

PIKE/PINE EXISTING DESIGN CHARACTERISTICS

A. SITE

Responding to site characteristics:

The topography of the neighborhood lends to its unique character, especially its slopes and vistas from Pike and Pine Streets toward the natural environs of Elliott Bay and the Olympic Mountains. Public views of the Space Needle and Pike Place Market are also important to the neighborhood.



Both Pike and Pine Streets are on a gentle eastward-rising slope. From Pine Street on Capitol Hill, there is a direct view downtown to the Paramount Theatre and downtown Seattle's principal retail area, all the way to the market and the waterfront. From Pike, the view, now somewhat obstructed by the Convention Center overpass, is of the iconic sign of the Pike Place Market.

The hill flattens somewhat between Harvard Avenue to about Tenth Avenue, and then commences again to the east. Between Tenth and Eleventh Avenues, from Pine to Pike (Tenth to Twelfth from Pike to Union), this elevation change has permitted the creation of a sunken service area between the two streets, frequently used for parking.



South of Pine Street along Eleventh Avenue: the elevation change is used for parking and delivery.

One consistent characteristic of the older buildings along the steeper portion of the hillclimb (west of Broadway) is to accommodate the change in topography by stepping up the hill. Frequently, the ground floor of a commercial or residential building on the hillclimb will have taller windows on the downside of the hill than on the upside. This may result in taller ceiling heights in some of the ground floor spaces, or, in some cases, commercial spaces with a ground floor a half-story below grade.



South side of Pine Street, at Summit: the retail area at the far left of the photo is one-half story below grade. Also note the single row of mullions above the single-pane display windows at the ground floor. As the building steps down the hill, this becomes a double row of mullions.



South side of Pine Street, at Bellevue: while the ground-floor retail spaces maintain a consistent height, the rows of mullions above the display windows demonstrate the step up the hill by becoming shorter on the building's upside.

Streetscape Compatibility and Building Entrances:

Along Pike and Pine Streets there is a fairly consistent and mostly unbroken street wall created by the one- to five-story commercial and residential structures along it, with most buildings oriented parallel to the street right-of-way, and flush to the sidewalk.



This building maintains its orientation to the street, even where the street bends.

Building entrances along Pine and Pike are oriented to the street. Some commercial entries have an exterior foyer, providing additional window display space, a transition zone, and weather protection.



South side of Pike Street between Belmont and Harvard: note the recessed entries for the commercial spaces, and additional display window space in the external foyer.

Others have entries flush to the sidewalk, with or without awnings:



Some commercial entries are more formal and celebrated:



Residential entrances are somewhat more protected. They may have a locking gate, or a recessed entry beneath an archway:



South side of Pine Street, between 13th and 14th Avenues.

The streetscape experience along the side streets is quite varied. On the west side of the neighborhood, between I-5 and Harvard Avenue, side streets are a mix of residential and commercial. There is a less consistent street wall, due to freestanding buildings, and more open spaces. Some commercial buildings wrap the corner from Pike or Pine to the side street with more retail space; others have garage entries on the side streets. There are some older houses, or multi-family structures with a residential character: set back from the street wall, front porch, gabled or dormered roof, steps to the front door.



Above (both): Belmont Avenue between Pike and Pine streets

From Broadway to Twelfth Avenue, the streets perpendicular to Pine and Pike are no longer “side streets.” The streetscape character of these streets is similar or identical to that of Pine and Pike. Commercial uses predominate, and residential uses are typically in converted industrial buildings, so retain their commercial character, in building orientation and entryway.



Eleventh Avenue, looking south from Pine Street toward Pike Street.

East of Twelfth Avenue, the streetscape is less consistent. The street wall is more broken, with empty lots, parking lots, and vehicle-oriented uses (drive-through bank, truck rental.) Some building entrances face the street, and others do not.



13th Avenue, looking north from Pike Street.

In this area, the block north of Pine Street is entirely residential, with low-scale houses or apartments set back from the street and fronted by a yard.

Human Activity:

The siting characteristics described above—building orientation flush to the street, ground floor retail with generous display windows and prominent entries—promote sidewalk activity and human interaction. Other design details, such as outdoor seating, weather protection, windows that open to the street, and outdoor display of merchandise also contribute to lively street activity.



Generous window display, windows that open, unique signage, and outdoor seating encourage pedestrian activity.



Some ground-floor retail in newer developments has been less successful in attracting human activity.

Transition between Residence and Street:

There is a pattern of arched recessed entries in older residential buildings on Pine Street, as well as on the side streets. Some of these entries have contrasting trim. Other, older residential buildings have a small front yard.



East side of Melrose Avenue, south of Pine Street: recessed residential entry, with contrasting trim.

In mixed-use buildings, the residential entry is often at the front of the building facing the sidewalk, adjacent to retail uses, and announced by an awning, a recessed entry, or sometimes a gate.

Residential Open Space:

Residential open space is not a common feature among the older residential buildings in the Pike-Pine corridor, with the exception of older multifamily units on the perpendicular streets (Boylston, Belmont) with small front yards. Among recent developments, residential open space may consist of courtyard entryways (Braeburn, Press, Trace North), rooftop terrace (Pike Lofts, 1111 East Pike) or balconies (Braeburn, 1111 East Pike, 605 East Pike).

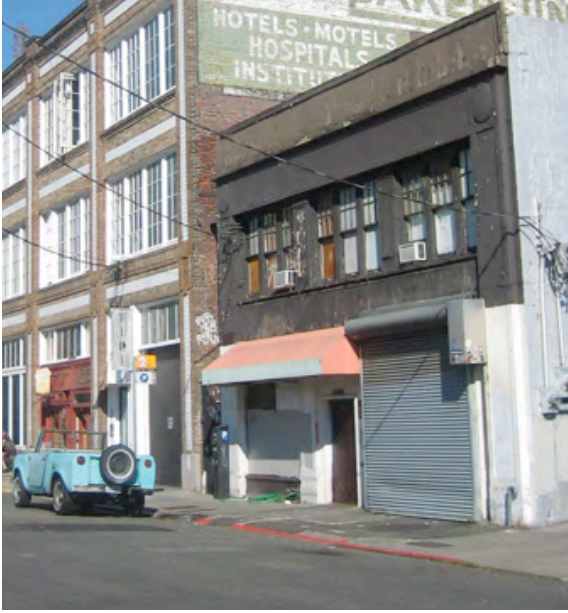


Balconies on 1111 East Pike Street.

Parking and Vehicle Access:

On-street parking is the most common form of parking in this neighborhood. All neighborhood streets have on-street parking, most of which is metered. There is angled parking on Tenth and Eleventh Avenues between Pine and Pike Streets.

Many of the older buildings in this neighborhood, though built a century ago, were former auto dealerships or repair shops. There is thus some precedent for sidewalk garage entries in the Pike-Pine neighborhood. Many of these garage entries can be found on the streets perpendicular to Pike and Pine.



Garage entry on Eleventh Avenue, south of Pike Street.

There are inherent conflicts with garages and pedestrians. Garages require a vehicle to enter the pedestrian zone (the sidewalk) in order to access or exit the garage. A garage entry also reduces the capacity for on-street parking.

In some newer developments, garage entrances are sometimes located on the less prominent street, or the street with less pedestrian traffic.



Parking garage entry for the Braeburn is located on 14th Avenue.

Other developments include a garage entry on the principal street:



Parking garage entry on Pike Street, 1111 East Pike.

Corner Lots:

Marking and defining the corner is a way to signal a change in the building's use, from a prominent to a less prominent façade:



Pike Street at Minor Avenue.

The variety of corner treatments includes sharp corners, with or without cornice lines,



and rounded corners with or without cornices.

Some building corners, with or without corner entries, are iconic:



While it is common to see a corner entry to a corner building, it is not a uniquely defining characteristic of this neighborhood. However, the corner entry does encourage pedestrian activity to round the corner and continue to the adjacent street.



Southwest corner of Pine and 14th Street



Agnes Lofts, Twelfth Avenue at Pike Street.



Pike Street at Eleventh Avenue.

Grand or humble, the most consistent corner treatment is one of strong, defined building edges, reinforcing and not eroding the corner. Further, the presence of building entries, rounded corners, architectural detailing and expansive windows contributes to pedestrian comfort while walking in the neighborhood (i.e., there are no “blind” corners).

PIKE/PINE EXISTING DESIGN CHARACTERISTICS

B. HEIGHT, BULK AND SCALE

Height, Bulk and Scale Compatibility:

Height: The common vernacular in this neighborhood is a one- to four-story former automobile showroom or industrial building with a heavily glazed double-height ground floor. Another vernacular is a two to three-story wood frame mixed-use building with protruding bays. A third type is a three—to five-story brick residential building with a center-arched entryway. Zoning permits heights of 65 feet throughout most of the neighborhood, with new regulations allowing for heights of 75 feet, under certain conditions.



Looking north on Twelfth Avenue, toward Pine Street: new development at 65 feet height.

Bulk: The typical block face along Pine and Pike streets is 250 to 300 feet. The predominant characteristic of buildings on such blocks is a width along Pike or Pine of 50 to 120 feet, and a depth of 50 to 200 feet.



Looking east on Pine from Melrose to Bellevue: two buildings per block, each approximately 120 feet long.

On streets perpendicular to Pine and Pike, the block faces are typically 400 feet in length. Building width of 50 to 200 feet is common, with three to six buildings per block face, as shown below.



Looking north on Eleventh Avenue toward Pike Street.



Looking north on Summit Avenue toward Pine Street.

Some newer developments comprise an entire block face on Pike or Pine Streets. The Harvard Market and Braeburn are examples. The Press condominium development comprises the entire 400-foot block length of Belmont Avenue between Pine and Olive Streets.

Scale: Common in this neighborhood are commercial and residential buildings oriented toward approach and entry on foot. Building elements, detailing, signs, and entryways are typically scaled for pedestrian comfort, while remaining in proportion to the building. Buildings are typically broken into a rhythm of bays, with large amounts of glazing on the ground floor. Twenty-five foot bays are common.



Pike Street, looking east to Thirteenth Avenue. A consistent rhythm of 25' bays.

Scale may be different at the ground floor than the higher floors:



Pine near Bellevue Avenue: larger 25' bays on the ground floor are broken up into smaller components on the residential floors above.

Purely residential buildings may have a smaller, finer scale than commercial or mixed-use buildings:



East side of Melrose Avenue between Pine and Pike Streets: Smaller bays, contrasting trim color give this residential building a smaller scale than the commercial structures around the corner.

Below is an example of the compatibility of height, bulk, and scale in the context of old and new buildings on Pike Street:



PIKE/PINE EXISTING DESIGN CHARACTERISTICS

C. ARCHITECTURAL ELEMENTS AND MATERIALS

Architectural Context:

There are several types of architecture of the Pike/Pine neighborhood that contribute to the overall design characteristics of the neighborhood.

To some degree, the distinction is most sharp between the older (65 years or more) buildings and the newer buildings. This neighborhood went through an almost forty-year period in which there was little investment and very little being built. Thus, there is not very much of the hodge-podge of architecture that characterizes many neighborhoods, and the core of the neighborhood retains an intact environment of early twentieth century vernacular architecture, which exhibits the following characteristics:

- Solid fireproof structures of concrete or brick, often two to four stories, with strongly expressed columns and spandrels on the building façade. Even single-story repair garages are of masonry or concrete construction.
- Use of exterior materials and design elements such as masonry (especially brick) and timber structures, multi-use loft spaces, very high, fully glazed storefront windows, and decorative details such as terra cotta cladding, expansive windows, intricate ornamentation, cornices, emblems and embossed building names.
- Residential entryways that feature heavy or contrasting trim, distinctive materials and a link to the surrounding streetscape.
- Adaptive re-use of older buildings as restaurants, retail, nightclubs, housing, artist lofts, or offices.



Southeast corner of Pike Street and Tenth Avenue: solid concrete structures with expansive areas of glass, and vigorously expressed vertical and horizontal members, are characteristic of this neighborhood.

The masonry industrial buildings rise sheer from the ground to the cornice line, with no upper story setbacks; cornices and parapets are common.



South side of Pike Street between Broadway and Tenth Avenue: Cornices and parapets are common elements in older commercial buildings.

Architectural Features:

Large expanses of glass, multi-paned above the ground floor display windows:



South side of Pike Street, between Eleventh And Twelfth Avenues.

Detailed cornices:



Southwest corner of Pike Street and Minor Avenue.

Terra cotta frieze work:



Western intersection of Pike Street with Minor and Melrose Avenues.

Upper story medallions, which may denote cross-bracing:



South side of Pine Street, at Crawford Place.

Detailed trim elements, especially window treatments, in plaster, terra cottas or patterned brick:



West side of Tenth Avenue, near Pine Street.

Protruding bay windows on wood-frame buildings:



South side of Pike Street, at Belmont Avenue.

Some of these features may also be found on newer buildings in the neighborhood:



Sturdy materials that evoke industrial use, strong vertical elements, large expanses of glass, and a cornice line are some of the elements these two new developments (1111 East Pike and Agnes Lofts) have in common with the older character buildings in Pike-Pine.



Building Articulation:

The repeating bay, marked by strong vertical and horizontal elements, is a characteristic method of building modulation in the Pike-Pine neighborhood:



Twelfth Avenue at Pine Street.

On older brick and wood-frame buildings, punched windows articulate the façade:



Northeast corner of Boren Avenue and Pike Street.

Changing materials or colors to denote contrasting building elements or trim:



Melrose Avenue, between Pike and Pine Streets.

Architectural Concept and Consistency:

The most evocative architectural concept in the Pike-Pine neighborhood, as defined by design elements, materials, and massing, is the early twentieth-century light industrial building or warehouse, or automobile showroom. Features that identify this type include:

- Masonry or concrete construction, simply expressed
- One to four stories in height
- Terra cotta or other contrasting trim material



Eleventh and Pine, southeast corner.

- Strong façade expression of horizontal and vertical support members
- Sheer rise from ground to cornice line, unbroken by setbacks
- Double height ground floor
- Floor-to-ceiling ground-floor display windows, as well as expansive upper-story windows broken into multi-paned components
- Buildings of approximately 120' in length, broken into intervals of 25' bays
- Strong corner elements, whether sharp or rounded

Other architectural concepts of note include the multi-story brick apartment building, the wood frame residential building, and the wood frame mixed-use building.

Brick apartment buildings include:

- punched windows
- Covered, arched entryways
- Contrasting trim elements



North side of Pike Street, just east of Broadway

Wood frame buildings may include:

- Peaked roofs on residential buildings, or
- Bay windows and an expressed cornice.



West side of Belmont Avenue, near Pike.



Northeast corner, 12th Avenue and Pike Street.

Human Scale:

While many of the older industrial buildings in the neighborhood are massive, the mass is typically broken up by a rhythm of bays, humanizing the scale of the structure. Building elements, detailing, signs, and entryways are typically scaled for pedestrian comfort, while remaining in proportion to the building. Large amounts of glazing, single-pane on the ground floor and multi-pane at upper floors, provides a lightness and transparency that makes these industrial buildings appealing to people, to live, shop, work, or entertain themselves in.

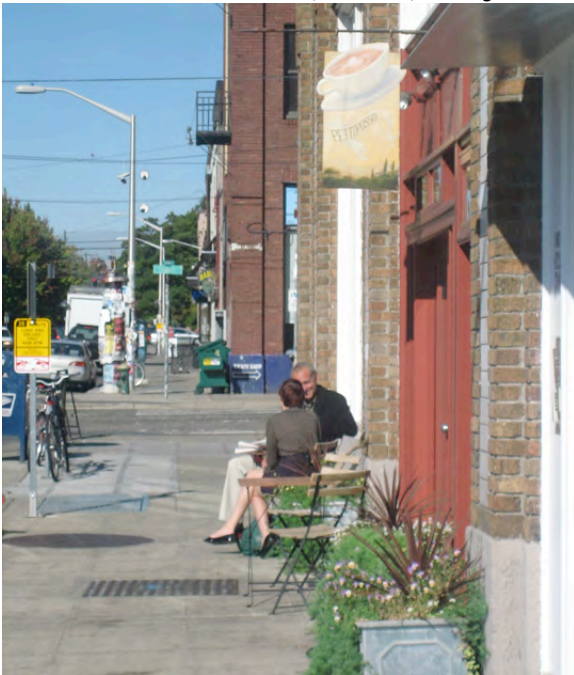
Planters and landscaping, outdoor seating, generous sidewalks, lively window displays, and weather protection (canopies or awnings) also humanize the scale of older industrial buildings.



Pedestrian-scaled entryways, large but multi-paned windows, and interesting display windows humanize the scale of this three-story building at Pike and Broadway.



Rhythmic bays and multi-paned large window expanses help to humanize this large-scale loft-style brick building at Eleventh Avenue and Pike Street, However, looking more closely,...



...one sees architectural and streetscape elements that humanize its overall mass: handmade signage, human-scaled doorway, awning to protect from weather, wide sidewalk, outdoor seating, and planters.

Exterior Finish Materials:

“Sturdy”, “solid,” and “industrial” are some of the words frequently used to describe the architectural character of the Pike-Pine neighborhood. These characteristics are clearly visible in the traditional exterior

finish materials of the character buildings in this neighborhood. Brick and concrete, materials that are both strong in compression, express the verticality of these industrial or warehouse –type buildings. The strong horizontal spandrels exhibited on the building facades of these buildings indicate the need for tensile materials (probably steel) to support the brick or concrete, both of which are weak in tension. Thick spandrels express the needed extra tensile support between floors. The resultant architecture is one that has strong vertical and horizontal expression on the building façade, revealed by the exterior finish materials.



North side of Pike Street, between Bellevue and Summit: though this church building represents a unique type for this neighborhood, a Greek-Revival eclectic temple, its sturdy concrete finish material. As well as its massive columns, bay rhythm and cornice line, are in keeping with other concrete industrial buildings of the Pike-Pine neighborhood.

In addition to masonry and concrete, some of the older character buildings are finished in true stucco. Automobile showrooms were frequently clad in terra cotta.



Pike Street at Minor/Melrose: automobile showrooms were often clad in terra cotta.

Wood frame and wood-clad buildings still exist on some of the smaller scale buildings in the neighborhood, but some of these are now covered, less successfully, in various types of siding.

Some of the newer buildings in the neighborhood reflect the industrial past through the use of metal cladding:



Others use materials to express the architectonics of a sturdy, durable building:



Exterior panels on 1111 East Pike could be seen as puzzle pieces, tightly fitting together, indicating the sturdy nature of the building's construction, and also giving a nod to the manufacturing and assembly nature of some of the industrial buildings in the neighborhood.



The slender steel spandrels separating the floors on the Agnes Lofts also give an indication of the building's architectonics. Though different from the broad spandrels on some of the older industrial buildings, the use of steel indicates that a material strong in tension, such as steel, requires less thickness to support floor weight than do either concrete or masonry.

PIKE/PINE EXISTING DESIGN CHARACTERISTICS

D. PEDESTRIAN ENVIRONMENT

The pedestrian environment typically considers architecture as well as physical elements in the street right-of-way. For the pedestrian, architectural character is most crucial at the ground level, where the he or she most intimately interacts with the building.

Street right-of-way, sidewalk width and materials, landscaping, lighting, signage, and street furniture are also design elements to consider in the pedestrian environment.

Architecturally, the orientation of the vast majority of buildings in this neighborhood is to the pedestrian. Buildings are flush to the sidewalk, form a continuous street wall, open onto the sidewalk, and have entryways appropriate in scale for a person on foot to enter. Drive-ins, driveways, garage entries, parking or vacant lots, and blank walls are infrequent.

Pedestrian Entrances and Open Spaces:

(Please see Section A, Site, for a thorough, illustrated discussion of building entrances.)

Building entries in the neighborhood are characteristically well defined, frequently covered or otherwise protected, and lighted.



North side of Pine Street, near Crawford Place: the building entry is flush to the sidewalk, scaled for pedestrian access, placed in the center of the building, marked by exterior lamps, and covered by a canopy.

Clearly marked signs and addresses at a building entrance also enhance comfort for pedestrians.



South side of Pike Street, east of Broadway

Frequent entries from the street also appeal to pedestrians, providing visual interest and encouraging them to continue walking along the sidewalk.



An entry approximately every twenty feet is pleasing to a person on foot.

Pedestrian open space frequently consists only of the sidewalk, and building owners and tenants frequently make use of that space to welcome pedestrians.



Planters used to mark an entry, or display merchandise for sale outside a shop are ways to improve open space for people in a dense urban environment.



Odd Fellows Building, East Pine Street: Note the incorporation of a bench in the display window at the left. This can accommodate the overflow of customers, or else those who wish to eat ice cream out of doors.

Recent changes to the right-of-way on East Pine Street have resulted in wider sidewalks with smaller pavers, and the inclusion of outdoor seating near a bus stop.



Note that the seating is set back from the sidewalk, and flanked by the protective canopy of adjacent trees.

This neighborhood is fortunate to include the Cal Anderson Park and Bobby Morris Playfield. This south boundary of this public open space fronts on Pine Street. The entries to the park from the sidewalk are demarcated by low-scale rusticated walls, topped by pedestrian-scaled lighting standards. The transition zone from the sidewalk on Pine Street to the park includes some dense shrubbery, pierced by viewing areas to the ball fields. These small open spaces include old-fashioned stone pavers and facing benches.



Entry, Cal Anderson Park



North side of Pine Street, at Tenth Avenue

Blank Walls:

There are several blank walls along the streets in the neighborhood. Windowless buildings are not conducive to pedestrian activity or comfort. In some cases, the blank façade was created by sealing and bricking over or otherwise blocking windows and doors.



East side of Thirteenth Avenue (near Pine Street).



North side of Pine Street (at 11th Avenue)

The impact of a blank facade not directly facing the street is purely visual for the pedestrian, and thus of lesser concern. However, one blank façade is noted for the cheerful artistic treatment given to it:



North (Eleventh Avenue) façade, Monique Lofts.

Retaining Walls:

Changes in topography and elevation in this hilly neighborhood sometimes present the need for retaining walls. These can be designed gracefully, such as the age-worn stone wall on the north side of Pine Street near Harvard Avenue, clearly marking the boundary of the community college, and containing the adjacent open space.

The west side of the Press building (Belmont Avenue, north of Pine Street) incorporates retaining walls along some portions of that facade. The wall is stepped, and separated by hanging plants. This creates the desired separation of the residential area from the street, and also softens the negative effect of a tall retaining wall on the pedestrian.

Some recent residential developments do include retaining walls above eye level.

Design of Parking Lots Near Sidewalks:

Parking lots are dead zones: there is nothing of interest to a pedestrian, nothing to do or to see. An open expanse of surface along a block face makes the walk along that section of the block seem longer than a walk along a block with a continuous street wall of buildings. Surface parking lots also decrease a pedestrian's sense of security: there are few other people in the vicinity, and the sense of isolation is heightened.

Surface parking lots are discouraged in this neighborhood, but several remain. Some of those that remain are affiliated with the existing auto dealerships. Most all other parking lots in this neighborhood can be perceived as sites waiting to be developed. Parking lots are sometimes screened from the street by a chain link fence, which also controls entry points from the sidewalk. Some lots are not screened at all. Few lots, if any, are accessed from Pike or Pine Streets; most access points are on side streets.

The best surface parking lots in this neighborhood, and they are few, are small, well demarcated by a low fence (not chain link or mesh), contain clear points of access and egress that are away from corners and principal streets (preferably only one access point), and include landscaping to soften the impact on the pedestrian environment. If the lot is lighted, illumination is at an appropriate level, and not excessive or harsh.

Visual Impacts of Parking Structures and Entrances:

Most new parking is structured, incorporated into new developments, and minimally visible from the sidewalk. The design is typically compatible in massing and materials to the other elements of the building. Other garage portions of recent developments use topography changes to lessen their physical presence and pedestrian impact, as well as incorporate landscaping or hanging plants to shield the garage from visibility.

One free-standing parking garage incorporates some mitigating elements on its Pine Street façade, such as locating the entry off of the principal street, screening at the ground level, tilework, and incorporating a restaurant at one end of the building, and a café at the other. However, the architectural style of the building (1970s cast concrete) is incompatible with surrounding architecture, and it encompasses an entire block face on Pine Street. There are typically two buildings to a block on this street, which decreases building bulk. This garage is a bulky building.

Structured parking entrances, particularly those in newer developments, are minimized to the extent possible.

An excellent example of this, shown below, includes most of the mitigation techniques available:

- Making the garage as narrow as possible
- Subordinating the garage entrance to the pedestrian entrance
- Locating the garage entry on the edge of the façade
- Recessing the garage entry, and extending portions of the structure above it, to further conceal it
- Reducing the visual prominence of the garage door, and emphasizing other elements of the façade
- Locating the garage entry on the low side of the hill, where topography conceals it most.



Screening of Dumpsters:

New building developments effectively deal with the problem of Dumpster location, but locating a storage place for Dumpsters is problematic with older buildings. These buildings were not originally designed to accommodate large Dumpsters. The default has been to leave Dumpsters on the sidewalk, street right-of-way, or in alleys. These are unsightly and not conducive to a healthy pedestrian environment.

Personal Security and Safety:

This neighborhood is characterized by an intense degree of pedestrian activity, and is active day and night. The presence of other people on the streets and sidewalks is one of the principal factors in assessing a person's level of comfort walking in a neighborhood. The numerous mixed-use buildings in this neighborhood provide essential "eyes on the street," another indicator of personal security.

Site elements that contribute to a sense of security include a continuous street wall of buildings, which is prevalent in the Pike-Pine neighborhood. Maintenance of clear lines of sight, even when topography changes, is also characteristic of buildings in this neighborhood.

Solid massing of the industrial and commercial buildings leaves no hiding places for criminal activity. Buildings are oriented to the sidewalk and street, with entryways clearly delineated and usually visible from the street. At corners, the presence of building entries, rounded corners, architectural detailing and expansive windows contributes to pedestrian comfort while turning the neighborhood, so that there are no "blind" corners.

Architectural design elements that contribute to or detract from safety and security include building transparency and illumination. The high degree of glazing on most buildings in this neighborhood creates a sense of openness and transparency, and the ability to see both in and out of buildings, which increases one's sense of comfort.

Transparency and illumination from ground floor windows, combined with street lighting and some pedestrian-scale lighting, and architectural lighting on some buildings, also increase the sense of security in this neighborhood.

Some residential buildings provide ornamental grille work incorporated into ground floor windows, or ornamental fencing at the building entrance. These gates or fences typically remain open during normal business hours, and are only locked at nighttime.



South side of East Pine Street at Summit Avenue: An ornamental gate that remains open during business hours and is locked at night.

With respect to safety, the principal factor affecting pedestrian safety is vehicular traffic. Signalized crosswalks, shortened intersection crossings, separation of vehicular traffic from pedestrians, traffic calming, sufficiently wide sidewalks, and the sheer presence of pedestrians are factors influencing pedestrian safety on streets and sidewalks. Recent improvements on a portion of East Pine Street have widened the sidewalk and reduced the vehicular right-of-way. At many intersections, curb bulbs have been placed to shorten the crossing distance and limit the pedestrian's exposure in the intersection.



East Pine at Summit Avenue: Curb bulbs shorten the pedestrian crossing distance at an intersection.

Pedestrian safety may be compromised at construction sites when a sidewalk or portion of a sidewalk is closed to foot traffic. Preservation of the pedestrian travel path on both sides of the street at all times is essential in a pedestrian-dominated neighborhood.

A parking garage incorporated into a new development requires the building of a curb cut, and a driveway across the sidewalk, increasing the potential for pedestrian-vehicle conflicts.

Signal timing and signal phasing may also affect pedestrian safety. These are under the purview of the Seattle Department of Transportation.

Treatment of Alleys:

There are five alleys or alley-like streets, in the neighborhood: Crawford Place, Broadway Court, one block of Minor Street between Pike and Pine, Nagle Place, and an unnamed alley between Harvard and Broadway, commonly called “Neighbours Alley”, for the nightclub that has its entry there.

Alleys have the potential to provide a more intimate pedestrian experience; their narrowness discourages most vehicular traffic, and is conducive to walking.

The alleys in the Pike-Pine neighborhood have some advantages: most buildings “turn the corner” and extend at least one bay, usually more, into the alley; and some of the alleys have sidewalks. Most of the alleys have pole-mounted lighting. However, the inherent problem in attempting to activate these alleys for more pedestrian uses is that they are typically the “backside” of the facing buildings, and thus are frequently used for loading and unloading. Service vehicles can often be found blocking the alleys. The alleys are lined with Dumpsters, and often smell bad.

Commercial Signage:

The best examples of signs are those for small, independent retail shops or restaurants. These reveal creativity and individual expression, and along a block, can be part of the rhythm that attracts the pedestrian to walk there.



East Pike Street, east of Twelfth Avenue



East Pine Street, between 13th and 14th Avenues



A hand painted sign on the panel below the window, accompanied by a small neon sign.



An understated hand painted commercial sign.

There is a good amount of neon signage in this neighborhood as well, much of it is uniquely designed for a particular business:



Some signs become part of a building's architecture, although they advertise something that is no longer there:



Backlit, roof-mounted signs do not seem to be in character with the architecture, or the neighborhood:



A collection of such signs, particularly when national chains are being advertised, looks generic, and not in keeping with the neighborhood's unique character:



South side of East Pike Street, looking east from Harvard Avenue.

Signs that are placed at a height and of a scale to attract drivers, instead of pedestrians, are not in keeping with the neighborhood character:



Commercial and Street Lighting:

Buildings in this neighborhood, with their heavy glazing, frequently rely upon window display lighting, interior lighting, and street lighting for illumination. Commercial lighting, where it exists, is subdued. It may be used to illuminate a building entry:



Artistic use of commercial lighting to illuminate the building sign and entryway.



Small lamps illuminate the entry to the residential portion of this mixed-use building on East Pike Street.

Exterior lighting may be incorporated into a building's architecture:



Small globes dot the exterior of this mixed-use building, highlighting the commercial level.

Lighting is also incorporated into signage, and provided on the underside of canopies and marquees.

Street lighting is typically provided on cobra standards affixed to wooden or aluminum utility poles. Street lamps extend over the vehicle travel lanes from a height of 28 feet. They are designed to illuminate the right-of-way for drivers.

Pedestrian lighting is typically 12-15' from the ground, and illuminates the sidewalk. There is some pedestrian scale lighting along portions of East Pike Street, placed at irregular intervals, with a frequency less than that of streetlights. Pedestrian lights are pole-mounted brackets with a metal-capped luminaire.



Pole-mounted pedestrian scale lighting on East Pike Street.

On a portion of East Pike Street and Twelfth Avenue, between Pike and Union Streets, in the vicinity of two new real estate developments (Agnes Lofts and Trace Lofts), there is recently placed pedestrian-scale lighting on free-standing poles:



New pedestrian-scale lighting on Twelfth Avenue.

Street lighting is typically the responsibility of the Seattle Department of Transportation, and lighting standards are included in the *Seattle Right-of-Way Improvements Manual*, Sec. 4.16.

Commercial Transparency:

Much of the ground-floor retail in this neighborhood is small-scale, and reliant upon pedestrian traffic. Fortunately, this encourages merchants to design storefront displays for maximum effect upon the eye of a passerby. This requires not only a well-designed window, but also a high level of transparency, to allow the pedestrian to view beyond the display and into the shop. At night, a transparent and well-lit window beckons the pedestrian. Many examples of ground-floor transparency such as this exist in the neighborhood, contributing to its overall character.



North side of East Pike Street, near Broadway.

Some storefronts are examples of lost opportunities that can be easily remedied:



Value Village on Eleventh Avenue: The awning is too large, and obscures a view of the storefront.



Directly across the street, an awning more appropriately scaled preserves the view into the storefront.

Others present dilemmas:



What should a nightclub look like during the day?

Though few merchants plaster their windows with obscuring merchandise or advertising material, there are examples in the neighborhood. Some of the chain retailers in the Harvard Market development are probably the best examples, or worst offenders.

Closed window blinds can also be found in ground-floor commercial spaces:



Residential Entries and Transitions:

Residential entries in older commercial buildings are sometimes found recessed in the center bay:



The slightly recessed entry provides a secure and private entry for residents, is compatible with the rhythm of the building's facade, and does not interrupt the interest of the pedestrian walking along the street front.

Sometimes the residential entry is a bit more celebrated:



Here, the entryway is in the center bay of a mixed-use building, in the form of a portico, up two steps, framed by two columns, topped by an accolade, and capped by a pediment.

The entryway for the residential portion of a mixed-use building may be flanked by lighting, or covered by a canopy or awning.

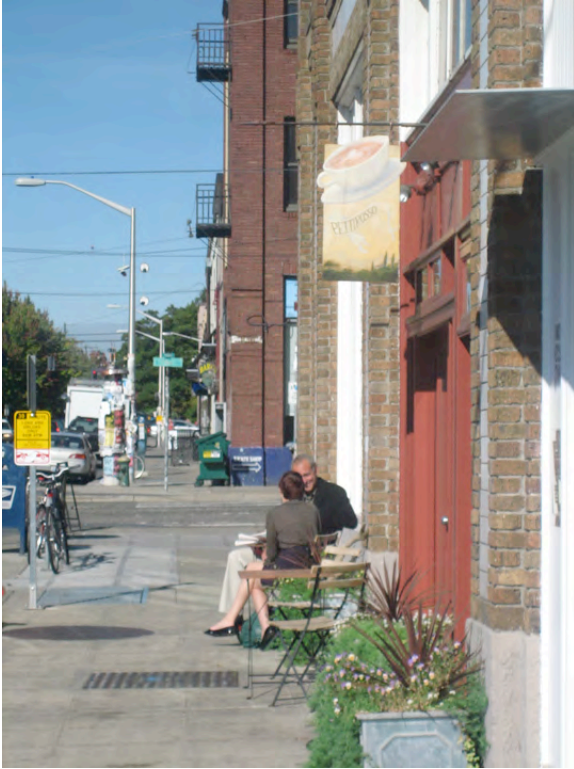
Older, purely residential buildings often contain covered archways protecting a stairway leading to the building's front door. There may be contrasting trim to mark the transition zone.

In newer mixed-use buildings, the entryway may be found slightly recessed (Agnes Lofts), beneath a canopy (Pike Lofts, 1111 East Pike, Trace Lofts), in a recessed courtyard (Press Building, Trace North), or on the minor street (617 East Pike).

Street furniture:

The design and incorporation of street furniture into the streetscape is a necessary consideration in designing a pleasing pedestrian environment. Street furniture may include the following:

- Art work
- Banners
- Benches
- Bike parking
- Bollards
- Bus stop/shelter
- Information kiosk
- Lighting Standard
- Parking pay station
- Phone booth
- Outdoor seating
- Outdoor dining
- Planter
- Trash cans
- Tree grates



Bicycle parking, planters, information kiosk and parking pay station (distant) are street furniture that must be thoughtfully incorporated into the streetscape.

Sidewalks (*Seattle Right-of-Way Improvements Manual, Sec. 4.11*)

Materials: *Accented paving helps to call out a residential entry and adds interest to the sidewalk.*

Width

Driveways

Vending

PIKE/PINE EXISTING DESIGN CHARACTERISTICS

E. LANDSCAPING¹

In a dense urban neighborhood, landscaping presents the opportunity to soften the built landscape, add color to the street, provide weather protection, and connect the city with nature and the seasonal cycle.

Landscaping to Reinforce Design Continuity with Adjacent Sites:

There is a pattern of tree plantings on Pine and Pike Streets that gives a rhythm and character to the streets. The sidewalks are planted with a variety of maple, high branching (or pruned) to permit views into ground floor retail, and with a narrow canopy. The trees are planted approximately every 20 to 40 feet, and placed back at least 30 feet from each intersection, for traffic safety and visibility reasons.



South side of Pike Street at Bellevue Avenue: high branching maples with a narrow canopy, placed approximately twenty feet apart, and held back approximately 30 feet from the intersection. The trees are indicators of the seasons, and allow a human connection with nature in a heavily built-up urban environment.

¹ For reference, also see the *Seattle Right-of-Way Improvements Manual*, Sec. 4.14



Twelfth Avenue, looking south from Pike Street: at this recently developed site, street trees and pedestrian-scale lighting alternate in a rhythm, approximately every twenty feet: tree, lamp, tree, lamp...

Trees are typically planted in pits, without tree grates. There is sometimes shrubbery planted alongside the trees, but not in a consistent pattern.



Looking east on East Pike Street, near Harvard Avenue: street tree accompanied by low ground cover.

Newer tree plantings on East Pine Street are in a raised bed and provide a much greater area of permeable surface for moisture absorption and drainage:



Landscaping on the streets perpendicular to Pike and Pine also consists predominantly of street trees, but is less consistent in variety and pattern. Trees of different species and heights and canopy patterns are sometimes planted, at irregular intervals. On some blocks, there may be trees planted on only one side of the street and not the other. Other blocks may have no landscaping at all.



Looking south on Eleventh Avenue toward Pike Street: street trees are planted on one portion of one side of the street only.



Summit Avenue, looking north toward Pine Street: along its entire 400' length, this block contains only three trees.

Landscaping to Enhance the Building and/or Site:

Planters are sometimes used to accompany existing landscaping, and may mark a building entrance.



At the Agnes Lofts, planters mark the building entrance and provide an accompaniment to street trees.



East Pine Street near 14th Avenue: planters accompany street trees, and plant material for sale.

Planters may also be used to enhance the streetscape on a street with no landscaping:



Landscaping can also be part of a transition zone from sidewalk to residential building entry, providing decoration and softening of hard surfaces, as well as screening and a layer of privacy. The low, terraced retaining wall at the Press Building is a good example.

Landscaping can also soften and screen blank portions of a building. Hanging plantings provide screening for the garage at the Harvard Market, on Harvard Avenue, south of Pike Street.

Some landscaping represents an image of a particular building, or may act as a gateway to the neighborhood:



The rooftop palm trees of the Pike Lofts are visible from the street below, and from a distance, and are identifying elements of the building.

Landscape Design to Address Special Site Conditions:

Landscape design may be used to take advantage of special on-site conditions. Raised beds for recently planted street trees on East Pine Street step up (or down) the street, reinforcing the hill, and doubling as benches.



In this unique example, ground cover is used to soften the view and approach of a high bank front yard:



East side of Melrose Avenue, between Pike and Pine Streets.

Landscaping Used to Define Space

Landscaping may also be used to define and demarcate space, such as public open space. At Bobby Morris Playfield, the low rusticated retaining wall, change in planting (more extensive and varied ground cover, mature trees) and elegant lighting standards mark the entry points, provide a clear distinction between the park and the adjacent planting strip, and express the value of this public space through the use of quality design and durable materials.

