

**Draft text and phrasing are for discussion purposes and are not final.**

**Design Guideline work session**  
**Columbia City Review Committee**  
Staff notes for meeting of 8.5.25

Green text = additions from discussion at 4.1.25 CCRC meeting

Blue text = from discussion at 6.3.25 CCRC meeting

**GUIDELINES/GENERAL**

*Add: Objective/Context statement*

Include references to: *CPTED principles/public safety, visibility, natural light, pedestrian flow and sightlines are maintained, visibility of historic storefronts is not obscured*

**GUIDELINES/SPECIFIC**

*Add: Objective/Context statement*

Goal: to allow individualization and flexibility in design while maintaining District character

*Consider: ratio of hard scape to natural landscape – is there a target the community would like to see?*

Reference to current guidelines, page 2, paragraph 2: *A significant number of buildings within Columbia City embody distinctive characteristics of early twentieth century architecture and possess integrity of location, compatibility of design, scale, use of materials, and impart a feeling of association and sense of place.*

**Fencing, Landscaping and Yard Design**

Border landscaping and fencing shall be kept to a height limit that does not obscure the home or business. (Plantings shall be maintained to not exceed 3'- 4' – provide exception for existing that exceed that height?)

Fencing - Preference shall be given to fencing designs with minimal ornamentation that draw influence from the historical (?) character of the property. Style and form should not detract from the architectural character of the home.

Materials/finishes– Wood, wrought iron are preferred for framing materials. Brick may be used for posts. Chain link is generally discouraged on primary frontages.

**BUILDINGS and STOREFRONTS**

**Storefront**

*Add: Objective/Context statement*

Materials: Durable, high-quality materials are generally in keeping with the historic nature of contributing buildings. Focus shall be given to primary facades, pedestrian scale.

Prioritize materials at pedestrian level Location is important – ground floor vs. upper or secondary façade.

Avoid materials that mimic historic materials

Substitute materials (ex: Fiber cement panels/cedar siding) Add/discourage specific materials (faux wood finish/texture)

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Importance of transition between materials, continuity  
Relief, shadow of siding materials, window depth

Decorative tilework shall be maintained and retained.

windows (*discuss what was suggested 3/4/25*)

Building lighting shall maintain the historic character of the district in terms of color temperature and intensity. In general, warm lighting tones are preferred over cool tones. A color temperature of 3500-4000 Kelvin mostly closely resembles historic lighting qualities.

Consider what is being illuminated (accent or primary lighting?)

When reviewing fixtures, consideration will be given to fixture materials, colors, tone or quality of light and lighting temperature, in addition to the location and scale/size of the fixture.

- Murals and artwork

## STREETS, SIDEWALKS and ALLEYS

Add: **PUBLIC SPACE ACTIVATION AND IMPROVEMENTS** (*different heading?*)

- Streeteries
  - Add maximum dimensions per block? (Reference SDOT Streets Illustrated?)
  - Overhead weather protection
- Street furniture, e.g. benches, bollards, kiosk, clock, water fountain
- Sidewalk cafes
- Weather protection (umbrellas, overhead covering for festival street)
- Bike racks
- ROW activation - placemaking, artwork (short term/long term)
- Paving
- Landscaping, plantings (hanging pots)
- Trash receptacles, storage
- EV charging stations

## SIGNS -- *feedback from 2009 guideline discussions* - REVISIT

Sign lighting

- backlist signs
- Neon & "LED neon"
- method of illumination and color and texture of text shall be compatible with other signs in the district.
- Dot-matrix or digitized text is discouraged.

Leasing signage

Decorative window film

Posters

Update sandwich board "A-frame"

Miscellaneous signs (reader board signs, marquees, free standing signs, etc.)

- Location – free-standing signs?
- Sign messaging (off-premises, alley signs)

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- Wayfinding/placemaking signage

### Sign design

- Painted on to buildings
- Discourage aluminum cabinet-signs
- Discussion of extruded plastics and new construction needed (Angeline example)

### Rooftop features

Minor Communication Utility – *setbacks from roof edge*

Solar panels and arrays – *discuss location*

### **ADD PHOTOS: from within and outside the District**

-streeteries, fencing, tile work

### **Issues to consider**

Differentiation within GL between historic buildings and new(er) construction

Discussion of historic integrity/alterations

### Notes from 2009 Design Guideline discussion:

#### **12. Additions to existing buildings**

##### ***New proposed sub-sections? Or new section altogether?***

d. Relocation of existing buildings within the District

e. Raising or lower an existing building (including additions to the base) – *this came up regarding elevating an historic home to increase density.*

#### **\*\*Addition of new guidelines**

- Recognition of alley functions
- Building entrances
  - Access & pedestrian flow (arcades and walkways)
  - door styles
- Balconies, porches
- Parking

*There was discussion about the need to define adjacency, in relation to scale and relationship to nearby buildings. What constitutes “adjacent”?*

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**Add definitions?** -- The following is an example extracted from the working draft of the revised International Special Review District guidelines:

### **Definitions of commonly used terms:**

- **Architectural integrity** – A term referring to the degree to which a building retains its original character through preservation of original configuration, materials, finishes, and design.
- **Cladding** – The external covering or materials (sometimes referred to as “skin”) applied to a structure for decorative or protective purposes.
- **Cornice** – The projecting ornamental molding or material at the top of a building, balcony or canopy.
- **Contributing building** – A building, structure, site or object adding to the significance of the District.
- **Compatible/sympathetic/contextual**
- **Façade** - The front or primary face of a building or any side of a building that faces a street or other open space.
- **Fenestration** – The pattern, alignment and design of windows in a building.
- **Historic context** – An organizing structure for interpreting history that groups information about historic properties that share common physical characteristics, common geographic area and a common time period.
- **Non-contributing building** – Buildings, structures or objects that were built outside of the District’s period of significance or have been altered to such an extent that the historic integrity of the building cannot be restored.
- **Parapet** – A low wall often found along the roof used as protection near the roof’s edge.
- **Scale** – Refers to the relationship between the dimensions of a building, street, adjacent buildings, streetscape, and/or outdoor space.

### **REFERENCES for discussion**

#### **Ballard Guidelines**

[https://www.seattle.gov/documents/Departments/Neighborhoods/HistoricPreservation/HistoricDistricts/BallardAvenue/BLD\\_2015\\_Guidelines\\_June\\_4015.pdf](https://www.seattle.gov/documents/Departments/Neighborhoods/HistoricPreservation/HistoricDistricts/BallardAvenue/BLD_2015_Guidelines_June_4015.pdf)

#### **Ballard Guidelines for Structures in the Right of Way**

<https://www.seattle.gov/documents/Departments/Neighborhoods/HistoricPreservation/HistoricDistricts/BallardAvenue/2023/ROW-Structures-Guidance.pdf>

#### **Pike Place Market Guidelines (Public Ways and Amenities, section 3.8, page 20)**

<https://www.seattle.gov/documents/Departments/Neighborhoods/HistoricPreservation/HistoricDistricts/PikePlaceMarket/MeetingDocuments/2023/MHCGuidelinesJuly122023FINAL.pdf>

#### **Streets Illustrated (SDOT right-of-way manual)**

<https://streetsillustrated.seattle.gov/>