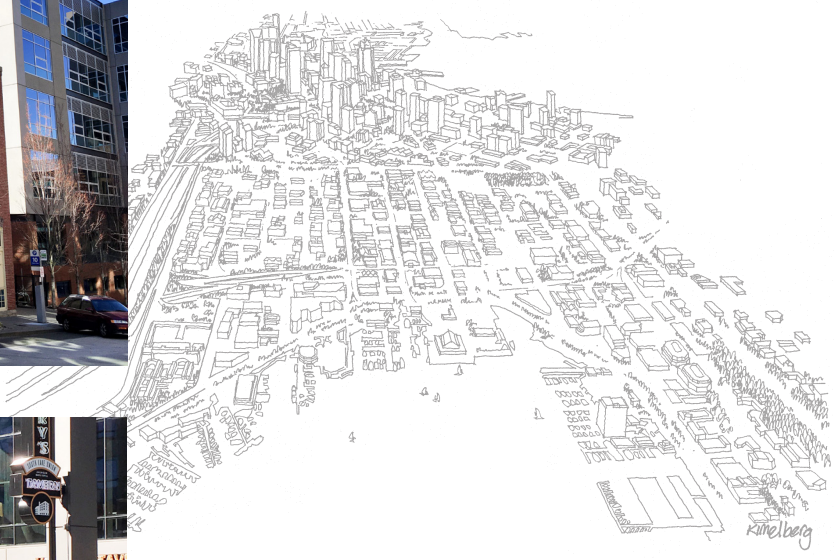
South Lake Union

NEIGHBORHOOD DESIGN GUIDELINES



Adopted 2005 | Revised 2018

DESIGN REVIEW

Seattle
Office of Planning &
Community Development

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Introduction

What are Neighborhood Design Guidelines?

Design guidelines are the primary tool used in the review of proposed private projects by Seattle Department of Construction and Inspections (DCI) staff for administrative design review, or the Design Review Boards. Guidelines define the qualities of architecture, urban design, and outdoor space that make for successful projects and communities. There are two types of guidelines used in the Design Review Program:

- Seattle Design Guidelines (also called Citywide) - apply to all areas of the city except for downtown, historic districts, and the ISRD.
- Neighborhood Design Guidelines - apply to a specific geographically-defined area, usually within a residential urban village or center.

Once a set of Neighborhood Design Guidelines is adopted by City Council, they are used in tandem with citywide guidelines for the review of all projects within that designated neighborhood guideline boundary. Not all neighborhoods within the city have neighborhood-specific guidelines, but for those that do, applicants and Board members are required to consult both sets of guidelines—citywide and neighborhood-specific—with the Neighborhood Design Guidelines taking precedence over the citywide in the event of a conflict between the two. Neighborhood-specific guidelines offer additional guidance on the features and character of a particular neighborhood, and are very helpful to all involved in the design review process.

Neighborhood Design Guidelines reveal the character of the neighborhood as known to its residents and business owners. The guidelines help to reinforce existing character and protect the qualities that neighborhood residents value most in the face of change. Thus, a neighborhood's guidelines, in conjunction with the citywide Design Guidelines, can increase overall awareness of responsive design and involvement in the design review process.

Reader's Guide

This document is organized around the larger themes and format of the citywide Seattle Design Guidelines with distinct topics and directives specific to the South Lake Union neighborhood. Photos and graphics that illustrate selected guidelines are presented, in addition to the text which explains design intent and/or provides background information. All images not individually credited are OPCD file photos.

Guidelines at a Glance

The South Lake Union Neighborhood Design Guidelines work together with the City Council adopted Seattle Design Guidelines (also called the Citywide Design Guidelines), which always remain applicable on all projects subject to Design Review. See SMC 23.41.004 for information on Design Review thresholds.

Below is a list of the Citywide Guidelines, and the column to the right indicates if these Neighborhood Design Guidelines provide supplemental guidance for that topic; a "yes" means both Citywide and Neighborhood Guidelines are applicable; a "no" means only Citywide Guidelines apply.

Citywide Design Guidelines	Neighborhood-specific Guidance

CONTEXT & SITE (CS)

CS1 Natural Systems and Site Features — **YES**
Use natural systems and features of the site and its surroundings as a starting point for design

CS2 Urban Pattern and Form — **YES**
Strengthen the most desirable forms, characteristics and patterns of the surrounding area

CS3 Architectural Context and Character — **YES**
Contribute to the architectural character of the neighborhood

PUBLIC LIFE (PL)

PL1 Connectivity — **YES**
Complement, connect and contribute to the network of open spaces around the site

PL2 Walkability — **YES**
Create a safe and comfortable walking environment, easy to navigate and well connected

PL3 Street-Level Interaction — **YES**
Encourage human interaction and activity at the street-level, including entries and edges

PL4 Active Transportation — **YES**
Incorporate features that facilitate active transport such as walking, bicycling and transit use

DESIGN CONCEPT (DC)

DC1 Project Uses and Activities — **NO**
Optimize the arrangement of uses and activities on site

DC2 Architectural Concept — **YES**
Develop a unified, functional architectural concept that fits well on the site and its surroundings

DC3 Open Space Concept — **YES**
Integrate building and open space design so that each complements the other

DC4 Exterior Elements and Finishes — **YES**
Use appropriate and high-quality elements and finishes for the building and open spaces

See the below link for a complete version of the Citywide Guidelines, and a complete list of all Neighborhood-specific Design Guidelines:

http://www.seattle.gov/dpd/aboutus/whoweare/designreview/designguidelines/default.htm

Context and Priority Issues:

The South Lake Union Urban Center has of a wide variety of building types and a diverse range of land uses. Building types include midrise, high-rise, and older buildings of 2 to 3 stories that provide connections to the neighborhood's past. Land uses in the neighborhood include residential, office, retail, fine dining, artisanal, research and development, biotech, and social services. In its early years in the late 1880's, South Lake Union was a commercial and light industrial support area to downtown Seattle. Over the course of the next century, manufacturing, warehousing, and water dependent industrial and commercial uses were typical for South Lake Union.

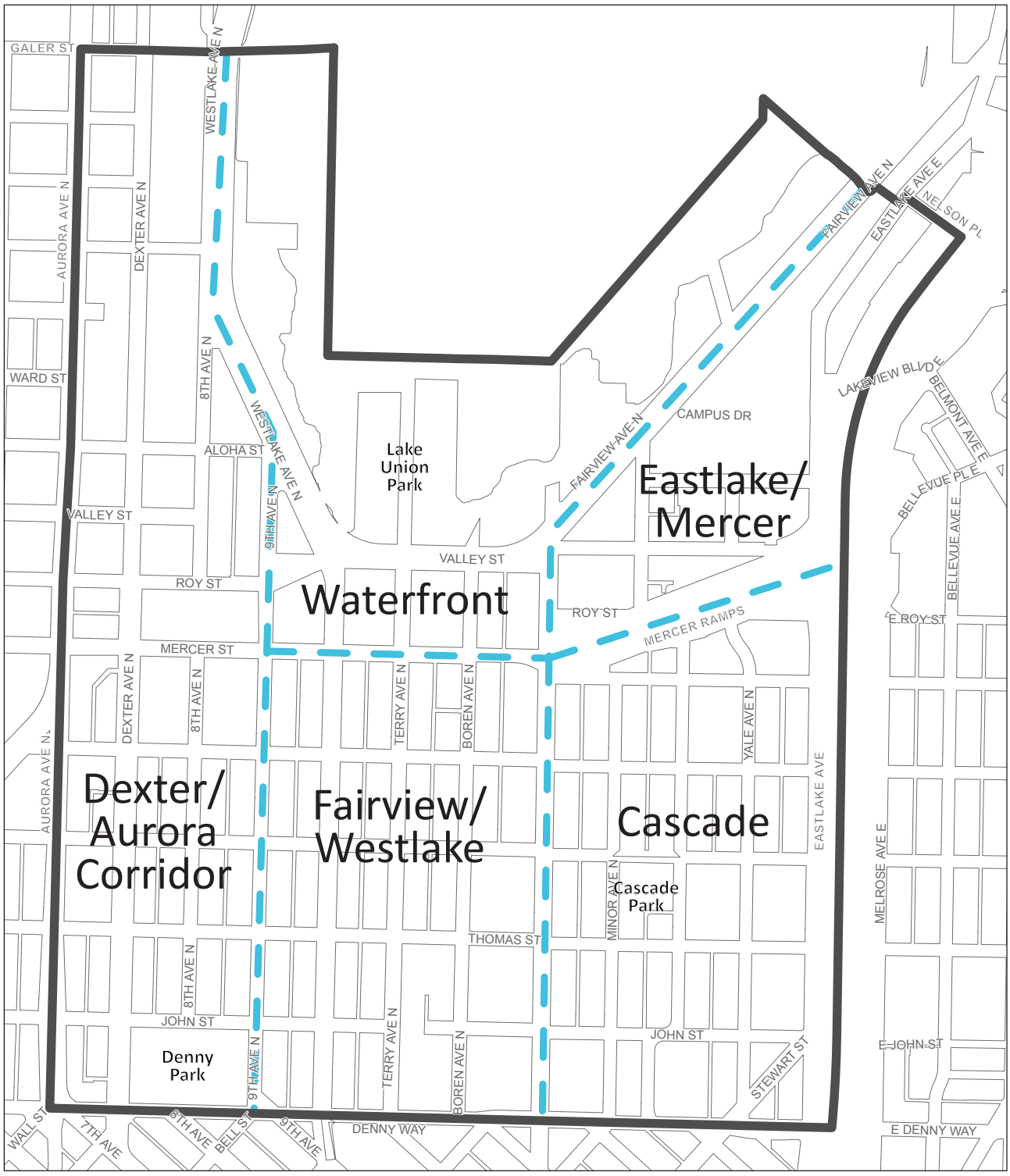
Recently, South Lake Union has undergone rapid and substantial redevelopment with new commercial and residential projects transforming the neighborhood into a dense, pedestrian oriented Urban Center. In response to these changes, the City working with the neighborhood developed the South Lake Union Urban Design Framework (UDF), and adopted new zoning regulations in 2013, to allow larger and different types of buildings and a wider range of uses in this neighborhood. The 2018 updated design guidelines are heavily informed by the UDF and build on changes to development standards to consider urban design issues including open space, residential character, pedestrian facilities.

Neighborhood Subareas

Application of these guidelines to specific projects should take into consideration the character and scale of development and other existing conditions in subdistricts within the neighborhood. In addition to providing supplemental design guidance that addresses unique characteristics of the South Lake Union Urban Center and the role it plays in the City's growth management strategy, these guidelines in some cases are based on subarea considerations:

- **Waterfront:** Anchored by South Lake Union Park, this area consists of a mix of recreational, commercial, and educational water dependent activities. This area is also experiencing major new commercial and biotech development with buildings ranging from 85 to 160 feet. This subarea is bound by Mercer Street to the south, 9th Avenue North and Westlake to the west, Fairview Avenue North to the east, by South Lake Union to the north.
- **Cascade:** Supporting a mixture of commercial, residential, and social services, this area has a reputation for its sustainable infrastructure and local improvement projects that maintain a creative, collaborative, and eclectic nature. Building heights in this subarea are limited to no more than 85 feet with a heavy emphasis on residential development to the north, south, and west of Cascade Park. This subarea is bound by Denny Way to the south, Fairview Avenue North to the west, Eastlake Avenue North to the east, and the Mercer Street/Interstate 5 interchange to the north.
- **Dexter/Aurora Corridor:** The Aurora Corridor is the most undefined area of the neighborhood with an eclectic variety of building types and forms that house all types of business uses. Completion of the Alaska Way Viaduct replacement tunnel means the street grid will be reconnected across Aurora Avenue at John Street, Harrison Street, and Republican Street. These new connections and a transformed 7th Avenue N (formerly Aurora Ave N) provides opportunities for development that responds to the new porosity of the street grid and increasing pedestrian activity. Building height limits in this subarea range from 85 feet to 400 feet. This subarea is bound by Denny Way on the south, Aurora Avenue North to the west, 9th Avenue North to the east, and Galer Street to the north.

- **Fairview/Westlake:** Predominantly commercial in nature the Fairview Corridor has undergone the most substantial redevelopment of the neighborhood in recent years. This area features a mix of residential and commercial buildings that range in height from 2 or 3 stories to 40 stories. A defining feature of this subarea is Westlake Avenue, a Class 1 Pedestrian Street that is also a frequent transit corridor (RapidRide C, Street Car, and Metro Route 40). Projects in this area should be designed with consideration for their contribution to the robust pedestrian and employment focused activities found here. This subarea is bound by 9th Avenue to the west, Mercer Street to the north, Fairview Avenue to the east, and Denny Way to the south.
- **Eastlake/Mercer:** This subarea is dominated by health sciences uses, notable reuse of historic structures (the former Ford factory now a public storage facility), and lake oriented uses including restaurants and hotels. The height limit in this area is 125 feet and other than projects fronting on Eastlake and Fairvew, this subarea is contained by hard boundaries including the Mercer Street onramps to I-5 to the south, I-5 itself to the east, Fairvew Avenue N to the north and west, and Eastlake Avenue E to the east that allows for different types of development than the rest of South Lake Union.



Urban Center Boundary & area where Neighborhood Guidelines apply

Subarea Boundary

South Lake Union Neighborhood Design Guidelines Boundary

Note: Design Review does not apply to all sites or projects.
See the Seattle Municipal Code, Section 23.41.004 for more details.

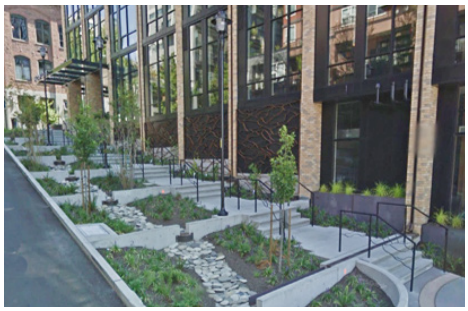
CS1

CONTEXT & SITE

Natural Systems & Site Features

Citywide Guideline:
Use natural systems and features of the site and its surroundings as a starting point for project design.

This swale provides for stormwater runoff and enhances the streetscape in the Cascade neighborhood.



Accommodate sloping terrain through 'stepping' ground floor and other architectural features.

Conceal all underground parking from street views. Planting, artwork, or other uses can effectively screen parking.

South Lake Union Supplemental Guidance

1. Energy Use

Take advantage of site configuration to accomplish sustainability goals. Examples include:

- Solar orientation,
- Stormwater run-off, detention, and filtration systems,
- Sustainable landscaping, or
- Versatile building design for entire building life cycle

2. Sunlight and Shadows

Avoid or reduce shadow impacts to Cascade, South Lake Union, and Denny Parks, particularly the gardens or active use areas of the parks.

3. Topography and Elevation Changes

Accommodate sloping terrain through 'stepping' ground floor and other architectural features. Emphasis should be placed on ground-level treatments that create a safe, attractive transition between the site and pedestrian zone.

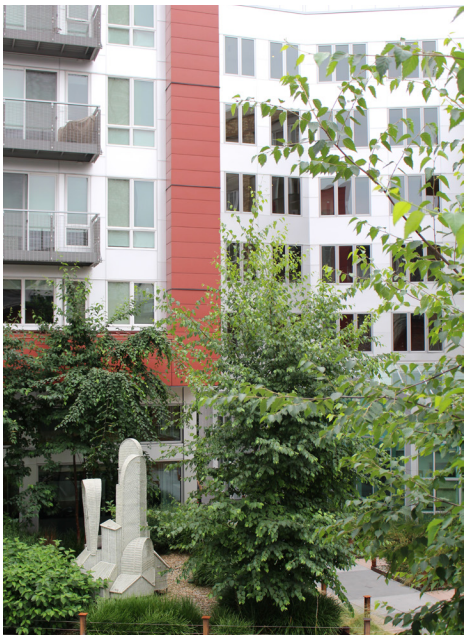
a. On sloping street frontages, entryways should include a generous and level transitional space for commercial or residential activity, in addition to Citywide Design Guideline PL3.

b. Setback or recess entrances for a gracious transition from a sloped sidewalk to a flat grade at the entry.

c. Conceal underground parking from street views and design any parking walls exposed above grade-level with an attractive treatment such as integrated, quality architectural cladding, planting, and/or artwork.

d. Create a safe visual transition between ground-level interior and adjacent pedestrian areas and public sidewalks.

e. Incorporate hill climbs as identified in the South Lake Union Urban Design Framework.



Use landscape to provide refuge habitat and foraging opportunities for bird and insect movement.

Yiorgis Yerolimbos

Facade landscaping.
The White Walls, Nicosia, Cyprus.

4. Plants and Habitat

South Lake Union is on a bird and insect flight path between greenbelts on Capitol Hill, Queen Anne, and Magnolia.

a. Consult with landscape architects to develop landscape plans that provide refuge habitat and food sources in project landscape species to facilitate movement for urban populations of some species.

b. In designing open spaces, Green Factor measures, green roofs, and other landscape element consideration should be given to plantings and other elements (such as fountains) that might be used by such species.

CS2

CONTEXT & SITE

Urban Pattern & Form

Citywide Guideline:
Strengthen the most desirable forms, characteristics, and patterns of the streets, block faces, and open spaces in the surrounding area.

Recessed corner for added pedestrian space.

Gateway artwork and fountain.

Additional open public space at corner.

South Lake Union Supplemental Guidance

1. Gateways Locations

The South Lake Union Urban Design Framework (UDF) identifies important gateways to consider in project design. Gateways are transition locations and places that mark entry or departure points to the neighborhood for automobiles and pedestrians. Private sites at gateways should create opportunities for identification—a physical marker so the community notices they are entering a special place.

a. Consider site characteristics such as topography, views, or surrounding building patterns, which are important for gateway locations.

b. Design elements that contribute to gateways include building out to meet the corner where appropriate, or tools such as:
   - Setbacks to allow for pedestrian friendly spaces and expanded sidewalks,
   - Signage,
   - Landscaping,
   - Artwork, or
   - Signature facade treatments.

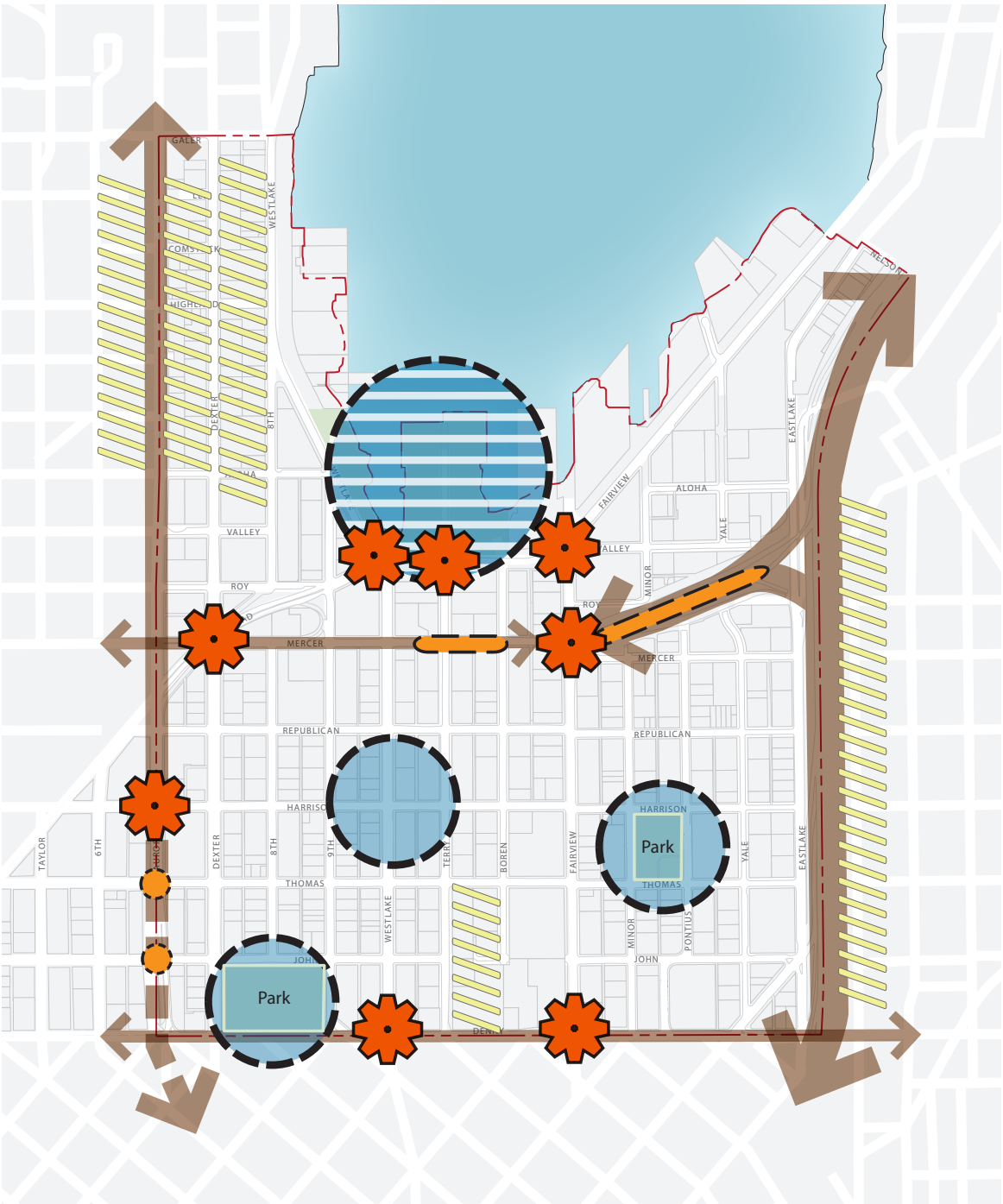
c. Where opportunities exist, collaborate with adjacent development projects or projects across the street that mark the same gateway location.

2. Heart Locations

In addition to Gateways, the UDF identifies Regional and Neighborhood Heart locations. 'Heart' locations are the center of commercial and social activity within the neighborhood. These locations provide anchors for the community and give form to the neighborhood.

a. Primary building entries and facades should respond to the heart location. Amenities to consider include: pedestrian lighting, public art, special paving, landscaping, additional public open space provided by curb bulbs, and entry plazas.

South Lake Union Urban Design Framework (UDF)



LEGEND

- Neighborhood Heart
- Regional Heart
- Gateway
- Processional gateway
- Infrastructure barrier
- Challenging topography (Public & private hillclimbs encouraged)

3. Adjacent Streets

Project design should respond to adjacent street character. These street descriptions should inform how projects relate to the right-of-way. See map on page 12. Specific design guidance for projects on specific streets is below:

a. **Aurora and Dexter Avenues N:** New development should help to make these arterials entries into downtown by implementing substantial landscaping and attractive building facades. Balconies and outdoor living spaces are less desirable facing these streets. Because these arterials will be primarily experienced by vehicle, the scale of street improvements and facade elements could be larger than if these streets were predominantly pedestrian-oriented. For example, larger massing of uniform landscape plantings will be preferable to small scale plantings featuring a variety of plant materials.

b. **Eighth and Ninth Avenues N:** Even though these streets may be occupied with several office buildings rather than residences, substantial landscaping and pedestrian interest should be emphasized along the street front. Courtyards and small open spaces may be more appropriate than a uniform street wall.

c. **Westlake Avenue N:** With its axial view to Lake Union and the streetcar alignment, Westlake is the district's north-south spine and the UDF stresses its importance as a pedestrian-oriented retail street. Projects facing Westlake should reinforce the street wall at ground level by aligning buildings along the sidewalk or should feature small courtyards, plazas, or other pedestrian oriented open spaces. The setback of upper stories from Westlake Ave should be encouraged to reduce view blockage of the lake.

d. **Boren, Fairview, Minor, Pontius, Yale and Eastlake Avenues N:** Streets east of Fairview feature a mix of commercial and residential uses, have an 85 foot height limit, and tend to be smaller in scale than those to the west. Additionally, most of the district's historic structures are along these streets, so an appropriate architectural response to this character is encouraged. This does not mean that the buildings should not look contemporary, but they might feature some of the massing, fenestration patterns, use of materials, or other non-stylistic character of the older buildings.

e. **Denny Way:** As the district's heavily trafficked southern edge, Denny Way has more of an automobile scale than a pedestrian scale. Large scale landscaping features such as street trees are more appropriate than smaller pedestrian pockets or plazas. Building stories above 45 feet are required to be set back along Denny Way. An important east-west connector with heavy traffic, pedestrian orientated retail uses are less important on Denny Way if the ground floor is active with interior uses and is lit at night. New developments along Denny should maintain the spatial street envelope with street-front facades that create a strong street wall or an active open space.

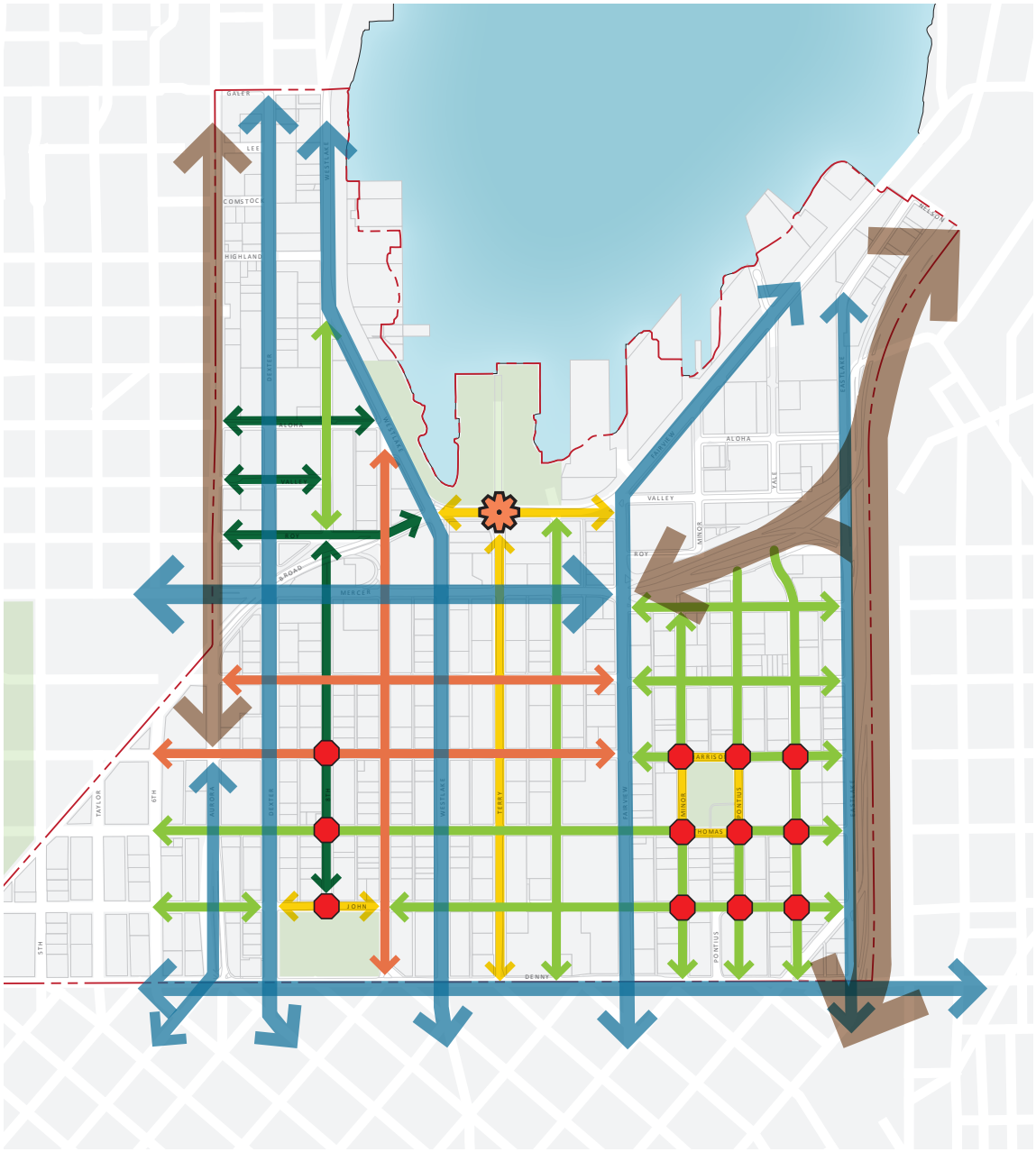
f. **John and Thomas Streets:** A Green Street Concept Plan has been prepared for Thomas Street, and the UDF describes the two streets in the text below:

- **John Street** is the lowest volume street for vehicles of the three new east-west crossings and is a neighborhood Green Street. Dedicated bicycle lanes may be included. John Street provides local access with a residential focus, but does not connect continuously through due to a steep hill east of Terry Ave. With its low volume of traffic John Street is well-suited for ground related housing.
- **Thomas Street** is a Green Street that balances a moderate volume of vehicle traffic. The Thomas Street Streetscape Concept Plan features a wide north side green promenade. Bicycle facilities are located on Thomas Street within slow-moving vehicle travel lanes in some sections and within dedicated bicycle lanes in other sections.

g. **Harrison, Republican, and Mercer Streets (east of Fairview Ave):** These are envisioned as residential streets between Fairview and Yale Avenues and the UDF advocates east-west mid-block pedestrian connections. As in the case of Thomas and John Streets, all three streets have steep grades. Ground floor residential uses are appropriate. Though Harrison and Republican are not Green Streets, landscaped areas and courtyards are encouraged there.

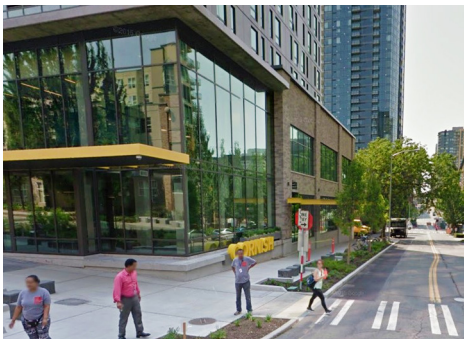
h. **Mercer Street:** Mercer Street is the widest and most heavily used street in South Lake Union. Strong street walls on both sides of the street will enhance the streets spatial characteristics. Ground floors should contain active building uses such as lobbies and group work spaces facing the corridor as well as retail and other pedestrian oriented uses. Ground floor spaces should be lit at night. Of special note is the 'Teardrop Site' at Broad Street, which provides opportunities for a number of special uses and activities.

South Lake Union Public Realm Character



Freeway
Boulevard/Great Street
Mixed Use Street
Festival Street (Mixed Use)
Green Street
Woonerf
Retail Nodes

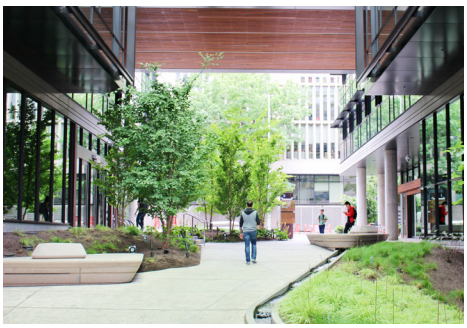
This public realm character map is developed to guide how private development projects should relate to the public realm and Right-of-Way. These descriptions are not meant to inform the design of the elements and infrastructure within the right-of-way, and do not replace or supersede SDOT street types or functional classifications. For SDOT street types, functional classifications, and related street design standards refer to Streets Illustrated (http://streetsillustrated.seattle.gov) or contact the Seattle Department of Transportation.



Corner with transparency and distinctive pedestrian scale canopy.

Context - light industrial building design; pilasters, large casement windows, brick and terra-cotta cladding.

Mid-block crossings should be open to the sidewalk to offer visual ques that they are for pedestrian movement through a project.



Mid-block connection with landscaping, seating, water features, and activated edges.

4. Relationship to the Block

a. All Corner Sites

Emphasize the importance and/or amount of pedestrian activity at corners with widened pedestrian areas, landscaping, corner building entries, artwork, and other architectural features.

b. Full Block Sites

New developments often occupy half to full block sites which can have street facades as long as 400 feet. Unmodulated or unbroken facades that long generally disrupt the smaller, historical pattern and pedestrian scale at the ground level, and create a blocky podium form when the building is viewed from afar. The zoning code limits the size of a building's podium and towers, but these provisions do limit the development of expansive, full block-long facades.

1. With the exception of the Eastlake/Mercer subarea, avoid internalized campus like developments with uniform architectural character. Large projects should express varied architectural elements and orient open spaces toward the streets and public realm.
2. Building facades should be articulated with modulation, fenestration patterns, different materials, and/or other means so that the building podium is not a monolithic block. The articulation should extend to all stories in the podium. If a tower extends directly over the front building facade, then the articulation should extend into the tower itself. Horizontal and vertical modulation beyond code minimums that further breaks a building's facade into legible elements, is encouraged.
3. Projects that include Landmarks should provide generous upper-level step-backs from historic facades to maintain the scale of the Landmark at the street level.

c. Mid-block Connections

Mid-block connections are code required for large blocks. These connections have several purposes. First, they enhance pedestrian movement through the neighborhood by breaking up large blocks. Second, they break up large buildings and provide modulation between buildings. Mid-block connections also provide usable ground-level open space.

1. Although portions of mid-block connections may be covered (per SMC), entrances should open to the sidewalk and interruption of connections with doors or other enclosed space should be avoided.
2. If the connection does not provide a clear line of sight from one end to the other, it should be inviting to the public and be designed to appear as a passage through the block.
3. The ideal mid-block connection will be activated by street-level uses, water features, landscaping, seating, and public art.
4. Mid-block connections should be well lit, safe, and be designed to take maximum advantage of natural light.

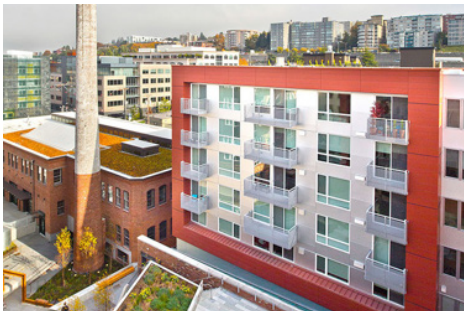
CS3

CONTEXT & SITE

Architectural Context & Character

Citywide Guideline:
Contribute to the architectural character of the neighborhood.

Alley 24 succesfully incorporates a Landmark into a new mixed-use project.



These projects incorporate Landmark structures while not overwhelming them.

Christoph Hoessly

New (left) compatible with restored (right). Taller Portions stepped well back. The Britomart, Auckland, NZ.

South Lake Union Supplemental Guidance

1. Emphasizing Positive Neighborhood Attributes and Challenges

a. **Fitting Old and New Together**
The retention of existing structures or facades is encouraged by allowing greater flexibility in applying these guidelines if the retention of the existing building fabric contributes to the overall design character and quality of the project.

PL1

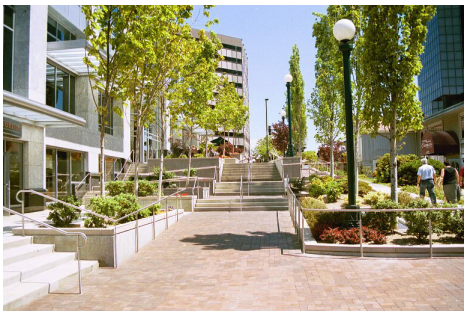
PUBLIC LIFE

Connectivity

Citywide Guideline:
Complement and contribute to the network of open spaces around the site and the connections among them.

Sidewalks as open space: a pedestrian-friendly streetscape.

New developments should design for safe, well-lit pedestrian connections through sites that connect to surrounding areas.



Public space through a site.

South Lake Union Supplemental Guidance

1. Network of Open Spaces

Open spaces in South Lake Union include mid-block connections, ground-level open space developed in new projects, and three parks: Denny Park, Cascade Playground, and Lake Union Park. Including green streets, Class I Pedestrian streets, and development of an open space network is a priority for the neighborhood. These spaces play a critical role in the transportation system and provide space for community activity.

Because of the importance of mid-block connections and of the open space connectivity within a network, these features should be designed as high priority amenities when granting departures from development standards. Proponents should consider the following:

a. **Mid-Block Connections:** Where possible, incorporate mid-block connections, linked courtyards, or activating alleyways. For residential focus areas, use mid-block connections with active and/or passive recreation that can strengthen existing urban activities. Consider merging different mid-block connectors to increase activity, such as an alleyway joined by a courtyard. Alleyway mid-block connections that include parking should incorporate paving that can be used for recreational activity.

b. **Street-Level Open Space:** For both retail and residential focus areas, consider private or semi-private courtyards facing the street, or pocket parks.

c. **Open Space Connections:** Open space connections should respond to view corridors of neighborhood-scale and regional open spaces, such as the Seattle Center, Lake Union, Denny Park, and Cascade Playground.

d. **8th Avenue North:** Create a visual and physical connection along 8th Ave between Mercer St and Roy St.

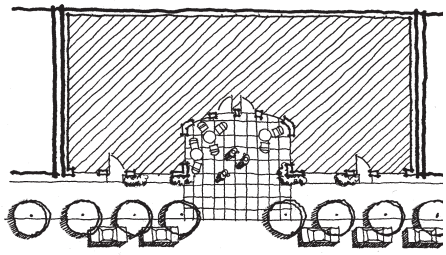
PL2

PUBLIC LIFE

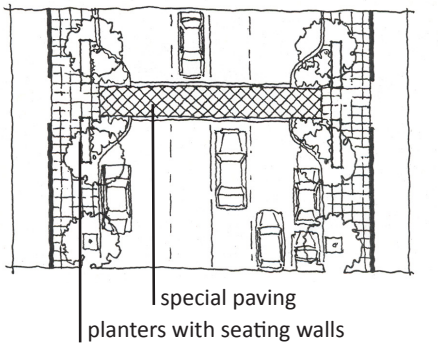
Walkability

Citywide Guideline:
Create a safe and comfortable walking environment that is easy to navigate and well-connected to existing pedestrian walkways and features.

Overhead weather protection.



Take the 'indoors' outdoors by spilling interior space onto plazas, walkways and sidewalks, where appropriate.



Streetscape amenities help buildings connect to, and enhance centers of commercial and social activity.

South Lake Union Supplemental Guidance

1. Weather Protection

Overhead weather protection is encouraged in areas of high pedestrian activity such as along Green Streets, designated trails, and where retail uses are provided along the ground floor.

a. Consider opportunities for the canopy or other weather protection to reinforce a sense of pedestrian scale.

b. Avoid long monothlic designs in favor of modulation along the length of a block. This can be achieved by matching overhead protection to facade bays and breaking up canopies or overhangs accordingly.

c. Entries to spaces that may house eating or drinking establishments should be recessed or provide two sets of doors so that temporary 'air locks' over the sidewalk are not necessary.

2. Walkways and Pedestrian Interest

Visually engaging pedestrian walkways reinforce the pedestrian network and are an important element in project design. The pattern of near-by features, spatial changes, and points of interest define the pedestrian experience. In designing projects with exposure to pedestrian walkways consider the following guidance:

a. Points of interest that may include building entrances, window displays, seats, landscaping, change of architectural character, alcoves or artwork should be placed every 15 to 20 feet to create regular sensory stimulation.

b. Focal features—an open space, pedestrian connection, activity center, or significant variation in spatial enclosure or architecture character—should be placed approximately every 130 feet.

c. A strong element at one end of a corridor can act as a 'terminus' by providing a destination or a view point that can be seen from the corridor. Similarly, a central plaza or landmark can attract pedestrians from throughout the corridor, thereby unifying the corridor's activity.

PL3

PUBLIC LIFE

Street-Level Interaction

Citywide Guideline:
Encourage human interaction and activity at the street-level with clear connections to building entries and edges.

Identifiable entry with bench, plants, and distinctive overhang.

Take the 'indoors' outdoors by spilling interior space onto plazas, walkways and sidewalks, where appropriate.

South Lake Union Supplemental Guidance

1. Entries

Buildings with more than 200 linear feet of street frontage should feature one or more primary building entries that are enhanced or articulated by design measures such as:

- Entry design elements that extend above the ground floor,
- Special canopy features,
- Architectural elements such as special lighting,
- Artwork, or
- Other similar treatment.

2. Residential Edges

a. **Ground-Level Residential (Including Live/Work Uses)**
The UDF identifies areas with a residential focus. Projects fronting onto a designated Green or 'woonerf' street as shown on page 12, should include the following elements to provide privacy layering to the sidewalk.

1. Provide a direct entry into the unit from the street. The entry should include weather protection sufficient to shelter persons entering the building during inclement weather.
2. Elevate the ground floor of the living area at least 2-4 feet above the adjacent sidewalk grade. This guideline does not apply to designated ADA accessible units.
3. Provide a physical 'threshold' feature such as a hedge, retaining wall, rockery, stair, gate, railing, or a combination of such elements on private property that defines and bridges the boundary between public right-of-way and private yard or patio. Thresholds should filter but not block views to and from the street, and should help define individual units. Retaining walls should generally not be taller than 4 feet. If additional height is required to accommodate grade conditions, then stepped terraces of more than one 4 foot wall can be employed.

4. Provide an outdoor space at least 6 feet in depth and 6 feet wide (36 square foot minimum) in the front yard such as a porch, patio, or similar space that can accommodate seating at least 2 persons. Where feasible, this space should be at the same level as the interior of the unit.
5. Design the front door and entry area to enhance the privacy transition. Windows should be located so that pedestrians on the sidewalk cannot see directly into the lower half of the ground floor. (This means that the bottom of the ground floor windows facing the street should be at least 6 feet above sidewalk grade.)

PL4

PUBLIC LIFE

Active Transportation

Citywide Guideline:
Incorporate design features that facilitate active forms of transportation such as walking, bicycling, and use of transit.

Hewitt & Schemata Workshop

Capitol Hill Station TOD Co-development, project rendering.

Cyclesafe.com

Custom bike racks provide an opportunity for placemaking. (Uptown example)

South Lake Union Supplemental Guidance

1. Bicycle Facilities

Bicycle use and parking should be encouraged to promote a healthy and active neighborhood and to support local businesses. Bicycle racks should be plentiful, and either be from the Seattle Department of Transportation's bike parking program or be an approved rack of similar 'inverted U' or 'staple' style. The bicycle racks may also be an opportunity for placemaking, such as having a uniform color for bike racks within South Lake Union or having distinctive place-names designed into the racks.

2. Transit Facilities

Public transit is an essential part of a well-functioning Urban Center that supports dense, mixed-use development with high concentrations of jobs and housing. These facilities work best when they are carefully integrated into the urban fabric of the neighborhood and reinforce pedestrian activity at the ground level. Transit facilities that occur out of the public right-of-way and are subject to design review can include light rail stations, bus terminals, and off-street bus layover.

a. **Pedestrian Activity**
Transit facilities should be designed as an integral part of any co-development and be designed to support all relevant Citywide Design Guidelines, especially those regarding the ground floor and pedestrian activity.

1. On Class I Pedestrian Streets required street-level uses are essential to achieving the intent of Pedestrian Street Classifications. Operational needs may require that vehicle entrances to transit facilities be wider than permitted for parking garages and facade lengths may be greater than other structures in the neighborhood. Street frontage of these projects should maintain and reinforce the levels of pedestrian activity and visual interest that Class I Pedestrian streets are intended to achieve.

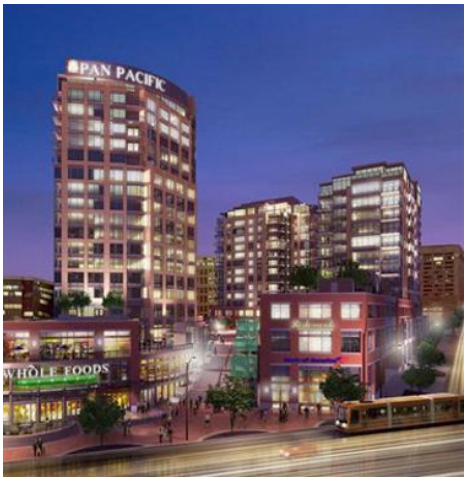
2. Consider completely screening the layover space from public view. Ideally other uses with transparent, active storefronts are located between bus parking and the public right of way.

DC2
DESIGN CONCEPT
Architectural Concept

Citywide Guideline:
Develop an architectural concept that will result in a unified and functional design that fits well on the site and within its surroundings.

Pedestrian scale

Street space scale



Skyline scale

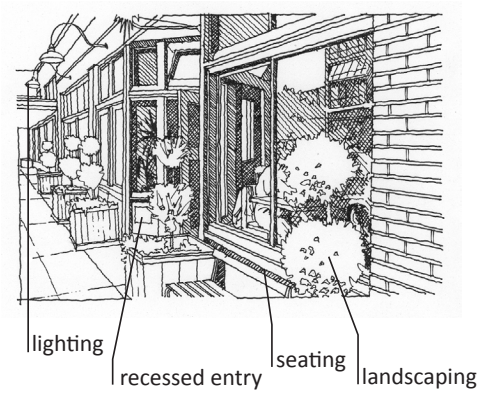
South Lake Union Supplemental Guidance

1. Massing, Design, and Scale

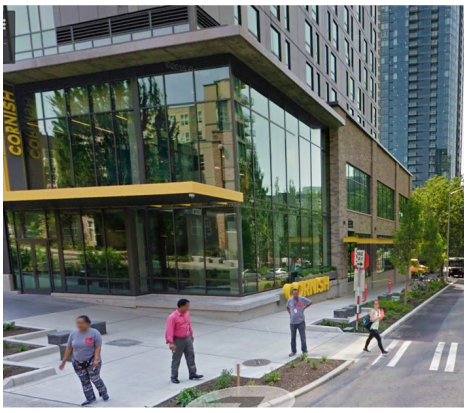
Consideration of three scales. Buildings and their surroundings are perceived at three scales:

1) **The pedestrian scale** that relates to human activity within the immediate vicinity of the pedestrian (roughly 60 feet horizontally),
2) **The street space** where the street and adjacent open spaces are perceived as a 'room' (generally street block or two long and about 60 feet high); and
3) **Tall building or skyline scale** (where the building form is perceived generally at more than a block away).

Considerations for the pedestrian scale are discussed in preceding section PL1, 2 and 3. Articulation of podiums is discussed in DC2.3 on page 21, and the zoning code limits podium heights in some areas to reduce the scale of a block front. Design concerns for tall buildings are discussed in DC2.4 on page 22.

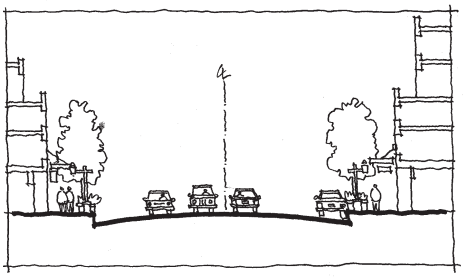


A street-level use that integrates pedestrian amenities into the siting and design of the building.



Pedestrian scaled and street defining podium proportions.

Street wall variation; breaking larger buildings down into separate volumes reduces apparent bulk.



Consider stepping back elevations at upper levels for large-scale development and relate proportions of buildings to width and scale of the street.

2. Pedestrian Scale

These guidelines apply to both taller buildings above the base height of 85 feet and buildings less than 85 feet in height.

a. **Street-level Scale:** Podiums in South Lake Union are intended to promote a pedestrian scale by creating a 'street wall' that is proportional to the width and intensity of the streets they face. A Podiums lower three floors or less are limited to 75% lot coverage to promote creative massing within the constraints of the podium height limits. Towers that extend a building's street-front facade upward directly from the podium can break up height and scale consistency of an otherwise coherent spatial 'street room'. For a successful scale transition, the podium facade should provide pedestrian scaled elements and proportions.

b. **Commercial podiums:** structures should express a podium level by setting back a portion of the structure at the podium height limit.

3. Building Podiums

Podiums in South Lake Union are intended to promote a pedestrian scale by creation a 'street wall' that is proportional to the width and intensity of the streets they face. Podiums lower three floors or less are limited to 75% lot coverage to promote creative massing within the constraints of the podium height limits.

Towers that extend a building's street-front facade upward directly from the podium can diminish or disrupt height and scale consistency of an otherwise coherent spatial 'street room'. For a successful scale transition, the podium facade must provide pedestrian scaled elements and proportions.

a. **Express Building Podiums:** Commercial structures should express a podium level by stepping back a portion of the structure at the podium height limit.

b. **Street Wall Variation:** Although podiums are required it is important to achieve some variety in street wall height. Full block projects should explore creative massing at the podium level to achieve variety

Matthias Van Roon

Tall building form. The Cube, Beirut, Lebanon.

Adjusted base scale and intermediate scales.

Facade depth and articulation.
South Lake Union project.

4. Tall Buildings

Tall buildings require additional design guidance since they are highly visible above typical 'fabric structures' and impact the public visual realm with inherently larger facade surfaces, bulk, and scale shifts. These Tall Building Guidelines work in concert with and do not restate applicable Citywide Guidelines (or applicable neighborhood guidelines), which cover many important topics on the base and lower levels of tall buildings.

Tall Building Guidelines apply to the entire structure whenever any portion of the structure exceeds 85 foot height.

a. **Response to Context:** Integrate and transition to a surrounding fabric of differing heights; relate to existing visual datums, the street wall and parcel patterns. Respond to prominent nearby sites and/or sites with axial focus or distant visibility, such as waterfronts, public view corridors, street ends.

b. **Tall Form Placement, Spacing & Orientation:** Locate the tall forms to optimize the following: reduce shadow impacts on public parks, plazas and places; increase tower spacing to adjacent structures; afford light and air to the streets, pedestrians and public realm; and minimize impacts to nearby existing and future planned occupants (e.g. be anticipatory and contextual, not myopic).

c. **Tall Form Design:** Avoid long slabs and big, unmodulated boxy forms, which cast bigger shadows and lack scale or visual interest. Consider curved, angled, shifting and/or carved yet coherent forms. Shape and orient tall floorplates based on context, nearby opportunities and design concepts, not simply to maximize internal efficiencies. Modulation should be up-sized to match the longer, taller view distances.

d. **Intermediate Scales:** To mediate the extra height/scale, add legible, multi-story intermediate scale elements: floor groupings, gaskets, off-sets, projections, sky terraces, layering, or other legible modulations to the middle of tall forms. Avoid a single repeated extrusion from base to top.

e. **Shape & Design All Sides:** Because tall forms are visible from many viewpoints/ distances, intentionally shape the form and design all sides (even party walls), responding to differing site patterns and context relationships. Accordingly, not all sides may have the same forms or display identical cladding.

f. **Adjusted Base Scale:** To mediate the form's added height, design a 1-3 story base scale, and/or highly legible base demarcation to transition to the ground and mark the 'street room' proportion. Tall buildings require several scale readings, and the otherwise typical single-story ground floor appears squashed by the added mass above.

g. **Ground Floor Uses:** Include identifiable primary entrances -scaled to the tall form - and provide multiple entries. Include genuinely activating uses or grade-related residences to activate all streets.

Steve Hall @ Hedrich Blessing

Facade depth and articulation.
Aqua Tower, Chicago.

Downtown Seattle skyline; ensemble of forms.

Aaron Pocock Photography

Transition to sky; and facade sky gardens.
South Beach, Singapore residential tower.

Designed rooftops.

h. **Facade Depth & Articulation:** Use plane changes, depth, shadow, and texture to provide human scale and interest and to break up the larger facade areas of tall buildings, especially in the base/ lower 100 feet. Compose fenestration and material dimensions to be legible and richly detailed from long distances.

i. **Quality & 6th Elevations:** Intentionally design and employ quality materials and detailing, including on all soffits, balconies, exterior ceilings, and other surfaces seen from below, including lighting, vents, etc.

j. **Transition to the Sky & Skyline Composition:** Create an intentional, designed terminus to the tall form and enhance the skyline (not a simple flat 'cut-off'). Integrate all rooftop elements and uses into the overall design, including mechanical screens, maintenance equipment, amenity spaces and lighting. Use wide photo simulations to study and design how the tall building will contribute to the overall skyline profile and variety of forms.

5. Secondary Architectural Features

a. Visual depth and Interest

1. **Rooftops:** Design the 'fifth elevation' — the roofscape — in addition to the facades. As South Lake Union is a topographic valley, the roofs will be visible from tall buildings and locations outside the neighborhood such as the freeway and Space Needle. Therefore, roof-top elements should be intentionally designed and organized to present a coherent image when seen from above. Equipment should be fully screened.

2. **Windows and Fenestration:** Fenestration design should respond to context and the size and character of glazed areas. Well-articulated fenestration with a break in the facade plane is strongly encouraged. Expanses of unarticulated glazing and repeated horizontal 'ribbon' windows are discouraged. Patterns of different sized windows indicate how interior spaces or residential units are organized. Multi-paned windows provide a much finer scale and sense of refinement – and can sometimes relate to near-by historical structures.

6. Scale and Texture

a. **Texture:** Materials such as brick, stone, pre-cast concrete, smaller paned glass, tile, etc. provide both scale and texture and should be selected, especially where the surfaces are prominent or where there are no other architectural features. For example, where structured parking is exposed because of site topography, the 'blank walls' should be textured with high quality materials.

DC3

DESIGN CONCEPT

Open Space Concept

Citywide Guideline:
Integrate open space design with the design of the building so that each complements the other.

Visible and non-gated courtyard and ampitheatre steps.

Christoph Hoessly

Multi-use open space with plaza, lawn, and fountain. (Britomart, Auckland, NZ)

South Lake Union Supplemental Guidance

1. Building Open Space Relationship

a. **Interior/Exterior Fit**
Locate open spaces toward streets with high pedestrian volumes and 'Heart' locations (see page 9). Open spaces accessible to the public should be visible from the street.

DC4
DESIGN CONCEPT
Exterior Elements & Finishes

Citywide Guideline:
Use appropriate and high-quality elements and finishes for the building and its open spaces.

Transparent ground floor glass.

Durable materials at ground level.

South Lake Union Supplemental Guidance

1. Exterior Building Materials

a. **Transparent Ground Floor Glass:**
Avoid the use of tinted or reflective glass on the ground floor for commercial uses or other non-residential uses. Transparency maintains pedestrian visual interest and safety at the street level.

b. **Panelized Materials:**

1. Sheet products can lower the visual quality of buildings – generally because of warping, poor fastening or detailing, and the manner in which the sheet products abut other materials or fenestration.

2. Panelized exterior cladding should be carefully detailed and of a sufficient thickness to prevent warping. The project applicant should provide visual examples of other applications, material samples, construction details (as requested by the Design Review Board and/or City Staff), and description of how the quality of the materials will be installed and ensured.

c. **Materials at Ground Level:**
Use durable materials resistant to vandalism, incidental damage, and wear. Ground floor materials should provide the visual interest and texture as described in Citywide Guideline DC.2.D. Brick, tile, and other highly durable materials are encouraged.

2. Trees, Landscape, and Hardscape Materials

a. Encourage landscaping that meets LEED criteria, or an equivalent standard. This is a priority in the Cascade neighborhood.

b. Where appropriate, install indigenous trees and plants to improve aesthetics, capture water, and create habitat.

c. Retain existing, non-intrusive mature trees or replace with large caliper trees. Water features are encouraged including natural marsh-like installations.

d. Reference the City of Seattle Street Tree Manual and SDOT's "Streets Illustrated" for appropriate landscaping and lighting options for the area.

e. Consider integrating artwork into publicly accessible areas of a building and landscape that evokes a sense of place related to the previous uses of the area. Neighborhood themes may include service industries such as laundries, auto row, floral businesses, photography district, arts district, maritime, etc.