

CONTEXT & SITE

CS1. Natural Systems and Site Features

Local Topography

- Respond to local topography with terraces, stoops, stepping facades, or similar approaches. Use appropriately scaled stones, stairs, and landscaping to transition between the sidewalk and building façade and entrances in keeping with local topographic conditions, and existing neighboring approaches. If fencing is included in the design, it should step along with the topography as well.

Connection to Nature

- Consider solar access by setting taller buildings back at upper floors to minimize shadows cast on adjacent pedestrian level spaces (i.e. sidewalks and open areas) and neighboring properties.
- Orient projects in a way that provides sunlight to interior spaces and open spaces within the building.
- Be sensitive to the project's impact on adjacent streets and sidewalks. Where possible, consider pushing buildings back from the street and provide wider sidewalks so sunlight reaches the public pedestrian level. Ensure sunlight reached building entrances whenever possible.
- Provide additional vegetated spaces (could happen in the form of vertical green walls which also provide an acoustic buffer).
- Use bioretention techniques as part of the landscape and site design to reduce the amount of storm water runoff to public systems. Incorporate into the streetscape where appropriate.
- Protect and retain existing, healthy and mature trees.
- Encourage incorporation of urban farming opportunities within the design, both at grade, and on the roof for larger mixed-use buildings.
- Unify streets through street trees. Incorporate an irrigation plan that maintains the trees and other landscaping proposed. Ensure maintainability of the plants, or include low-maintenance, drought-resistant species.

CS2. Urban Pattern and Form

Transition and Delineation of Zones

- Where denser zones transition to lower density residential zones, ground related entrances, porches, and stoops with grade separation should be provided at facades facing the less dense zone.
- Use building massing and articulation in addition to building height to transition to single-family scaled fabric (i.e. through setbacks, the building footprint and placement on the site, the building width, façade modulation, roof line articulation, etc.).
- Use residential-scaled elements (i.e. bay windows, balconies, etc.) on larger buildings next to single-family zones to better relate to the human scale, especially for buildings four stories and lower.

CS3. Architectural Context and Character

History & Heritage

- Provide opportunities to honor the African and black American presence within the neighborhood.
- Consider including visual arts as an integral part of the design concept along main street building facades, within highly trafficked pedestrian areas, and within open spaces.
- Retain and respect the existing surrounding neighborhood character.
- Base new building design character on local history and culture.
- Include interpretive opportunities (through visual art, signage, markers etc.) where applicable that tell the story of the neighborhood's history in engaging ways.

- Encourage the building design to reflect the racial, economical, and multi-generational character of the community.
- When possible, encourage the preservation, rehabilitation, adaptive reuse, and addition to existing structures as a means to honor what came before in the existing neighborhood fabric.

PUBLIC LIFE

PL1. Open Space Connectivity

- Publicly Accessible Open Space**
- Provide safe and well connected open spaces. Encourage shared public walkways to multiple buildings/campus to create a network of walkways. Larger projects around important neighborhood nodes should dedicate more public open space, while projects along dense business corridors should maintain a continued street presence contributing to the area’s urban feel.
 - Identify and emphasize gateways within the community. Create activities and visual interest at these intersections and thresholds to enhance the Central Area’s identity and a sense of arrival such as;
 - Providing street furniture, public art, landscape elements, banners, pedestrian lighting, mosaics, etc.
 - Creating façade enhancement at prominent building corners.
 - Creating a building layout and setbacks that provide opportunities for open space
 - Utilize urban design techniques to relate and visually connect pedestrian paths with neighboring projects and public spaces to create and contribute to a well-connected and publicly accessible open space network.

- Connection Back to the Community**
- Provide meaningful open spaces in the community that can be used for a variety of uses including social gathering, festivals, and other larger celebrations.
 - Enhance gathering points so that the scale of the art in public spaces is commensurate with the scale of the new development (i.e. at larger developments provide larger gathering points and public spaces)
 - Use blank walls and surfaces for public expression of art that references the history, heritage, and culture of the community.
 - Provide amenities appropriate to the community (i.e. bike racks are not as necessary, however when required by code they can be an artistic opportunity).
 - Discourage inaccessible rooftop, or private, or gated open spaces as the only form of open space for the project. Prioritize ground level open space at the building front or side, or by means of a courtyard that is not restricted or hidden from public view.
 - When providing vegetation at the roof level, consider urban agriculture instead of a passive green roof as a means to provide residents access to fresh produce. Consider ways to incorporate entrepreneurship opportunities and community engagement related to urban agriculture.
 - Incorporating transparent, indoor community meeting spaces at the ground level of larger projects is encouraged.

- Livability for Families & Elderly**
- Provide safe areas for children to play where they can be seen.
 - Consider utilizing building rooftops as an opportunity for family gathering and gardening.
 - Preserve alleys (for pedestrian use/provides a space for play and other activities) with entrances and transparency, where applicable.
 - Make sidewalks, pathways and grade transitions accessible for those with limited mobility and reduced vision.
 - Provide multi-generational public gathering spaces for young & old to recreate and converse together.
 - Family sized apartment units (2 and 3 bedrooms) are encouraged.

PL2. Walkability

Gathering and Social Spaces

- Where appropriate, provide public open spaces at ground level for gathering (not all open spaces need to be landscaped; hardscapes are encouraged when sized and designed to encourage active usage). At these moments, building edges should be inviting and create well defined open spaces for public use. These spaces are especially important close to intersections and streets. In areas where it is not feasible to be open to physical pedestrian access, they should provide visual openness.
- Encourage human activity. Provide opportunities for neighbors to connect and walk/talk together on the sidewalk. Porches and stoops are the life of the street.
- Incorporate building-integrated shelters and canopies both for transit users, as well as to provide weather protection for pedestrians at retail streets.

PL3. Street-Level Interaction

Frontages

- Encourage color variation in storefront design.
- Design ground floor frontage in commercial/mixed-use areas that emulate or improve upon the surrounding pedestrian-oriented context.
- Promote transparency and “eyes on the street”. Permeable transparency should be used (no reflective or obscure glass). Maintain transparency and openness of community facilities. Discourage retailers from putting display cases up against windows to maintain transparency into commercial spaces.
- Provide coupled entries where possible to foster sense of community and interest in building entryways.
- Provide exterior access to ground floor residential units. This interior/exterior connection should occur regularly with entrances placed at a repeating interval.
- Avoid grade separations at retail. Storefronts should step along with the grade (ex: 30’ max length).
- In pedestrian-oriented commercial areas, provide breaks at storefronts at regular intervals of 25 to 30 feet to accommodate and encourage smaller retailers and community oriented businesses.
- Live/work spaces should be designed in a way that clearly defines which spaces are conducive to working versus living through the architecture.

Streetscape Treatment

- Pay close attention to the relationship between buildings and their entrances to the street, pedestrians, and neighboring buildings both adjacent and across the street. Provide recessed entries for retail spaces with special treatment through paving or building materials to highlight business’s presence along the street.
- Provide awnings or overhead weather protection at all non-residential frontages with a minimum depth of 6’ at key nodes or if west facing. Larger commercial projects should have even deeper coverage (min. 8’).
- Encourage a quality pedestrian environment that provides safe, comfortable routes for pedestrians that change based on the character of the building fabric, and encourages activation of the amenity zone to include community gardens as well as street trees and pedestrian furniture.
- Limit the placement of solid, blank walls or fences next to the sidewalk. Consider using landscape buffers instead as a barrier.
- Provide space abutting the sidewalk right-of-way for businesses to utilize (ex: cafes, produce markets, street markets, fish vendors, buskers, pop-up shops etc.).
- Encourage clusters of local businesses together. Reduce the scale of commercial facades so that it is conducive to small business tenants. Include commercial spaces with smaller footprints for local establishments that average 2,000 square feet or less in size at street level. Set maximum length of street frontage for individual businesses to be consistent with the existing business character of the area. Where there is not a strong existing character for the area, follow guidance provided in frontage section.

- Encourage a safe, comfortable environment for pedestrians with components of complete streets (i.e. wide amenity zones, wide sidewalks, buildings setback to allow for usable porches, stoops, and outdoor seating).
- Set stoops, setbacks, and porches at a sufficient height to separate private uses from activities on the public sidewalk.
- Define or enhance existing streetscape character with street trees.
- Limit building undercuts to maintain urban character along the street.

DESIGN CONCEPT

DC2. Architectural Concept

Building Layout and Massing

- Smaller, more broken up and varied building forms (monoliths are discouraged). Larger building forms should be expressed in a way that divides the mass up so that it does not appear to be one massive building. These breaks in the massing should take cues from the surrounding fabric in terms of vertical and horizontal data can help provide a guide for how to articulate and break down the overall massing. Encourage modulated facades for large buildings that keeps the building simple, inviting, and respectful of the finer-grain fabric (use 50' – 75' as a guide).
- Appropriately scale buildings so that they relate to the scale and form of the adjacent public realm (i.e. the width of the streets and/or affronting open spaces and adjacent lower scale zones).
- Consider all sides of the building and the impacts each façade has on its immediate neighboring context.
- Consider second floor setbacks. Tall does not always mean urban (ex: Union west of 23rd = single story urban example). Walkable urban places can be achieved with one-story main street buildings that have visual texture (i.e. storefront frontage, pedestrian scale signage, tile details, etc.).
- Minimize impact of parking accessed from the street. Provide parking off of an alley if possible, or ensure it is well screened from the street. Where possible, parking should not be visible from the street and pedestrian realm.

DC3. Open Space Concept

Semi-public Spaces

- Provide semi-public courtyards and spaces that are publicly visible and accessible, where possible.
- Encourage courtyard housing/bungalow courts with landscaping as the delineation between public and private spaces instead of fencing.
- Expand common open space requirements to include semi-public courtyards and yards as extensions of the public realm.

DC4. Materials

Screening

- Be sensitive to fencing height, porosity and materials to allow for views in and out of the site, and visual interaction with the public realm.
- Keep fences of a consistent height and/or level of transparency that relates to the existing context.

Building Materials

- Consider vibrant and bold uses of color.
- Encourage variation in building materials with an emphasis on high quality materials.
- If certain materials (ex: brick) are removed from demolished existing buildings, use them in the new development as visible building components, or salvage building materials from the site when possible.

Building Details & Elements

- Provide operable windows in a way that promotes natural ventilation.
- Relate building details to the human scale and the human role of the building process (ex: use of brick).
- Incorporate elements such as bay windows, columns, and deep awnings.