverage should allow adequate percentage of permeable space for water infiltration and treatment. In built-out neighborhoods, public open space and amenities should be planned and designed to compensate for the loss of permeable space. Permeable paving materials and landscape drainage swales should be incorporated into public or private landscaped areas whenever appropriate.



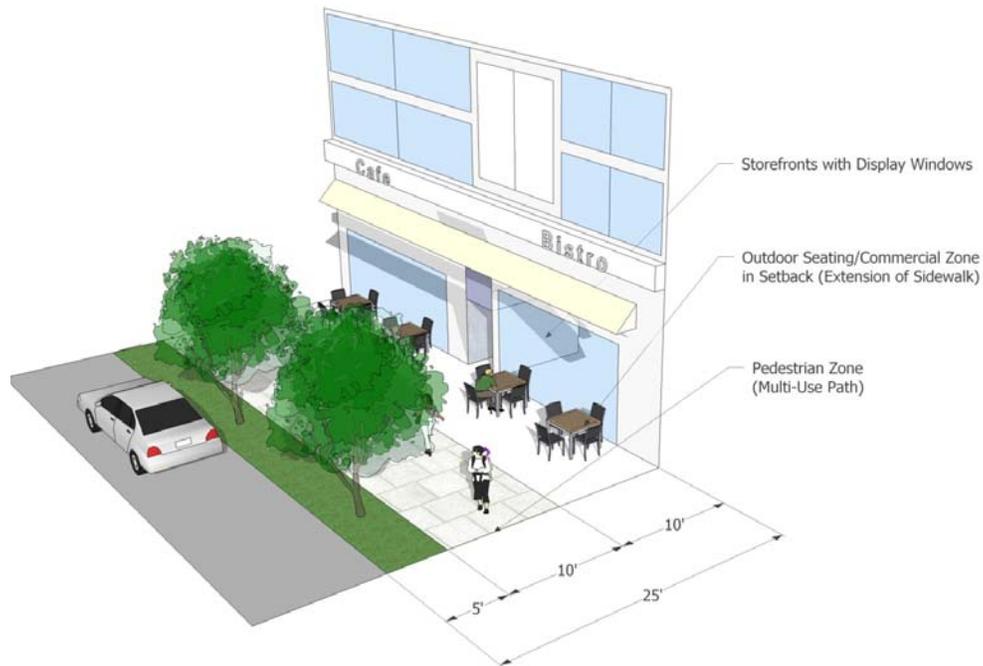
Drainage swales and other water infiltration and treatment techniques should be encouraged

- **Water Conservation:** Water conservation measures such as gray water irrigation and local drought-tolerant vegetation should be prioritized in all public and private landscape areas.
- **Green roofs:** Green roofs should be considered in the design of new developments.
- **Solar panels:** Solar powered signs or panels or LED pedestrian lights or other low-energy lights should also be installed along the bikeway/pedestrian paths or at crossings or buildings to provide a flexible illuminated solution with no external powering requirement.

Sidewalks/Multi-Use Path

- **Provide sidewalks:** Sidewalks should include parkways and walkways, especially along ground floor retail.
- **Direct access from sidewalks:** Access from adjoining retail, restaurants, and live-work units should be provided directly to the 10-foot multi-use path ON Date Palm Drive with appropriate landscaping and hardscape offering the transition, see **Figure 6-12**.
- **Outdoor dining:** Outdoor dining may occur on any portion of the setback area next to adjacent retail space.
- **Landscaped setback:** Adjacent to live-work space or professional office space, at least 50% of the required setback shall consist of landscaping.

Figure 6-12: Outdoor dining should be encouraged next to ground-floor retail within the setback area



- **Buffer pedestrian paths:** Pedestrian pathways and sidewalks should be buffered from moving traffic by providing street trees along the curbside and in the case of collector streets a row of parked cars on the street.
- **Safe & attractive pedestrian paths:** Pedestrian pathways, amenities, and linkages should be well maintained and well lighted for pedestrians to feel safe.
- **Low maintenance:** Pedestrian amenities, street furniture, signage, street lights, and other urban design elements should be designed to minimize maintenance.

Street Blocks

- **Smaller blocks:** Smaller pedestrian-scale blocks of 200 feet to 300 feet long are preferred over large super blocks in the Complete Neighborhood and in major residential developments.
- **Subdivide blocks:** Subdivide blocks to provide pedestrian-scaled access points and visual connections into the development from streets, shared-use alleys or paseos.
- **Open space:** Locate open space within smaller block developments to create meaningful public rooms. Make the public open spaces a central feature with residential and commercial uses facing onto it.