

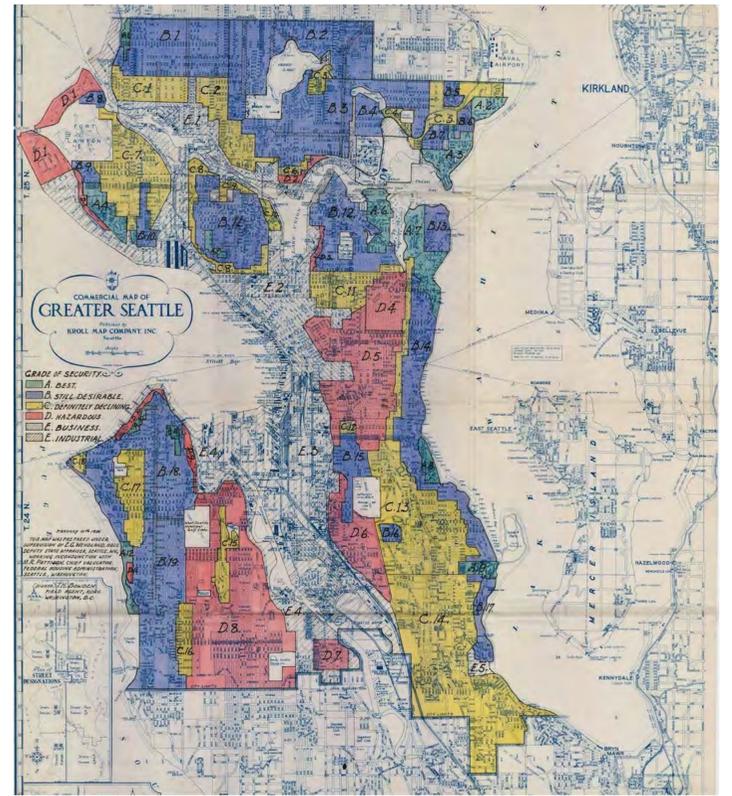
A brief history...

The African American presence in the Central Area dates back to 1890 with an upsurge in the 1940's. Due to segregation and restrictive covenants, it was one of the few places black people could live in Seattle. From 1940 to 2000, African Americans were the majority resident population in the Central Area. The Central Area was redlined beginning in the 1930's when a large part of the population was African American. Discriminatory lending and insurance practices restricted the growth of black residents and businesses.

"The parties hereto signing and executing this instrument, and the several like instruments relating to their several properties, hereby mutually covenant, promise and agree each with the others that no part of lands owned by them shall ever be used or occupied by, or sold, conveyed, leased, rented or given to Negroes or any person of Negro blood.

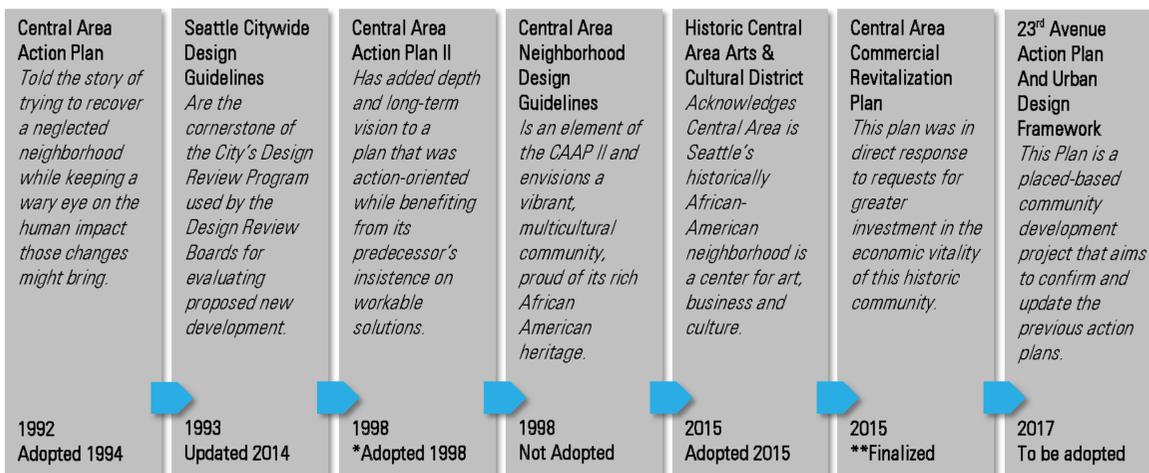
This covenant shall run with the land and bind the respective heirs and parties hereto for a period of 21 years."

Excerpt from a 1948 Capitol Hill neighborhood agreement on a restrictive covenant. Intended expiration was 1969.



Redline map from 1930's.

Previous documents reviewed

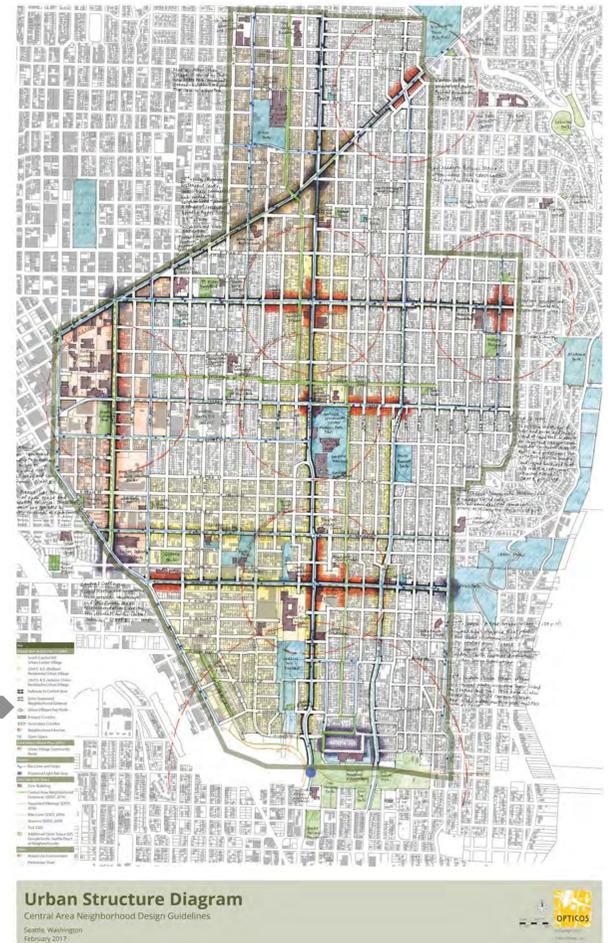


*Incorporated into the adopted Seattle Comprehensive Plan
 **Finalized by community (not an adopted city document)

Previous outreach



January community meeting at Douglass-Truth Library to identify initial goals and approaches for the design guidelines.



February walking tours with Opticos to identify essential neighborhood character.

CS1. Natural Systems and Site Features

Local Topography

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

Connection to Nature

- Consider solar access by setting taller buildings back at upper floors to minimize shadows cast on adjacent pedestrian level spaces (i.e. sidewalks and open areas) and neighboring properties.
- Incorporation of urban farming opportunities within the design, both at grade, and on the roof for larger mixed-use buildings is encouraged.
- Unify streets through street trees. Consider utilizing tree species as theming devices to provide identifiable character to a street or project. Incorporate an irrigation plan that maintains the trees and other landscaping proposed. Ensure maintainability of the plants, or include low-maintenance, drought-resistant species.



contextual response to local topography



unified street through street trees

CS2. Urban Pattern and Form

Transition and Delineation of Zones

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



entrances with grade separation and single-family scaled building articulation

CS3. Architectural Context and Character

History and Heritage

- Provide opportunities to honor the African and black American presence within the neighborhood.
- Consider including visual arts as an integral part of the design concept along main street building facades, within highly trafficked pedestrian areas, and within open spaces.
- Retain and respect the existing surrounding pedestrian oriented neighborhood character.
- Include interpretive opportunities (through visual art, signage, markers etc.) where applicable, that tell the story of the neighborhood's history in engaging ways.
- Encourage the building design to reflect the racial, economical, and multi-generational character of the community.
- When possible, encourage the preservation, rehabilitation, adaptive reuse, and addition to existing structures as a means to honor what came before in the existing neighborhood fabric.



tile mosaic as artistic expression



mural as artistic expression



swing dancer visual art

PL1. Open Space Connectivity

Publicly Accessible Open Space

- Provide safe and well connected open spaces. Encourage shared public walkways to multiple buildings to create a campus-like network of walkways.
- Celebrate gateways within the community. Create activities and visual interest at these intersections and thresholds to enhance the Central Area's identity and emphasize the sense of arrival.

Connection Back to the Community

- Provide meaningful open spaces in the community that can function for a variety of uses including social gathering, festivals, and other larger celebrations.
- Use blank walls and surfaces for public expression of art that references the history, heritage, and culture of the community.
- Discourage inaccessible rooftop, or private, or gated open spaces as the only form of open space for the project. Prioritize ground level open space at the building front or side, or by means of a courtyard that is not restricted or hidden from public view.
- When providing vegetation at the roof level, consider urban agriculture instead of a passive green roof as a means to provide residents access to fresh produce.
- Incorporating transparent, indoor community meeting spaces at the ground level of larger projects is encouraged.

Livability for Families and Elderly

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



connected open spaces



places for gathering



blank walls used for artistic expression



urban agriculture as rooftop amenity for residents



alleys preserved for pedestrian uses



safe and visible areas for play

PL2. Walkability

Gathering and Social Spaces

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



social space for neighbors to connect

PL3. Street-Level Interaction

Frontages

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

Streetscape Treatment

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



residential units with exterior access



coupled entries



businesses with street presence



activated street frontage



comfortable pedestrian environment



deep awning and landscape buffer



small business footprints with unified facade expressions

DC2. Architectural Concept

Building Layout and Massing

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



broken down massing and bay window facade features



modulated building form with material and color variations

DC3. Open Space Concept

Semi-public Spaces

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



semi-public open space for neighbors to interact

DC4. Materials

Screening

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

Building Materials

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

Building Details and Elements

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



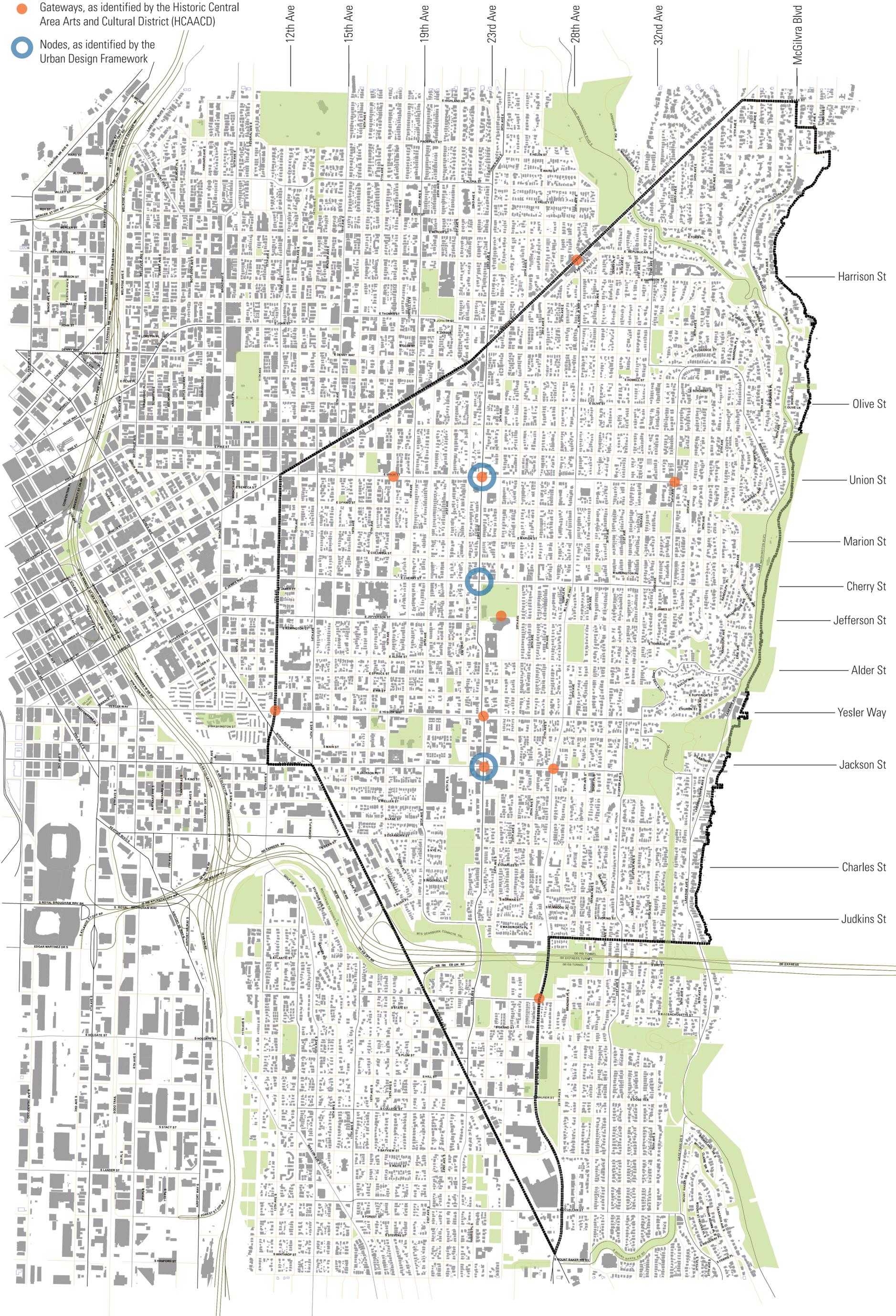
varying patterns and textures



vibrant and bold use of colors

Gateways & Nodes

- Gateways, as identified by the Historic Central Area Arts and Cultural District (HCAACD)
- Nodes, as identified by the Urban Design Framework



Cultural Identity in Design

The following principles have been gathered from a short-list of contemporary architects that have written or commented on the subject of Afrocentric Architecture.

- A distinctive manifestation of form, imagery and space in the modern built environment which is derived from the culture, environmental and historical origins of the continent of Africa
 - David Hughes, FAIA



- Distinctive use of form for function
 - David Hughes, FAIA



- Abstract use of traditional form and materials
 - David Hughes, FAIA



- Features public gathering spaces
 - Donald King, FAIA



- Relates to the earth in grounded form and massing
 - Donald King, FAIA



- Has balanced asymmetry
 - Donald King, FAIA & Sharon Sutton, FAIA



- Strong expressions of shelter in roof lines
 - Donald King, FAIA



- Rhythm of fenestration and an appearance of the inside program out
 - Donald King, FAIA



- Use of warm colors, earth tones
 - Donald King, FAIA



- Connects earth and sky; recycles for innovation
 - Sharon Sutton, FAIA



- Exhibits a continuous back and forth rhythm
 - Sharon Sutton, FAIA

- Simplicity makes knowledge of the design accessible, thus a larger portion of the community will be able to participate in the planning and design
 - Jack Travis, FAIA



- Duality or irony of the condition of members of the African diaspora's attempts to co-exist within a dominant culture that, by nature, is in direct conflict with it, is an ongoing theme in their lives and in the make-up of their communities
 - Jack Travis, FAIA



- Legacy/identity includes information, symbolism, and physical memory of past legacy and achievement of peoples, events, places and dates that act as reminders of what has gone before and are therefore critical to making a cultural place
 - Jack Travis, FAIA



- Visual/tactile/materiality/skin is essential in expressing the spatial/formal content that elevates the aesthetic quality of black lives, the intensity of incorporating color, pattern, and texture in intensities that rival if not surpass all other cultures
 - Jack Travis, FAIA

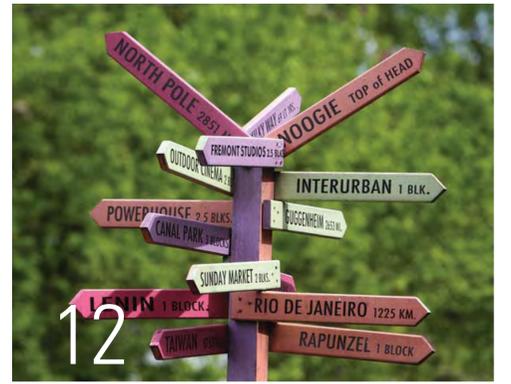


Design Preferences

Commercial Streetscape



Placemaking Strategies



Residential Entry Treatment



Gathering Spaces



Community Amenities

