

**EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE PRIORITIES
OF THE
NORTHWEST DESIGN REVIEW BOARD**

**Meeting Date: November 19th, 2007
Report Date: November 27th, 2007**

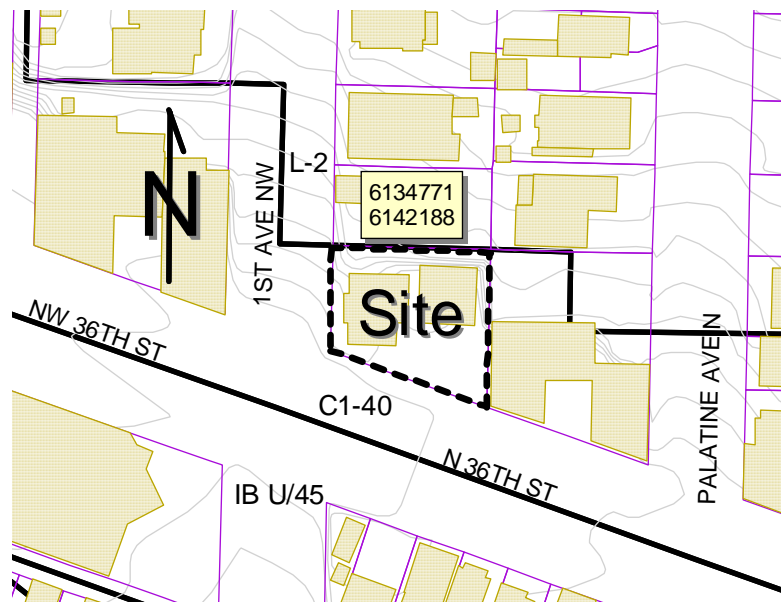
BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Project Number:	3007752
Address:	100 North 36th Street
Applicant:	David Wu of TSE Architects representative for Sahagun Restaurant Consulting Inc.
Board members present:	Guy Peckham, Acting Chair Mark Brands Joe Giampietro Bill Singer
Board members absent	Elizabeta Stachisin-Moura (excused)
DPD staff present:	Shelley Bolser, Land Use Planner

SITE & VICINITY

The approximately 8,050 square foot corner site is located on 1st Ave NW and N. 36th St. A restaurant with accessory surface parking currently occupies the site. The site is not adjacent to an alley.

The site is located in the Fremont neighborhood in a pedestrian-oriented area with frequent transit service. The existing streetscape on N. 36th St reflects a mix of commercial development. The area to the north is zoned L-2 and includes some recent townhouse construction but remains predominantly single family detached housing. A townhouse development (two duplexes) is proposed and permits are in review for the site to the north.



The proposed development site is located in a Commercial zone with a 40' height limit (C1-40). The adjacent zone to the north is Lowrise Multi-family Residential (L-2), which includes a 30' height limit with an additional 5' pitched roof. The zone to the south across N. 36th St is Industrial Buffer with a 45' height limit (IB U/45).

The site slopes down to the south, towards the ship canal. Surrounding development consists of mixed ages and styles of commercial and residential structures. Commercial structures include facades of brick, metal siding, stucco, and concrete. Residential facades are predominantly composed of painted wood lap siding.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The proposal includes the construction of one mixed-use residential, restaurant, and retail building with below grade parking. The proposed project consists of retail and restaurant area at the street level with residential units above. Below grade parking would be accessed from a curb cut on 1st Ave NW. Retail and restaurant entries would face N. 36th St. The primary residential entry would face N. 36th St, with a secondary exit door on 1st Ave NW.

The proposal includes approximately 6 residential units, 4,159 square feet of retail and/or restaurant area at the street level, and 11 below grade parking stalls.

DESIGN PRESENTATION

Three schemes were presented at the Early Design Guidance meeting. All of the options included street level restaurant and retail space with an outdoor seating area, two stair/elevator cores to the residential development above, and below grade parking. The applicant also submitted supplementary packets sheets at the meeting.

The applicant started by noting that the owner of the existing restaurant and property is the developer for the project. The intent is to keep the restaurant business at this site. TSE is the architectural firm, with landscape design by Studio 342. The design focus of the proposed development includes emphasis of the following items:

- Increase pedestrian-oriented development to attract more pedestrians from the more retail focused areas to the south
- Enhance landscaping, especially near the proposed entry plazas
- Human scale development with retail and restaurant facing N. 36th St
- Outdoor seating for the restaurant business

The first scheme (Option 01) proposed vehicular access from a curb cut on N. 36th St, near the east property line. Separate restaurant and retail entry plazas would be located adjacent to the sidewalk on N. 36th St, with an outdoor seating area located between the two entry plazas. Retail area would be located at the corner of N. 36th St, with restaurant to the east. One of the residential stair towers would be located between the driveway and the restaurant entry, and the other would be located on 1st Ave NW at the north property line. The applicant explained that this option would emphasize the building corner at the intersection, but could create conflicts between vehicles and pedestrians on the busy N. 36th St frontage. The shared entry plaza between restaurant and residential uses would also be awkward for residents entering the building.

The second scheme (Option 02) proposed vehicular access from a curb cut on 1st Ave NW, near the north property line. Separate restaurant and retail entry plazas would be located adjacent to the sidewalk on N. 36th St, with an outdoor seating area located near the east property line. Retail area would be located at the corner of N. 36th St, with restaurant to the east. One of the residential stair towers would be located between the retail entry and the restaurant entry, and the other would be located on 1st Ave NW south of the driveway. The applicant explained that this option would again emphasize the building corner at the intersection, would also create some separation between the restaurant and residential entry areas, and would reduce the potential conflict between cars and pedestrians at N. 36th St. Challenges include less restaurant storefront facing N. 36th St and the location of outdoor restaurant seating in the shadow of the building next door, and the location of driveway higher on the site (translates to steeper internal ramping for parking access).

The third scheme (Option 03) proposed the same vehicular access as Option 02. Separate restaurant and retail entry plazas would be located adjacent to the sidewalk on N. 36th St, with an outdoor seating area located at the corner of 1st Ave NW and N. 36th St. Restaurant area would be located at the corner, with retail to the east. One of the residential stair towers would be located between the retail entry and the restaurant entry, and the other would be located on 1st Ave NW south of the driveway. The applicant explained that this option would include the opportunity for additional modulation, additional plaza areas adjacent to N. 36th St., and outdoor seating in a more prominent location to activate the corner. Challenges include less retail storefront facing N. 36th St and the driveway location on the upper slope.

BOARD QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS

The Board had the following questions and clarifying comments, with responses from the applicant:

- The applicant stated that the proposed building placement would allow a “view corridor.” What would be viewed, and from where?
 - The placement of the driveway and upper stories setback from the northwest corner would allow the residences to the north to have open space, light, and view to N 36th St.
- Is the proposed building placement at the property line near the southwest corner?
 - Yes
- How wide would the sidewalk be on N. 36th St?
 - 10’ wide sidewalk plus landscaped areas
- How much would the building be setback from the north and east property lines?
 - There would be a 5’ setback at the base on the north and east sides
- Has the applicant examined the possibility of building to the property line on N. 36th St?
 - That was examined as the proposal was developed. The applicant felt that a zero foot setback at that street front wouldn’t reflect the context of streetscape of nearby newer developments that allow for public gathering areas adjacent to the sidewalk. The additional setback at street level would offer more opportunity for human activity at the street level.
- Why are there two stair towers?
 - One is an emergency exit (1st Ave NW); the other is the primary stair entry.
- Why does the N. 36th St stair tower infringe so far into the retail store frontage?
 - This placement allows some separation between the retail and residential entry, which makes it more comfortable for residents
- The applicant mentioned an “interior” courtyard?

- The courtyard would not actually be internal to the building; instead, he meant to describe the plaza area adjacent to the sidewalk on N. 36th St.
- How does the building form present to the street? The massing diagrams appear to indicate an inset lower floor at the corner with upper stories overhanging the ground level.
 - That is a graphical error; the intent is not to include a large building overhang
- Preferred modulation should include setback upper stories, if any. Overhanging upper stories are not the preferred method.
- Please describe the elevation drawings shown on page A.10
 - The elevation shows street level entry with canopy and balconies extending above. The building wall would be in line with the entry wall, as viewed in elevation.
- How much outdoor seating is proposed, compared to the current situation?
 - Approximately ½ to 2/3 of the current outdoor seating area would be provided in the new development
- What is the maximum building height at this site, and would the proposed development be at the maximum height?
 - 40', and yes, the proposed structure would be at or near maximum building height.
- How high is the retail space?
 - 13' average height, ranging from 12'-14' high depending on the grade change (approximately 5' grade change between southwest and northwest corners of the site)
- The retail height should be the maximum possible, even if it means increasing the building height and stair overruns to the maximum allowed by the Land Use Code
- Would the proposal include separate entries for the retail and restaurant areas?
 - Yes
- How much parking is proposed?
 - Eleven parking spaces are proposed for the residential and commercial uses
- Has the applicant examined a scheme with the residential entry placement on 1st Ave NW?
 - Yes, but they felt that residents would prefer to enter on grade at N. 36th St as opposed to climbing the grade change on 1st Ave NW
 - Also, the placement of the driveway at the northwest corner could create conflicts between pedestrians and cars, if the primary residential entry were adjacent to the driveway
 - The placement of the secondary exit door on 1st Ave NW should minimize conflicts between pedestrians and vehicles
- Would the proposed residences be flats or lofts?
 - They would be flats

PUBLIC COMMENT

Two members of the public attended the Early Design Guidance meeting:

- Why is the applicant proposing a 5' setback between their building and the adjacent building to the east?
 - The applicant noted that the 5' allows for easier construction and excavation for the foundation.
- Commenters expressed general support for the proposal

- Support for the proposed curb cut location (not on N. 36th St)
- A zero foot setback at N. 36th St would be preferable
- There is a lot of pedestrian traffic that travels from the canal north on 1st Ave NW to N. 36th St
- Additional outdoor seating would be preferred
- There is a lot of solar exposure at the corner of N. 36th St and 1st Ave NW in the summer
- The residential entry would be better placed on 1st Ave NW
- The biggest challenge with the existing restaurant is the placement of dumpsters. The proposed location of dumpsters adjacent to the driveway near the northwest corner of the site may cause conflicts with adjacent residential development and the secondary entry
- The stair overrun at the top of the building should be the lowest height possible
- Appreciation for the sensitivity of building placement in relation to adjacent residential development
- If there is no public access to the roof, the applicant should look at reducing or removing the stair overruns where possible

DESIGN GUIDELINE PRIORITIES

After visiting the site, considering the analysis of the site and context provided by the proponents, and hearing public comment, the Design Review Board members provided the following siting and design guidance and identified by letter and number those guidelines found in the City of Seattle's *Design Review: Guidelines for Multi-family and Commercial Buildings* of highest priority to this project.

The Board noted that the project includes the following positive aspects:

- Proposed outdoor seating is a positive aspect of the proposal
- The separation of residential entry from retail/commercial entries is positive, but should be done in a way that minimizes the visual presence of the stair tower
- The proposed vehicle entry and pedestrian residential entry placement is positive

"Hot Buttons" are items initially discussed by the Board and include items of top importance for the design. For this project, the Board determined the hot button was:

1. N 36th St Street front facade

- The applicant should carefully design the visual relationship between the upper and lower floors. The proposal should include a distinct base, middle, and top through use of modulation and façade treatments.
- The retail and restaurant uses should be visually prominent and not hidden by the stair tower or residential entry
 - Possible modification includes relocation of the residential entry to the east edge of the N. 36th St street front façade
 - Grouping the retail and restaurant entries would enhance the visibility of these areas and allow for maximum plaza area adjacent to the sidewalk

2. Adjacent residential development

- The townhouse development under review on the property to the north of the proposed development would be located approximately 5' from the shared property line. The applicant has proposed a departure to place the proposed development 5' from parts of the north property line

- The close proximity of the proposed and adjacent development provides some concern regarding privacy impacts, blank walls, and appropriate landscaping
- The applicant should demonstrate how the proposed design better meets the intent of the design guidelines
- The applicant should demonstrate this through graphics, including elevations of proposed and adjacent façade, landscape plans, site sections with both developments shown, and site plans

The applicant should address all priority guidelines and Board guidance below during the next stages of design review.

A. Site Planning

A-1 Responding to Site Characteristics. The siting of buildings should respond to specific site conditions and opportunities such as non-rectangular lots, location on prominent intersections, unusual topography, significant vegetation and views or other natural features.

The proposed development should respond to the sloping characteristic of the site. Specifically, the applicant should demonstrate how the slope from north to south will affect the proposed development in relation to the adjacent residences to the north. Site sections, elevations of the proposed north façade and adjacent development's south façade, and site plans should be used to demonstrate compliance with this guideline.

A-2 Streetscape Compatibility. The siting of buildings should acknowledge and reinforce the existing desirable spatial characteristics of the right-of-way.

Comments reflect the statements regarding restaurant and retail space in Hot Button #1. The commercial areas should be grouped and should be visually prominent in the street front façade.

A-4 Human Activity. New development should be sited and designed to encourage human activity on the street.

The Board expressed support for the proposed outdoor seating areas. In addition to the comments in Hot Button #1 and A-2, the proposed design should maximize outdoor seating areas.

A-5 Respect for Adjacent Sites. Buildings should respect adjacent properties by being located on their sites to minimize disruption of the privacy and outdoor activities of residents in adjacent buildings.

Comments reflect those found in Hot Button #2 and the guidance found in response to A-1.

A-8 Parking and Vehicle Access. Siting should minimize the impact of automobile parking and driveways on the pedestrian environment, adjacent properties, and pedestrian safety.

The proposed vehicular entry is located at the northwest corner of the site, adjacent to the proposed townhouses on the site to the north. The applicant should demonstrate that the proposed driveway would have minimal visual, audio, and air quality effects on the adjacent

residences. Possible methods to reduce impacts include covering the driveway with structure, trellis structures with vegetation, and vegetated buffers.

The Board noted that they would be willing to entertain a departure request to reduce the width of the driveway to the minimum possible, in order to reduce the visual impacts. A one-way driveway (used by one car at a time, both entry and egress) could also be entertained as a departure request.

A-10 Corner Lots. Building on corner lots should be oriented to the corner and public street fronts. Parking and automobile access should be located away from corners.

The proposed development includes outdoor seating areas adjacent to the intersection of the two adjacent streets. The outdoor seating areas should be maximized and the plaza areas adjacent to the sidewalk should be grouped into a single larger area.

B. Height, Bulk and Scale

B-1 Height, Bulk, and Scale Compatibility. Projects should be compatible with the scale of development anticipated by the applicable Land Use Policies for the surrounding area and should be sited and designed to provide a sensitive transition to near-by, less intensive zones. Projects on zone edges should be developed in a manner that creates a step in perceived height, bulk, and scale between anticipated development potential of the adjacent zones.

The applicant has noted that the massing diagrams don't accurately present the proposed development. In addition to the comments found in Hot Button #1, the Board responded that the proposed massing should relate well to the street. This may include techniques such as stepping back upper residential levels and shifting the bulk of the building to the north so the street level plaza areas are uncovered.

C. Architectural Elements and Materials

C-1 Architectural Context. New buildings proposed for existing neighborhoods with a well-defined and desirable character should be compatible with or complement the architectural character and siting pattern of neighboring buildings.

The Board expressed support for incorporating recent nearby architectural context into the proposed building design. A positive example of context for this area is located across 1st Ave NW from the proposed development (northwest corner of the intersection of 1st Ave NW and NW 36th St). Typical recent context for this area includes durable materials such as masonry, concrete, and metal siding, with rectilinear forms indicative of historic industrial character of the area.

C-4 Exterior Finish Materials. Building exteriors should be constructed of durable and maintainable materials that are attractive even when viewed up close. Materials that have texture, pattern, or lend themselves to a high quality of detailing are encouraged.

Comments reflect those regarding context of nearby façade materials in the guidance for C-1.

- C-5 Structured Parking Entrances. The presence and appearance of garage entrances should be minimized so that they do not dominate the street frontage of a building.**

Guidance reflects comments found in response to A-8.

D. Pedestrian Environment

- D-1 Pedestrian Open Spaces and Entrances. Convenient and attractive access to the building's entry should be provided. To ensure comfort and security, paths and entry areas should be sufficiently lighted and entry areas should be protected from the weather. Opportunities for creating lively, pedestrian-oriented open space should be considered.**

Guidance reflects comments found in Hot Button #1, A-2, A-4, and A-10.

- D-2 Blank Walls. Buildings should avoid large blank walls facing the street, especially near sidewalks. Where blank walls are unavoidable they should receive design treatment to increase pedestrian comfort and interest.**

In addition to the guidance found in Hot Button #2, A-1, and A-5, the applicant should demonstrate compliance with this guideline at the MUP stage of review. Blank walls should not face the street or adjacent residential development. Possible blank wall treatments include fenestration, green walls, a mix of colors and materials, and/or trellises.

- D-3 Retaining Walls. Retaining walls near a public sidewalk that extend higher than eye level should be avoided where possible. Where higher retaining walls are unavoidable, they should be designed to reduce their impact on pedestrian comfort and to increase the visual interest along the streetscapes.**

The applicant should provide any information about proposed or existing retaining walls at the MUP stage of review.

- D-5 Visual Impacts of Parking Structures. The visibility of all at-grade parking structures or accessory parking garages should be minimized. The parking portion of a structure should be architecturally compatible with the rest of the structure and streetscape. Open parking spaces and carports should be screened from the street and adjacent properties.**

Guidance reflects comments found in response to A-8.

- D-6 Screening of Dumpsters, Utilities, and Service Areas. Building sites should locate service elements like trash dumpsters, loading docks and mechanical equipment away from the street front where possible. When elements such as dumpsters, utility meters, mechanical units and service areas cannot be located away from the street front, they should be situated and screened from view and should not be located in the pedestrian right-of-way.**

The public comments revealed that current dumpster and service areas are a challenge at the existing site. The proposed development should include fully enclosed trash areas (including a covered top for the enclosure) that are architecturally compatible and integrated with the proposed building design. Proposed trash enclosures should be designed to minimize both the appearance and smell of refuse areas.

- D-7 Personal Safety and Security. Project design should consider opportunities for enhancing personal safety and security in the environment under review.**

The proposed options shown at the EDG meeting indicated the potential for 'dead-end' corridors between the proposed structures and the adjacent structures. The proposed design should avoid such corridors, either by enclosing the corridors with building structure or adequately restricting the access to such areas.

- D-9 Commercial Signage. Signs should add interest to the street front environment and should be appropriate for the scale and character desired in the area.**

The applicant should provide information about proposed signage at the MUP stage of review.

- D-10 Commercial Lighting. Appropriate levels of lighting should be provided in order to promote visual interest and a sense of security for people in commercial districts during evening hours. Lighting may be provided by incorporation into the building façade, the underside of overhead weather protection, on and around street furniture, in merchandising display windows, in landscaped areas, and/or on signage.**

The applicant should provide a conceptual proposed lighting plan at the MUP stage of review. Submittal materials should include a lighting plan and manufacturer cut sheets for proposed fixtures.

- D-11 Commercial Transparency. Commercial storefronts should be transparent, allowing for a direct visual connection between pedestrians on the sidewalk and the activities occurring on the interior of a building. Blank walls should be avoided.**

The applicant should provide information about proposed commercial transparency at the MUP stage of review. Guidance reflects comments found in Hot Button #1 and A-2.

D-12 Residential Entries and Transitions. For residential projects in commercial zones, the space between the residential entry and the sidewalk should provide security and privacy for residents and a visually interesting street front for pedestrians. Residential buildings should enhance the character of the streetscape with small gardens, stoops and other elements that work to create a transition between the public sidewalk and private entry.

In addition to the comments found in Hot Button #1 and the response to A-2, the applicant should examine the possibility of providing a primary residential entry on 1st Ave NW closer to the intersection and making the N. 36th access a minimal secondary egress. This could allow maximum commercial store frontage on N. 36th St.

E. Landscaping

E-1 Landscaping to Reinforce Design Continuity with Adjacent Sites. Where possible, and where there is not another overriding concern, landscaping should reinforce the character of neighboring properties and abutting streetscape.

The proposed landscape plan should address a sufficient buffer for the residential development to the north and should provide additional information about existing landscaping in the public right of way, especially on N. 36th St. The existing street trees should be called out with species, size, and location.

E-2 Landscaping to Enhance the Building and/or Site. Landscaping, including living plant material, special pavements, trellises, screen walls, planters, site furniture, and similar features should be appropriately incorporated into the design to enhance the project.

Proposed landscaping should enhance the proposed plaza areas. A green roof is encouraged. If a green roof is not possible, the applicant should include planting on the roof in planters and/or large containers.

DEVELOPMENT STANDARD DEPARTURES

The following departures from the development standards were proposed at this phase:

Departure Summary Table

STANDARD	REQUIREMENT	REQUEST	APPLICANT'S JUSTIFICATION	BOARD RECOMMENDATION
Rear and side setback requirements for lots adjacent to residential zones SMC 23.47A.014.B.3 Setback 15' at rear lot line when taller than 13' and adjacent to a residential zone	0' setback for areas up to 13' tall; 15' setback along the north property line where the building is more than 13' tall	5' setback at the base of the building; 10' setback for areas above 13' height on the north property line	Additional buffer area provided at the base of the building for vegetation; provide increased northwest corner setback to allow more light and air to adjacent residences to the north	The Board will continue to entertain this request, provided the applicant can demonstrate how the proposal would better meet the intent of the adopted design guidelines.

- 1. Rear and side setback requirements for lots adjacent to residential zones (SMC 23.47A.014.B.3):** The applicant proposes to provide additional setback below 13' height and reduce the required setback above 13' height adjacent to the north property line.

The Board indicated that they would continue to entertain the request for this departure as more information is received. Additional information in the form of sections, elevations, and landscape plans will be needed at the MUP stage of review in order to review this request.

NEXT STEPS

MUP Application:

1. Submit application for Master Use Permit (MUP) application. Appointments for MUP intake may be made by calling (206) 684-8850. Please contact Land Use Planner Shelley Bolser at (206) 733-9067 or shelley.bolser@seattle.gov when you have scheduled your MUP intake appointment.
2. Please include a written response to the guidance provided in this EDG, as noted in CAM 238, Attachment B. Plan on embedding four 11x17 colored and shadowed elevations, landscape and right-of-way improvement plans into the front of the MUP plan set (4 per sheet). Label all sheets for design review and provide a table of contents at the front of the plan set. CAM 238 may be accessed at <http://www.ci.seattle.wa.us/dclu/Publications/cam/cam238.pdf>.
3. A traffic study or memo disclosing trip estimates may be required as part of the next phase of the MUP process.
4. Provide the following graphics, either in the MUP plan set or directly to Land Use Planner Shelley Bolser, following MUP intake:
 - a. Developed site plan of preferred scheme with surrounding context showing existing adjacent structures.
 - b. Plans of all significant floor levels including below grade parking. Include scale and north arrow.
 - c. Sections of the project (east-west and north-south), including adjacent structures (existing and proposed) and labeling of building heights at changes in the façade.
 - d. Elevation drawings, including proposed façade treatments, colors, and materials
 - e. Elevation drawing for the southern elevation of the proposed development on the site to the north
 - f. Sketches of the street level facades, including canopies, entrances, materials, colors, etc.
 - g. Detailed graphics of the building top and roof level (mechanical equipment location and screening, landscaped areas if any, stair penthouse locations)
 - h. Perspective sketches of the streetscape experience from the pedestrian's point of view (especially at N. 36th St)
 - i. Graphics demonstrating the proposed façade treatment for any blank facades
 - j. Landscape plans, including plant species, size, and placement (including existing street tree locations, sizes, and species)
 - i. Communicate with SDOT Arborist Bill Ames regarding recommended tree protection for existing street trees: bill.ames@seattle.gov or 206-684-5693
 - k. Conceptual lighting plan, including fixture locations and manufacturer cut sheets for proposed fixtures
 - l. Conceptual signage plan, with proposed signage locations and approximate sizes
 - m. Page with colors and materials shown

Recommendation Meeting:

Include the following items in your design recommendation meeting submittal:

1. Items 4a through 4L from above
2. Colors and materials board, as well as a page in the packet demonstrating the palette
3. Perspective sketches including outline of adjacent development as viewed from:
 - a. 1st Ave NW
 - b. The intersection of 1st Ave NW and N. 36th St
 - c. Southeast of the project looking at it from across N. 36th St
4. Written response to the Early Design Guidance
5. Diagrams and departure chart (including code sections) clearly describing the proposed departure(s) in contrast to the code requirement
6. Provide an electronic copy of the recommendation packet to the DPD at the time of recommendation packet submittal (instructions posted on website under “design review going digital” http://www.seattle.gov/dpd/planning/design_review_program/Overview/).