

SEATTLE CITYWIDE DESIGN GUIDELINES



Review Draft
January 2010



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Introduction

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Introduction

The Seattle Citywide Design Guidelines are the cornerstone of the City's Design Review Program and the primary tool used by the Design Review Boards for evaluating proposed new development. The overarching goal of the design guidelines—and the Design Review Program—is to foster design excellence in private development of new multi-family and commercial projects throughout the city. The Citywide Design Guidelines apply to all projects required to undergo design review in all areas of the city except Downtown.

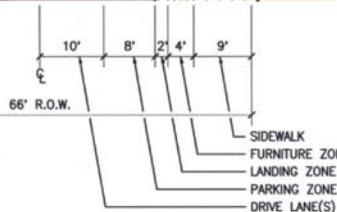
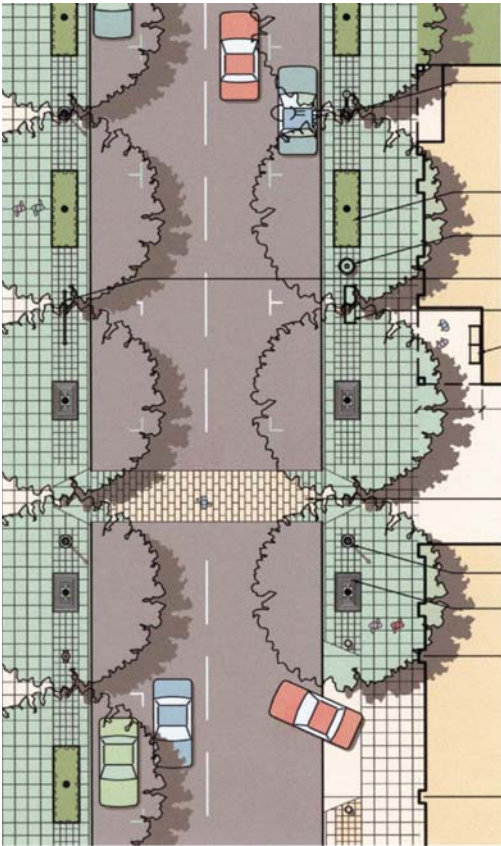
WHAT IS DESIGN EXCELLENCE?

One measure of design excellence is the degree to which new development fits comfortably within the existing fabric of the city. Another measure is the ability of a project to stand the test of time by remaining functional and ageless over a period of many years. Sustainability is also an aspect of design excellence; reflected in how a project affects the environment, which materials are used, how healthy it is for its occupants, and how much energy or resources it uses. The City of Seattle Citywide Design Guidelines play an important role in helping all parties to the design review process define, design, and build projects of excellence in our city.

THE ROLE OF SEATTLE'S DESIGN GUIDELINES

Design guidelines by themselves do not create good design nor do they ensure it. They do not address nor resolve disputes about zoning; likewise they do not address project impacts related to parking or traffic. What design guidelines do address are the qualities of architecture, urban design, and public space that make for successful projects and communities.

The chief value and purpose of Seattle's Citywide Design Guidelines is in providing clarity and focus on what is important to consider in the design of projects. By presenting clear performance-based statements about what we value, the guidelines make it possible for the dialogue that occurs in Design Review Board meetings to be as productive and efficient as possible. The guidelines also provide a common language with which to discuss the best ways to create an attractive, vibrant, sustainable city of the future, project by project. Lastly, the guidelines serve as the legal basis for ensuring fair and consistent recommendations by the Design Review Boards.



WHAT DO WE VALUE?

The Citywide Design Guidelines provide guidance on universal design issues as well as the specific challenges faced by Seattle as it grows and changes. The underlying philosophy of the guidelines stems from an appreciation of certain qualities that are valued by community members:

- **design excellence** as evidenced by the existence of the Design Review Program, strong volunteerism of Board members, existence of the Seattle Design Commission, and a citizenry that is active in all projects and processes related to the design of individual projects and the city as a whole;
- **physical environment** of the hills, water, habitat, and mountains surrounding Seattle and how that can best be reflected in the amount, type, and form of development within the city;
- **sustainable development** that is capable of meeting the needs of the current citizens of Seattle without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs; and
- celebration of the **diversity of people and cultures** that exists within the city as evidenced by active interest in protecting historic and cultural resources, and strong identity with and cultivation of distinct neighborhoods—each with its own character and features.

The design guidelines reflect these values by addressing:

- design excellence through an emphasis on thinking conceptually and holistically;
- the physical environment and sustainability through inclusion of guidelines addressing the context of natural systems, conditions, and features; and
- diversity through an emphasis on understanding and building upon historical, cultural, and neighborhood-specific contexts as an important step toward constructing buildings and projects that authentically reflect Seattle.

WHO IS EXPECTED TO USE THE GUIDELINES?

The design guidelines are intended for a variety of audiences including developers, design professionals, neighbors, community members, Design Review Board members, DPD staff, and the general public. Each has a specific role in the City's design review process. The guidelines provide all parties in the process with a clear understanding of what the City urges project applicants to strive for in designing new development. The guidelines and the design review process are part of the City's Design Review Program described in Chapter 23.41 of the Seattle Municipal Code, in the Department of Planning and Development's (DPD's) Client Assistance Memo #238, and on the DPD website: www.seattle.gov/dpd/.



READER'S GUIDE

The Citywide Design Guidelines are organized to progress from the broadest scope of issues to the smallest details; and from the beginning of the design process to its completion. Readers are advised to review ALL the design guidelines at the beginning of a new project before attempting to determine which guidelines are most applicable to the project.

The guidelines are divided into three sections—A. Context; B. Public Life; and C. Design Concept—each containing four or five individual guidelines.

Each guideline includes:

- a concise directive and an explanation of what the desired outcome is and why it is important;
- a series of related points, examples, strategies, and/or design approaches to consider; and
- photos and/or diagrams to offer inspiration and guidance.

The guidelines reflect the understanding that all projects are part of a larger context—a block, a neighborhood, pedestrian realm, and open space—that must be considered in project design. They are meant to be used in tandem with the relevant neighborhood-specific design guidelines that exist for 19 neighborhoods as of January 2010. For any neighborhood that has adopted neighborhood-specific design guidelines, both sets of guidelines—neighborhood and Citywide—must be consulted in the review of projects.

A. Context and Site

A1. Natural Systems and Site Features

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

- POSITIVE CLIMATE RESPONSE
- PLANTS AND HABITAT
- SUNLIGHT
- WATER
- AIR
- ALTERNATIVE ENERGY
- TOPOGRAPHY

A2. Urban Pattern and Form:

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

- LOCATION IN THE CITY AND NEIGHBORHOOD
- ADJACENT SITES, STREETS, AND OPEN SPACES
- RELATIONSHIP TO THE BLOCK

A3. Architectural Context and Character:

Contribute to the architectural character of the neighborhood.

- HEIGHT, BULK, AND SCALE
- EMPHASIZING POSITIVE NEIGHBORHOOD ATTRIBUTES
- LOCAL HISTORY AND CULTURE

A4. Access, Circulation, and Connections

Accommodate all modes of travel with connections to existing transportation systems and features.

- PEDESTRIAN WALKWAYS AND CONNECTIONS
- ENTRY LOCATIONS AND RELATIONSHIPS
- CYCLING AND TRANSIT
- VEHICULAR ACCESS AND CIRCULATION

B. Public Life

B1. Public Space

Contribute to the network of public spaces around the site and the connections among them.

A NETWORK OF PUBLIC SPACES
NATURAL HABITATS
ACTIVITIES

B2. Walkability

Create a safe, comfortable, and interesting environment that encourages walking for pleasure and for transportation.

ACCESSIBILITY
WEATHER PROTECTION
SAFETY AND SECURITY
WAYFINDING AND AMENITIES

B3. Activity

Encourage human activity and interaction at street level.

ENTRIES
RETAIL EDGES
RESIDENTIAL EDGES
ACTIVE OPEN SPACE

B4. Transit

Support the use of public transit.

PLANNING AHEAD FOR TRANSIT
PLACEMAKING OPPORTUNITIES

C. Design Concept

C1. Project Uses and Activities

Optimize the arrangement of uses and activities on site.

- POSITIVE CLIMATE RESPONSE
- ARRANGEMENT OF USES
- RELATIONSHIP OF INTERIOR AND EXTERIOR USES
- FLEXIBILITY
- PARKING AND SERVICE USES

C2. Massing

Compose unified, balanced, and harmonious building forms that fit with their surroundings.

- SITING AND ADJACENT CONDITIONS
- DESIGN

C3. Architectural Concept

Develop an architectural concept that will result in a functional and harmonious design.

- FORM AND FUNCTION
- ARCHITECTURAL AND FAÇADE COMPOSITION
- SECONDARY ARCHITECTURAL FEATURES
- SCALE AND TEXTURE

C4. Open Space Concept

Integrate open space with the building design.

- BUILDING-SITE RELATIONSHIP
- OPEN SPACE USES AND ACTIVITIES
- OPEN SPACE DESIGN
- NATURAL SYSTEMS

C5. Materials

Use quality materials for the building and its open spaces.

- EXTERIOR ELEMENTS AND FINISHES
- SIGNAGE
- LIGHTING
- LANDSCAPE AND HARDSCAPE MATERIALS
- LIFE-CYCLE AND CARBON NEUTRAL THINKING

A. Context and Site

What's inside:

A1. Natural Systems and Site Features

A2. Urban Pattern and Form

A3. Architectural Context and Character

A4. Access, Circulation, and Connections



A1

Natural Systems and Site Features

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

why?

Each site has a unique setting and natural environment. Understanding a site's natural features is the starting point for preserving the best qualities and improving upon the others in the design concept. Using natural systems and features effectively is essential to creating an energy efficient and sustainable project that is also comfortable for users and cost efficient to operate and maintain.

how?

Consider these design strategies:

- ✓ Positive climate response
- ✓ Plants and habitat
- ✓ Sunlight
- ✓ Water
- ✓ Air
- ✓ Alternative energy
- ✓ Topography

DESIGN APPROACHES AND STRATEGIES TO CONSIDER:

POSITIVE CLIMATE RESPONSE

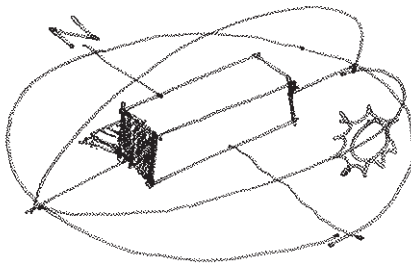
- Use site characteristics and features to help reduce energy use and greenhouse gas emissions that accelerate climate change, thereby achieving a positive climate response.
- Strike a balance between using site resources to project benefit, and minimizing impacts or demands on them.

PLANTS AND HABITAT

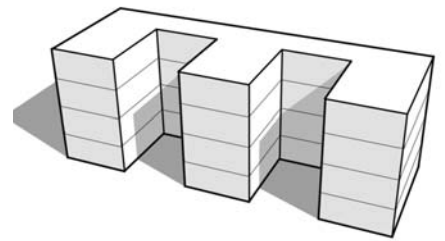
- Incorporate existing on-site natural habitats and landscape elements into project design as part of a network of public spaces and habitats wherever possible.
- Carefully site buildings to retain large trees on site and consider relocating significant trees if retention is not feasible.

SUNLIGHT

- Site and mass buildings to maximize daylight for interior and exterior spaces and minimize shading on adjacent sites.
- Integrate passive and active solar features in the project, such as managing direct sunlight on south and west facing facades through shading devices and planting of deciduous trees.



Siting longer facades east to west brings the most consistent solar exposure and daylighting into the building, providing comfortable spaces for users and potential energy savings.



Narrow or multi-sided floorplates allow daylight and natural ventilation to penetrate deep into the building.

Additional Resources:

Neighborhood Guidelines: The following neighborhoods have their own design guidelines that include neighborhood-specific design direction related to A1: Natural Systems and Features. See guideline numbers A-1 and/or E-3 of the old design guidelines numbering system:

- *Admiral (2002)*
- *Ballard (2001)*
- *Capitol Hill (2005)*
- *Green Lake (2001)*
- *Greenwood/Phinney (2006)*
- *Morgan Junction (2007)*
- *North District/Lake City (2007)*
- *Northgate (2003)*
- *Pike/Pine (2000)*
- *Roosevelt (2000)*
- *South Lake Union (2005)*
- *Upper Queen Anne (2009)*
- *Uptown (2009)*
- *University (2000)*
- *Wallingford (2005)*



Densely landscaped with native plants, this swale is designed to hold street run-off and release it slowly into the stormwater system.

AIR

- Use natural ventilation as a means of reducing the need for mechanical ventilation, taking advantage of local wind patterns wherever possible.

ALTERNATIVE ENERGY

- Integrate alternative energy sources into the design of the project, including wind, solar, and/or ground source heating and cooling as appropriate to reduce demand on traditional energy sources.

TOPOGRAPHY

- Express the natural topography in project design, and re-use and re-store degraded land where possible.
- Locate structures to work with site topography, creating multiple connections for circulation and/or to “stepping up or down” hillsides to accommodate significant changes in elevation.



The topography of a relatively steep site is expressed through the form of the building and its stepped roofline.



Louvers on the windows help to moderate the amount of sunlight received into this building, as do the deciduous trees.

WATER

- Incorporate functional and visible storm water control features such as rain gardens, swales, and green roofs to store, slow and/or reduce rainwater runoff from the site.
- Reduce potable water use. Capture rainwater for storage and reuse for irrigation and non-potable building water uses.



Mature trees are preserved and made a significant feature of the open space for this residential project.



Individual entries have been created where breaks occur in a series of planters on this sloped site, providing a good transition between public and private space.



A2

Urban Pattern and Form

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

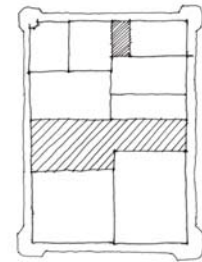
DESIGN APPROACHES AND STRATEGIES TO CONSIDER:

LOCATION IN THE CITY AND NEIGHBORHOOD

- Emphasize attributes that give Seattle, the neighborhood, or the site its distinctive sense of place. Examples include patterns of streets or blocks, slopes, prominent visibility, relationships to bodies of water or significant open spaces, iconic buildings or transportation junctions, and land seen as a gateway to the community.
- Consider the degree of visibility or architectural presence that is appropriate, and design accordingly. Decide whether the site lends itself to a “high-profile” design with significant presence and individual identity, possibly as a future icon; or is better suited for a background building that is a simple but handsome addition to the street and neighborhood.



Originally designed with long curving streets and few intersections, this development reinstated the street grid to better reflect neighboring properties and provide connections to them.



Introducing a mid-block passageway offers an opportunity for greater and more varied pedestrian spaces and circulation.

ADJACENT SITES, STREETS, AND OPEN SPACES

- Contribute to the character and proportion of surrounding public spaces by evaluating adjacent sites, streetscapes and open spaces for how they function as the walls and floor of outdoor spaces or “rooms” for public use. Use the project as an opportunity to complete the public spaces as needed.
- Reinforce interesting characteristics of sites, especially where the street grid and topography create unusually shaped lots that can add drama or distinction to the building massing.
- Design each edge of the project—including visible roofs—as an integrated set of facades.

why?

The combination of urban street patterns, block sizes, and building forms is one element of the character and identity of a neighborhood. Reinforcing the best features of those patterns and forms helps a new project to successfully integrate with existing development, and strengthens the neighborhood as a whole in the process.

how?

Consider these design strategies:

- ✓ *Location in the city and neighborhood*
- ✓ *Adjacent sites, streets, and open spaces*
- ✓ *Relationship to the block*

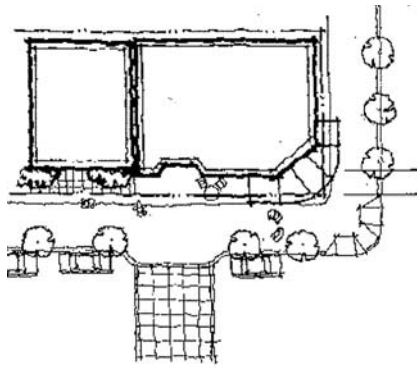
Additional Resources:

Neighborhood Guidelines: The following neighborhoods have their own design guidelines that include neighborhood-specific design direction related to A2: Urban Pattern and Form. See guideline numbers A-1, A-2, A-5, A-10, D-8 and/or E-2 of the old design guidelines numbering system:

- Admiral (2002)
- Ballard (2001)
- Capitol Hill (2005)
- Green Lake (2001)
- Greenwood/Phinney (2006)
- Morgan Junction (2007)
- North Beacon Hill (2006)
- North District/Lake City (2007)
- Northgate (2003/2009?)
- Othello (2006)
- Pike/Pine (2000)
- Roosevelt (2000)
- South Lake Union (2005)
- University (2000)
- Upper Queen Anne (2009)
- Uptown (2009)
- Wallingford (2005)
- West Seattle (2001)

RELATIONSHIP TO THE BLOCK

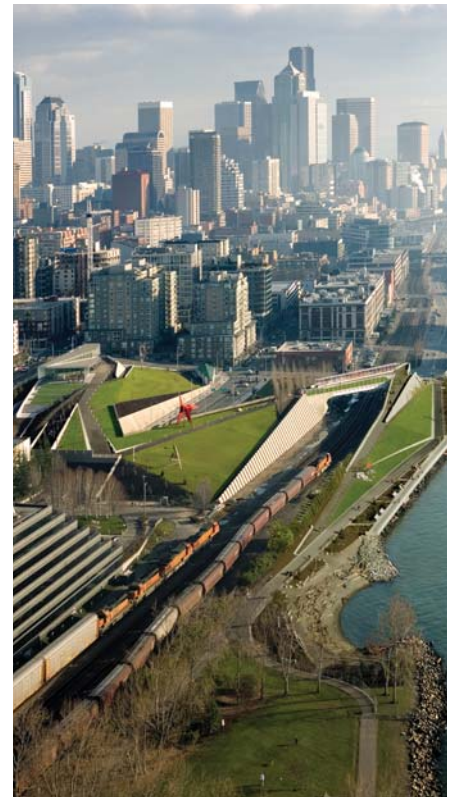
- Use a corner site to greatest advantage. Corner sites can serve as gateways or focal points. Consider using a corner to provide extra space for pedestrians and a generous entry(ies), or build out to the corner to provide a strong urban edge to the block.
- Look to the uses and scales of adjacent buildings for clues about how to design a mid-block building. If the corners of the block are already occupied by buildings with strong presence, consider a simpler design that doesn't compete with them. If street geometries are such that the mid-block site is the termination of another street view, consider a design with enough presence and detail to make the view worthwhile. Where adjacent properties are undeveloped and/or party walls exist as visible blank walls, design the walls to provide interest and human scale.
- Design long facades of full-block buildings so as to avoid a monolithic presence. Provide detail and human scale at street level, and include repeating elements to add variety and rhythm to the façade and overall building design. Consider providing through-block access and/or designing the project as an assemblage of buildings and spaces within the block.
- On sites that abut an alley, design the alley façade and its connection to the street carefully. At a minimum, consider wrapping the treatment of the street-facing façade around the alley corner of the building.



This project uses the corner to highlight a main entrance, providing more sidewalk space in the process.



The intersection of two street grids at irregular angles made for a unique opportunity to shape the form of this building.



An iconic view of the city skyline that shows how topography and building form combine to create a distinctive sense of place.



A3

Architectural Context and Character

Contribute to the architectural character of the neighborhood.

why?

The character of the architecture and open space surrounding a site can offer clues as to how a new project may best contribute to the neighborhood. Responding thoughtfully will help ensure sensitive and well-crafted infill development, including transitions between zones allowing development of varying scales.

how?

Consider these design strategies:

- ✓ Height, bulk, and scale
- ✓ Emphasizing positive neighborhood attributes
- ✓ Local history and culture

DESIGN APPROACHES AND STRATEGIES TO CONSIDER:

HEIGHT, BULK, AND SCALE

- Examine the height, bulk, and scale of adjacent buildings to determine an appropriate complement and/or transition.
- Where a project site abuts a less intensive zone, make a successful transition between zones by lowering the building height, breaking up the mass of the building, and/or matching the scale of adjacent properties in building detailing.



This drawing appropriately shows the proposed project within a broader context in order to assess height, bulk, and scale compatibility with surrounding buildings.

EMPHASIZING POSITIVE NEIGHBORHOOD ATTRIBUTES

- Blend old and new projects, and historic and modern designs through building articulation, scale and proportion, roof forms, detailing and fenestration, and/or the use of complementary materials.
- In existing neighborhoods with a well-defined and desirable character, new buildings should complement or be compatible with the architectural style and siting patterns of neighborhood buildings.
- Neighborhoods where architectural character is evolving or otherwise in transition offer opportunities for new development to lead the way in establishing a positive and desirable context for others to build upon in the future.
- Explore how contemporary designs can contribute to the development of attractive new forms and styles, especially with projects that incorporate and express sustainable design solutions.

Additional Resources:

Neighborhood Guidelines: The following neighborhoods have their own design guidelines that include neighborhood-specific design direction related to A3: Architectural Context and Character. See guideline numbers A-5, B-1 and/or C-1 of the old numbering system:

- Admiral (2002)
- Ballard (2001)
- Capitol Hill (2005)
- Green Lake (2001)
- Greenwood/Phinney (2006)
- Morgan Junction (2007)
- North Beacon Hill (2006)
- North District/Lake City (2007)
- Northgate (2003/2009?)
- Othello (2006)
- Pike/Pine (2000)
- Roosevelt (2000)
- South Lake Union (2005)
- University (2000)
- Upper Queen Anne (2009)
- Uptown (2009)
- Wallingford (2005)
- West Seattle (2001)

- Reuse existing structures on the site where feasible as a means of using resources sustainably and incorporating historical or cultural elements into the new project.



Maintaining the scale and architectural character of this 1910 building was an important element in reflecting its prior occupancy and cultural associations while updating the building for contemporary uses and opening another chapter in its history.



The floor levels and heights of these two projects are similar and compatible while other detailing serves to nicely differentiate the two.



The form of these townhouses reflects, without copying, the scale, rooflines, and entry detailing of adjacent single-family houses.



Artwork referencing local history at the public plaza level of this project provides a link to the past in this rapidly changing neighborhood.

LOCAL HISTORY AND CULTURE

- Consider the history of the site and neighborhood as a potential place-making opportunity.
- Look for historical and cultural significance, using neighborhood groups and archives as resources.
- Where a neighborhood has a strong history or association with a particular ethnic group, seek to incorporate references to that culture into the project design in meaningful and innovative ways.



A4

Access, Circulation, and Connections

Accommodate all modes of travel with connections to existing transportation systems and features.

why?

Each project needs to address access and circulation in its design. Looking beyond the project site to coordinate with existing transportation systems and facilities helps meet those needs efficiently, making the best use of both project resources and the public transportation infrastructure. Focusing on alternative modes of travel can help reduce automobile congestion and pollution, and improve public health.

how?

Consider these design strategies:

- ✓ Pedestrian walkways and connections
- ✓ Entry locations and relationships
- ✓ Cycling and transit
- ✓ Vehicle access and circulation

DESIGN APPROACHES AND STRATEGIES TO CONSIDER:

PEDESTRIAN WALKWAYS AND CONNECTIONS

- Site pedestrian walkways so that they are well integrated with existing infrastructure and support pedestrian connections within and outside the project.
- Expand or enhance the adjacent sidewalk with features such as landscaping, pedestrian amenities, street furniture, and public art.
- Provide ample space for pedestrians, particularly in areas where there is already heavy pedestrian use.
- On sloped and full-block sites, add features to assist pedestrians, such as stairs, escalators, and through-block connections.

ENTRY LOCATIONS AND RELATIONSHIPS

- Select access points that easily and conveniently accommodate arrival by all modes of travel, while also preventing conflicts between modes.
- Site the primary entry in a location that logically relates to building uses and clearly connects all major points of access with the primary entry. Highlight entries and spaces leading up to them through the use of special paving, landscaping, public art, and/or architectural features.

CYCLING AND TRANSIT

- Encourage walking, cycling, transit, and other sustainable means of transportation in the siting and design of walkways, entries, and other access points.
- Sites that include, or are near, a transit stop should provide a comfortable environment for transit patrons with features such as adequate waiting and queuing space, trash receptacles, and seating or leaning rails.
- Support convenient use of bicycles with features such as with well-located bicycle racks and shower facilities where appropriate. Consider weather protection and security when selecting a location for bicycle storage.

Additional Resources:

Neighborhood Guidelines: The following neighborhoods have their own design guidelines that include neighborhood-specific design direction related to A4: Access, Circulation and Connections. See guideline numbers A-3, A-8 and/or D-7 of the old numbering system:

- Admiral (2002)
- Ballard (2001)
- Capitol Hill (2005)
- Morgan Junction (2007)
- North Beacon Hill (2006)
- North District/Lake City (2007)
- Northgate (2003/2009?)
- Othello (2006)
- Roosevelt (2000)
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- Uptown (2009)
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VEHICULAR ACCESS AND CIRCULATION

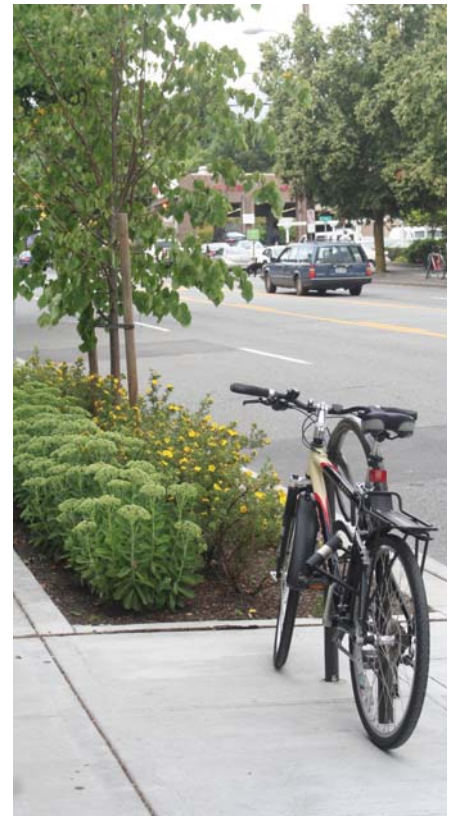
- Examine existing traffic circulation and volumes to determine the optimal location for vehicular access, service uses, and deliveries, taking care to limit interaction between pedestrians and vehicles and avoid impacts to pedestrian circulation and public space.
- Locate and design service entries, loading docks, and trash receptacles to maintain pedestrian safety, circulation, and comfort.
- In residential projects, provide prominently located and easily accessible space for shared vehicles and carpooling, electrical access for electric vehicles, and other amenities as a means of encouraging more sustainable forms of travel by residents.
- Create a safer condition for pedestrians, cyclists, and drivers wherever possible:
 - Minimize the number and width of driveways and curb cuts, or sharing driveways with adjacent property owners.
 - Use alleys for access.
 - Locate driveways so they are less visually dominant.
 - Use design techniques to reduce conflicts with vehicles, such as contrasting pavement to indicate vehicle entries or adding warning lights or other safety devices for vehicles exiting a garage.



Street trees, wide sidewalks, and varied pavement color and texture make it clear where pedestrians and vehicles are to travel, thereby reducing the potential for conflicts between them.



A small break in the lush landscaping of this planting strip gives just enough room to install a simple bike rack in a convenient, visible, and safe location.



Anticipating larger volumes of bicycle traffic, this project provided space for a bike shed for residents and employees to store bikes out of the weather.



B. Public Life

What's inside:

B1. Public Space

B2. Walkability

B3. Activity

B4. Transit



B1

Public Space

Contribute to the network of public spaces around the site and the connections among them.

DESIGN APPROACHES AND SOLUTIONS TO CONSIDER:

A NETWORK OF PUBLIC SPACES

- Enhance public space by designing the project to relate to the public areas and activities around it, including sidewalks, streets and alleys, commercial and cultural activities, circulation routes and open spaces.
- Consider opportunities to expand the physical space available for public life, such as widened sidewalks, recessed entries, curb bulbs, or through routes, coordinating with the Department of Transportation for all street-related improvements.



"In this project a 'woonerf' creates a shared common space for both people and cars that is larger than either would have on its own. These shared spaces are practical solutions for higher-density development on tight lots."

NATURAL HABITATS

- Incorporate features into project-related public space that are environmentally sound and sustainable as well as pleasing to people, such as bioswales for stormwater detention and stands of trees or shrubs for avian habitat.

ACTIVITIES

- Support desired public activities on or near the site, and design project-related public space accordingly. In addition to places for walking and sitting, the design may include informal gathering space, performance space, farmer's markets, cafes, or street vending.
- Include features and amenities for activities beyond daylight hours and throughout the seasons of the year, especially in neighborhood centers where active public space will contribute vibrancy, economic health, and public safety. These may include seasonal plantings or displays, outdoor heaters, overhead weather protection, outdoor dining, and/or an extra level of pedestrian lighting.

why?

Public open space is a valuable resource. When projects expand and improve upon the network of public spaces around them, the impact is greater than would result from isolated contributions. Well designed and connected public space benefits both the project and the neighborhood by attracting people to the area, strengthening the community, and making room for a vibrant public life.

how?

Consider these design strategies:

- ✓ A network of public spaces
- ✓ Natural habitats
- ✓ Activities

Additional Resources:

Neighborhood Guidelines: The following neighborhoods have their own design guidelines that include neighborhood-specific design direction related to B1: Public Space. See guideline numbers A-4, A-7, D-1, D-2 and/or E-1 of the old numbering system:

- Admiral (2002)
- Ballard (2001)
- Capitol Hill (2005)
- Green Lake (2001)
- Greenwood/Phinney (2006)
- Morgan Junction (2007)
- North Beacon Hill (2006)
- North District/Lake City (2007)
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- Roosevelt (2000)
- South Lake Union (2005)
- University (2000)
- Upper Queen Anne (2009)
- Uptown (2009)
- Wallingford (2005)
- West Seattle (2001)



An extra wide sidewalk here is an appropriate response to an anticipated high volume of pedestrians. Weather protection, seating, plantings, bike racks, and waste cans are all comfortably accommodated in the space provided.



Two small tables with chairs suit the scale of this sidewalk perfectly and make it clear what the adjacent retail space has to offer.



Glazed, operable walls can be opened fully to the street, expanding the public space along this retail street.



Another fully glazed, operable wall creates a porous edge and invites open-air dining during good weather.



B2

Walkability

Create a safe, comfortable, and interesting environment that encourages walking for pleasure and for transportation.

DESIGN APPROACHES AND STRATEGIES TO CONSIDER:

ACCESSIBILITY

- Provide access for people of all abilities in a manner that is integrated into the design.

WEATHER PROTECTION

- Provide overhead weather protection on urban streets, and locate it at or near uses that generate pedestrian activity such as entries, retail uses, and transit stops.
- Integrate weather protection into the design of the structure as a whole, and ensure that it also relates well to neighboring buildings in design, coverage, or other features.
- Extend weather protection over the length of the building, addressing changes in topography as needed to provide continuous coverage.
- Incorporate drainage into the design in order to keep water off of the façade and sidewalk.
- Create an artful and people-friendly space beneath the canopy by using human-scale architectural elements and a pattern of forms and/or textures at intervals along the façade.
- If transparent canopies are used, provide for regular cleaning and maintenance. Ensure that the building includes space to store canopy scaffolding and cleaning supplies.

SAFETY AND SECURITY

- Create a safe environment through thoughtful design, providing lines of sight and encouraging natural surveillance with “eyes on the street” through careful placement of doors, windows, balconies and street level uses.
- Provide lighting at appropriate levels and scales; including pathway illumination, pedestrian and entry lighting, and/or security lights.
- Ensure transparency of street level uses by keeping views open into spaces behind walls or plantings, at corners, or along narrow passageways. Choose semi-transparent rather than opaque screening.

why?

Walkable neighborhoods are fundamental to achieving Seattle’s sustainability goals. By contributing to a human-centered neighborhood with attractive buildings and streets that make walking enjoyable, a project can significantly increase the likelihood, frequency, and intensity of pedestrian travel.

how?

Consider these design strategies:

- ✓ Accessibility
- ✓ Weather protection
- ✓ Safety and security
- ✓ Wayfinding and amenities

Additional Resources:

Neighborhood Guidelines: The following neighborhoods have their own design guidelines that include neighborhood-specific design direction related to B2: Walkability. See guideline numbers A-4, A-6, C-3, D-1, D-2 and/or D-7 of the old numbering system:

- Admiral (2002)
- Ballard (2001)
- Capitol Hill (2005)
- Green Lake (2001)
- Greenwood/Phinney (2006)
- Morgan Junction (2007)
- North Beacon Hill (2006)
- North District/Lake City (2007)
- Northgate (2003/2009?)
- Othello (2006)
- Pike/Pine (2000)
- Roosevelt (2000)
- South Lake Union (2005)
- University (2000)
- Upper Queen Anne (2009)
- Uptown (2009)
- Wallingford (2005)
- West Seattle (2001)

WAYFINDING AND AMENITIES

- Design so that pedestrians can easily orient themselves within the project, using design features as a means of wayfinding wherever possible, and clear directional signage where needed.
- Provide variety and interest for pedestrians through amenities appropriate to the site, such as seating, lighting, landscaping, pedestrian scale signage, site furniture, art work, or kiosks.
- Include human-scale features and detailing in the design of buildings and open space to foster a pedestrian environment that is welcoming and comfortable.
- Create character and a sense of place that coordinates with and supports the overall architectural design.
- Enhance the pedestrian's experience with, and connection to, nature by using multiple height plantings, a variety of plant materials, and seasonal variation to create conditions suitable for birds and other wildlife.



Even this relatively narrow sidewalk has clearly demarcated zones for street trees, pedestrians, and retail-related elements, making it a pleasant place to stroll.



Above-grade residential entries are detailed in a manner that offers privacy for residents and makes it clear the space is semi-private, while still lending interest to the public sidewalk through the use of seasonal planters, decorative fencing, and mature street trees.



Fencing, recessed entries, and landscaping provide an element of privacy and distinction between public and private space along this sidewalk on a residential street.



B3

Activity

Encourage activity and interaction at street level.

why?

Livelier streets can contribute to safer streets, and safer streets can lead to more liveliness and activity. Engaging the pedestrian around a project helps to create an interesting, secure, and vibrant setting for commerce, cultural exchange, and social interaction.

how?

Consider these design strategies:

- ✓ Entries
- ✓ Retail edges
- ✓ Residential edges
- ✓ Active open space

DESIGN APPROACHES AND STRATEGIES TO CONSIDER:

ENTRIES

- Design entries to be identifiable and distinctive with clear lines of sight and lobbies visually connected to the street. Make entries distinctive through the use of canopies, porches, balconies, decks, landscaping, special paving and/or lighting.

RETAIL EDGES

- Engage passersby by creating a “porous edge” between the building and street with multiple entries, and by making a physical and visual connection between people on the sidewalk and retail activities in the building.
- Maximize visibility into the interior and merchandise displays. Consider fully operational glazed doors that can be completely opened to the street, increased height in lobbies, and/or special lighting for displays.
- Allow space for activities such as sidewalk vending, seating and restaurant dining to occur, possibly by setting structures back from the street or incorporating space in the project design into which retail uses can extend.

RESIDENTIAL EDGES

- Provide security and privacy for residential units at street level, providing a buffer of semi-public/private space between the development and the street or neighboring buildings.
- In mixed use buildings, establish a residential identity distinct from commercial entries by using features such as sheltered or courtyard entries, canopies, porches, stoops, seating walls, or stairways; screens and upward-operating shades; transitional spaces such as portals or arcades; individualized residential doors and paving; and signage, lighting, gardens, and landscaping with a residential scale and character.
- For townhouses or rowhouses with individual unit entries, create obvious, attractive, well-lit entries that are protected from the weather.

Additional Resources:

Neighborhood Guidelines: The following neighborhoods have their own design guidelines that include neighborhood-specific design direction related to B3: Activity. See guideline numbers A-3, A-4, A-6, D-11 and/or D-12 of the old numbering system:

- Admiral (2002)
- Ballard (2001)
- Capitol Hill (2005)
- Green Lake (2001)
- Greenwood/Phinney (2006)
- Morgan Junction (2007)
- North Beacon Hill (2006)
- North District/Lake City (2007)
- Northgate (2003/2009?)
- Othello (2006)
- Pike/Pine (2000)
- Roosevelt (2000)
- South Lake Union (2005)
- University (2000)
- Upper Queen Anne (2009)
- Uptown (2009)
- Wallingford (2005)
- West Seattle (2001)

- For multi-family or mixed-use buildings with a central entry, locate the entry along a primary pedestrian corridor.
- Provide opportunity for interaction among residents and neighbors by locating commonly used features or services in the area between buildings, such as mailboxes, outdoor seating, seasonal displays, and space for informal events.

ACTIVE OPEN SPACE

- Concentrate activity areas in places with sunny exposure, views across spaces, and in direct line with pedestrian routes.
- Animate open spaces with water features, seasonal plantings, and/or programmed activities such as music concerts, food vendors, street artists, and seasonal performances.
- Provide amenities such as ample, moveable seating and tables, an “anchor” use, a small meeting room, a community bulletin board, space for musicians to perform, kiosks, regular or seasonal events, and other amenities.
- If appropriate to the building uses and community desires, consider including space and amenities for informal community gathering on a regular basis. These gathering areas are often characterized by:
 - A location at the crossroads of high levels of pedestrian traffic.
 - Proximity to shops and services used regularly by members of the community.
 - Locally-owned and -staffed venues providing basic services in a relaxed atmosphere during peak hours of pedestrian circulation.
 - Interior or exterior, public or private spaces, such as a small coffee shop, magazine or book shop, tot lots, libraries, laundries, and dog parks.
 - Neighborhood-specific design guidelines may offer guidance in identifying community “heart” locations where an active open space might logically be a good fit and desired use.



Generously sized plazas and sidewalks, lush plantings, a variety of paving materials, colorful signs and storefronts, good lighting, and plenty of seating virtually guarantee year round activity at this popular shopping area.



Retail and entertainment uses placed at the heart of this development enliven the entire project and provide a central space for people—residents and visitors—to gather.



B4 Transit

Support the use of public transit.

why?

Public transit is a significant component of reducing carbon emissions and creating a sustainable city. Providing space for transit facilities and patrons, and actively welcoming them, is part of ensuring transit's success. Projects can contribute to a comfortable environment for transit users by providing specific amenities and encouraging pedestrian activity.

how?

Consider these design strategies:

- ✓ Planning ahead for transit
- ✓ Placemaking opportunities

DESIGN APPROACHES AND SOLUTIONS TO CONSIDER:

PLANNING AHEAD FOR TRANSIT

- Consider how a transit stop adjacent to or near the site may influence project design and suggest logical locations for building entries, retail uses, open space, or landscaping. Note that transit agencies may be able to assist in developing transit stop design and amenities.
- Where transit stops are adjacent to the site, incorporate features to support riders where feasible such as waiting areas away from store front or lobby entrances; clear lines of sight to approaching buses; appropriate lighting levels; seating; overhead weather protection; public art; and/or information systems, signage and other wayfinding devices.
- Where transit stops are not adjacent to the site, work with Metro to identify where the nearest transit stops and pedestrian routes are and contribute design features that facilitate connections as appropriate.

PLACEMAKING OPPORTUNITIES

- Use the presence of a transit stop as an opportunity for placemaking for the site and for neighborhood identity as appropriate.
- Take advantage of the presence of transit patrons to support retail uses in the building and to be an asset to the site.



Overhead weather protection and leaning rails have been well integrated into the design of this building, creating a highly comfortable and functional transit zone as well as a handsome streetfront.

C. Design Concept

What's inside:

C1. Project Uses and Activities

C2. Massing

C3. Architectural Concept

C4. Open Space Concept

C5. Materials



C1

Project Uses and Activities

Optimize the arrangement of uses and activities on site.

why?

Project design is driven by the specific uses and activities that are expected to occur on the site. A successful arrangement of uses and activities forms the basis for clear and cohesive architectural and open space concepts, helps to use resources efficiently and sustainably, and makes the project easy to understand, use, and maintain over time.

how?

Consider these design strategies:

- ✓ Positive climate response
- ✓ Arrangement of uses
- ✓ Relationship of interior and exterior uses
- ✓ Flexibility
- ✓ Parking and service uses

DESIGN APPROACHES AND STRATEGIES TO CONSIDER:

POSITIVE CLIMATE RESPONSE

- Locate uses to take advantage of solar exposure and natural ventilation. Careful location and orientation of window openings will allow building users to benefit from passive solar gain, daylight penetration deep into the building, and local breezes that create healthy interior spaces and replace purchased utility energy with natural energy available on the site.

ARRANGEMENT OF USES

- Locate public uses in visible or prominent areas, such as at entries or along the street front. Take into account any places or features identified by the community as important, or “heart” locations.
- Site and design project-related public open spaces to connect with, or enhance, the uses and activities of other nearby public open space where appropriate. Look for opportunities to support positive uses and activities on adjacent properties and/or the sidewalk.

RELATIONSHIP OF INTERIOR AND EXTERIOR USES

- Locate interior and exterior uses and activities to take advantage of views and physical connections between them, particularly activities along sidewalks, parks or other public spaces.
- Consider the impact of the arrangement of uses on the building facades. Create a harmonious design that works for the interior and exterior of the building.



A small site and ambitious program necessitated this creative response to accommodating vehicular circulation and open space for residents—the internal “street” is also a courtyard and gathering space as needed.

Additional Resources:

Neighborhood Guidelines: The following neighborhoods have their own design guidelines that include neighborhood-specific design direction related to C1: Project Uses and Activities. See guideline numbers A-1, A-8, A-9, C-2, D-2, D-3, D-4, D-5 and/or D-6 of the old numbering system:

- Admiral (2002)
- Ballard (2001)
- Capitol Hill (2005)
- Green Lake (2001)
- Greenwood/Phinney (2006)
- Morgan Junction (2007)
- North Beacon Hill (2006)
- North District/Lake City (2007)
- Northgate (2003/2009?)
- Pike/Pine (2000)
- Roosevelt (2000)
- South Lake Union (2005)
- University (2000)
- Upper Queen Anne (2009)
- Uptown (2009)
- Wallingford (2005)
- West Seattle (2001)

FLEXIBILITY

- Build in flexibility so the building can adapt over time to evolving needs, such as the ability to change residential space to commercial space as needed. Flexibility in the use or configuration of spaces will enable a building to remain useful over a period of many years.

PARKING AND SERVICE USES

- Preserve the sidewalk for pedestrians and avoid encroachment by, or conflict with, vehicles. Use design techniques such as contrasting pavement to indicate vehicle entries, and warning lights or sounds for vehicles exiting a garage. Where wheelchair ramps are provided, consider plantings along the edges.
- Reduce the visual impacts of parking lots, structures, entrances, and related signs and equipment by minimizing the number and width of driveways and curb cuts; by sharing driveways with adjacent property owners; and by locating driveways so they are less visually dominant.
- Locate parking below grade wherever possible. Where a surface parking lot is the only alternative, locate the parking in rear or side yards, or an lower or less visible portions of the site. Break large parking lots into smaller lots, and/or provide attractive landscaping or fencing as a screen.
- Design at-grade parking structures so that they are architecturally compatible with the rest of the building and streetscape.
- Avoid large blank walls along visible façades wherever possible. Where retaining walls above eye level are unavoidable, consider terraces and landscaping.
- Where expanses of blank walls or garage facades are unavoidable, include uses or design treatments at the street level that have human scale and are designed for pedestrians. These may include newsstands, ticket booths and flower shops (even if small or narrow); green walls, landscaped areas or raised planters; wall setbacks or other indentations; display windows; trellises or other secondary elements; and/or public art as appropriate to area zoning and uses.
- Where service facilities abut pedestrian pathways and other public areas, maintain an attractive edge through screening, plantings, or other design treatments.



This garage entry is clearly visible but detailed in a manner that integrates it with the rest of the building and yields prominence to the main entrance for pedestrians.



C2

Massing

Compose unified, balanced, and harmonious building forms that fit with their surroundings.

why?

The manner in which a building's massing is handled has much to do with how well it fits within its context, and how it is perceived by neighbors. Siting and designing a building's massing with sensitivity to nearby zones helps to create a project that is compatible with the scale of development anticipated by land use policies for the area. Skillful siting and design can also help preserve privacy among residents or workers in adjacent buildings.

how?

Consider these design strategies:

- ✓ Siting and adjacent conditions
- ✓ Design

DESIGN APPROACHES AND SOLUTIONS TO CONSIDER:

SITING AND ADJACENT CONDITIONS

- Arrange the mass of the building carefully, considering not only the surrounding buildings but also the characteristics of the site and the proposed uses of the building and its open space. Use topography to de-emphasize the mass of larger buildings as needed.
- Consider a variety of factors when making decisions about how to arrange building massing, including distance from the edge of a less intensive zone; differences in development standards between abutting zones; the type of separation from adjacent properties (e.g. separation by property line only, by an alley or street, or by physical features such as grade change); adjacencies to different neighborhoods or districts; adjacencies to parks, open spaces, significant buildings or view corridors; and shading to neighboring properties.
- Create transitions among existing and proposed buildings. Pay attention to the height, scale, and massing of a building when the site is on the edge of a less intensive zone, or when the site is especially large, has an unusual shape, or has topography that would make buildings appear greater in height, bulk, or scale than usual. Use changes in topography, site shape, and existing vegetation or structures to help with the transition; for example siting the greatest mass of the building on the lower part of the site or using an existing stand of trees to buffer building height from a smaller neighboring building.



Well-balanced horizontal and vertical elements create a pleasing façade that helps to add interest to the massing of this full-block, mixed-use project.



A series of bays and sets of windows lend rhythm and pattern to what would otherwise be a very long, flat façade.

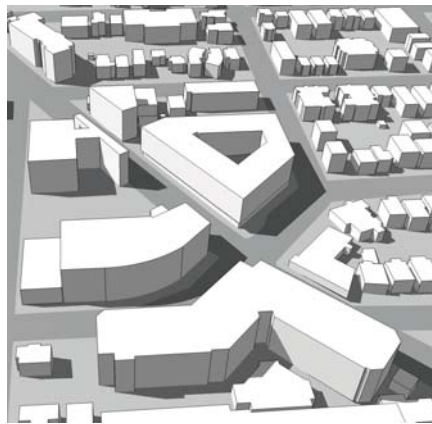
Additional Resources:

Neighborhood Guidelines: The following neighborhoods have their own design guidelines that include neighborhood-specific design direction related to C2: Massing. See guideline numbers A-5, A-6, B-1, C-1, and/or C-2 of the old numbering system:

- Admiral (2002)
- Ballard (2001)
- Capitol Hill (2005)
- Green Lake (2001)
- Greenwood/Phinney (2006)
- Morgan Junction (2007)
- North Beacon Hill (2006)
- North District/Lake City (2007)
- Northgate (2003/2009?)
- Othello (2006)
- Pike/Pine (2000)
- Roosevelt (2000)
- South Lake Union (2005)
- University (2000)
- Upper Queen Anne (2009)
- Uptown (2009)
- Wallingford (2005)
- West Seattle (2001)

DESIGN

- Devise a well-proportioned base, middle and top to the building, addressing how the building meets both the ground and the sky. Consider also how surrounding buildings have addressed base, middle, and top, and whether those solutions—or similar ones—might be appropriate to the project.
- Use secondary architectural elements to reduce the perceived mass of larger projects. Consider creating recesses or indentations in the building envelope; adding balconies, bay windows, porches, canopies or other elements; and/or highlighting building entries. These elements should derive from and reflect interior uses or circulation as much as possible so as to maintain a strong relationship between interior uses and exterior forms.



Diagrams such as this one showing the massing of several large buildings in contrast to existing smaller scale development are useful in analyzing appropriate fit with context.



In this project, the form and mass of the building curve inward mid-block to indicate the location of a primary entry as well as to break up the mass of a block-long façade.



C3

Architectural Concept

Develop an architectural concept that will result in a functional and harmonious design.

why?

A strong architectural concept is essential in order to establish a clear organizing principle from which further development of the design can proceed. To best meet the needs of project users and to contribute to the broader neighborhood, the architectural concept should arise from a solid understanding and integration of surrounding development, public space, and proposed uses and activities.

how?

Consider these design strategies:

- ✓ *Form and function*
- ✓ *Architectural and facade composition*
- ✓ *Secondary architectural features*
- ✓ *Scale and texture*

DESIGN APPROACHES AND STRATEGIES TO CONSIDER:

FORM AND FUNCTION

- Detail buildings to provide clues to their functions and uses. Buildings with few design clues as to what functions and uses they serve, often make awkward neighbors. Large blank walls, industrial materials, and retail-size windows can be confusing in a residential area. Conversely, commercial buildings that mimic residential styles can also be confusing and inappropriate in a commercial district. Building flexibility should not be at the expense of building legibility.

ARCHITECTURAL AND FAÇADE COMPOSITION

- Thoughtfully design the building facades considering the composition and architectural expression of the building as a whole. Ensure that facades are attractive and well-proportioned through the placement and detailing of all elements, including bays, fenestration, and materials, and any patterns created by their arrangement. Where roofs are visible, consider their design also as a visible façade.

SECONDARY ARCHITECTURAL FEATURES

- Create multiple layers of depth on facades where appropriate by thoughtfully incorporating balconies, canopies, decks, or other elements into the façade design. Where these elements are prominent design features, the quality of the materials is critical.

SCALE AND TEXTURE

- Incorporate architectural features, elements, and details that are of human scale into the building facades, entries, courtyards, and exterior spaces in a manner that is consistent with the overall architectural concept.
- Consider the character of the building as expressed in the form, scale, and materials of the building, and strive for a fine-grained scale or “texture” particularly at the street level and other areas where pedestrians predominate.

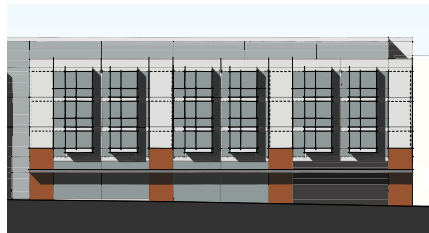
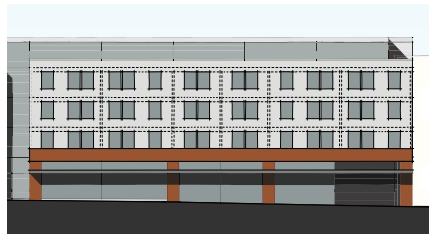
Additional Resources:

Neighborhood Guidelines: The following neighborhoods have their own design guidelines that include neighborhood-specific design direction related to C3: Architectural Concept. See guideline numbers C-1, C-2, C-3, and/or E-2 of the old numbering system:

- Admiral (2002)
- Ballard (2001)
- Capitol Hill (2005)
- Green Lake (2001)
- Greenwood/Phinney (2006)
- Morgan Junction (2007)
- North Beacon Hill (2006)
- North District/Lake City (2007)
- Northgate (2003/2009?)
- Pike/Pine (2000)
- Roosevelt (2000)
- South Lake Union (2005)
- University (2000)
- Upper Queen Anne (2009)
- Uptown (2009)
- Wallingford (2005)
- West Seattle (2001)



Steep roof pitches, nicely detailed eaves, and the use of a variety of materials all give this corner property a strong presence in a neighborhood of traditional houses.



Three versions of façade treatments were explored for this building in order to determine the optimal fit with building use and neighborhood context.



A clear base, middle, and top along with a consistent window pattern lend detail to an otherwise straightforward building form.



Slightly unconventional, yet still familiar, the skewed gable roof forms help blend this townhouse project into a neighborhood of single-family houses.



Bold color and carefully arranged windows create a playful and lively façade that is very much at home in this neighborhood of older industrial buildings and active arts, restaurant, and street life.



C4

Open Space Concept

Integrate open space with the building design.

why?

Open space is the complement to a building's massing and volume with its size, form, and shape inversely related to that of the building. Designing open space in tandem with buildings helps to ensure that both will function well and complement one another, and that high-quality, attractive green spaces will be added to the city through the development of the project.

how?

Consider these design strategies:

- ✓ Building-site relationship
- ✓ Open space uses and activities
- ✓ Natural systems

DESIGN APPROACHES AND SOLUTIONS TO CONSIDER:

BUILDING-SITE RELATIONSHIP

- Develop an open space concept in conjunction with the architectural concept to ensure that interior and exterior spaces relate well to each other and support the ecological and human functions of the development as a whole.

OPEN SPACE USES AND ACTIVITIES

- Thoughtfully plan the size, uses, activities, and features of each open space to meet the needs of expected users, ensuring each space has a purpose and function and leaving no “leftover” open spaces.
- Respond to environmental conditions and seasonal and daily light and weather shifts, matching uses with appropriate conditions. For example, place outdoor seating and gathering areas where there is sunny exposure and shelter from wind. Plan for changing needs over time.



With the building wrapping around all sides of a large block, this project was able to create a large open space with views to and from units and good sun exposure for building residents.

Additional Resources:

Neighborhood Guidelines: The following neighborhoods have their own design guidelines that include neighborhood-specific design direction related to C4: Open Space Concept. See guideline numbers A-1, A-4, A-7, D-7 and/or E-2 of the old numbering system:

- Admiral (2002)
- Ballard (2001)
- Capitol Hill (2005)
- Green Lake (2001)
- Greenwood/Phinney (2006)
- Morgan Junction (2007)
- North Beacon Hill (2006)
- North District/Lake City (2007)
- Northgate (2003/2009?)
- Pike/Pine (2000)
- Roosevelt (2000)
- South Lake Union (2005)
- University (2000)
- Upper Queen Anne (2009)
- Uptown (2009)
- Wallingford (2005)
- West Seattle (2001)

OPEN SPACE DESIGN

- Where a strong open space concept exists in the neighborhood, reinforce existing character and patterns of street tree planting, buffers or treatment of topographic changes. Where no strong patterns exist, initiate a strong open space concept through the design of the project that other projects can build upon in the future.
- Combine hardscape and plantings effectively and creatively to create pleasant, attractive outdoor spaces and natural habitats. “Green” the project creatively with a variety of features, such as planters, green roofs and decks, groves of trees, and vertical green trellises along with more traditional foundation plantings, street trees, and seasonal displays.

NATURAL SYSTEMS

- Emulate natural habitats and ecosystems and provide linkages to existing habitats where they exist. Where they do not exist, create new habitats to encourage future linkages.
- Include significant amounts of vegetation in the open space design concept in order to realize the benefits of shading, cooling, habitat, wind buffering, and carbon absorption that vegetation offers.



Although small, this elegantly detailed and appointed interior courtyard is a perfect complement to the architecture of the surrounding building.



This townhouse project on a small site uses pavers for the interior pathways, lending texture and pattern to the shared open space.



C5

Materials

Use quality materials for the building and its open spaces.

Design Approaches and Solutions to Consider:

EXTERIOR ELEMENTS AND FINISHES

- Select durable and attractive materials, taking special care to detail corners, edges, and transitions. Highly visible features, such as balconies, grilles and railings should be especially attractive, well crafted and easy to maintain.
- Pay particular attention to environments that create harsh conditions that may require special materials and details, such as marine areas or open or exposed sites. Similar attention should be paid to interior spaces that will be heavily used and subject to more wear and tear by the public.

SIGNAGE

- Add interest to the street environment with exterior signs and attachments that are appropriate in scale and character desired for the neighborhood.
- Design signage within the context of architectural and open space concepts, and coordinate the details with façade design, lighting, and other project features so that the signs are a visual and functional complement to the project as a whole.

LIGHTING

- Use lighting both to increase site safety and highlight architectural or landscape features such as entries, signs, canopies, plantings, art, and architectural detailing.
- Design project lighting based upon the uses on and off site; taking care to provide illumination to serve building needs while avoiding off-site night glare and light pollution, particularly spill-over lighting to nearby residences. Use energy efficient fixtures.



Building materials are not limited to brick and mortar—this building covered almost entirely with a variety of plants is literally a green façade.

why?

The choice of materials, and how they are detailed, has a great impact on how well a project design concept is articulated and implemented. Designs that are well executed using quality materials will help a project stand the test of time—both stylistically and materially—and become a valued asset to the community.

how?

Consider these design strategies:

- ✓ Exterior elements and finishes
- ✓ Signage
- ✓ Lighting
- ✓ Landscape and hardscape materials

Additional Resources:

The following neighborhoods have their own design guidelines that include neighborhood-specific design direction related to C5: Materials. See guideline numbers C-1, D-9, D-10, E-1, E-2 and/or E-3 of the old numbering system:

*Admiral (2002)
Ballard (2001)
Capitol Hill (2005)
Green Lake (2001)
Greenwood/Phinney (2006)
Morgan Junction (2007)
North Beacon Hill (2006)
North District/Lake City (2007)
Northgate (2003/2009?)
Othello (2006)
Pike/Pine (2000)
Roosevelt (2000)
South Lake Union (2005)
University (2000)
Upper Queen Anne (2009)
Uptown (2009)
Wallingford (2005)
West Seattle (2001)*

LANDSCAPE AND HARDSCAPE MATERIALS

- Reinforce the overall design concept through the selection of landscape materials. Choose plants that will bring the design to life and create enduring green spaces.
- Use exterior courtyards, plazas, and other hard surfaced areas as an opportunity to add color, texture, and/or pattern and enliven public areas through the use of distinctive and durable paving materials.
- Select plants that are appropriate to particular locations, taking into account solar access, soil conditions and adjacent patterns of use, aiming for landscaping that will thrive under urban conditions.
- Favor native plants, plants with minimal watering requirements, and plants that add to habitat where possible.
- Select plants that upon maturity will be of appropriate size, scale, and shape to contribute to the site as intended. It may be necessary to create a landscaping plan for various stages of plant maturity, such as 5, 10, and 20 year plans in order to ensure the landscaping will perform and function as needed over the life of the project.

LIFE-CYCLE AND CARBON NEUTRAL THINKING

- Select materials with consideration for the impacts generated over their life cycle including the harvesting or extraction process for raw materials, the manufacturing process for finished materials, transportation of materials at all stages, and their use in construction, as well as deconstruction and disposal at the end of the development's life.
- Use renewable materials or materials sustainably harvested and manufactured whenever possible to limit impacts to natural resources.
- Favor materials that are regionally sourced and/or manufactured whenever possible in order to reduce the carbon footprint of the manufacture and transport of materials.
- Design the project so that it may be deconstructed at the end of its useful lifetime, with connections and assembly techniques that will allow reuse of materials.



Glass, wood, steel, glass—and rooftop plants combine successfully in this project.

Appendices

What's inside:

Matrix of Proposed and Original Design Guidelines

Original Guidelines (1994): *Design Review: Guidelines for
Multifamily and Commercial Buildings*

Correlation of Updated Citywide Guidelines with Original Citywide Guidelines*

The chart below shows the approximate correlation of issues addressed in the updated design guidelines as compared with the original citywide guidelines. It serves as a guide to how and where design issues are addressed and helps the reader in transitioning to the new design guidelines and their numbering.

		Proposed Citywide Guidelines												
		Context and Site				Public Life				Concept Design				
	Existing Citywide Guidelines	A1. Natural Systems and Site Features	A2. Urban Pattern and Form	A3. Architectural Context and Character	A4. Access, Circulation, and Connections	B1. Public Space	B2. Walkability	B3. Activity	B4. Transit	C1. Project Uses and Activities	C2. Massing	C3. Architectural Concept	C4. Open Space Concept	C5. Materials
Site Planning	A-1 Responding to Site Characteristics													
	A-2 Streetscape Compatibility													
	A-3 Entrances Visible from the Street													
	A-4 Human Activity													
	A-5 Respect for Adjacent Sites													
	A-6 Transition Between Residence and Street													
	A-7 Residential Open Space													
	A-8 Parking and Vehicle Access													
	A-9 Location of Parking on Commercial Street Fronts.													
	A-10Corner Lots													
H, B, S	B-1 Height, Bulk and Scale Compatibility													
Arch Elements & Material	C-1 Architectural Context													
	C-2 Architectural Concept and Consistency													
	C-3 Human Scale													
	C-4 Exterior Finish Materials													
	C-5 Structured Parking Entrances													
Pedestrian Environment	D-1 Pedestrian Open Spaces and Entrances													
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Landscaping	E-1 Landscaping to Reinforce Design Continuity with Adjacent Sites													
	E-2 Landscaping to Enhance the Building and/or Site													
	E-3 Landscape Design to Address Special Site Conditions													

*Design Review: Guidelines for Multifamily and Commercial Buildings, October 1993, November 1998

Original Design Guidelines from the Design Review: Guidelines for Multifamily and Commercial Buildings

SITE PLANNING

- A-1 Responding to Site Characteristics:** The siting of buildings should respond to specific site conditions and opportunities such as non-rectangular lots, location on prominent intersections, unusual topography, significant vegetation and views or other natural features.
- A-2 Streetscape Compatibility:** The siting of buildings should acknowledge and reinforce the existing desirable spatial characteristics of the right-of-way.
- A-3 Entrances Visible from the Street:** Entries should be clearly identifiable and visible from the street
- A-4 Human Activity:** New development should be sited and designed to encourage human activity on the street.
- A-5 Respect for Adjacent Sites:** Buildings should respect adjacent properties by being located on their sites to minimize disruption of the privacy and out-door activities of residents in adjacent buildings.
- A-6 Transition Between Residence and Street:** For residential projects, the spaces between the buildings and the sidewalk should provide security and privacy for residents and encourage social interaction among residents and neighbors.
- A-7 Residential Open Space:** Residential projects should be sited to maximize opportunities for creating usable, attractive, well-integrated open space.
- A-8 Parking and Vehicle Access:** Siting should minimize the impact of automobile parking and driveways on the pedestrian environment, adjacent properties and pedestrian safety.
- A-9 Location of Parking on Commercial Street Fronts:** Parking on a commercial street front should be minimized and where possible should be located behind a building.
- A-10 Corner Lots:** Buildings on corner lots should be oriented to the corner and public street fronts. Parking and automobile access should be located away from the corners

B. HEIGHT, BULK, AND SCALE

- B-1 Height, Bulk and Scale Compatibility:** Projects should be compatible with the scale of development anticipated by the applicable Land Use Policies for the surrounding area and should be sited and designed to provide a sensitive transition to near-by, less-intensive zones. Projects on zone edges should be developed in a manner that creates a step in perceived height, bulk and scale between the anticipated development potential of the adjacent zones.

C. ARCHITECTURAL ELEMENTS & MATERIALS

- C-1 Architectural Context:** New buildings proposed for existing neighborhoods with a well-defined and desirable character should be compatible with or complement the architectural character and siting pattern of neighboring buildings.
- C-2 Architectural Concept and Consistency:** Building design elements, details and massing should create a well-proportioned and unified building form and exhibit an overall architectural concept.

Buildings should exhibit form and features identifying the functions within the building.

In general, the roofline or top of the structure should be clearly distinguished from its façade walls.

- C-3 Human Scale:** The design of new buildings should incorporate architectural features, elements and details to achieve a good human scale.
- C-4 Exterior Finish Materials:** Building exteriors should be constructed of durable and maintainable materials that are attractive even when viewed up close. Materials that have texture, patterns, or lend themselves to a high quality of detailing are encouraged.
- C-5 Structured Parking Entrances:** The presence and appearance of garage entrances should be minimized so that they do not dominate the street frontage of a building.

D. PEDESTRIAN ENVIRONMENT

- D-1 Pedestrian Open Spaces and Entrances:** Convenient and attractive access to the building's entry should be provided. To ensure comfort and security, paths and entry areas should be sufficiently lighted and entry areas should be protected from the weather. Opportunities for creating lively, pedestrian-oriented open space should be considered.
- D-2 Blank Walls:** Buildings should avoid large blank walls facing the street, especially near sidewalks. Where blank walls are unavoidable they should receive design treatment to increase pedestrian comfort and interest.
- D-3 Retaining Walls:** Retaining walls near a public sidewalk that extend higher than eye level should be avoided where possible. Where high retaining walls are unavoidable, they should be designed to reduce their impact on pedestrian comfort and to increase the visual interest along the streetscape.
- D-4 Design of Parking Lots Near Sidewalks:** Parking lots near sidewalks should provide adequate security and lighting, avoid encroachment of vehicles onto the sidewalk, and minimize the visual clutter of parking lot signs and equipment.
- D-5 Visual Impacts of Parking Structures:** The visibility of all at-grade parking structures or accessory parking garages should be minimized. The parking portion of a structure should be architecturally compatible with the rest of the structure and streetscape. Open parking spaces and carports should be screened from the street and adjacent properties.
- D-6 Screening of Dumpsters, Utilities and Service Areas:** Building sites should locate service elements like trash dumpsters, loading docks and mechanical equipment away from the street front where possible. When elements such as dumpsters, utility meters, mechanical units and service areas cannot be located away from the street front, they should be situated and screened from view and should not be located in the pedestrian right-of-way.
- D-7 Personal Safety and Security:** Project design should consider opportunities for enhancing personal safety and security in the environment under review.
- D-8 Treatment of Alleys:** The design of alley entrances should enhance the pedestrian street front.
- D-9 Commercial Signage:** Signs should add interest to the street front environment and should be appropriate for the scale and character desired in the area.
- D-10 Commercial Lighting:** Appropriate levels of lighting should be provided in order to promote visual interest and a sense of security for people in commercial districts during evening hours. Lighting may be provided by incorporation into the building façade, the underside of overhead weather protection, on and around street furniture, in merchandising display windows, in landscaped areas, and/or on signage.
- D-11 Commercial Transparency:** Commercial storefronts should be transparent, allowing for a direct visual connection between pedestrians on the sidewalk and the activities occurring on the interior of a building. Blank walls should be avoided.
- D-12 Residential Entries and Transitions:** For residential projects in commercial zones, the space between the residential entry and the sidewalk should provide security and privacy for residents and a visually interesting street front for pedestrians. Residential buildings should enhance the character of the streetscape with small gardens, stoops and other elements that work to create a transition between the public sidewalk and private entry.

E. LANDSCAPING

- E-1 Landscaping to Reinforce Design Continuity with Adjacent Sites:** Where possible, and where there is not another overriding concern, landscaping should reinforce the character of neighboring properties and abutting streetscape.
- E-2 Landscaping to Enhance the Building and/or Site:** Landscaping, including living plant material, special pavements, trellises, screen walls, planters, site furniture and similar features should be appropriately incorporated into the design to enhance the project.
- E-3 Landscape Design to Address Special Site Conditions:** The landscape design should take advantage of special on-site conditions such as high-bank front yards, steep slopes, view corridors, or existing significant trees and off-site conditions such as greenbelts, ravines, natural areas, and boulevards.

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Upper left	Alley 24, NBBJ
Middle left	Alley 24 streetscape, NBBJ
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Upper middle	Rendering, Berger Partnership, Studio 216
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Lower right	Benaroya Hall/3rd Avenue streetscape, DPD staff photo

Introduction

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Page iii	Upper left Lower left	Seattle Cancer Care Alliance, Weinstein A U, Michael Burns photographer Street design concept plan, sketch by Zimmer Gunsul Frasca Architects
Page iv	Upper left Middle left Lower left	The Gilbert Apartments, DPD staff photo Pike Pine streetscape, DPD staff photo Thornton creek, DPD staff photo

A. Context and Site

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Page 4	A2 photo Middle left Middle right	New Holly Phase 1, Weinstein A/U, Michael Shopenn New Holly Phase I, Weinstein A/U Diagram, DPD
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Page 8	A4 photo	The Berger Partnership, Image by Studio 216
Page 9	Upper left Lower left Right	Diagram, DPD Bike rack, DPD staff photo Bike stand, DPD staff photo

B. Public Life

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Page 14	Middle Lower middle Lower right	Alaska Junction streetscape, DPD staff photo Ballard streetscape, DPD staff photo Urban Walk, B9 Architects
Page 15	B3 photo	Queen Anne Avenue, Michael Burns photographer
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C. Design Concept

Page 19	C1 photo Lower right	Thornton Place, Mithun Architects Fremont Lofts, Johnston Architects
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Page 25	Upper left Middle	Danielson Grove, Ross Chapin Architects—photo from website; call for permission Merrill Place near U Village?? DPD staff photo
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