Seattle Department of Construction & Inspections

DESIGN REVIEW

EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE OF THE DOWNTOWN DESIGN REVIEW BOARD

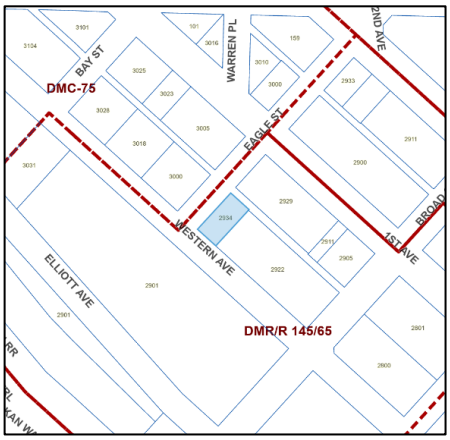
Record Number:	3034998-EG
Address:	2934 Western Ave
Applicant:	Jeff Ocampo, Olson Kundig
Date of Meeting:	November 14, 2023
Board Members Present:	Che Fortaleza (Chair) Nicole Li Ed Palushock (Substitute) Jake Woll (Substitute)
Board Members Absent:	Carey Dagliano Matthew Bissen
SDCI Staff Present:	David Sachs

SITE & VICINITY

Site Zone: Downtown Mixed Residential/R 145/65

Nearby Zones: (North) Downtown Mixed Residential/R 145/65 & Downtown Mixed Commercial 75
(South) Downtown Mixed Residential/R 145/65
(East) Downtown Mixed Residential/R 145/65
(West) Downtown Mixed Commercial 75

Lot Area: 7,222 sq. ft.



Current Development:

The subject site is currently developed with a two-story concrete building built in 1927. The site is rectangular in shape and slopes downward northeast to southwest approximately 18 feet.

Surrounding Development and Neighborhood Character:

The subject site is located on the east corner of Eagle St and Western Ave in the Belltown neighborhood of the Downtown Urban Center. Multifamily residential structures are adjacent to the southeast and across the alley to the northeast. A lowrise medical office building is across Eagle St to the northwest. The vicinity is primarily comprised of mixed-use, multifamily residential, commercial, and office uses, with religious institutions, parking, and green spaces throughout. Across Western Ave to the southwest, Olympic Sculpture Park overlooks Elliott Bay. Myrtle Edwards Park and the Elliott Bay Trail to the southwest and the Seattle Center campus to the northeast provide public open space and recreational opportunities. Principal arterial Western Ave experiences a subtle grade change and follows a diagonal street grid parallel to the Elliott Bay shoreline, whereas the steep grade change along Eagle St slopes downward toward the bay.

The Belltown neighborhood maintains a largely urban and pedestrian-oriented character with varied building age and scale. Older, smaller-scale structures to the north transition to newer and denser development in the blocks to the southeast. Structures range from low- to highrise up to thirteen stories in height. Larger-scale buildings frequently include one- to two-story podiums which respond to the historic lowrise context. Projecting bays and balconies offer occasional deviation from boxy massing forms. At the pedestrian level, structures meet the ground with strong street walls and heavy glazing. Linear window patterns are consistently present. The vicinity includes a mix of old and new construction and materials, including masonry, metal, and fiber cement. This block was rezoned from Downtown Mixed Residential/R 125/65 to Downtown Mixed Residential/R 145/65 on May 14, 2017. Multiple projects in the vicinity are currently in review or under construction for proposed development, including 3000 Western Ave.

Access:

Vehicle access is proposed from Western Ave and the alley. Pedestrian access is proposed from Western Ave.

Environmentally Critical Areas:

No mapped environmentally critical areas are located on the subject site.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Design Review Early Design Guidance for a 12-story building with hotel and 30 apartment units. Parking for 21 vehicles proposed.

The design packet includes information presented at the meeting, and is available online by entering the record number at this website:
http://www.seattle.gov/DPD/aboutus/news/events/DesignReview/SearchPastReviews/default.aspx

Any recording of the Board meeting is available in the project file. This meeting report summarizes the meeting and is not a meeting transcript.

EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE – NOVEMBER 14, 2023

PUBLIC COMMENT

The following public comments were offered at this meeting:

- Commented on the potential to impact to views and amount of natural daylight on the neighboring 3000 1st Ave condominium building.
- Noted the steep slope and supported a dynamic solution.
- Supported the additional residential units and hotel program on the underutilized site and will provide activity and eyes on the street.

SDCI also summarized design related comments received in writing prior to the meeting:

- Opposed to the proposed 12-story building height as it is inconsistent with the surrounding neighborhood fabric and would loom over the park.
- Concerned about shadow impacts to Olympic Sculpture Park and the residential building to the northeast.
- Felt the proposed building height is not proportional with the narrowness of the site.
- Preferred a 5-6 story building height, stating it would better fit into the neighborhood and respect Olympic Sculpture Park.
- Observed the building will be highly visible from Olympic Sculpture Park.
- Requested improving the pedestrian environment by widening the sidewalk or setting back the building.
- Noted that privacy impacts to the neighboring 2929 1st Ave north building have not been addressed.
- Stressed the importance of pedestrian visibility and lighting along Eagle St.
- Commented that the narrow street frontage leaves no room for open spaces or pedestrian access.
- Expected the window design to present challenges for birds.
- Opined that pedestrian and vehicular access to the site is awkward and dangerous.
- Remarked that material quality, open space, and landscaping appeared haphazard and cheap compared to Olympic Sculpture Park.
- Reminded that with Eagle Street's designation as a Neighborhood Green Street, two of the three options proposed will need Eagle St setback departure approval, and the option that does not require the setback departure approval is incompatible with neighborhood aesthetics.
- Referenced 3000 Western Ave as a precedent for proposing to enhance the neighborhood with a similar height building, greenery, and keeping in line with the designated Green Street aesthetic.
- Multiple comments opposed granting departuresor Options 2 and 3, as both would block light and detract from the general aesthetics of the designated Green Street.

SDCI received non-design related comments concerning zoning, property values, views, traffic, parking, proposed uses, energy use, carbon emissions, housing affordability, homelessness, high-wind safety, and noise. These comments are outside the scope of design review.

Seattle Public Utilities offered the following comments:

- The project must submit the Solid Waste Storage and Access Checklist for Designers and site plans that detail solid waste storage and access.
- Solid waste collection will occur off the alley.
- SPU supports the project using 2 cubic yard uncompacted dumpsters for residential and commercial solid waste.
- SPU highly encourages the project to plan on-floor access to all three solid waste streams - garbage, compost, recycle.

One purpose of the design review process is for the Board and City to receive comments from the public that help to identify feedback and concerns about the site and design concept, identify applicable Seattle Design Guidelines and Neighborhood Design Guidelines of highest priority to the site and explore conceptual design, siting alternatives and eventual architectural design.

All public comments submitted in writing for this project can be viewed using the following link and entering the record number: http://web6.seattle.gov/dpd/edms/

PRIORITIES & BOARD GUIDANCE

After visiting the site, considering the analysis of the site and context provided by the proponents, and hearing public comment, the Design Review Board members provided the following siting and design guidance.

1. **Massing:** The Board discussed all massing options provided by the applicant, considered the responsiveness to the existing context, and agreed with the applicant's preferred approach in Option 3. The Board appreciated Option 3 for its dynamic and slender upper level form that is carved and setback at the east side to provide relief to the adjacent condominium building while also setting back on the west side to address the corner of Eagle Street and Western Ave. The Board gave guidance to continue to develop massing Option 3 with the following guidance.
    a. Although the Board appreciated the carving and setbacks of the upper levels of the massing on Option 3, the Board was concerned that top of the building was not fully resolved and did little to enhance the skyline. Moving forward, the Board gave guidance for the applicant to intentionally incorporate the vertical circulation core and any mechanical screening / enclosures into a well composed rooftop form that promotes visual interest and variety in the downtown skyline. **A-2, B-2.2, B-4.1**
    b. The Board supported the applicant's proposal to reduce the required upper level setbacks at the central massing to reinforce the slenderness of the tower portion on Eagle Street. However, the Board was concerned with the lack of cohesion between the upper floors and the lower boxier mass below. The Board gave guidance for the applicant to study ways to better integrate the two forms through minor modulation of the base, a shift in the facades, or other means to clarify the overall architectural concept. **B-4.1, B4.2**

c. The Board noted that the massing on Option 3 was located along the south facing property line, creating a blank wall condition for the top five floors that would be exposed for some time, and would be visible from multiple vantage points throughout the neighborhood. The Board gave guidance to continue to develop the massing along the south side to minimize the amount of blank wall through the use of minor modulation that could allow for transparency and further articulation of the large visible façade. The Board specifically requested a pedestrian level view from the corner of Broad Street and Western Ave in the Recommendation packet that clearly shows how the design addresses the property line condition, as well as the resolution of the top of the building discussed in item 1.a. above, when viewed from the south. **B-2.2, B-2.3, B-4.1, B4.2**

2. Façade Concept & Materials:

a. The Board noted that the lower portion of the massing appeared cubic and lacked modulation when compared to the relative slenderness of the massing above. Moving forward, the Board gave guidance for the applicant to develop a cohesive façade and material application concept for the lower massing which creates an enlightened experience through fenestration pattern and depth and materials that provide texture and visual interest. **A-2.1, B-4, C-2**

b. The Board supported the applicant's request to remove the code required use between the street and parking along Eagle Street in order to provide safer pedestrian circulation, drop-off, and temporary parking for the proposed hotel program. The Board, in acknowledgement that this would require screening of the parking areas, also supported the applicant's request to reduce the amount of code required transparency and blank wall along the Eagle Street frontage. The Board noted, however, that this support was predicated on the applicant's continued study of the Eagle Street and Western Ave facades to ensure that the design maximizes the use of interesting materials, secondary architectural features, and art to create an appropriate level of visual interest to mitigate the lack of perceived transparency and blank walls. **A-2.1, B-3.3, B-4.3, C-2, C-3, D-1.1, D-2.1, D-3**

3. Access, Pedestrian Experience & Landscape:

a. The Board supported the applicant's proposed two points of vehicle access, from the alley and from Western Ave, in order to appropriately serve the drop-off and parking needs of the hotel program. The Board gave guidance to further develop the design of the screening and landscaping around the vehicle access on Western Ave to ensure pedestrian visibility and security. **D-6.1, E-1, E-2**

b. The Board strongly supported the applicant's proposed green street right-of-way improvements along Eagle Street and Western Ave that included new curb-bulb, sidewalk widening, and crosswalk improvements to enhance circulation and pedestrian safety. However, the Board was concerned that the design, as shown in the EDG plans, left no space for landscape buffering of the screened parking and lacked areas for pedestrian interaction. The Board gave guidance for the applicant to consider setting the building back from the property line, as shown in the view on page 24 of the EDG packet, to allow for both street improvements and activation along the property lines. The Board also required the applicant to provide studies in the Recommendation packet, showing the impact of including an interior active use in-lieu of the proposed "pick-up/drop-off" area inside the

garage at the corner of Eagle Steet and Western Ave. **A-2.1, B-3.3, B-4.3, C-2, C-3, D-1.1, D-2.1, D-3, E-2**

c. The Board supported the exterior amenity space located on the 5th floor with its potential for active interaction between hotel guests and residents. The Board gave guidance for the applicant to retain this element and further develop the design of this space. **D-1.3**
d. The Board gave guidance for the applicant to include information on bike parking and access in the Recommendation packet. **E-2**

DEVELOPMENT STANDARD DEPARTURES

The Board's recommendation on the requested departure(s) will be based on the departure's potential to help the project better meet these design guideline priorities and achieve a better overall project design than could be achieved without the departure(s).

At the time of the Early Design Guidance meeting, the following departure(s) were requested:

1. **Upper Level Setbacks – Green Streets (SMC 23.49.166.B):** The Code requires a 10 foot setback for portions of structures from 65 feet to 85 feet high and an additional 1 foot setback for every 5 feet in height over 85 feet. This requirement applies to Eagle Street, a designated Green Street. The applicant proposes no setback above the height of 65 feet for a 35 foot wide portion of the structure along Eagle Street.

   The Board indicated preliminary support of the departure request, finding that the reduced setbacks allow for a more dynamic massing that responds to the immediate context and site constraints. If all recommendations and guidance in this report are resolved, the design with this departure has the potential to better meet the intent of **Design Guidelines B-2.2. Compatibility with Nearby Buildings, B-3 Reinforce the Positive Urban Form & Architectural Attributes of the Immediate Area, B-4.1. Massing.**

2. **Parking At Street Level (23.49.019.B.1.a):** The Code requires on designated green streets, parking is not permitted at street level unless separated from the street by other uses. This requirement applies to Eagle Street, a designated green street. The applicant proposes no other use between the street and parking at street level.

   The Board indicated preliminary support for the departure request, finding that the parking and "pick-up/drop-off" use along Eagle Street supported the hotel program and improved pedestrian safety and circulation along the Western Ave street frontage. The Board specifically noted that preliminary support of this departure request was predicated on the design of the screen articulation and the pedestrian amenities proposed at ground level along Eagle Street. If all recommendations and guidance in this report are resolved, the design with this departure has the potential to better meet the intent of **Design Guidelines B-3.3. Pedestrian Amenities at the Ground Level, C-2.1. Modulation of Facades, C-3.2. Desirable Façade Elements,** and **D-1.2. Open Space Features.**

3. **Street Level Transparency (23.49.162.C.4.c):** The Code requires when the slope of the street frontage of the facade exceeds seven and one-half (7½) percent, the required amount of transparency shall be reduced to twenty-five (25) percent on Class II pedestrian streets and

designated green streets. The applicant proposes no transparency along Eagle Street, a designated Green Street.

The Board indicated preliminary support for the departure request, finding that screening articulation and pedestrian amenities in-lieu of transparency had the potential to provide more visual interest along the Eagle Street frontage. The Board specifically noted that preliminary support of this departure request was predicated on the design of the screen articulation and the pedestrian amenities proposed at ground level along Eagle Street. If all recommendations and guidance in this report are resolved, the design with this departure has the potential to better meet the intent of **Design Guidelines B-3.3. Pedestrian Amenities at the Ground Level, C-2.1. Modulation of Facades, C-3.2. Desirable Façade Elements,** and **D-1.2. Open Space Features.**

4. **Blank Façade Limits (23.49.162.D.3.c):** The Code requires the total of all blank facade segments, including garage doors, shall not exceed seventy-five (75) percent if the slope of the street frontage of the facade exceeds seven and one-half (7½) percent on Class II Pedestrian Streets and designated Green Streets. The applicant proposes a one hundred (100) percent blank façade along the Eagle Street frontage, a designated Green Street.

   The Board indicated preliminary support for the departure request, finding that screening articulation and pedestrian amenities had the potential to provide more visual interest along the Eagle Street frontage. The Board specifically noted that preliminary support of this departure request was predicated on the design of the screen articulation and the pedestrian amenities proposed at ground level along Eagle Street. If all recommendations and guidance in this report are resolved, the design with this departure has the potential to better meet the intent of **Design Guidelines B-3.3. Pedestrian Amenities at the Ground Level, C-2.1. Modulation of Facades, C-3.2. Desirable Façade Elements,** and **D-1.2. Open Space Features.**

5. **Blank Façade Limits (23.49.162.D.3.a):** The Code requires blank facades shall be limited to segments thirty (30) feet wide on Class II Pedestrian Streets and designated Green Streets. The applicant proposes one continuous one hundred and twenty (120) feet wide blank façade along Eagle Street, a designated Green Street.

   The Board indicated preliminary support for the departure request, finding that screening articulation and pedestrian amenities had the potential to provide more visual interest along the Eagle Street frontage. The Board specifically noted that preliminary support of this departure request was predicated on the design of the screen articulation and the pedestrian amenities proposed at ground level along Eagle Street. If all recommendations and guidance in this report are resolved, the design with this departure has the potential to better meet the intent of **Design Guidelines B-3.3. Pedestrian Amenities at the Ground Level, C-2.1. Modulation of Facades, C-3.2. Desirable Façade Elements,** and **D-1.2. Open Space Features.**

Staff Note: the EDG packet identified departures associated with other massing options. However, the Board supported development of massing option 3, the applicant's preferred option, and therefore only discussed departures associated with that option.

DESIGN REVIEW GUIDELINES

The Seattle Design Guidelines and Neighborhood Design Guidelines recognized by the Board as Priority Guidelines are identified above. All guidelines remain applicable and are summarized below. For the full text please visit the Design Review website.

SITE PLANNING AND MASSING

A-1 Respond to the Physical Environment: Develop an architectural concept and compose the building's massing in response to geographic conditions and patterns of urban form found nearby or beyond the immediate context of the building site.

A-1.1. Response to Context: Each building site lies within a larger physical context having various and distinct features and characteristics to which the building design should respond. Develop an architectural concept and arrange the building mass in response to one or more of the following, if present:

a. a change in street grid alignment that yields a site having nonstandard shape;
b. a site having dramatic topography or contrasting edge conditions;
c. patterns of urban form, such as nearby buildings that have employed distinctive and effective massing compositions;
d. access to direct sunlight—seasonally or at particular times of day;
e. views from the site of noteworthy structures or natural features, (i.e.: the Space Needle, Smith Tower, port facilities, Puget Sound, Mount Rainier, the Olympic Mountains);
f. views of the site from other parts of the city or region; and
g. proximity to a regional transportation corridor (the monorail, light rail, freight rail, major arterial, state highway, ferry routes, bicycle trail, etc.).

A-1.2. Response to Planning Efforts: Some areas downtown are transitional environments, where existing development patterns are likely to change. In these areas, respond to the urban form goals of current planning efforts, being cognizant that new development will establish the context to which future development will respond.

Belltown Supplemental Guidance:

A-1.a. Views: Develop the architectural concept and arrange the building mass to enhance views. This includes views of the water and mountains, and noteworthy structures such as the Space Needle;

A-1.b. Street Grid: The architecture and building mass should respond to sites having nonstandard shapes. There are several changes in the street grid alignment in Belltown, resulting in triangular sites and chamfered corners. Examples of this include: 1st, Western and Elliott between Battery and Lenora, and along Denny;

A-1.c. Topography: The topography of the neighborhood lends to its unique character. Design buildings to take advantage of this condition as an opportunity, rather than a constraint. Along the streets, single entry, blank facades are discouraged. Consider providing multiple entries and windows at street level on sloping streets.

A-2 Enhance the Skyline: Design the upper portion of the building to promote visual interest and variety in the downtown skyline. Respect existing landmarks while responding to the skyline's present and planned profile.

A-2.1. Desired Architectural Treatments: Use one or more of the following architectural treatments to accomplish this goal:

a. sculpt or profile the facades;

b. specify and compose a palette of materials with distinctive texture, pattern, or color; and
c. provide or enhance a specific architectural rooftop element.

A-2.2. Rooftop Mechanical Equipment: In doing so, enclose and integrate any rooftop mechanical equipment into the design of the building as a whole.

ARCHITECTURAL EXPRESSION

B-1 Respond to the Neighborhood Context: Develop an architectural concept and compose the major building elements to reinforce desirable urban features existing in the surrounding neighborhood.

B-1.1. Adjacent Features and Networks: Each building site lies within an urban neighborhood context having distinct features and characteristics to which the building design should respond. Arrange the building mass in response to one or more of the following, if present:

a. a surrounding district of distinct and noteworthy character;
b. an adjacent landmark or noteworthy building;
c. a major public amenity or institution nearby;
d. neighboring buildings that have employed distinctive and effective massing compositions;
e. elements of the pedestrian network nearby, (i.e.: green street, hillclimb, mid-block crossing, through-block passageway); and
f. direct access to one or more components of the regional transportation system.

B-1.2. Land Uses: Also, consider the design implications of the predominant land uses in the area surrounding the site.

Belltown Supplemental Guidance:

B-1.a. Compatible Design: Establish a harmonious transition between newer and older buildings. Compatible design should respect the scale, massing and materials of adjacent buildings and landscape.

B-1.b. Historic Style: Complement the architectural character of an adjacent historic building or area; however, imitation of historical styles is discouraged. References to period architecture should be interpreted in a contemporary manner.

B-1.c. Visual Interest: Design visually attractive buildings that add richness and variety to Belltown, including creative contemporary architectural solutions.

B-1.d. Reinforce Neighborhood Qualities: Employ design strategies and incorporate architectural elements that reinforce Belltown's unique qualities. In particular, the neighborhood's best buildings tend to support an active street life.

B-2 Create a Transition in Bulk & Scale: Compose the massing of the building to create a transition to the height, bulk, and scale of development in nearby less-intensive zones.

B-2.1. Analyzing Height, Bulk, and Scale: Factors to consider in analyzing potential height, bulk, and scale impacts include:

a. topographic relationships;
b. distance from a less intensive zone edge;
c. differences in development standards between abutting zones (allowable building height, width, lot coverage, etc.);
d. effect of site size and shape;
e. height, bulk, and scale relationships resulting from lot orientation (e.g., back lot line to back lot line vs back lot line to side lot line); and
f. type and amount of separation between lots in the different zones (e.g. , separation by only a property line, by an alley or street, or by other physical features such as grade changes);
g. street grid or platting orientations.

B-2.2. Compatibility with Nearby Buildings: In some cases, careful siting and design treatment may be sufficient to achieve reasonable transition and mitigation of height, bulk, and scale impacts. Some techniques for achieving compatibility are as follows:

h. use of architectural style, details (such as roof lines, beltcourses, cornices, or fenestration), color, or materials that derive from the less intensive zone.

i. architectural massing of building components; and

j. responding to topographic conditions in ways that minimize impacts on neighboring development, such as by stepping a project down the hillside.

B-2.3. Reduction of Bulk: In some cases, reductions in the actual bulk and scale of the proposed structure may be necessary in order to mitigate adverse impacts and achieve an acceptable level of compatibility. Some techniques which can be used in these cases include:

k. articulating the building's facades vertically or horizontally in intervals that reflect to existing structures or platting pattern;

l. increasing building setbacks from the zone edge at ground level;

m. reducing the bulk of the building's upper floors; and

n. limiting the length of, or otherwise modifying, facades.

Belltown Supplemental Guidance:

B-2.A. Discourage Bulky Structures: The objective of this guideline is to discourage overly massive, bulky or unmodulated structures that are unsympathetic to the surrounding context.

B-3 Reinforce the Positive Urban Form & Architectural Attributes of the Immediate Area: Consider the predominant attributes of the immediate neighborhood and reinforce desirable siting patterns, massing arrangements, and streetscape characteristics of nearby development.

B-3.1. Building Orientation: In general, orient the building entries and open space toward street intersections and toward street fronts with the highest pedestrian activity. Locate parking and vehicle access away from entries, open space, and street intersections considerations.

B-3.2. Features to Complement: Reinforce the desirable patterns of massing and facade composition found in the surrounding area. Pay particular attention to designated landmarks and other noteworthy buildings. Consider complementing the existing:

a. massing and setbacks,

b. scale and proportions,

c. expressed structural bays and modulations,

d. fenestration patterns and detailing,

e. exterior finish materials and detailing,

f. architectural styles, and

g. roof forms.

B-3.3. Pedestrian Amenities at the Ground Level: Consider setting the building back slightly to create space adjacent to the sidewalk conducive to pedestrian-oriented activities such as vending, sitting, or dining. Reinforce the desirable streetscape elements found on adjacent blocks. Consider complementing existing:

h. public art installations,

i. street furniture and signage systems,

j. lighting and landscaping, and

k. overhead weather protection.

Belltown Supplemental Guidance:

B-3.a. Regulating Lines & Rhythms: Respond to the regulating lines and rhythms of adjacent buildings that also support a street-level environment; regulating lines and rhythms include vertical and horizontal patterns as expressed by cornice lines, belt lines, doors, windows, structural bays and modulation.
B-3.b. Context: Use regulating lines to promote contextual harmony, solidify the relationship between new and old buildings, and lead the eye down the street.
B-3.c. Fenestration Patterns: Pay attention to excellent fenestration patterns and detailing in the vicinity. The use of recessed windows that create shadow lines, and suggest solidity, is encouraged.

B-4 Design a Well-Proportioned & Unified Building: Compose the massing and organize the interior and exterior spaces to create a well-proportioned building that exhibits a coherent architectural concept. Design the architectural elements and finish details to create a unified building, so that all components appear integral to the whole.

B-4.1. Massing: When composing the massing, consider how the following can contribute to create a building that exhibits a coherent architectural concept:

a. setbacks, projections, and open space;
b. relative sizes and shapes of distinct building volumes; and
c. roof heights and forms.

B-4.2. Coherent Interior/Exterior Design: When organizing the interior and exterior spaces and developing the architectural elements, consider how the following can contribute to create a building that exhibits a coherent architectural concept:

d. facade modulation and articulation;
e. windows and fenestration patterns;
f. corner features;
g. streetscape and open space fixtures;
h. building and garage entries; and
i. building base and top.

B-4.3. Architectural Details: When designing the architectural details, consider how the following can contribute to create a building that exhibits a coherent architectural concept:

j. exterior finish materials;
k. architectural lighting and signage;
l. grilles, railings, and downspouts;
m. window and entry trim and moldings;
n. shadow patterns; and
o. exterior lighting.

THE STREETSCAPE

C-1 Promote Pedestrian Interaction: Spaces for street level uses should be designed to engage pedestrians with the activities occurring within them. Sidewalk-related spaces should appear safe, welcoming, and open to the general public.

C-1.1. Street Level Uses: Provide spaces for street level uses that:

a. reinforce existing retail concentrations;
b. vary in size, width, and depth;
c. enhance main pedestrian links between areas; and
d. establish new pedestrian activity where appropriate to meet area objectives. Design for uses that are accessible to the general public, open during established shopping hours, generate walk-in pedestrian clientele, and contribute to a high level of pedestrian activity.

C-1.2. Retail Orientation: Where appropriate, consider configuring retail space to attract tenants with products or services that will "spill-out" onto the sidewalk (up to six feet where sidewalk is sufficiently wide).
C-1.3. Street Level Articulation for Pedestrian Activity: Consider setting portions of the building back slightly to create spaces conducive to pedestrian-oriented activities such as vending, resting, sitting, or dining. Further articulate the street level facade to provide an engaging pedestrian experience via:

e. open facades (i.e., arcades and shop fronts);
f. multiple building entries;
g. windows that encourage pedestrians to look into the building interior;
h. merchandising display windows;
i. street front open space that features art work, street furniture, and landscaping;
j. exterior finish materials having texture, pattern, lending themselves to high quality detailing.

Belltown Supplemental Guidance:

C-1.a. Retail: Reinforce existing retail concentrations;
C-1.b. Commercial Space Size: Vary in size, width, and depth of commercial spaces, accommodating for smaller businesses, where feasible;
C-1.c. Public Realm Elements: Incorporate the following elements in the adjacent public realm and in open spaces around the building: unique hardscape treatments, pedestrian-scale sidewalk lighting, accent paving (especially at corners, entries and passageways), creative landscape treatments (planting, planters, trellises, arbors), seating, gathering spaces, water features, inclusion of art elements.
C-1.d. Building/Site Corners: Building corners are places of convergence. The following considerations help reinforce site and building corners: provide meaningful setbacks/open space, if feasible, provide seating as gathering spaces, incorporate street/pedestrian amenities in these spaces, make these spaces safe (good visibility), iconic corner identifiers to create wayfinders that draw people to the site.
C-1.e. Pedestrian Attraction: Design for uses that are accessible to the general public, open during established shopping hours, generate walk-in pedestrian clientele, and contribute to a high level of pedestrian activity. Where appropriate, consider configuring retail space to attract tenants with products or services that will "spill-out" onto the sidewalk (up to six feet where sidewalk is sufficiently wide).

C-2 Design Facades of Many Scales: Design architectural features, fenestration patterns, and material compositions that refer to the scale of human activities contained within. Building facades should be composed of elements scaled to promote pedestrian comfort, safety, and orientation.

C-2.1. Modulation of Facades: Consider modulating the building facades and reinforcing this modulation with the composition of:

a. the fenestration pattern;
b. exterior finish materials;
c. other architectural elements;
d. light fixtures and landscaping elements; and
e. the roofline.

C-3 Provide Active — Not Blank — Facades: Buildings should not have large blank walls facing the street, especially near sidewalks.

C-3.1. Desirable Facade Elements: Facades which for unavoidable programmatic reasons may have few entries or windows should receive special design treatment to increase pedestrian safety, comfort, and interest. Enliven these facades by providing:

a. small retail spaces (as small as 50 square feet) for food bars, newstands, and other specialized retail tenants;
b. visibility into building interiors;
c. limited lengths of blank walls;
d. a landscaped or raised bed planted with vegetation that will grow up a vertical trellis or frame installed to obscure or screen the wall's blank surface;
e. high quality public art in the form of a mosaic, mural, decorative masonry pattern, sculpture, relief, etc., installed over a substantial portion of the blank wall surface;
f. small setbacks, indentations, or other architectural means of breaking up the wall surface;
g. different textures, colors, or materials that break up the wall's surface.
h. special lighting, a canopy, awning, horizontal trellis, or other pedestrian-oriented feature to reduce the expanse of the blank surface and add visual interest;
i. seating ledges or perches (especially on sunny facades and near bus stops); and
j. merchandising display windows or regularly changing public information display cases.

C-4 Reinforce Building Entries: To promote pedestrian comfort, safety, and orientation, reinforce building entries.

C-4.1. Entry Treatments: Reinforce the building's entry with one or more of the following architectural treatments:

a. extra-height lobby space;
b. distinctive doorways;
c. decorative lighting;
d. distinctive entry canopy;
e. projected or recessed entry bay;
f. building name and address integrated into the facade or sidewalk;
g. artwork integrated into the facade or sidewalk;
h. a change in paving material, texture, or color;
i. distinctive landscaping, including plants, water features and seating; and
j. ornamental glazing, railings, and balustrades.

C-4.2. Residential Entries: To make a residential building more approachable and to create a sense of association among neighbors, entries should be clearly identifiable and visible from the street and easily accessible and inviting to pedestrians. The space between the building and the sidewalk should provide security and privacy for residents and encourage social interaction among residents and neighbors. Provide convenient and attractive access to the building's entry. To ensure comfort and security, entry areas and adjacent open space should be sufficiently lighted and protected from the weather. Opportunities for creating lively, pedestrian-oriented open space should be considered.

C-5 Encourage Overhead Weather Protection: Project applicants are encouraged to provide continuous, well-lit, overhead weather protection to improve pedestrian comfort and safety along major pedestrian routes.

C-5.1. Overhead Weather Protection Design Elements: Overhead weather protection should be designed with consideration given to:

a. the overall architectural concept of the building;
b. uses occurring within the building (such as entries and retail spaces) or in the adjacent streetscape environment (such as bus stops and intersections);
c. minimizing gaps in coverage;
d. a drainage strategy that keeps rain water off the street-level facade and sidewalk;

e. continuity with weather protection provided on nearby buildings;
f. relationship to architectural features and elements on adjacent development, especially if abutting a building of historic or noteworthy character;
g. the scale of the space defined by the height and depth of the weather protection;
h. use of translucent or transparent covering material to maintain a pleasant sidewalk environment with plenty of natural light; and
i. when opaque material is used, the illumination of light-colored undersides to increase security after dark.

Belltown Supplemental Guidance:

C-5.A. Overhead Weather Protection Design Considerations: Overhead weather protection should be designed with consideration given to:

a. the overall architectural concept of the building;
b. uses occurring within the building (such as entries and retail spaces) or in the adjacent streetscape environment (such as bus stops and intersections);
c. minimizing gaps in coverage;
d. a drainage strategy that keeps rain water off the street-level facade and sidewalk;
e. continuity with weather protection provided on nearby buildings;
f. relationship to architectural features and elements on adjacent development, especially if abutting a building of historic or noteworthy character;
g. the scale of the space defined by the height and depth of the weather protection;
h. use of translucent or transparent covering material to maintain a pleasant sidewalk environment with plenty of natural light; and
i. when opaque material is used, the illumination of light-colored undersides to increase security after dark.

C-6 Develop the Alley Façade: To increase pedestrian safety, comfort, and interest, develop portions of the alley facade in response to the unique conditions of the site or project.

C-6.1. Alley Activation: Consider enlivening and enhancing the alley entrance by:

a. extending retail space fenestration into the alley one bay;
b. providing a niche for recycling and waste receptacles to be shared with nearby, older buildings lacking such facilities; and
c. adding effective lighting to enhance visibility and safety.

C-6.2. Alley Parking Access: Enhance the facades and surfaces in and adjacent to the alley to create parking access that is visible, safe, and welcoming for drivers and pedestrians. Consider:

d. locating the alley parking garage entry and/ or exit near the entrance to the alley;
e. installing highly visible signage indicating parking rates and availability on the building facade adjacent to the alley; and
f. chamfering the building corners to enhance pedestrian visibility and safety where alley is regularly used by vehicles accessing parking and loading.

Belltown Supplemental Guidance:

C-6.A. Services & Utilities:

a. Services and utilities, while essential to urban development, should be screened or otherwise hidden from the view of the pedestrian.
b. Exterior trash receptacles should be screened on three sides, with a gate on the fourth side that also screens the receptacles from view. Provide a niche to recess the receptacle.

c. Screen loading docks and truck parking from public view using building massing, architectural elements and/or landscaping.

d. Ensure that all utility equipment is located, sized, and designed to be as inconspicuous as possible. Consider ways to reduce the noise impacts of HVAC equipment on the alley environment.

C-6.B. Pedestrian Environment:

e. Pedestrian circulation is an integral part of the site layout. Where possible and feasible, provide elements, such as landscaping and special paving, that help define a pedestrian-friendly environment in the alley.

f. Create a comfortably scaled and thoughtfully detailed urban environment in the alley through the use of well-designed architectural forms and details, particularly at street level.

C-6.C. Architectural Concept:

g. In designing a well-proportioned and unified building, the alley facade should not be ignored. An alley facade should be treated with form, scale and materials similar to rest of the building to create a coherent architectural concept.

PUBLIC AMENITIES

D-1 Provide Inviting & Usable Open Space: Design public open spaces to promote a visually pleasing, safe, and active environment for workers, residents, and visitors. Views and solar access from the principal area of the open space should be especially emphasized.

D-1.1. Pedestrian Enhancements: Where a commercial or mixed-use building is set back from the sidewalk, pedestrian enhancements should be considered in the resulting street frontage. Downtown the primary function of any open space between commercial buildings and the sidewalk is to provide access into the building and opportunities for outdoor activities such as vending, resting, sitting, or dining.

a. All open space elements should enhance a pedestrian oriented, urban environment that has the appearance of stability, quality, and safety.

b. Preferable open space locations are to the south and west of tower development, or where the siting of the open space would improve solar access to the sidewalk.

c. Orient public open space to receive the maximum direct sunlight possible, using trees, overhangs, and umbrellas to provide shade in the warmest months. Design such spaces to take advantage of views and solar access when available from the site.

d. The design of planters, landscaping, walls, and other street elements should allow visibility into and out of the open space.

D-1.2. Open Space Features: Open spaces can feature art work, street furniture, and landscaping that invite customers or enhance the building's setting. Examples of desirable features to include are:

a. visual and pedestrian access (including barrier-free access) into the site from the public sidewalk;

b. walking surfaces of attractive pavers;

c. pedestrian-scaled site lighting;

d. retail spaces designed for uses that will comfortably "spill out" and enliven the open space;

e. areas for vendors in commercial areas;

f. landscaping that enhances the space and architecture;

g. pedestrian-scaled signage that identifies uses and shops; and

h. site furniture, art work, or amenities such as fountains, seating, and kiosks.

D-1.3. Residential Open Space: Residential buildings should be sited to maximize opportunities for creating usable, attractive, well-integrated open space. In addition, the following should be considered:

i. courtyards that organize architectural elements while providing a common garden;
j. entry enhancements such as landscaping along a common pathway;
k. decks, balconies and upper level terraces;
l. play areas for children;
m. individual gardens; and
n. location of outdoor spaces to take advantage of sunlight.

Belltown Supplemental Guidance:

D-1.A. Adjacent to Retail: Mixed-use developments are encouraged to provide usable open space adjacent to retail space, such as an outdoor cafe or restaurant seating, or a plaza with seating.

D-1.B. Street Grade: Locate plazas intended for public use at/or near street grade to promote physical and visual connection to the street; on-site plazas may serve as a well-defined transition from the street. Take views and sun exposure into account as well.

D-1.C. Define Spaces: Define and contain outdoor spaces through a combination of building and landscape, and discourage oversized spaces that lack containment.

D-1.D. Buffers: The space should be well-buffered from moving cars so that users can best enjoy the space.

D-1.E. Desirable Features: Open spaces can feature art work, street furniture, and landscaping that invite customers or enhance the building's setting. Examples of desirable features to include are:

a. attractive pavers;
b. pedestrian-scaled site lighting;
c. retail spaces designed for uses that will comfortably "spill out" and enliven the open space;
d. areas for vendors in commercial areas;
e. landscaping that enhances the space and architecture;
f. pedestrian-scaled signage that identifies uses and shops; and
g. site furniture, art work, or amenities such as fountains, seating, and kiosks.

D-1.F. Residential Open Space: Residential buildings should be sited to maximize opportunities for creating usable, attractive, well-integrated open space. In addition, the following should be considered:

a. courtyards that organize architectural elements while providing a common garden;
b. entry enhancements such as landscaping along a common pathway;
c. decks, balconies and upper level terraces;
d. play areas for children;
e. individual gardens; and
f. location of outdoor spaces to take advantage of sunlight and views.

D-2 Enhance the Building with Landscaping: Enhance the building and site with generous landscaping— which includes special pavements, trellises, screen walls, planters, and site furniture, as well as living plant material.

D-2.1. Landscape Enhancements: Landscape enhancement of the site may include some of the approaches or features listed below:

a. emphasize entries with special planting in conjunction with decorative paving and/or lighting;
b. include a special feature such as a courtyard, fountain, or pool;
c. incorporate a planter guard or low planter wall as part of the architecture;
d. distinctively landscape open areas created by building modulation;
e. soften the building by screening blank walls, terracing retaining walls, etc;

f. increase privacy and security through screening and/or shading;
g. provide a framework such as a trellis or arbor for plants to grow on;
h. incorporate upper story planter boxes or roof planters;
i. provide identity and reinforce a desired feeling of intimacy and quiet;
j. provide brackets for hanging planters;
k. consider how the space will be viewed from the upper floors of nearby buildings as well as from the sidewalk; and
l. if on a designated Green Street, coordinate improvements with the local Green Street plan.

D-2.2. Consider Nearby Landscaping: Reinforce the desirable pattern of landscaping found on adjacent block faces.

m. plant street trees that match the existing planting pattern or species;
n. use similar landscape materials; and
o. extend a low wall, use paving similar to that found nearby, or employ similar stairway construction methods.

Belltown Supplemental Guidance:

D-2.a. Entries: Emphasize entries with special planting in conjunction with decorative paving and/or lighting;

D-2.b. Plazas & Courtyards: Use landscaping to make plazas and courtyards comfortable for human activity and social interaction;

D-2.c. Open Areas: Distinctively landscape open areas created by building modulation, such as entry courtyards;

D-2.d. Year-Round Greenery: Provide year-round greenery — drought tolerant species are encouraged to promote water conservation and reduce maintenance concerns; and

D-2.e. Art: Provide opportunities for installation of civic art in the landscape; designer/artist collaborations are encouraged (e.g., Growing Vine Street).

D-3 Provide Elements That Define the Place: Provide special elements on the facades, within public open spaces, or on the sidewalk to create a distinct, attractive, and memorable "sense of place" associated with the building.

D-3.1. Public Space Features and Amenities: Incorporate one or more of the following a appropriate:

a. public art;
b. street furniture, such as seating, newspaper boxes, and information kiosks;
c. distinctive landscaping, such as specimen trees and water features;
d. retail kiosks;
e. public restroom facilities with directional signs in a location easily accessible to all; and
f. public seating areas in the form of ledges, broad stairs, planters and the like, especially near public open spaces, bus stops, vending areas, on sunny facades, and other places where people are likely to want to pause or wait.

D-3.2. Intersection Focus: Enliven intersections by treating the corner of the building or sidewalk with public art and other elements that promote interaction (entry, tree, seating, etc.) and reinforce the distinctive character of the surrounding area.

Belltown Supplemental Guidance:

D-3.A. Art and Heritage: Art and History are vital to reinforcing a sense of place. Consider incorporating the following into the siting and design:

a. vestiges of Belltown Heritage, such as preserving existing stone sidewalks, curbs;

b. art that relates to the established or emerging theme of that area (e.g., Western, 1st, 2nd, 3rd Avenue street specific character; and

c. install plaques or other features on the building that pay tribute to Belltown history.

D-3.B. Green Streets: Green Streets are street rights-of-way that are enhanced for pedestrian circulation and activity with a variety of pedestrian-oriented features, such as sidewalk widening, landscaping, artwork, and traffic calming. Interesting street level uses and pedestrian amenities enliven the Green Street and lend special identity to the surrounding area.

D-3.C: Street Furniture/Furnishings along Specific Streets: The function and character of Belltown's streetscapes are defined street by street. In defining the streetscape for various streets, the hierarchy of streets is determined by street function, adjacent land uses, and the nature of existing streetscape improvements.

a. 1st Avenue: Any new installations between Denny Way and Virginia Street should continue the established character of the street by using unique pieces of inexpensive and salvaged materials such as the Wilkenson sandstone pieces that are currently in place. South of Virginia, new installations should reflect the character of the Pike Place Market.

b. 3rd Avenue: New installations on 3rd Avenue should continue to be "civic" and substantial and be reflective of the role the street plays as a major bus route.

c. 2nd Avenue: New installations on 2nd Avenue should continue the style of "limited edition" street art that currently exists between Cedar Street and Virginia Street.

d. 4th Avenue: Street furnishings on 4th Avenue should be "off-the-shelf"/ catalogue modern to reflect the high-rise land uses existing or permitted along that corridor.

e. 1st , 2nd and 3rd Avenues: Sidewalks should be wide and pedestrian amenities like benches, kiosks and pedestrian-scale lighting are especially important on promenade streets.

f. 5th Avenue: Installations on 5th Avenue are encouraged to have a futuristic or "googie" architectural theme to reflect the presence of the monorail as part of the streetscape.

g. Emerging Multi-Use Connector Streets: Western avenue, Elliott Avenue. These streets offer good connections between Pike Place Market and the new sculpture garden. The area is experiencing a fair amount of residential growth. Like 1st Avenue, these streets are receiving eclectic public art and varied facades, and ultimately both will become promenade-type streets.

D-3.D. Street Edge/Furnishings: Concentrate pedestrian improvements at intersections with Green Streets (Bell, Blanchard, Vine, Cedar between 1st and Elliott, Clay, Eagle, and Bay Streets). Pedestrian crossings should be "exaggerated," that is they should be marked and illuminated in a manner where they will be quickly and clearly seen by motorists.

D-4 Provide Appropriate Signage: Design signage appropriate for the scale and character of the project and immediate neighborhood. All signs should be oriented to pedestrians and/or persons in vehicles on streets within the immediate neighborhood.

D-4.1. Desired Signage Elements: Signage should be designed to:

a. facilitate rapid orientation,

b. add interest to the street level environment,

c. reduce visual clutter,

d. unify the project as a whole, and

e. enhance the appearance and safety of the downtown area.

D-4.2. Unified Signage System: If the project is large, consider designing a comprehensive building and tenant signage system using one of the following or similar methods:

a. signs clustered on kiosks near other street furniture or within sidewalk zone closest to building face;

b. signs on blades attached to building facade; or
c. signs hanging underneath overhead weather protection.

D-4.3. Signage Types: Also consider providing:

d. building identification signage at two scales: small scale at the sidewalk level for pedestrians, and large scale at the street sign level for drivers;
e. sculptural features or unique street furniture to complement (or in lieu of) building and tenant signage; and
f. interpretive information about building and construction activities on the fence surrounding the construction site.

D-4.4. Discourage Upper-Level Signage: Signs on roofs and the upper floors of buildings intended primarily to be seen by motorists and others from a distance are generally discouraged.

Belltown Supplemental Guidance:

D-4.a. Human Dimension: Use signs on an individual storefront's awning, overhang, shop entrance, or building facade to add interest and give a human dimension to street-level building facades; and
D-4.b. Creative Expression: Show creativity and individual expression in the design of signs.
D-4.c. Distinguish Levels: Use signs to help distinguish the ground level of a building from the upper levels of a building; and
D-4.d. Rhythm: Establish a rhythm of elements along the street-level facade; for instance, the regular cadence of signs with storefronts enhances the pedestrian experience.

D-5 Provide Adequate Lighting: To promote a sense of security for people downtown during nighttime hours, provide appropriate levels of lighting on the building facade, on the underside of overhead weather protection, on and around street furniture, in merchandising display windows, in landscaped areas, and on signage.

D-5.1. Lighting Strategies: Consider employing one or more of the following lighting strategies as appropriate.

a. Illuminate distinctive features of the building, including entries, signage, canopies, and areas of architectural detail and interest.
b. Install lighting in display windows that spills onto and illuminates the sidewalk.
c. Orient outside lighting to minimize glare within the public right-of-way.

Belltown Supplemental Guidance:

D-5.a. Illuminate Distinctive Features: Illuminate distinctive features of the building, including entries, signage, canopies, and areas of architectural detail and interest.
D-5.b. Illuminate the Sidewalk: Install lighting in display windows that spills onto and illuminates the sidewalk.
D-5.c. Outdoor Lighting: Orient outside lighting to minimize glare within the public right-of-way.

D-6 Design for Personal Safety & Security: Design the building and site to promote the feeling of personal safety and security in the immediate area.

D-6.1. Safety in Design Features: To help promote safety for the residents, workers, shoppers, and visitors who enter the area:

a. provide adequate lighting;
b. retain clear lines of sight into and out of entries and open spaces;
c. use semi-transparent security screening, rather than opaque walls, where appropriate;

d. avoid blank and windowless walls that attract graffiti and that do not permit residents or workers to observe the street;
e. use landscaping that maintains visibility, such as short shrubs and/or trees pruned so that all branches are above head height;
f. use ornamental grille as fencing or over ground-floor windows in some locations;
g. avoid architectural features that provide hiding places for criminal activity;
h. design parking areas to allow natural surveillance by maintaining clear lines of sight for those who park there, for pedestrians passing by, and for occupants of nearby buildings;
i. install clear directional signage;
j. encourage "eyes on the street" through the placement of windows, balconies, and street-level uses; and
k. ensure natural surveillance of children's play areas.

VEHICULAR ACCESS AND PARKING

E-1 Minimize Curb Cut Impacts: Minimize adverse impacts of curb cuts on the safety and comfort of pedestrians.

E-1.1. Vehicle Access Considerations: Where street access is deemed appropriate, one or more of the following design approaches should be considered for the safety and comfort of pedestrians.

a. minimize the number of curb cuts and locate them away from street intersections;
b. minimize the width of the curb cut, driveway, and garage opening;
c. provide specialty paving where the driveway crosses the sidewalk;
d. share the driveway with an adjacent property owner;
e. locate the driveway to be visually less dominant;
f. enhance the garage opening with specialty lighting, artwork, or materials having distinctive texture, pattern, or color; and
g. provide sufficient queueing space on site.

E-1.2. Vehicle Access Location: Where possible, consider locating the driveway and garage entrance to take advantage of topography in a manner that does not reduce pedestrian safety nor place the pedestrian entrance in a subordinate role.

E-2 Integrate Parking Facilities: Minimize the visual impact of parking by integrating parking facilities with surrounding development. Incorporate architectural treatments or suitable landscaping to provide for the safety and comfort of people using the facility as well as those walking by.

E-2.1. Parking Structures: Minimize the visibility of at-grade parking structures or accessory parking garages. The parking portion of a structure should be architecturally compatible with the rest of the building and streetscape. Where appropriate consider incorporating one or more of the following treatments:

a. Incorporate pedestrian-oriented uses at street level to reduce the visual impact of parking structures. A depth of only 10 feet along the front of the building is sufficient to provide space for newsstands, ticket booths, flower shops, and other viable uses.
b. Use the site topography to help reduce the visibility of the parking facility.
c. Set the parking facility back from the sidewalk and install dense landscaping.
d. Incorporate any of the blank wall treatments listed in Guideline C-3.
e. Visually integrate the parking structure with building volumes above, below, and adjacent.
f. Incorporate artwork into the facades.

g. Provide a frieze, cornice, canopy, overhang, trellis or other device at the top of the parking level.

h. Use a portion of the top of the parking level as an outdoor deck, patio, or garden with a rail, bench, or other guard device around the perimeter.

E-2.2. Parking Structure Entrances: Design vehicular entries to parking structure so that they do not dominate the street frontage of a building. Subordinate the garage entrance to the pedestrian entrance in terms of size, prominence on the street-scape, location, and design emphasis. Consider one or more of the following design strategies:

i. Enhance the pedestrian entry to reduce the relative importance of the garage entry.

j. Recess the garage entry portion of the facade or extend portions of the structure over the garage entry to help conceal it.

k. Emphasize other facade elements to reduce the visual prominence of the garage entry.

l. Use landscaping or artwork to soften the appearance of the garage entry from the street.

m. Locate the garage entry where the topography of the site can help conceal it.

E-3 Minimize the Presence of Service Areas: Locate service areas for trash dumpsters, loading docks, mechanical equipment, and the like away from the street front where possible. Screen from view those elements which for programmatic reasons cannot be located away from the street front.

E-3.1. Methods of Integrating Service Areas: Consider incorporating one or more of the following to help minimize these impacts:

a. Plan service areas for less visible locations on the site, such as off the alley.

b. Screen service areas to be less visible.

c. Use durable screening materials that complement the building.

d. Incorporate landscaping to make the screen more effective.

e. Locate the opening to the service area away from the sidewalk.

BOARD DIRECTION

At the conclusion of the Early Design Guidance meeting, the Board recommended moving forward to MUP application.