

2. Guidelines for New Structures

5-12-2022 *(Highlighted text indicates item for Board focus.)*

a. General Information

While historic districts convey a sense of time and place which is retained through the preservation of historic buildings and the general character of the district, these areas continue to be dynamic, evolving settings. Careful thought and planning in the design and development of new structures can enhance the character of the district while providing for new and expanded activities and a vibrant community.

These guidelines are intended to promote new buildings that are sensitive to their historic context and complementary to their surroundings. The guidelines provide a basic framework to create an environment that respects the special setting of Pioneer Square, maintains a cohesive neighborhood identity and is pedestrian oriented. All new buildings within the districts should be compatible with both the visual qualities of the immediate area in which the property is located, as well as the overall context of the district as to retain its historic character.

It is not intended that new buildings necessarily employ the same architectural styles as the contributing and historic buildings, as this practice leads to a false or imitation historicism. Instead, new buildings and structures should feature some of the fundamental design characteristics of historic buildings noted in the guidelines below in order to complement existing buildings rather than produce a stridently contrasting element along an otherwise architecturally consistent block front. Adherence to these guidelines is intended to produce new construction that is differentiated from the old, while respecting and complementing the qualities and vocabulary of the historic district.

b. Relationship to Site, Street and Block Front

Rationale, Context, and Intent

Most block fronts in the District are characterized by buildings that extend property line to property line forming continuous street walls with buildings of similar proportions, window patterns, top-middle-base configurations, and materials. This relative uniformity is enhanced by a variety of architectural styles, facade details, signage, and storefront designs. Therefore, block fronts in the district are typically perceived as single block long buildings with multiple complementary components. Because of this, it is appropriate to think of a new building within a block front as an “addition” to the block front. When reviewing proposals for new structures, the Board will apply, in a conceptual manner, the criteria for building additions as described in the National Park Service Technical Preservation Services Brief #14: New Exterior Additions to Historic Buildings: Preservation Concerns. This guidance recommends designing new elements with a consistent height and setback as those of adjacent and other surrounding buildings.

The architectural characteristics of block fronts do vary across the District. For example, block fronts along 1st Avenue S north of S Jackson St feature relatively narrow building facades with a variety of architectural ornamentation while those south of S Jackson St. tend to be wider with a less ornamental, more massive character, reflecting a slightly different period of construction.



Figure XXX. Block fronts north of S Jackson (left) and South of S Jackson St. (right)

When determining a new building’s “compatibility” and “consistency” with other buildings in the block front, the Board will consider height and bulk, materials, window patterns, top-middle-base configuration, storefront/ground floor design, color, and other considerations described in these guidelines.

In the District, building facades are uniformly located at the front property/ROW lines, thus there is a strong street edge definition. Continuous street walls are the historical precedent with exceptions of some elements extending out from the facade such as building cornices, bay windows and façade and some recessed elements such as recessed entrances and chamfered corners of some facades.

The primary entrance, majority of the storefronts and most significant architectural features face a street. Some buildings located on street corners have the main entrance or a storefront oriented to the corner and feature additional storefronts and entrances on the street front facades as well. For proposals on corner lots, the applicant should identify which street front façade is intended to be primary. Generally, the primary facades of corner lot buildings face north-south avenues, so this should be the default unless the Bord finds a compelling case to the contrary.

The intent of the guidelines below is to maintain the “street wall” of the block front framed by front building facades that are generally consistent in character and uniformly aligned along the street ROW line.

Guidelines

- i. The building shall be oriented to the street with similar setbacks to the neighboring contributing and supporting buildings and as appropriate for the conditions of the site. This generally means that the building must align with the street ROW property line. However, building entries, building corners at intersections and areas for outdoor functions may be set back if approved by the Board.
- ii. New buildings must also be consistent with other buildings in the block front in terms of architectural character, height and bulk, materials, window patterns, top-middle-base configuration, storefront/ground floor design, color, and other considerations described in these guidelines, as determined by the Board.

c. Building Height and Massing (Bulk)

Rationale, Context, and Intent

Contributing and supporting buildings feature a variety of heights from 1 to 6 stories ,with a few exceptions such as the Smith Tower and Alaska Buildings. In some areas of the District, buildings have a narrow frontage where in other locations the building frontage is significantly larger (a quarter block).

Section 23.66.140 SMC refers to Section 23.49.178 Pioneer Square Mixed, structure height which sets maximum height for the District and establishes further maximum and minimum structure height parameters. However, the Board has the responsibility to ensure that a building's height does not disrupt the District's character and can determine a new building's "appropriate" range of heights to achieve compatibility with its immediate surroundings and the District as a whole.

A building's height can substantially affect the District's visual character at three scales:

- As viewed from its immediate surroundings. The objective at this scale is to ensure that a new building is compatible with neighboring buildings and does not dominate the visual character of a block front viewed from across the street or the in the immediate vicinity



Figure xxx Building as viewed from its immediate surroundings

- As viewed looking down a street. In order to maintain the District's unique streetscape qualities, a new building's height should fit within the range of contributing and supporting buildings on the block to the extent that the new building does not visually dominate the view of the block as a whole as seen looking down the street.



Figure xxx Building as viewed as part of a block front.

- As viewed from a distance or from an entry point into the district. In order to maintain and enhance the District’s identity and design integrity, new buildings should complement the District’s profile as seen from outside the District, including views from Elliott Bay and Kobe Terrace. New buildings should not disrupt the general composition of the skyline from important public viewpoints.



Figure xxx. View of the district from an entry point on S Jackson Street.

The intent of this section is to ensure that new buildings complement the height and scale of near- by buildings, adjacent streetscapes, and the District as a whole.

Guidelines

- i. The Board will establish a new building’s appropriate height based on its visual impact to its local surroundings and the District’s profile as seen from outside Pioneer Square. To accomplish this, the Board will consider the following:
 - a. Perspectives of the proposed building from street fronts, as seen from locations on the adjacent block, looking down streets within the District and looking in from the outskirts of the District, including from Kobe Terrace and from Elliot Bay. The proposed building, although it may be visible from such locations, must not dominate or detract from the visual fabric of the District.
 - b. Graphic comparisons of height of existing buildings. The application must demonstrate that the proposed building is compatible with contributing and supporting buildings within one block surrounding the site.
 - c. Blockage of sunlight access on public spaces for a significant portion of the day. The intent is to avoid shading of important public spaces such as Occidental Park and 1st Avenue.
 - d) The extent that the height and mass of the building is mitigated by architectural characteristics to provide a more compatible human scale typical of street facades of near-by contributing and supporting buildings. Such characteristics are further discussed in this Section 2 (Guidelines for Modifications to or Demolition of Existing Buildings .
 - e) Other as identified by the Board.

ii. In order for the Board to evaluate the impacts of the height of a proposal the applicant must submit the following.

- Elevations drawn to scale of the proposed building and its relationship to buildings on the block.



Figure xxx. Elevations such as this one help the Board to review the implications of a proposal's height on local surroundings.

- An eye-level perspective rendering of the building looking down the street illustrating the visual impact of the building with respect to other buildings on the



block front.

Figure xxx. Renderings such as this illustrate the impact of new buildings on the streetscape.

- The Board may require graphics showing views of the proposed building from prominent viewpoints outside the district or aerial views showing the size and bulk of the building relative to its surroundings.

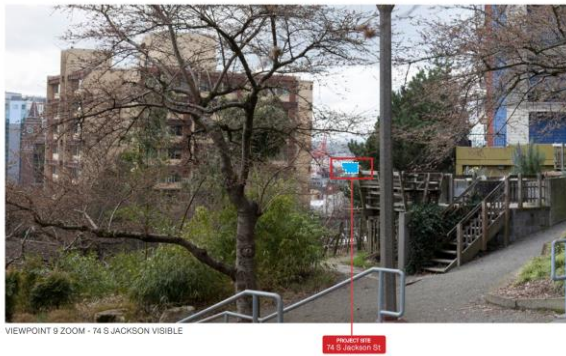


Figure xxx. An example of a view analysis from a prominent viewpoint.

- The Board may require graphic analysis of a new building’s visual impact to views of the district and at entry points into the District. This does not mean that the review of project proposals will necessarily require protection of a specific view from a given point.



Figure xxx. An example of height analysis from a viewpoint looking into the district. Note how the building façade on the left is divided into different sections to reduce its visual massing while the new building on the extreme right does not address this objective.

- The Board may require 3-dimensional modelling of building forms to clarify a building’s relationship to its surroundings in the district.



Figure xxx. Three dimensional visualizations such as this one are very useful in analyzing the impacts of height and bulk.

All view locations for visual analysis are subject to approval by the Board. The graphics noted above should also be accompanied by photographs from the same locations showing existing conditions.

d. Characteristics of Street facing Façades

Rationale, Context, and Intent

The street facing facades of most contributing and supporting buildings feature the following characteristics and elements.

- Variable size and proportion. The largest contributing building facades appear approximately 6,000-7,000 SF. These are typically on E/W streets and usually well-articulated with window patterns and other features.
 - North-South streetscapes (e.g.: 1st Ave S) feature facades between 30' to 60' wide with some being wider. Building facades feature a wide variety of architectural features and heights.
 - East-West streetscapes (e.g.: S, Main St), sometimes feature facades the full length of the block – approximately 110' +/- . Some E/W streets have fewer entries and storefronts and less transparency but there are exceptions to this generalization.

While the relative width to height of building facades (proportions) vary across the district, building proportions tend to be relatively consistent within most block fronts. To retain the general visual character of streetscapes and the District as a whole, new buildings should respond to and respect the general proportions and architectural expression of buildings on the same block front. Per the National Park Service Technical Preservation Services Brief #14: New Exterior Additions to Historic Buildings: Preservation Concerns, there is no prescribed approach for new in a historic district, rather, a new building should strike a balance between compatibility and differentiation as to maintain the historic character and identity of the district.

- Top, middle and base configuration. Most contributing buildings feature specific, well-articulated elements at the top or cornice line, middle story facades that add continuity to the variety of styles and characteristics among the District's building stock.
- Human scale, which means how the building and its elements relates to a person. Contributing buildings almost always feature building elements such as double hung windows, doors with glass, awnings, traditionally sized storefronts, or materials such as brick that visually relate to human body size and activities.
- Architectural scale, which refers to building's relative bulk (as modified by articulation) in relationship to its neighbors. Generally, the facades of contributing buildings on N/S streets fall in the range of 1500 SF to 6,000 SF and nearly all of them include façade features that visually articulate (break down) the buildings massing.
- Transparent store fronts with entries. (This element is covered in section "e" . below.)
- Rhythmic patterns of windows. Contributing and supporting buildings generally feature single or double hung, vertically oriented windows arranged in repetitive patterns in which two or more windows are spaced closer together and separated from adjacent window

clusters by a broader strip of masonry. New buildings that feature similar patterns, size, and alignment generally are more consistent with the District’s architectural character than those that feature window walls or large expanses of glass. (This element is also covered in a Section “f” below.)

The intent of the guidelines in this section is to incorporate the fundamental architectural characteristics noted above into the street facing building facades of new buildings in order to increase visual compatibility between old and new buildings while encouraging new buildings to exhibit a contemporary character.

Guidelines

- i. During the ARC and Board’s review of proposals, the applicant must demonstrate that the façade in question addresses the guidelines’ intent noted in the Rationale, Context and Intent statement above regarding the District’s fundamental architectural characteristics. In so doing, that demonstration must not be based on a single existing building example, but rather based on an analysis of several contributing buildings that feature the characteristic in question.
- ii. Building façades that face the public realm should be articulated with a strong rhythm of regular vertical and horizontal elements. Vertical and horizontal elements should break down the visual scale of larger buildings and create a rhythm that visually minimizes the overall massing consistent with historic development patterns. .



Figure xxx. Two new contemporary styled buildings that include some of the desired façade elements. The one on the left features a rhythmic window pattern, and the one on the right has a vague top-middle-base configuration, brick materials and an acceptable, if minimalist, storefront design.

- i. The front facades of all new buildings must feature an “articulated” top, middle and base configuration as approved by the Board. The articulation of the three façade sections may be achieved through a number of measures such as 1) physical elements such as cornices, transparent storefronts 2) changes in façade features such as window patterns and materials or 3) other measures approved by the Board.

The general size and characteristics of the top, middle and base are illustrated below.



Figure xxx. A building that features a top middle and base façade composition. Note the light-colored masonry storefront (base), the repetitive window patterns of the second through sixth stories (middle), and unique design of the top story (top).

- Top: Elements may include a prominent cornice visible from the adjacent street, a top floor with a different window pattern, materials or architectural features, horizontal articulation, identifiable parapet, or other feature approved by the board.
 - Middle: Relatively uniform window patterns per Section f, below, materials, articulation measures such as pilasters and other features such as balconies.
 - Base: Comply with Section e. Storefronts and Ground Floor Design. The base shall consist of the ground floor façade or, if the Board approves, a combination of ground floor and mezzanine space. However, if the mezzanine space is included the separation of the ground floor and mezzanine space must be articulated with different fenestration and other features such as a canopy. In no case shall the base be no more than 30 feet in height.
- I. Building facades that are wider than 75 feet as measured parallel to the property line, must be articulated vertically into identifiable façade segments **if** the adjacent contributing or historic building facades are 60 feet wide or less. Articulation may be achieved by dividing the ground floor into separate storefronts with separate entries, grouping façade windows into repetitive patterns, varying window types, materials that have a similar size and texture to traditional masonry, or other measures approved by the board. The Board may waive this requirement if it determines that the proposal is compatible with nearby streetscape context. .
- Need a photo of 74th S Jackson**
- iii. Applicants proposing new buildings must demonstrate to the Board's satisfaction that facades facing and adjacent to a public street (not an alley) include building elements that provide for a human scale. This may be accomplished through means such as (but not excluding other measures):e:

- Distinctive window patterns such as grouped windows, multiple paned windows, or glass artwork such as stained glass or prismatic windows
- A canopy or weather protection, especially over an entry
- Balconies or window boxes
- . A unique or specially designed entry.
- Unique pedestrian light features (especially at a building entrance)
- A unique architecture feature such as a bay window or corner entrance.
- Other feature or characteristic approved by the Board.

Proposed elements to achieve a human scale must be approved by the Board. Elements employed to satisfy this requirement may be used to satisfy other guidelines.

e. Storefronts and Ground Floor Design

Rationale, Context and Intent

Commercial storefronts are a defining characteristic of the District and important to the streetscape qualities, pedestrian interest and security and overall character of a building. . . . Ground floor storefronts of existing buildings typically feature prominent entries, large display windows, transom windows and center recessed entry doors framed within a bay by columns on the sides, a bulkhead/base/kickplate generally 18 – 30 inches tall (and topped with a cornice, sign band or frieze)



Figure xxx. (Left) Although contemporary in character, this storefront features some traditional elements: strong pillars (pilasters) transparent windows, kick plates, recessed entries and weather protection. Missing are transom windows are opportunities for sign bands or other elements between first and second stories.

(Right) This new storefront also features strong pillars, transparent windows, kick plates, recessed entries and weather protection. In place of transom windows and sign bands typical of contributing and historic buildings, it features a grill which does provide space for a sign.

The intent of the guidelines below is to increase the compatibility between existing and new buildings and maintain visual consistency along a blockfront. An additional objective is to

provide a safe and attractive pedestrian environment by providing lines of sight and encouraging natural surveillance through strategic placement of doors, windows. It is not necessary that new storefronts mimic the storefronts of contributing or historic buildings. New ground floor building fronts and store fronts may feature contemporary elements and materials. However, these guidelines do address fundamental functional and visual characteristics such as transparency, public/commercial realm transition, human scale, pedestrian interest, weather protection and architectural proportions.

Guidelines

i. The ground floor façade must feature:

- Active ground floor uses such as retail shops, walk in services (banks, salons, professional activities, etc. or other uses identified by the Board. The Board may exempt applications from this requirement if it finds such uses are not viable along a certain street front.
- Transparent window areas or window displays over at least 75 percent of the ground floor façade between 2' and 8' above the sidewalk. The windows shall provide views into the building's interior or be configured as merchandise display windows. The building must be designed so that the windows satisfying the requirement for "pedestrian oriented façades" do not look into service or storage areas or other unsightly rooms. Window darkening and/or reflective film in ground or upper floor windows on primary building facades is not permitted. Windows at street level shall permit visibility into the business, and visibility shall not be obscured by tinting, frosting, etching, window coverings including but not limited to window film, draperies, shades, or screens, extensive signage, or other means. (
- Window darkening and/or reflective film in ground or upper floor windows on street facing building facades is not permitted)
- Transparency should not be blocked by walls or other division of spaces within 15 feet of the storefront windows.
- Alterations to non-conforming and non-historic buildings shall not diminish the amount of ground floor window area.
- See also guidelines for Section 7 regarding window signs.
- A primary building entry facing the street front with lighting for pedestrian safety and comfort. A new storefront shall incorporate architectural detailing such as, but not limited to ornamental glazing, railings and balustrades, awnings, canopies, decorative pavement on private property as an accent on special areas of the facade, decorative lighting, seats, architectural molding, and signage to articulate the entrances
- Weather protection (e.g., canopy, awning, or other cover from the rain) at least 5' wide over at least 65 percent of the front façade. The weather protection must be located between 8' and 15' above grade unless the Board determines there is a compelling reason to the contrary.

- A floor-to-floor ground floor height of at least 15 feet but not greater than 20 feet, excluding any mezzanines. The Board may waive this requirement if there are special conditions such as the provision of a mezzanine, topographic constraint, or special use.
 - A “kick plate or bulkhead” that articulates the connection between the bottom of the façade and the ground plane. Such elements should be incorporated under windows and at the bottoms of columns and pilasters. Kick plates or bulkheads of approximately 18-24 inches in height above grade are generally appropriate. Base materials must be durable - concrete, stone metal, or other as approved by the board and may be poured, precast, or cut to fit. Note: For new buildings the term “ornamental” does not mean “ornate” or with added non-functional decoration. New storefronts may feature contemporary elements and materials so long as the applicant can demonstrate that the project achieves a higher level of quality, craftsmanship or design than the standard industrial components. (See figure xxx for examples)
- ii. Unless otherwise authorized by the Board because of local conditions, building fronts facing a public street must not feature an untreated ground floor “blank wall” of more than 30 feet or longer as measured horizontally without having a ground level window or a door lying wholly or in part within that 30-foot section. If the Board determines that a blank wall on the ground floor or a street facing façade is necessary or justifiable then it must be treated in one of the ways below.
- Install a vertical trellis in front of the wall with climbing vines or plant materials
 - Provide a landscaped planting bed or a raised planter bed in front of the wall of sufficient size to support. Plant materials that will obscure or screen at least 50 percent of the wall’s surface within 4 years.
 - Provide artwork (mosaic, mural, sculpture, relief, etc.) over at least 50 percent of the blank wall surface.
 - Other method as approved by the Board. For example, landscaping or other treatments may not be necessary on a wall that employs high quality building materials (such as brick) and provides desirable visual interest.
 - Special architectural lighting may be used to highlight a successful treatment.

Windows

Rationale, Context and Intent

Windows are prominent features of a building’s architecture and contribute to its sense of massing, proportion, and rhythm. The size and shape of windows, depth and width of frames, materials and color and type of glazing, dramatically affect a building’s appearance. In the Pioneer Square Preservation District there are a wide variety of historic window types such as single hung, double hung, fixed, awning, pivot and

casement windows. Most historic windows in Pioneer Square are wood but metal windows also exist.

The intent of guidelines for windows in new buildings is to reflect the general placement, proportion and composition of window types within the District but allow contemporary window types with current technological innovations to improve energy conservation and durability. Ideally, windows in new buildings will respect the size, rhythm, and alignment of those found in surrounding historic buildings.

Guidelines

- i. Design windows to be compatible with the placement, scale, type, materials and operation of windows and their openings in surrounding buildings. Design windows to be compatible with the architectural character of the new facade and the surrounding buildings. This may be accomplished in new buildings by sizing, orienting and/or configuring upper floor windows in a similar manner to near-by contributing and historic buildings. The Board may accept other means to accomplish compatibility of new window designs.
- ii. Window walls (facades where windows are the dominant façade material) and ribbon windows (where windows form horizontal bands along a front facade) are not generally acceptable in the District. However, the Board may allow such glazing systems in special situations such as where there is no architectural or historic context to respond to or when the new construction is a “bridging” or “hyphen” element separating it from historic buildings.
- iii. Window detailing. The street facing facades of buildings shall employ treatments of upper story windows to articulate their connection to the façade and provide a human scale. Sheer facades where the windows are in the same plane as the façade cladding are not acceptable unless the windows include some form of enhancement articulation. Measures to address this guideline include but are not limited to:
 - Repetitive patterns of individual or grouped windows
 - Vertically oriented windows
 - Individual windows above the ground floor that are set back from the façade or sill at least four inches from the façade plane.
 - Windows that feature multiple panes
 - Window trim or distinguishing materials around the window at least 4” wide.
 - Windows that feature a projecting sill or head jam at least 2” wide.
 - Other measure approved by the Board.



Figure xxx. This contemporary Pioneer Square building features windows with multiple panes and extended sills which add scale and nuanced detailing. Additionally, the groups of windows are recessed from the pilasters to enhance the façade’s sculptural qualities and visual “rhythm”.

g. Materials

Rationale, Context and Intent

The most common facing materials of contributing and supporting buildings are brick, masonry, concrete and cut or rusticated sandstone, with limited use of terra cotta and tile. Wooden window sash, ornamental sheet metal, carved stone and wooden or cast-iron storefronts are also typically used throughout the District. The relatively restricted palette of materials and consistency from building to building contributes greatly to both the historic and urban design assets of the District. Recognizing the need to allow cost-effective and durable contemporary materials, the intent of these guidelines is to ensure that materials on new buildings are highly durable and well detailed so that they do not look cheap or become dilapidated. At the same time building materials should not unnecessarily call attention to their contemporary nature through, for example, garish patterns or high reflectivity.

Guidelines

- i. Materials used on new construction must complement their surroundings in terms of unit or panel size, scale, profile, texture, sheen, reflectivity, and other physical characteristics. Proposed building materials should assure durability through such documentation such as extended warranties, independent testing or certification and/or successful long-term use in similar conditions, with high quality finish compatible with those traditionally used. Synthetic stucco siding, vinyl, plastic, and similar materials are generally not permitted. . The Board may require a change of materials if it determines that the proposal is not durable or compatible with its surroundings. Faux materials that imitate other materials are generally not appropriate or acceptable on new buildings
- ii. Ground floor facades should be composed of materials that are durable to touch and resistant to vandalism. Brick, stone, tile and such materials are preferred. EIFS, sheet

metal and panelized systems are not allowed on the ground floor of street facing facades.

- iii. Panelized concrete fiberboard is not appropriate in the District and is not allowed except in certain situations as authorized by the Board.

h. Color and Texture

Rationale, Context and Intent

The District's color palette emphasizes various tones of red brick masonry or gray sandstone. While new buildings may feature a broad spectrum of colors for trim, signage and accents, new building facades with traditional, muted colors will better fit into their context. The National Park Service Technical Preservation Services Brief #14: New Exterior Additions to Historic Buildings: Preservation Concerns advises that materials need not be the same as historic buildings but should be harmonious and in the same color range or value as those found in the district.

Guidelines

- i. For all new buildings, the applicant must demonstrate that they have considered the other existing materials and colors of contributing and supporting buildings on the block front and selected colors that will coordinate with or enhance that color pallet of the block. If a desirable color has already been used nearby, consider a different shade, adjusting its tint or adding an accent color.
- ii. Generally, muted colors and earth tones are most appropriate in the District. Unless the Board finds a compelling reason to the contrary, the predominant colors of street facing facades should be muted, emphasizing natural earth tones such as neutral greys, tans, brick reds, and buff.
- iii. Large areas of white, off-white, black and very dark shades of any color, as well as buildings that employ such colors as a primary façade color, are not typical in the District. The Board will allow such colors only in limited areas and unusual circumstances.
- iv. Bright, "neon" colors must not be used except for accents in limited areas on storefronts.
- v. Color may be used to convey a message about the type of business, or the products sold. However, the Board may reject specific colors associated with corporate branding or identity if those colors dominate the building's façade or its storefront or conflict with the historic qualities of the building's architecture.
- vi. The applicant must submit a color palette with samples to the Board for review. The Board may require that the proposed color palette be revised.
- vii. Accent colors used for portions of a storefront may be brighter, subject to Board approval.

- viii. Texture: Primary façade materials (those materials that cover larger areas of the façade) must not feature a gloss, sheen, or highly reflective finish.

i. Solar Panels and other roof top features

Rationale, Context and Intent

Roof top equipment such as solar panels, water treatment facilities and air conditioning units may be necessary and beneficial in terms of energy use and general sustainability. However, they can detract from District's historic and visual qualities. The guidelines below are intended to minimize these adverse effects.

Guidelines

- i. New roof top equipment other than solar panels shall be setback from the street facing building edge per SMC 23.66.140 so as not to be visible by pedestrians situated directly across the street from the building.
- ii. The Board may require screening or painting of rooftop equipment to reduce visual impacts.
- iii. Per SMC23.66.140 solar panel are allowed on the roof tops up to 7 feet above the roof and must be set back 10 feet. For buildings allow enclosed rooftop recreational spaces solar panels can be up to 15 feet above the roof of the main structure. Placement on rooftops away from primary facades is preferred but non-primary facade locations and other locations may be considered when the solar panels are installed in such a manner that minimizes their visibility from the street.

J. Mechanical Systems and Roof-Top Features

Rationale, Context and Intent

New mechanical equipment such as air conditioning units are often necessary to the proper use and functioning of a building, but such features can detract from the building's visual qualities.

Guidelines

- j. The preferred location for mechanical systems is in the building interior. In cases where locating systems in the interior is not possible, exterior mechanical systems equipment, including but not limited to air conditioning units, compressors, boilers, generators, ductwork, louvers, wiring and pipes, shall be installed on non-street facing building facades or roof tops. If installed on roof tops, see guideline I above. Mechanical equipment shall be installed in such a manner avoids, or if that is not possible, minimizes its negative visual impacts.

K Building Mounted Lighting

Rationale, Context and Intent

Building mounted lighting serves several functions such as illuminating a sign or storefront display, identifying an entry, marking a pedestrian path, offering security, or enhancing architectural features. Additionally, lighting fixtures themselves can be important building elements that affect a building's character and attractiveness.

The goal is to encourage installation of architectural compatible light fixtures that enhances pedestrian comfort and safety. Light fixtures should also complement the building's architecture in proportion, style and material as well as function.

Guidelines

- i. Building lighting for new buildings shall include lighting to enhance pedestrian comfort and safety, especially at building entries. such lights shall be mounted and oriented to minimize glare and shadows. High contrast environments are counter-productive to security and should be avoided. Lighting fixtures should include cut off angles and be directed at the surface to be seen. Storefront display lighting is encouraged as it contributes to the soft illumination of the sidewalk as well as providing security and business advertising.
- ii. Fixtures should be mounted at an appropriate height to provide a sufficient light level for pedestrians (typically 2 to 4 footcandles on horizontal surfaces). Exposed conduit is not allowed in new buildings.
- iii. Fixture attachments should be integral to the building's architecture. Light placement should be coordinated with other building elements and give the appearance that the light was not an afterthought.
- iv. When lighting is used to enhance architectural features, the lighting should be arranged in a way that emphasizes the architectural features but is still pedestrian orientated. Too much light on the face of the building can detract from architectural features or distort their appearance.
- v. On building facades facing alleys, locate and orient lights at appropriate heights to improve public safety and encourage positive activities in the alleys. However, the more intimate nature of the alley and the use of neighboring buildings should be considered when determining the placement, fixture style and lighting level. (E.g.: Avoid possible light splash into residential units.) include dimmer switches that allow light level adjustment. The Board may require a project to include alley lighting in the proposed redevelopment of a building.
- vi. For lighting of signage, see Seattle Municipal Code 23.66.160 Signs and Section 4 Signage.
- vii. Provide down lighting over all building entrances with a minimum light level of 2-foot candles on the pavement surface.

L. Pedestrian Weather Protection - Awnings and Canopies

Rationale, Context and Intent

Awnings and canopies are structures attached to buildings above storefront windows and entrances to provide weather protection. Awnings are light-weight structures constructed of metal framing with fabric or vinyl covering. Canopies are heavier, more permanent structures

constructed of rigid materials such as metal or metal framing with glass. Awnings, canopies and similar features are useful in providing pedestrian comfort and can add to a building's visual interest.

Guidelines

- i. Awnings shall be sloped, rather than curved. No writing may be placed on the sloping portion of the awning. Scalloped or cut-out valances are not acceptable. Return of valances on awnings may be permitted,
- ii. Shiny, high-gloss awning materials are not permitted. Awning colors shall be subdued to ensure compatibility with the character of the District.
- iii. Canopies that are compatible in design, scale, materials, color, details, and method of attachment with the building and that do not display a false historical appearance are permitted. .
- iv. Awnings and canopies covering more than one story are not allowed.
- v. Awnings and canopies must serve a functional purpose, and therefore shall project a minimum of five (5) feet horizontally.
- vi. Internally illuminated awnings or canopies are not permitted. Internal illumination and neon are not allowed on awnings or canopies.

M. Security Bars and Gates

Rationale, Context and Intent

Pursuant to SMC 23.66.100, the Pioneer Square Preservation District was created, in part, because of its historic and architectural significance, and remarkable business environment. District goals include preserving, protecting, and enhancing the historic character of the area, and encouraging the development of street level pedestrian-oriented businesses that attract citizens and visitors to the neighborhood.

Guidelines

- i. Installation of permanent metal security bars in storefront windows is prohibited.
- ii. Retractable roll down and scissor type gates are permitted only in garage door openings and in alley locations that require high levels of security.