Central Area
Neighborhood Design Guidelines

Assessing Essential Elements of Neighborhood Character:

Two-Day Public Workshop
Summary

For: Central Area Design Guidelines Coalition
By: Opticos Design, Inc.
On behalf: Congress for the New Urbanism
In collaboration with:
Schemata Workshop
Mimar Studio
City of Seattle
1 Summary & Background
Past Planning Process

• 1998 Central Area Action Plan & Design Guidelines
• 2013 Citywide Design Guidelines
• 2015 23rd Avenue Action Plan & Urban Design Framework
Opening Workshop

- Summary of Central Area Design Guidelines Process
- Summary of Community Feedback
- Urban Structure Diagram
- Walking Tours
Urban Structure Diagram
Presenting Jan 28 Workshop Results
Walking Tour Workbooks
Walking Tour Workbooks To Document Observations
Saturday Walking Tours
Saturday Walking Tours
Posters Documenting Observations
Saturday Walking Tours
Saturday Walking Tours
Saturday Walking Tours
Reporting Back Walking Tour Observations
Comments & Questions
Design Guidelines - Approach
• In what ways is the character of the Central Area distinct from other Seattle neighborhoods?
District Character - Urban Structure and Form
District Character - Characteristic Components

• Mixed-Use Environments
  • Urban village main streets
  • Neighborhood main streets
  • Neighborhood “mini-centers” and “corners”

• Residential Neighborhoods
  • Primarily single family residences
  • Mix of single and multi-family
Mixed-Use Main Street I
Mixed-Use Main Street 2
Mixed-Use Main Street 2
Main Street - “Flex”
Main Street - “Flex”
Neighborhood “Corner”
Neighborhood “Corner”
Neighborhood “Corner”
# Thoughts on Commercial Mixed-Use Addresses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Address</th>
<th>Intended Land Use Ground Floor</th>
<th>Footprint</th>
<th>Frontage</th>
<th>Front Yard Setback</th>
<th>Building Types</th>
<th>Building Height</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Main Street 1</td>
<td>Retail</td>
<td>Large / Medium</td>
<td>Shopfront</td>
<td>0' - min.</td>
<td>Commercial Block / MU</td>
<td>High / Medium</td>
<td>Buildings 1/2 block or larger (block scale)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Main Street 2</td>
<td>Retail</td>
<td>Medium / Small</td>
<td>Shopfront</td>
<td>0' - min.</td>
<td>Commercial Block / MU</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>50-75' maximum width (block scale) / (big house scale)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Main Street Flex</td>
<td>Retail Service Live-work Residential</td>
<td>Medium / Small</td>
<td>Shopfront Dooryard Porch / stoop</td>
<td>Mod.</td>
<td>Commercial Block / MU Live / Work Residential</td>
<td>Medium / Low</td>
<td>Predominantly detached, house scale / townhouse to low-rise along corridors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neighborhood Corner</td>
<td>Retail Service</td>
<td>Medium / Small</td>
<td>Shopfront Dooryard</td>
<td>Mod.</td>
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Comments & Questions
Low-Rise Residential Outcomes
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Low-Rise Res. - Favor Townhouse and Rowhouse
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Low-Rise Res. - Over Cottage Court and Apartment
Low-Rise Res. - Over Cottage Court and Apartment
Consider evaluating City of Pasadena’s City of Gardens Development Standards to expand common open space requirement and extend the public realm.
Consider More Courtyard Types?
Comments & Questions
Consider what elements should live within the zoning and what should live in the design guidelines. These elements could be highly graphic to ensure development predictability and help streamline the review process.
• What character elements were observed that should be incorporated into the Central Area design guidelines?
Terraced, Usable Porch Frontages
Enclosed, Usable Porch Frontages
Covered, Landscaped Stoop Frontages
Terraced, Inset Stoop Frontages
Setback and Furnished Commercial and Live-Work
Inset Transitional Commercial and Live-Work Space
Massing Patterns Based on 50’-75’ Building Width
Massing Patterns Seen in Roof Forms
Reflect Neighborhood Materials and Roof Lines
Engaging Commercial Frontages With Amenity Zones
Paved Commercial Frontages with Outdoor Seating
No Gaps and Recessed Shopfront Entries
Narrow Gaps and Recessed Porch Entries
Range of Architectural Styles & Building Types
Range of Architectural Styles & Building Types
Porous, Low Fences above Stone Walls
Porous Fences
Brick in Landmark Buildings
Mosaic Expression in Building Fabric
Mosaic Expression in Building Fabric
What We Heard - Yesler and Jackson

Assessing Essential Elements of Neighborhood Character:
Yesler and Jackson

1. Use of appropriately-scaled stone, stairs, and landscaping to transition between sidewalk and building facade in keeping with local topographic conditions
2. Buildings set back (at least at ground-floor) sufficiently to accommodate usable stoops and porches
3. Appropriately-scaled buildings that relate to the scale and form of the public realm adjacent (e.g. the width of streets and/or framing/open spaces)
4. Minimize parking accessed from the street

How does development in nodes transition to the neighborhood fabric?

1. Buildings set back at upper floors to minimize shadows cast on public realm adjacent (e.g. sidewalks and open spaces)
2. Building massing varies in multiples that relate to house-scaled building nearby
3. Building mass reduced of roofline and use of half-story forms
4. Use and application of house-scaled elements — bay windows, balconies, etc.

How do building details contribute to the character and architectural heritage of the neighborhood?

1. Appropriately designed ground floor frontage in commercial/mixed-use areas (sidewalks with transparency)
2. Set stoops, setbacks, and porches, at sufficient height to separate uses from activities on sidewalk
3. Simple color palettes that use a limited variety of colors (horizontal siding, brick, stucco)
4. Fences of consistent height and/or transparency

How are the qualities of public open spaces and buildings defined? How is arts and culture displayed?

1. Buildings set back sufficiently to accommodate gathering places and encourage human scale
2. Use of blank walls and surfaces for murals and public art
3. Active frontage extending to front public open spaces and activities

How are community facilities being used? How are community facilities, historic landmarks, and public open spaces connected?

1. Expand common open space requirements to encourage semi-public courtyards and pads as extensions of the public realm
2. Maintain transparency and openness of community facilities
3. "Central District "yes" scale" as a unifying element and an address for new development

Porch Frontages
Exterior porches, sometimes adjacent to bay windows, provide a sense of enclosure and a transition between private and public realms. Sufficient height above grade contributes to privacy.

Stoop Frontages
Steps are used in conjunction with stairs and landscape to create transitions and are protected from the elements by overhang or engagement into house forms.

Commercial and Live-Work
Commercial and live-work spaces meet the street in different ways. On the left, the storefronts benefit from providing additional indoor space to the back from the 1st floor. Through the neighborhood, the community is exposed to the fronts of these buildings. On the right, the low work as a residential street provides a subtle entry with class transition facade and single entry entry for a transitional space.

Massing Patterns
Large apartment buildings can break up their massing with projecting or recessed entries, porches, and semi-private rear walls. The building at right uses an apartment block front down a narrow alley to create an entry portico, providing a break from the city street. The entry at left allows porches, balconies, and a larger entry window supported by a column lowered to the pedestrian scale.

Materials and Rooflines
Siding and materials are used to provide the street-quality: siding makes the buildings look good, and other two forms of the design tend to be of a horizontal variety. Two-story homes often have their porches at the same scale and roof projection of roof forms.

Yesler and Jackson
Central Area Neighborhood Design Guidelines
February 2017
Assessing Essential Elements of Neighborhood Character: Union and Cherry

Architectural Character

- What welcoming elements meet the street and sidewalk?
  1. Walkable urban places can be achieved with one-story main street buildings that have visual texture—storefront frontage, pedestrian-scale signage, tile details, etc.
  2. Encourage active uses along the street and sidewalk with spaces scaled to users, typically 50'-75' wide.
  3. Preserve/encourage transitional areas in between pockets of main street fabric as an amenity.
  4. Encourage a safe, comfortable environment for pedestrians with components of complete streets wide-amenity area, wide sidewalks, building setbacks to allow for usable porches, stoops, and outdoor seating.

How does development in nodes transition to the neighborhood fabric?

- Enable range of building types offered within the neighborhood to add density where appropriate while being sensitive to the scale of the fabric: shops, rowhouses, multiples, 50'-75' wide main street and apartment buildings.
- Use elements other than height to transition to single-family fabric—setback, building footprint, building width, etc.

Architectural Character

- How do building details contribute to the character and architectural heritage of the neighborhood?
  1. Encourage the use of durable materials that stand the test of time.
  2. Break down the massing of buildings into a base, middle, and top utilizing good details that typically show up in the single-family fabric.
  3. Encourage the use of bay windows, columns, and deep overhangs.
  4. Encourage a modular system for large buildings that keeps the building simple, inviting, and respectful of the finer-grain fabric (50'-75').

How are the qualities of public open spaces and buildings defined? How is arts and culture displayed?

- Encourage activation of the amenity zone to include community gardens as well as street trees and pedestrian furniture.
- Public buildings such as Garfield High School, Langston Hughes Performing Arts Institute, Cherry Hill Baptist Church, Islamic School, etc., are composed of brick and stone detailing signifying their civic importance within the community.
- Arts and culture is displayed through tile mosaics within brick buildings and stoops as well as murals along the side of main street building facades.
- Encourage pocket parks and other publicly accessible open spaces (i.e., P-Patches) to provide highly sought-after amenities.

How are community facilities being used? How are community facilities, historic landmarks, and public open spaces connected?

- Encourage semi-public courtyard spaces that are publicly visible and accessible.
- Provide safe, comfortable routes for pedestrians that change based on the character of the building fabric.

Materials and Rooflines

- Siding and shingles are thin of the lightweight weathering materials in the neighborhood. Often these siding are similar earth tones, and often have tones.

Yesler and Jackson
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Comments & Questions