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# Chapter 4: Private Realm Guidelines



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## A. Introduction

### Chapter 4 - The Private Realm

The River District Design Guidelines provide policy guidance to the Design Commission, Sacramento Housing and Redevelopment Commission, Planning Commission, Preservation Commission, and the City Council. Used in concert with the City of Sacramento Zoning and Preservation Ordinances and applicable building codes, this document will provide City staff and private interests a common basis for the evaluation of design and development issues during the design review and approval process.

These guidelines are to be used to give direction rather than prescriptive requirements. The Design and Preservation Commissions shall have the authority to waive individual guidelines for specific projects where it is found that such waiver will better achieve the design policy objectives than strict application of the guidelines.

These Guidelines incorporate both mandates and recommendations. Where the word “shall” or “must” is used it is intended to be a mandate; and where the word “should” or “encouraged” is used, it is intended to be a recommended guideline. The mandates are treated as standards with little room for variation whereas the recommendations are subject to some interpretation and have room for minor variances.

Some key building components referred to repeatedly in this section are identified and pictured at the beginning of *Part D - Massing & Building Configuration*.

### Review of Alternative Designs

The River District Design Guidelines are intended to be a framework and basis for the review of projects in a fair, consistent, transparent, and seamless fashion by the City of Sacramento. Although not all Design Principles will be met on any given project, staff will review projects for overall compliance to ensure project meet the intent of the design criteria set forth in this document.

As such, alternative designs that can be demonstrated to achieve key design principles in some form will also be considered by City Staff. The Preferred Design will always be the recommended approach for proposed projects; however, when an Alternate Design can be proven to be appropriate, staff will be flexible and use reasonable judgment when reviewing projects.

Alternative Designs can be proven to be appropriate when the proposed design provides equal or greater amenities

and benefits to compensate for areas of the project design not in compliance. Alternative Design projects should always strive to uphold the Urban Design Policies set forth in this document related to context, architectural character, project scale, pedestrian experience, exterior material quality, integration of building services, and sustainable design.

### 1. River District Urban Design Policies

The guidelines that form the criteria for Private Realm architectural review are based on the following policies:

- A. Context: Allow for creative architectural solutions that acknowledge contextual design through emulation, interpretation, or contrast in character.*
- B. Character: Complement the architectural character of existing historic building enclaves and promote harmony in the visual relationships and transitions between new and older buildings.*
- C. Scale: Relate the bulk of new buildings to the prevailing scale of development to avoid an overwhelming or dominating appearance in new construction.*
- D. Pedestrian: Enhance the pedestrian experience.*
- E. Materials: Promote efforts to utilize high quality building materials, detailing & landscaping.*
- F. Integrated Services: Promote functional & aesthetic integration of building services, vehicular access and parking facilities.*
- G. Sustainable Design: Promote sustainability in building design, construction and operation*

### 2. Private Realm Design Guidelines

Design guidelines in the chapter are grouped into these categories:

- A. Introduction (this page)
- B. Site Planning
- C. Building Types
- D. Massing & Building Configuration, including Sustainability at the Building Scale



## A. Introduction

- E. Parking & Vehicle Access
- F. River District Infill with Respect to Historic Resources

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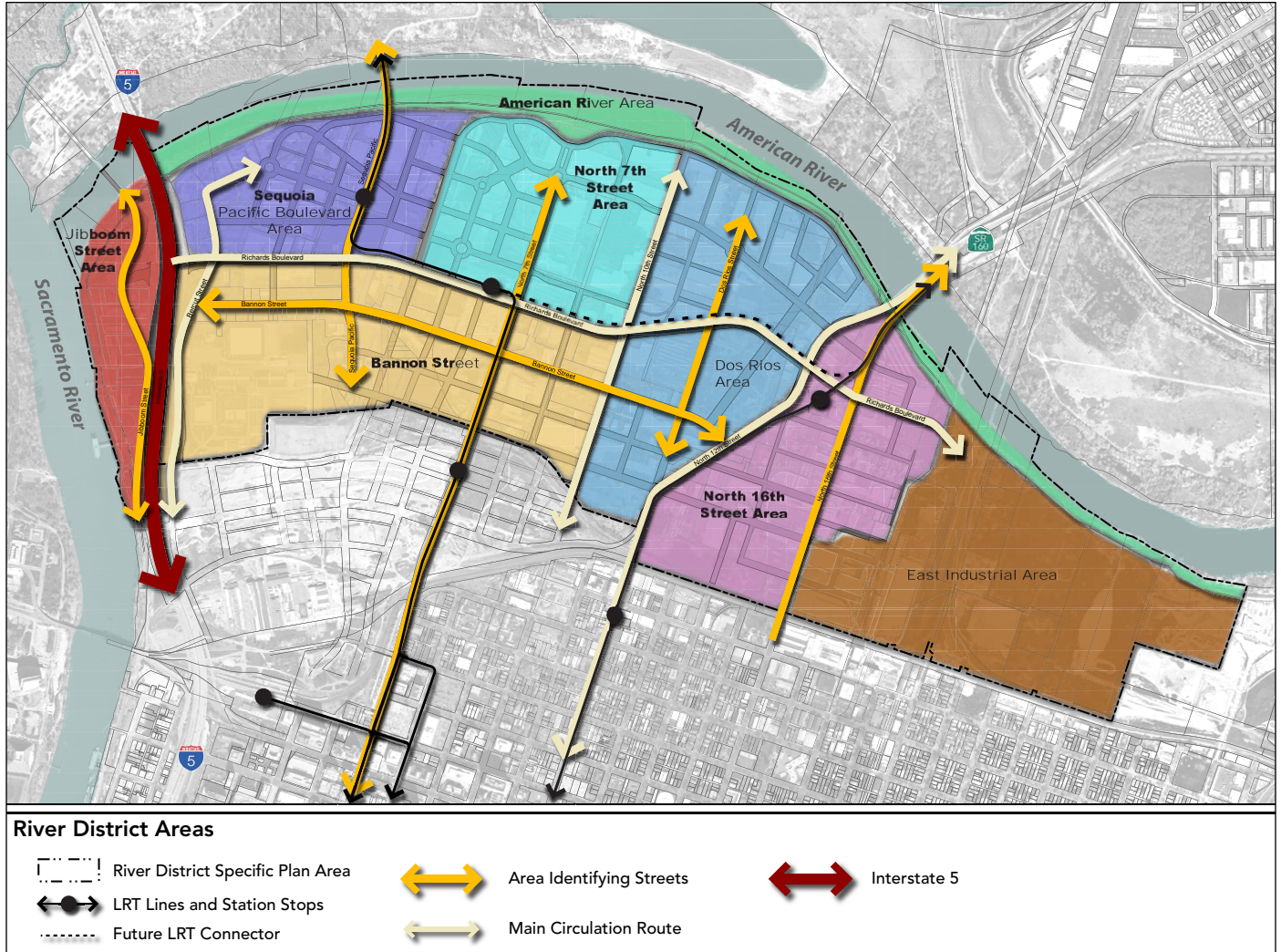
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- I. Building Types
- J. Massing & Building Configuration, including Sustainability at the Building Scale
- K. Parking & Vehicle Access
- L. River District Infill with Respect to Historic Resources

A. Introduction



Seven Areas of the River District that have distinctive urban design character.

## B. Site Planning

The Site Planning Guidelines are intended to guide the layout and site design of a parcel. These guidelines account for the physical, regulatory and programmatic forces that help to determine the optimum building footprint and envelope on a site, given that parcel's constraints and opportunities.

The site planning needs to balance forces from outside the site, e.g. traffic volumes on adjacent roads and existing trees in the public right-of-way, with internal site constraints, e.g. required setbacks, existing trees, and parking demand.

These guidelines introduce some key site planning concepts. Categories of guidelines, which are keyed in at the diagram at right, include:

1. Setbacks & Build-to-Lines
2. Tree Setbacks
3. Lot Coverage
4. Open Space
5. Landscaping
6. Project Size & Building Type
7. Site Access, Service Areas and Utilities

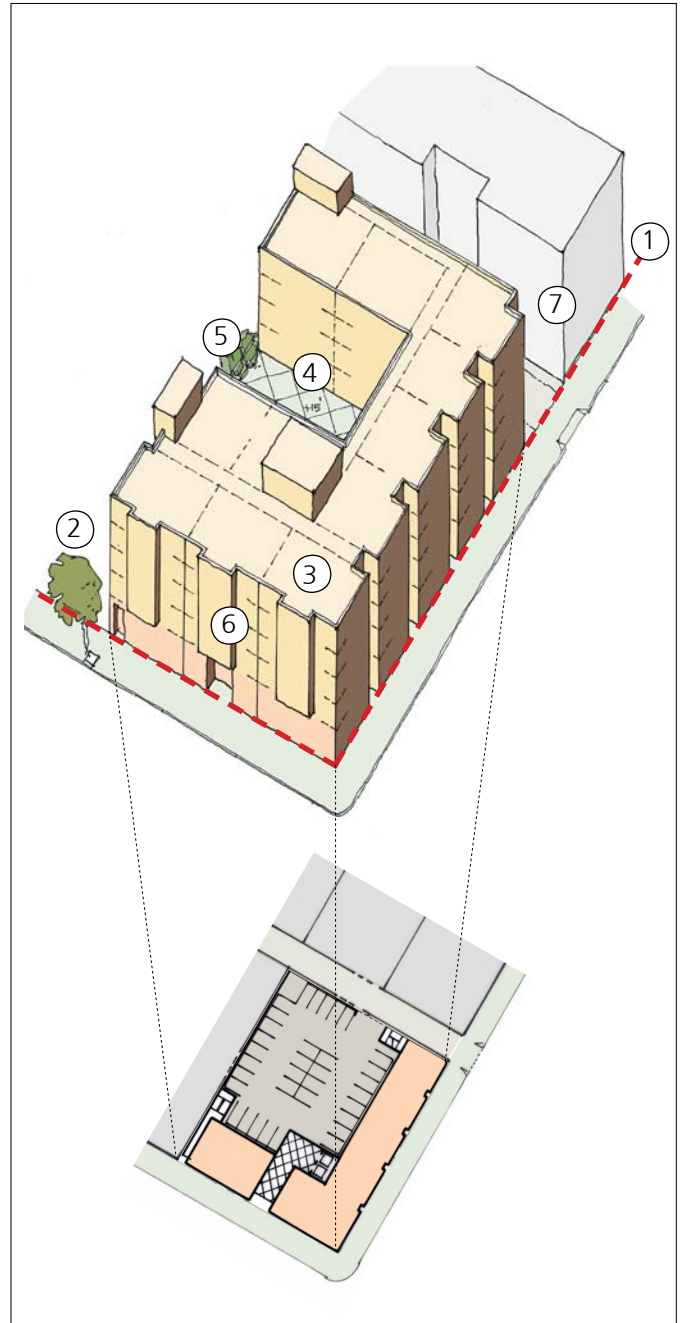


Figure 1

**B. Site Planning**

**1. Setbacks and Build-to-Lines**

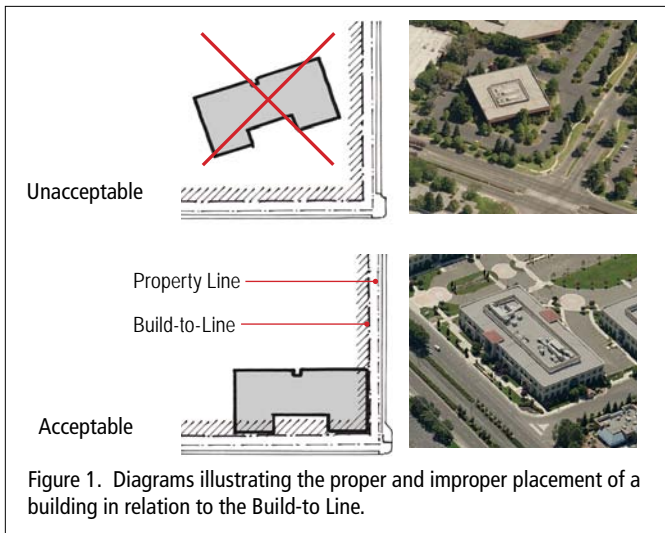
**PRINCIPLE:** New buildings shall have a setback appropriate to the district, typically similar to immediately adjacent existing buildings.

**Rationale**

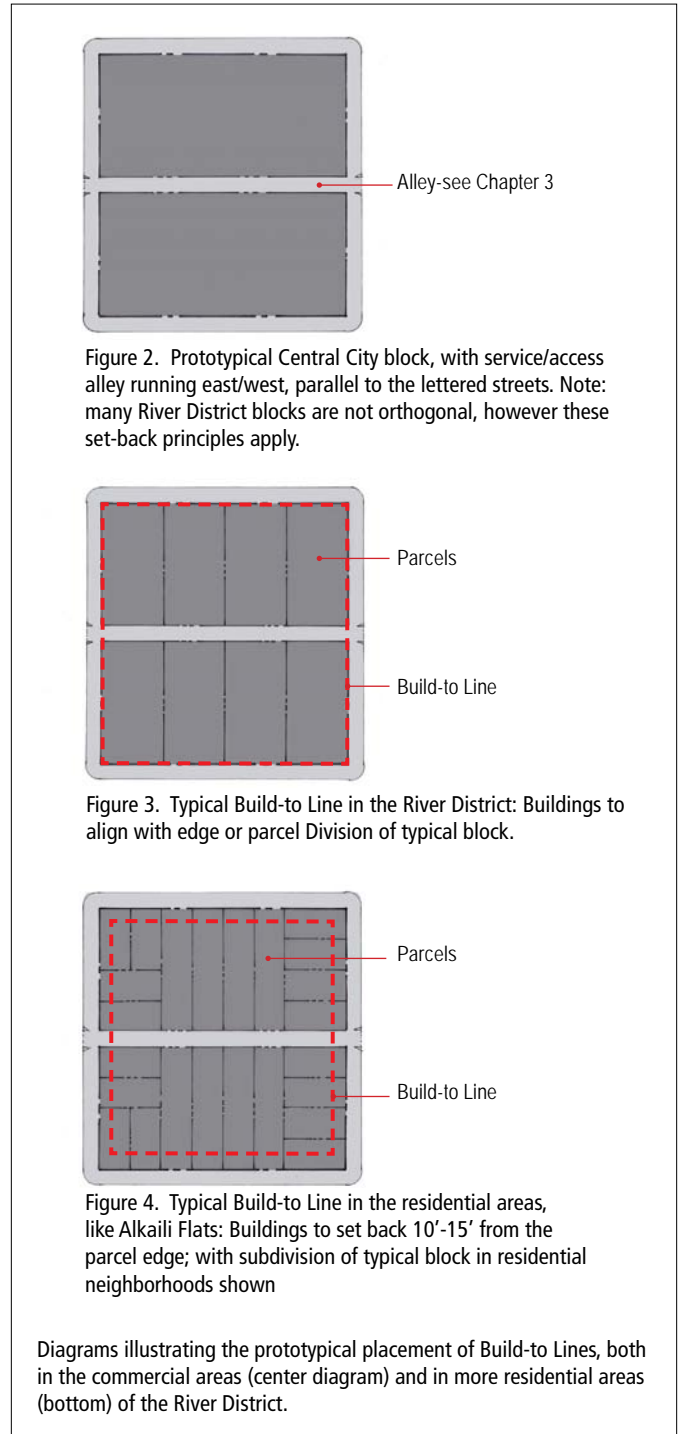
In order to transform the public realm throughout the River District, the edge of the private realm should be established with consistently aligned building frontages. The amount of setback should be appropriate for the individual district areas. For example, buildings would have little or no setback in the commercial areas of the District, where the highest level of public activity occurs. In more residential areas, a wider setback is appropriate, where a landscaped zone between the building and the back edge of the sidewalk provides a privacy buffer. Build-to-Lines are established to ensure that the setback is a specific required distance rather than a minimum. The main massing of the building should be established along the Built-to-Line. In the River District commercial areas, this will hold the consistent line of the street-wall. In order to retain design flexibility, the amount of a building's façade that must align with the Build-to Line must meet a given percentage. The Build-to Line can be required for 100% of the building frontage in certain River District locations, or a minimum percentage in other locations, where a public plaza, for example might be a desirable feature, such as at North 7th Street and Richards Boulevard (see Chapter 3).

Required setbacks can permit the tree canopy of the existing mature street trees to remain unobstructed.

**Guidelines**  
**Build-to Line Examples**



**Block Pattern Diagrams**





**B. Site Planning**

**1. Build-to-Lines & Setbacks (cont.)**

*1. Setbacks*

A building's setback should be appropriate for its building type, its adjacent buildings, and its location in the city. The edge of the private realm is thus established with consistently aligned building frontages. For example, buildings would have little or no setback in the Sequoia and Bannan Street Areas, where the highest level of public activity occurs. In more residential areas, a wider setback is appropriate for a landscaped zone between the building and the back edge of the sidewalk is desirable.

- A. Residential buildings should be setback generally 0'-15'; or be consistent with existing buildings.
- B. Commercial buildings should have zero setback; or be consistent with existing buildings.
- C. Retail, Mixed-Use, and buildings along transit corridors should not be setback unless accommodating seating which in such instance a portion of the building should be set back 5' to 10'.

Appropriate setbacks are listed with each building type in Chapter 4, Part C, and the River District Special Planning District (SPD) provides precise setback requirements.

*2. Open Space Provision*

Setbacks described above shall be followed, except when providing public and semi-public spaces, e.g. plazas, entry courts, sidewalk cafes, tree protection setbacks, etc.

**Build-to Line Examples**

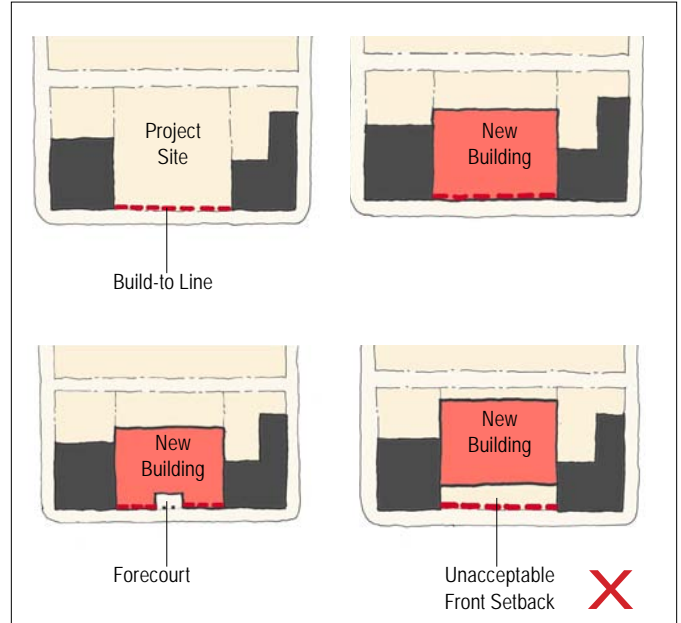
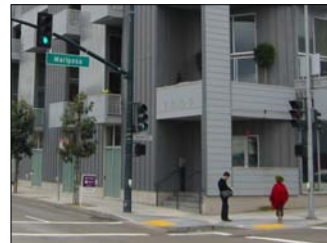


Figure 1. Diagrams illustrating the placement of a building in relation to the Build-to Line.

**Setback Examples**



0' Setback  
Stacked loft apartment building



3' Setback  
Multifamily residential development



12' Setback  
Duplex residential development

## B. Site Planning

### 2. Lot Coverage-Building Footprint

**PRINCIPLE:** Lot coverage shall be used to control the scale and massing of a building by limiting the building footprint to the ensure that a given parcel, and its adjacent parcels, have suitable access to light and air.

#### Rationale

A building which completely fills up its lot and repeats that floorplate to maximum height, allowing no air or light access to its occupants, can seem overbearing to its neighbors. Limiting the amount of lot coverage can remedy this problem. Lot Coverage Guidelines are often combined with requirements to address holding the street-wall and defining the street frontage. Penetration of air and light into the interior of the lot is also a prime concern.

Typically lot coverage may be maximized on the ground floor, where retail, common, and garage spaces are likely to occur, and be reduced at the first single-use (residential or commercial) floors above.

The required open space may serve as an occupiable terrace or courtyard, and allow natural light and ventilation deep within a building.

#### Guidelines

1. Consult the Zoning Code for allowable lot coverage for the parcel.
2. On lower levels (no more than 25% of the total number of floor levels): Coverage by the building footprint may be up to 100%.
3. On upper levels: Coverage by the building footprint should not exceed 75% of the overall lot area. See Figure 1.
4. Where the principal outlook for a living room is oriented to the open space, e.g. a light court, that open space should have a minimum width (W) to height (H) ratio of at least 1:1, (i.e. W greater than or equal to H). See Figure 2.

#### Lot Coverage Diagrams

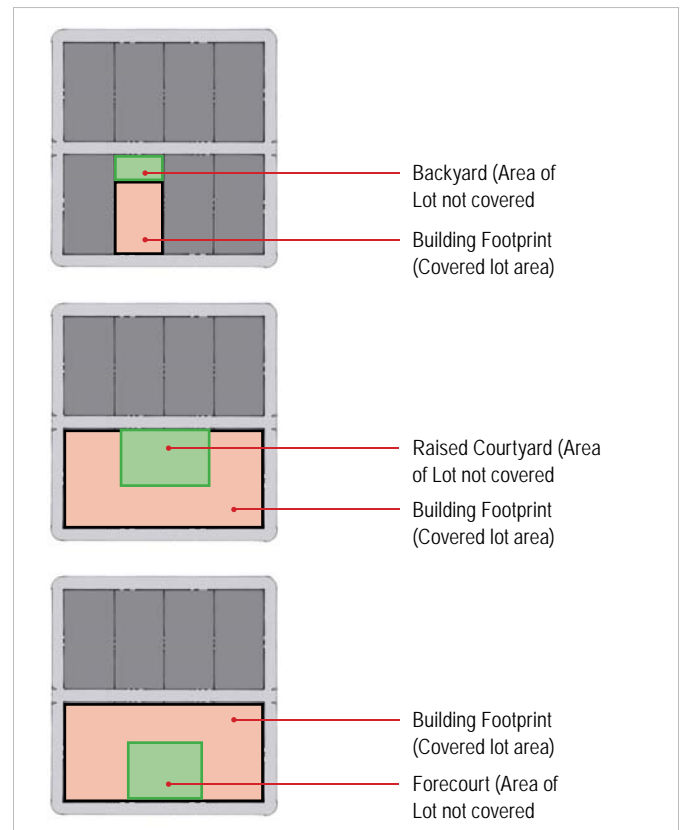


Figure 1. These site diagrams illustrate building footprint options which do not exceed 75% of the parcel area. The remaining open area on the parcel can be designed as a private, semi-public, or public open space.

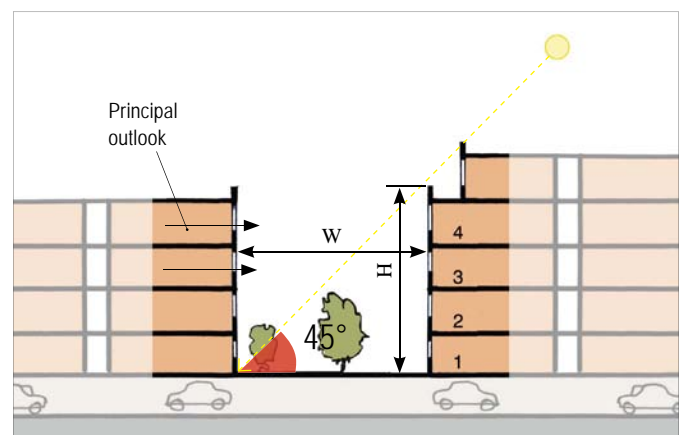


Figure 2. Open space separation between residential buildings.

**B. Site Planning**

**3. Open Space**

**PRINCIPLE: Open space is essential and shall be provided on-site for new developments, in a range of public, common and private open space types.**

**Rationale**

Open space which is well-designed, local and accessible is a key component of any livable city, and a public benefit to the residents of the River District. In accordance with the City's Parks Masterplan and Small Public Spaces guidance, new development should provide a range of open space types for its users and visitors, on-site.

**Guidelines**

Public, Common and Private Open Space should be provided as follows:

*1. Public Open Space*

- A. Must be open to the street or public right-of-way and accessible to all citizens.
- B. This element should be provided either as a dedicated courtyard or plaza.
- C. Public open space should include hard and soft landscaping, areas for sun and shade, benches and water features, where appropriate.
- D. Public Open Space must be accessible and meet ADA requirements.
- E. See also *Chapter 4, Part B.4. - Open Space - Small Public Places.*

*2. Common/Private Open Space*

Private and common open space belongs to the residents and is either in the form of a secure shared garden or roof-deck above the base of the building, or in the form of private balconies attached to each unit.

*3. Open Space Quantities*

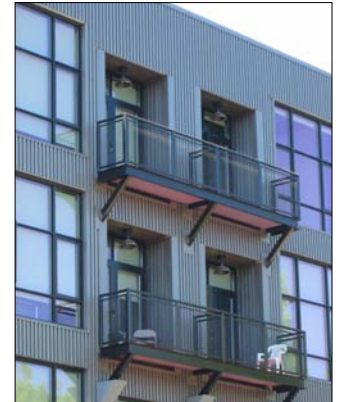
Open space area quantities should comply with City of Sacramento Parks Department's Quimby requirements.

*4. Area Specific Requirements: Jibboom Area*

- A. Development fronting onto the river levee shall provide 15'-0" wide open space connections for access to the river.

B. Access to the rivers shall be provide at a minimum interval of 400 feet, where public street parallel the river.

**Open Space Types**



Figures 1 and 2. Private open space- balconies outside apartments, Amsterdam (left), Sacramento. (right)



Figures 3 and 4. Examples of common or shared open space. Public: San Francisco Mint Plaza (left); Semi-public San Jose (right).



Figures 5. Example of public access to public facilities. (Federation Square, Melbourne, Au)



## B. Site Planning

### 4. Open Space - Small Public Places

**PRINCIPLE: Encourage the provision of new Small Public Open Spaces**

#### Rationale

Small public spaces will be a key component of the open space network in the River District. Small Public Places may be public, private, or any combined form.

Small Public Places can provide needed open space for surrounding residences, offices, and commercial buildings, and serve as places to gather and recreate for persons living, working or visiting nearby. The inclusion of publicly accessible small parks and plazas is intended to provide a complement to taller buildings and needed relief from the hardscape and intensity of the denser land use patterns within the River District. Small Public Places help create a more liveable city.

#### Guidelines

1. Purpose. Design Small Public Places parks around a "purpose." Applicants or property owners should identify an appropriate purpose for each proposed park before it is designed, preferably by meeting with the neighborhood and/or community to determine the most appropriate purpose of the future park. Categories of purposes could include education; socializing; exercise; and relaxation. They should not be limited to addressing only the needs of office workers and patrons of commercial buildings, but should permit other kinds of space that meet other demonstrable need, such as children's playgrounds, workout space for tai chi or active sports facilities.
2. Site design. Layout should include seating areas and central design features. Flexible seating arrangements are encouraged. The design should have adequate access to sunlight, and combine hard and soft landscape.
3. Size. There is no minimum size for a Small Public Place, although established guidelines should be followed for a minimum size dependent upon the purpose of the park. (See Table 19 Guidelines for Small Public Spaces, Parks and Recreation Master Plan 2005-2010)
4. Ecological Design. Privately owned public open spaces shall provide enhanced landscaping and ecological functionality, and contribute to local stormwater management strategies. Plazas, particularly because they are open expanses of paved material, shall be designed to capture, filter and recycle rainwater from adjacent buildings and streets.
5. Accessibility. Small Public Places shall be designed to be accessible to the highest possible number of users. They should be accessible from a public sidewalk and be inviting to the public.
6. Signage. Provide signage of adequate size and location. The sign should include the name of the owner of the building; the name, address and phone number of the person designated to maintain the open space; and a statement that complaints regarding the open space may be addressed to named city agencies.
7. The Parks and Recreation Master Plan should be referenced for policies and further guidelines for Small Public Places.



Figures 1 and 2. Examples of Small public spaces: The plaza of the CalEPA building, an example of a corner plaza appropriate for public spaces at 7th Street and Richards Boulevard. Below: Raised plaza and green space along public sidewalk, Swanston Street, Melbourne Australia.

## B. Site Planning

# 5. Landscaping

**PRINCIPLE: On-site open space shall be landscaped to make the space comfortable, attractive, and complimentary with surrounding architecture.**

### Rationale

The quality of an open space is only as good as its design and landscaping. Quality landscaping has a significant impact on the experience, texture, and temperature of an open space. The landscaping component needs to be included and implemented as part of any new development. Landscaping needs to be appropriate to the intended use of the space.

### Guidelines

1. Landscaping should be used to activate building facades, soften building contours, highlight important architectural features, screen less attractive elements, add color, texture, and visual interest, and provide shade.
2. Landscape materials should be of high quality and suitable for the Central Valley climate. Given the seasonal lack of precipitation, naturalized and low-water tolerant plant species are preferred.
3. The creation of semi-public outdoor spaces such as on-site plazas, patios, courtyards, paseos, terraces and gardens that support pedestrian activity and community interaction is strongly encouraged, particularly in larger projects.
4. Plazas and courtyards should be well-defined by buildings and landscaping, comfortably scaled, with shade and ornament, furnished with areas for sitting, and lighted for evening use.
5. Planting and finishes selected should be appropriate to the type and volume of use. Durability of the landscaping is a key component to how the space will be used and maintained long after implementation.
6. Landscaping along “River Walk” streets shall incorporate indigenous riparian plant materials into the landscape.
7. On-site landscaping shall incorporate Low-Impact-development measures such as bioswales for water quality treatment. See Sustainability section.

### Landscaping



Figure 1. Appropriately scaled planting defines mid-block pedestrian alley



Figure 2. Color and water elements create a soothing environment in commercial districts.

### Hardscape Paving

- Decorative paving treatment, texture and color of surfaces under arcades, colonnades, or within courtyards and plazas should complement the architectural character and materials of the project.
- Well designed utility grills or vents in conjunction with decorative surface materials are encouraged.
- On-site paving material should have non-slippery surface when wet.
- Paving treatment and material may extend into the public sidewalk ROW. Public realm paving alterations to sidewalks and streets are discussed in the Public Realm chapter of these guidelines. See Chapter 3.



## B. Site Planning

### 6. Project Size and Building Type

**PRINCIPLE: The areas of the River District with the highest density shall be developed with a rich mix of parcel sizes, land uses, massing and architectural variety.**

#### Rationale

While minimum lot sizes are a standard feature of many cities, including the residential districts of Sacramento, consideration should be given to establishing a maximum project size as well. Projects that approach the size of an entire block or more can often be repetitive and monotonous, inserting potentially homogenous design, land uses and their related monocultures into a city neighborhood.

It is desirable to encourage a rich mix of both land uses and architectural variety in the city. Each urban block should include a mix of uses, building types, heights and styles. Design concepts for large scale projects more than one-half block in size should achieve a refreshing variety of style and avoid monotonous repetition of architectural form and details on multiple buildings. This situation has been achieved in some of the Little Italy blocks in San Diego and the proposed four city block development of Laguna Hill on the site of the former UC Berkeley extension in San Francisco.

#### Guidelines

1. New blocks shall be maintained at the size allotment of the River District Specific Plan unless a civic program use requires an increase in block size. Where large blocks exist, new development shall seek to subdivide the large block into smaller block sizes.
2. Projects that propose the elimination of any city street or alley should be discouraged. If the elimination of a street or alley is proposed, the publicly-accessible right-of-way or easement should be kept in its place.
3. If a project is more than 2.5 acres, it should be subdivided with an appropriate number of public streets.
4. Any development site greater than one quarter of a city block should include at least two distinct building mass articulation and roof heights which include at least a 15' variance across the project. See Figure 3.

#### A Variety of Parcel Sizes

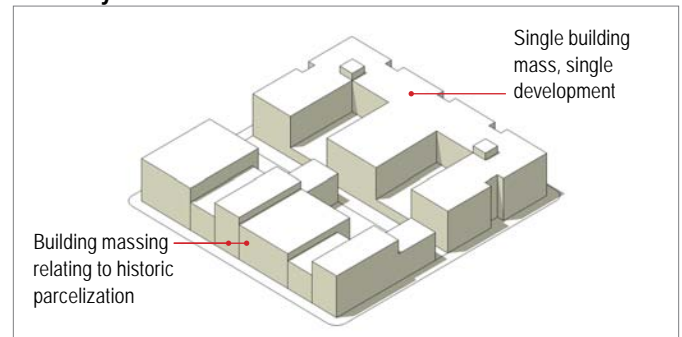


Figure 1: This diagram shows two scenarios. To the left, buildings relating to the historic block parcelization. To the right, a single building mass which occupies numerous lots developed in aggregate.

#### Non-Orthogonal Blocks



Figure 2: Irregular block shapes produce interesting juxtapositions and architectural solutions such as this loft housing in the Protrero Hill District of San Francisco.

#### A Variety of Building Types & Scale



Figure 3: A variety of scale and form in a single block, as seen here at 18th and Capitol Streets, provides diversity of retail and living opportunities while retaining original historic resources.

## B. Site Planning

### 7. Site Access, Service Areas and Utilities

**PRINCIPLE: To minimize the functional and visual impact of site access areas, service areas and utilities connections, they shall be carefully designed, and located along the least traffic-impacted edges of the parcel.**

#### Rationale

Vehicular access areas, service areas and utilities connections need to be optimally located so that they are both visible yet secondary to the building's key features, typically the main entrance or public areas.

#### Guidelines

##### 1. Vehicle Access Location

If a project site has an alley adjacency, all vehicular access should be from the alley (primary access). If there is no alley adjacency, access is preferred to come from the north-south streets (secondary access). Only if there is no other alternative available should vehicular access be given from the east-west street (tertiary access).

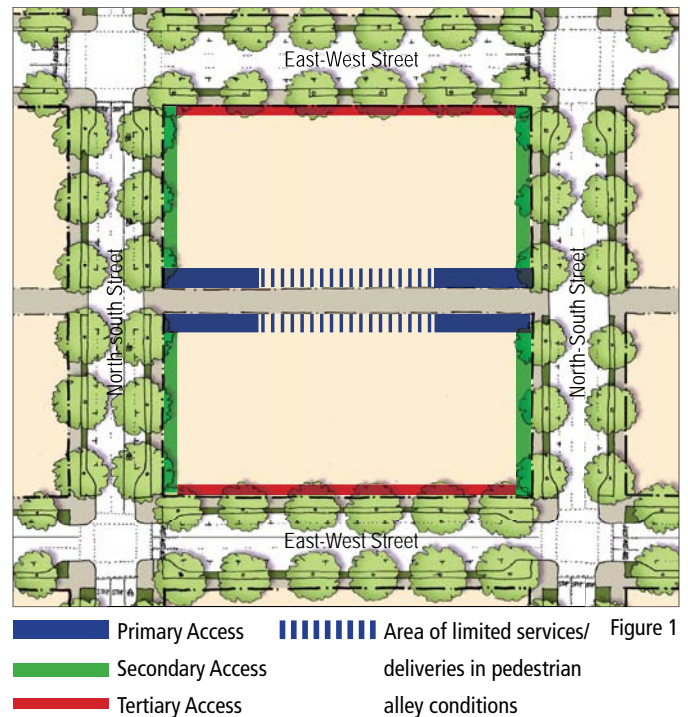
##### 2. Servicing

- For major projects, trash storage facilities, loading docks, mail rooms and other service related functions should be located within the interior space.
- For major projects, truck parking for pick-up and deliveries should be located on-parcel
- Access into service facility should be located on the alley not on a public street. For multi-use alleys, vehicle access should be limited to 100 ft from back of sidewalk (see diagram).
- The facade around the service opening should be treated in a decorative manner, consistent with the character of the main building.

##### 3. Curb Cuts: Maximum allowable curb cuts:

- Single-family residential: One curb cut, up to 10' wide
- Attached residential and multifamily residential (up to 20 units): One curb cut, up to 12' wide
- Multifamily residential (more than 20 units): One curb cut, up to 24' wide
- Commercial up to 75,000 gross floor area: One curb cut, up to 24' wide

#### Access



- Commercial greater than 75,000 gross floor area: Two curb cuts, up to 24' wide each

##### 4. Maximum Parking Garage Opening

- single lane access: 12' wide
- double lane access: 24' wide

##### 5. Trash & Trash Removal

- The trash pickup route should be located along alleys, where possible. Where alleys are designated as pedestrian routes, additional requirements may apply.
- Retractable bollards on shared-use alleys and pedestrian alleys shall limit trash pick-up times to off-peak hours.
- Trash storage areas shall not be in the 20' public right-of-way of the alley, but rather be recessed into the private parcel. The trash area should be protected from rain, and secured behind a lockage door or gate.

**B. Site Planning**

**7. Site Access, Service Areas and Utilities (cont.)**

D. Where it is physically infeasible to provide a waste storage facility within the interior space of the development, the outdoor trash storage facility should be designed as follows:

1. The walls of the trash enclosure shall be constructed of solid masonry material with decorative exterior surface finish compatible to the main building.
2. The structure shall have lockable, decorative, heavy gauge, solid metal gates and be designed with cane bolts to secure the gates when in open position.
3. The height of wall shall be minimum six feet and contain a decorative roof to screen bin from view. (See Zoning ordinance for additional requirements).
4. The perimeter of the facility shall be landscaped with climbing vines and/or shrubs.

*6. Utility Connections*

- A. Utilities connections to buildings should be designed to minimize their occurrence and mitigate their visual impact.
- B. Where possible, connections should be made on the private parcel, in a manner that is integrated with the building design. See Figure 2.
- C. Utilities connections should be screened with plantings (see Figure 1), not be left floating and exposed in setback zones (see Figures 3 and 4).



Figure 1: Utilities connections should be accessible but screened with plantings.



Figure 2: Utilities connections should be carefully located and integrated into the rhythm of the design.



Figure 3: Utilities connections should NOT be left floating and exposed in a sidewalk's park strip.



## C. Building Types

### Background & Introduction

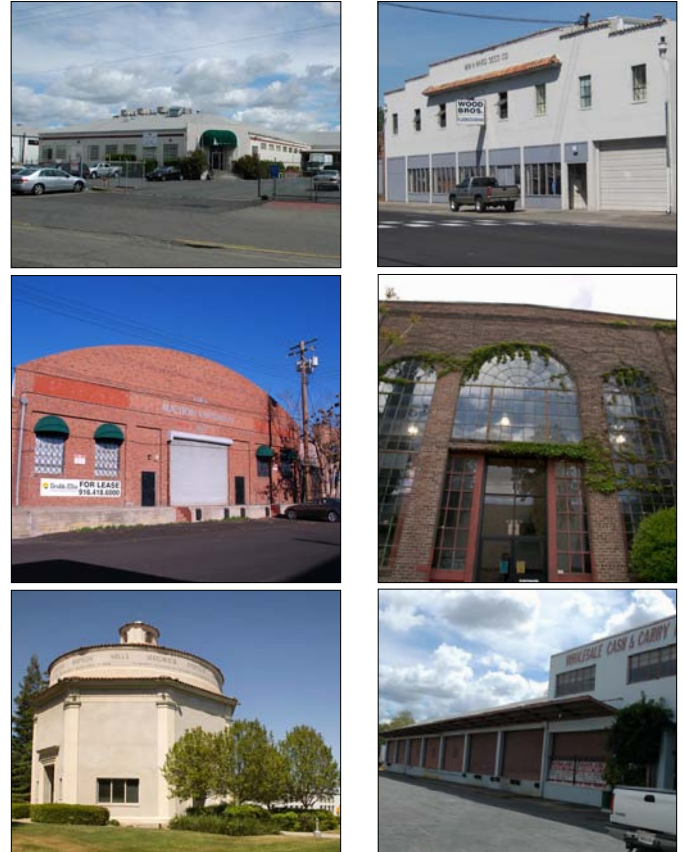
An understanding of building types is essential for all parties who are involved with developing, designing, reviewing and approving projects which are located in urban and transitional areas of the River District. Understanding building types allows for the informed assessment of a projects ability to provide sensible commercial, retail, residential, recreational and parking configurations on a given site, relative to its urban and economic context.

The River District is fairly uniform in the range of building types. The first building developed with large floor-plate canneries and packing warehouses. Other were low-rise and masonry buildings with wood truss framework for large span floor areas. Smaller commercial masonry buildings were located near the old highway between 12th and 16th Streets. After Interstate 5 opened regional access on the western end of the district, tilt-up concrete warehouses began to spring up with close proximity to downtown and the regional transportation system.

With the loss of the canning industry, several large cannery sites have undergone recent transformation. The Continental Canning Company has been redeveloped as the headquarters campus for the California Highway Patrol. The site of the former Richards-Bercut Cannery is undergoing a complete transformation to a mixed-use village with a variety of housing types and mixed-use office.

This section discusses a variety of building appropriate types for the River District, including general urban design guideline recommendations for each type.

### Existing Building types in the River District



Figures 1-6, clockwise from top left: 1940's warehouse; two-story office retail, typical of 16th Street; masonry entry, 16th Street; loading dock warehouse, Vine Street; Beaux-Arts water treatment facilities; brick warehouse North C Street.

### Township 9 sets a new precedent future building typology



Figures 7. The River District circa 1966. New tilt-up warehouse construction just east of the Jibboom Street bridge in anticipation of the construction of the new Interstate. Bercut-Richards and Continental Cannery in the upper left middle of the photo.



Figures 8. The former Bercut-Richards Cannery site renamed Township 9, consists of a variety of housing typologies and mid-height urban office.

**C. Building Types**

**1.a - Residential Low-Rise**

**PRINCIPLE: Low-rise residential development shall be included as a viable building type in the River District for infill housing in established residential and transition zones.**

**Rationale**

This section covers single family detached houses, semi-detached houses (duplexes), rowhouses and townhouses, and multifamily buildings. This category generally ranges from 1-1/2 story buildings to 5-story buildings, up to 50', and is typically built in Type V (typically wood frame) construction.

For single family parcels within the River District Design Review District, refer also to the Central City Neighborhood Design Guidelines for further guidance.





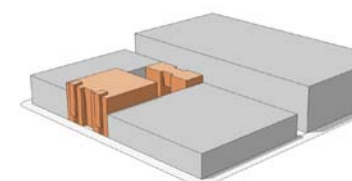

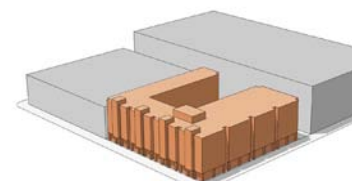

The following guidelines are recommended parameters for this category.

**Guidelines**

*1. Site planning*

- A. Location: As allowed by Zoning Code.
- B. Build-to Lines, Setbacks: 5'-15'. Should be consistent with adjacent buildings and Zoning Code.
- C. Lot Coverage (above parking): See *Chapter 4, Part B.3 Lot Coverage* and the Zoning code.
- D. Private Open Space: Either option listed below:
  - i. Private Open Space: As per Zoning Code; otherwise 50 sf per DU
  - ii. Common Open Space: As per Zoning Code; otherwise 80 sf per DU
- E. Public Open Space Requirement: Coordinate with City Parks Department for Requirements
- F. Landscaping: Required in front setback. Paved front yards are not permitted.
- G. Trash storage area must be on site.
- H. Parking access: Alley preferred or side street. Curb cuts should be minimized.

**Low-Rise Residential Massing Diagrams**

 <p>2 Story Tuck Under Town Houses 24-27 DU/AC</p>	
 <p>3 Story Tuck Under Town Houses or 2 level lofts 40-45 DU/AC</p>	
 <p>4 Story Resid. Over 1 Story Mixed-Use Stacked Lofts 60-75 DU/AC</p>	
 <p>4 Story Resid. Over 1 Story Mixed-Use Stacked flats 75-90 DU/AC</p>	

Figures 1, 2, 3, and 4. Low-rise residential building types can be used to achieve urban-level densities, less expensive construction costs associated with Type V building, and massing that is compatible with single-family neighborhoods and historic districts.



## C. Building Types

### 1.a - Residential Low-Rise (cont.)

#### 2. Massing & Building Configuration

- A. Height Limits, to plate line: Generally 35' for single family houses, 55' for all other low-rise development.
- B. Massing and bulk controls: Massing should generally be similar in scale to existing adjacent buildings. See also *Chapter 4, Part D - Massing & Building Configuration*.
- C. Facades:
  - i. Ground level uses: Should be residential or mixed.
  - ii. Transparency: Any nonresidential ground floor use should have walls 75% transparent, but never less than 60% transparent.
  - iii. Articulation of street-wall: Articulations should be spaced no further than 26' o.c. A lot up to 40' wide should have at least 2 articulations.
  - iv. Lighting: Nighttime lighting should be limited and discreet, with light-levels similar to adjacent properties.
  - v. Facades facing the street should clearly present a front face of the building, not its side.
  - vi. Entries: Entry locations should be obvious, easy to find, clearly visible facing the sidewalk, and safe. Non-corridor/elevator buildings should have individual entries for each unit. Recessed entries are discouraged.
- D. Fenestration & Windows: See *Chapter 4, Section D.4.e*.
- E. Roofs and mechanical penthouse enclosures: Mechanical equipment located at roof level should be integrated into the building design, e.g. as a screened volume. See *Chapter 4, Part D.3.e - Rooftops & Mechanical Penthouse Enclosures*.

#### 3. Parking

- A. Ratios: The number of parking spaces provided should not exceed the minimum allowable by code by more than 10%.
- B. Location: Parking shall not be located on the front 1/4 of the lot (unless the lot has only alley frontage). Lots with access via a vehicular alley should locate access to all parking and garages off the alley. Where there is no alley access, parking should be at the back of the lot, accessed by a max. 10' wide drive. Lots narrower than 40' may have a street-facing garage as a set back, subsidiary part of the house massing.

- C. Vehicle Access: Should be from alley. Otherwise: Facing street: One 10' curb cut per lot. If lot is 80' wide or greater, two 10' curb cuts permissible. Access/Curb lots should come from numbered or side streets, unless demonstrated to be impossible.
- D. Double-wide garage doors are discouraged.
- E. Screening of Parking: Parking should not be exposed to view from the street. Structured parking should be wrapped with liner uses. If site conditions prohibit wrapped parking, the parking structure shall be designed with articulation and fenestration patterns consistent with the overall project. See *Chapter 4, Part E.1*.

#### 4. Sustainability

Development should meet the criteria listed below for each project type, and be consistent with the City's sustainability policies:

- A. Single-family houses: LEED for Homes Certified performance level, an Ecohomes Very Good rating, or equivalent.
- B. Multifamily: Enterprise Green Communities criteria, or according to the Green Multi-family Design Guidelines by the California Integrated Waste Management Board, or LEED Certified performance level or equivalent.

#### 5. Historic Neighborhoods

New residential buildings in Historic Districts should be designed in a manner sensitive to the dominant characteristics of the surrounding Historic District. This requires coordination with Preservation staff.

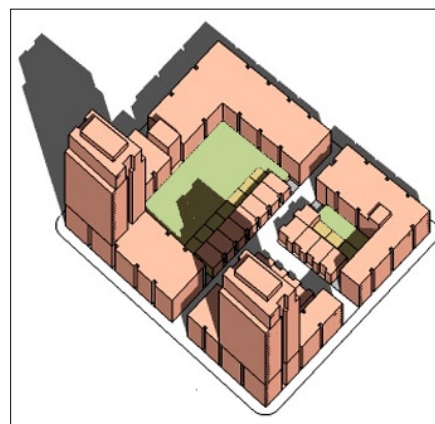


Figure 1. In the River District, a mix of residential building types, within the same block, is both typical and appropriate. This block depicts mid/high-rise towers and low-rise multi-family buildings, with mews townhouses lining the alleys.

## C. Building Types

### 1.b - Residential Mid-Rise

**PRINCIPLE: Mid-rise residential development shall provide both effective densities and local service amenities in their ground floor mixed-use areas.**

#### Rationale

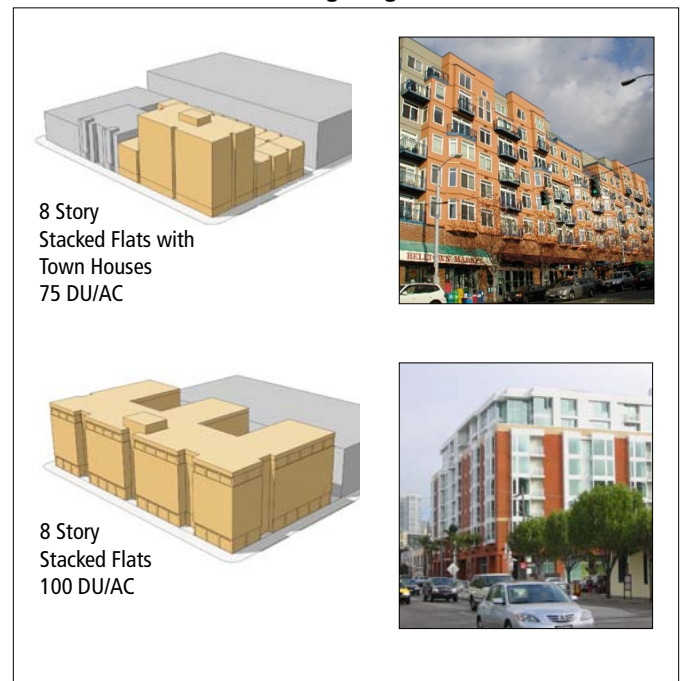
This section covers projects which range from 50-100' in height, and are primarily residential though it is preferable that they have a mixed-use component on the lower levels. Mid-rise residential buildings typically include stacked flats, stacked lofts, and various combinations of the two. This category generally ranges from 6-story buildings to 8-story buildings, where the top floor is no more than 75' above finished sidewalk level, and is typically built in Type I or II (typically concrete/steel or steel/metal stud respectively) construction. The following guidelines are recommended for this category.

#### Guidelines

##### 1. Site planning

- A. Location: As allowed by Zoning Code.
  - B. Setbacks: Should be consistent with adjacent buildings and Zoning Code. Otherwise:
    - i. Front: 0'-6'
    - ii. Side: zero setback allowed
    - iii. Back: 6' from alley at garage entry/exit; otherwise zero setback allowed
  - C. Lot Coverage (above parking): See *Chapter 4, Part B.2 Lot Coverage* and Zoning code.
  - D. Private Open Space: Either option listed below:
    - i. Private Open Space: As per Zoning Code; otherwise 50 sf per DU
    - ii. Common Open Space: As per Zoning Code; otherwise 80 sf per DU
  - E. Public Open Space: Coordinate with City Parks Department for Requirements
  - F. Landscaping: Required in all setback areas. Design to CPTED standards.
- ##### 2. Massing & Building Configuration
- A. Height Limits to plate line: Generally 75' to top of highest occupied floor; 100' max overall. See illustrations page 4-16.

#### Mid-Rise Residential Massing Diagrams



Figures 1 and 2. Mid-rise residential building types can be used to achieve higher density levels than low-rise, but require more expensive Type I, II, or III construction, and are therefore targeted to middle-higher income occupants.

- B. Bulk controls: See *Chapter 4, Part D.3*.
- C. Facades:
  - i. Ground level uses: Should be residential or mixed.
  - ii. Transparency: Any nonresidential ground floor use (except parking and servicing) shall have walls at least 60% transparent.
  - iii. Articulation of street-wall: Articulations should be spaced no further than 20' o.c.
  - iv. Lighting: Should be appropriate to the ground floor uses, and respectful of adjacent property uses, and designed to CPTED standards.
  - v. Entries: Entry locations should be obvious, easy to find, clearly visible from the sidewalk, and safe. Double height entries are encouraged. Recessed entries are discouraged.

**C. Building Types**

**1.b - Residential Mid-Rise (cont.)**

D. Fenestration & Windows: See *Chapter 4, Part D.4.e.*

E. Roofs and mechanical penthouse enclosures: Mechanical equipment located at roof level should be integrated into the building design, e.g. as a screened volume. Reference *Chapter 4, Part D.3.e - Rooftops & Mechanical Penthouse Enclosures* for further elaboration of the subject.

**3. Parking**

- A. Ratios: The number of parking spaces provided should not exceed the minimum allowable by code by more than 10%.
- B. Location: Parking shall not be located on the front 1/4 of the lot. Lots with alley access should locate access to all parking and garages off the alley.
- C. Vehicle Access: Should be from alley. Otherwise:  
Facing street: One 10' curb cut per lot. If lot is 80' wide or greater, two 10' curb cuts permissible. Access/ Curb cuts should come from numbered or side streets, unless demonstrated to be impossible.
- D. Double-wide garage doors are discouraged.
- E. Screening of Parking: Parking should not be exposed

to view from the street. Structured parking should be wrapped with liner uses. If site conditions prohibit wrapped parking, the parking structure shall be designed with articulation and fenestration patterns consistent with the overall project. See *Chapter 4, Part E1.*

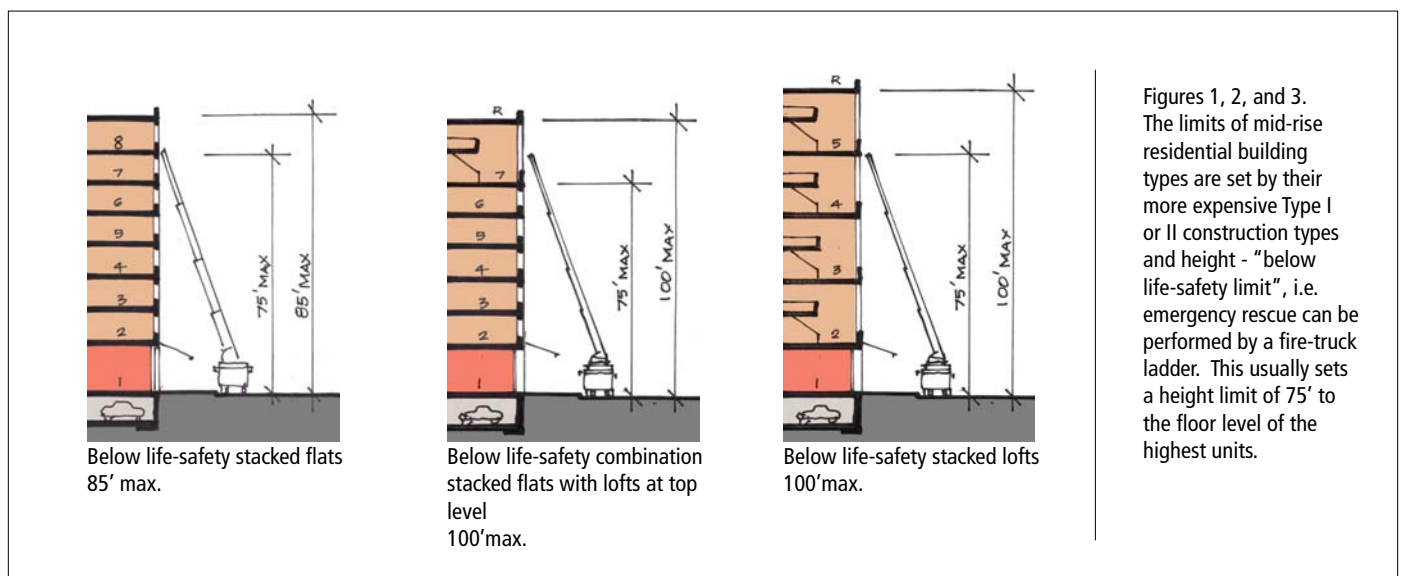
**4. Sustainability**

Development should meet the criteria required for LEED certification (or another appropriate rating system) at a minimum.

**5. Historic Neighborhoods**

- A. New mid-rise buildings in Historic Districts should be designed in a manner sensitive to the dominant characteristics of the surrounding Historic District. This requires coordination with Preservation staff.
- B. Well-designed mid-rise buildings can be complementary to the character of an historic neighborhood, although they may be significantly taller than many or most of their surroundings. Many historic neighborhoods in the city have historic buildings which exceed 100', yet still clearly contribute to the character of the district. Height alone should not be cause for denial of a project, but rather design quality. The City of Sacramento's Historic Preservation director shall be consulted on an acceptable solution for this building type in an Historic District.

**Mid-Rise Residential Building Types & Height Limits**



## C. Building Types

### 1.c - Residential High Rise

**PRINCIPLE:** High-rise residential development shall be a desirable building type to achieve high densities with minimal land consumption, best utilizing investments in public transit, open space & services, including family supportive uses.

#### Rationale

This section covers projects which are in excess of 8 stories, typically over 100' high. High-rise residential towers will often have several floors of non-residential uses on the lower levels, included structured parking. They may also be combined with other lower-rise building types as part of the development. This category requires Type I construction, in steel or concrete frame. The following guidelines are recommended for this category.

#### Guidelines

##### 1. Site planning

- A. Location: As allowed by Zoning Code.
- B. Setbacks: Should be consistent with adjacent buildings and Zoning Code. Otherwise:
  - I. For building base:
    - a. Front: 0'
    - b. Side: 0'
    - c. Back: 6' from alley at garage entry/exit; otherwise zero setback allowed
  - II. For tower component:
    - a. Front: zero setback allowed
    - b. Side: zero setback allowed for blank wall; 15' for wall with windows; minimum 80' between adjacent tower sides
    - c. Back: 30' between adjacent tower sides; otherwise 6' from alley
- C. Lot Coverage (above parking): See *Chapter 4, Part B.2 Lot Coverage* and Zoning code.
- D. Private Open Space: Either option listed below:
  - i. Private Open Space: As per Zoning Code; otherwise 50 sf per DU
  - ii. Common Open Space: As per Zoning Code; otherwise 80 sf per DU
- E. Public Open Space: Coordinate with City Parks Department for Requirements and designed to CPTED standards.
- F. Landscaping: Required in all open spaces and designed to CPTED standards.

#### High-Rise Residential Massing Diagrams



Figures 1 and 2. High-rise residential building types can be used to achieve very high density levels, and require Type I construction, which typically results in units tailored exclusively to higher income occupants.

## C. Building Types

### 1.c - Residential High-Rise (cont.)

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#### 2. Massing & Building Configuration

- A. Height Limits: As allowed by Zoning Code.
  - B. Bulk controls: above the street-wall height of 60', bulk controls apply, related to tower heights as follows (refer also to *Chapter 4, Part D.3 - Bulk Controls* for massing diagrams):
    - I. Up to 240' height**
      - » Maximum average tower floor plate: 7,500 sq ft
      - » Maximum plan dimension: 90'
      - » Maximum diagonal dimension: 120'
      - » 10% bulk reduction required for the top 20% of the tower height, measured from grade.
  - C. Facades:
    - i. Ground level uses: Should be residential or mixed.
    - ii. Transparency: Any nonresidential ground floor use (except parking and servicing) shall have walls at least 60% transparent.
    - iii. Articulation of street-wall: Articulations should be spaced no further than 40' o.c.
    - iv. Lighting: Should be appropriate to the ground floor uses, and respectful of adjacent property uses. The lighting design should focus light on the building and avoid light pollution. See the IESNA's Recommended Practice RP-33-99: "Lighting for Exterior Environments", Section 5.1.
    - v. Entries: Entry locations should be obvious, easy to find, clearly visible from the sidewalk, and safe. Main entry should be scaled relative to amount of users. Double/triple height entries encouraged in commercial office buildings.
  - D. Fenestration & Windows: See *Chapter 4, Part D.4.e*.
  - E. Roofs and mechanical penthouse enclosures: Mechanical equipment located at roof level should be integrated into the building design, e.g. as a screened volume. Reference *Chapter 4, Part 3.2 Rooftops & Mechanical Penthouse Enclosures* for further elaboration of the subject.
- B. Location: Parking should not be located on the front 1/4 of the lot. Lots with alley access should locate access to all parking and garages off the alley.
  - C. Screening of Parking: Parking should not be exposed to view from the street. Structured parking should be wrapped with liner uses. If site conditions prohibit wrapped parking, the parking structure shall be designed with articulation and fenestration patterns consistent with the overall project. See *Chapter 4, Part E1*.
  - D. Vehicle Access: Facing street: One 20' curb cut per lot, other than alley access.

#### 4. Sustainability

Development should meet the criteria required for LEED certification (or another appropriate rating system) at a minimum.

#### 3. Parking

- A. Ratios: The number of parking spaces provided shall not exceed the minimum allowable by code by more than 10%.



## C. Building Types

### 2.a - Commercial Low/Mid Rise

**PRINCIPLE:** Low-rise commercial development shall be desirable building types included as a viable strategy that contribute to the sustainability of neighborhoods, providing employment centers and daytime activity.

#### Rationale

This section covers low-rise commercial buildings, to a maximum height of 85'. These building type ranges from multi-tenant office space to highly tailored, custom designed green buildings for specific tenants. These buildings typically have a single use as commercial office space, although other supporting uses may be accommodated on the ground floor, like retail or food services, if the building is located in a busy district. To meet the parking requirements - currently 1 parking spaces per 400-600 s.f. of space, parking is usually either located in a structured facility behind the office building, or beneath the building footprint. This category requires Type I construction, with construction in steel or concrete frame. The following guidelines are recommended for this category.

#### Guidelines

##### 1. Site planning

- A. Location: As allowed by Zoning Code.
- B. Setbacks: Should be consistent with adjacent buildings and Zoning Code. Otherwise:
  - I. In residential areas:
    - a. Front: 5'-15'
    - b. Side: 5'-15'
    - c. Back: 10'
  - II. In mixed-use & commercial areas:
    - a. Front: 0'-10'
    - b. Side: zero setback allowed
    - c. Back: zero setback allowed
- C. Lot Coverage: As per Zoning code.
- D. Open Space: May be Private / Common or Public. Should be included as a figurally shaped open space, visible from street (see Figure 1).

#### Low-Rise Commercial Massing Diagrams

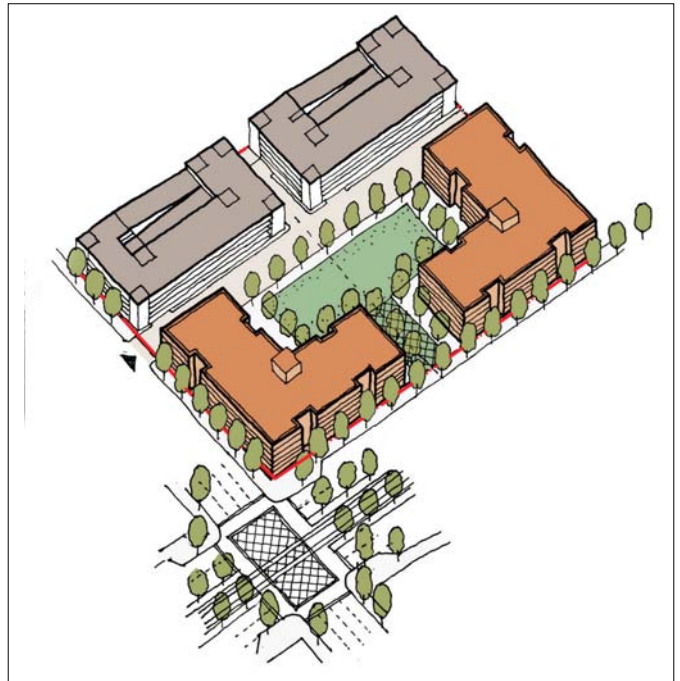


Figure 1. Low-rise commercial buildings should be placed along the Build-to line, with little setback required. Their massing should form figural (shaped like a "figure" or volume) open spaces. High parking ratios require structured parking, often almost equivalent in gross square feet to the office space that it serves.

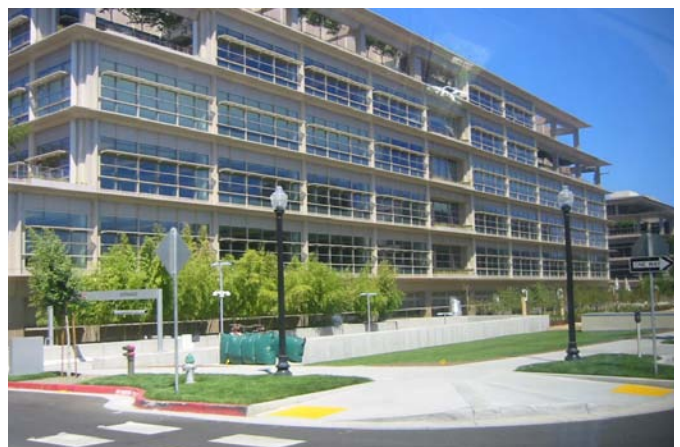


Figure 2. The CalPERS building, completed in 2006, is a group of 6-story office buildings arranged around an open, landscaped plaza.

## C. Building Types

### 2.a - Commercial Low/Mid-Rise (cont.)

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- E. Public Open Space: Required, see River District SPD.
- F. Landscaping: Required in all open spaces and designed to CPTED standards.

#### 2. Massing & Building Configuration

- A. Height Limits: up to 85'
- B. Bulk controls: See *Chapter 4, Part D.3.*
- C. Facades:
  - i. i. Ground level uses: Any retail uses within the building should open to the street, rather than to an internal atrium.
  - ii. ii. Transparency: At least 40% transparent.
  - iii. iii. Articulation of street-wall: Articulations should be spaced no further than 40' o.c.
  - iv. iv. Lighting: Should be appropriate to the ground floor uses, and respectful of adjacent property uses. Paths to/from parking shall be well-lit.
  - v. v. Entries: Entry locations should be obvious, easy to find, clearly visible from the sidewalk, and safe. Double height entries encouraged. Main entry should be scaled relative to amount of users.
- D. Fenestration & Windows: See *Chapter 4, Section D.4.e.*
- E. Roofs and mechanical penthouse enclosures: Mechanical equipment located at roof level should be integrated into the building design, e.g. as a screened volume. Reference *Chapter 4, Part D.3.e - Rooftops & Mechanical Penthouse Enclosures* for further elaboration of the subject.

#### 3. Parking

- A. Ratios: The number of parking spaces provided should not exceed the minimum allowable by code by more than 10%.
- B. Location: Parking should not be located at or above grade level on the front 1/4 of the lot. Lots with alley access should locate access to all parking and garages off the alley.

- C. Screening of Parking: Parking should not be exposed to view from the street. Structured parking should be wrapped with liner uses. If site conditions prohibit wrapped parking, the parking structure shall be designed with articulation and fenestration patterns consistent with the overall project. See *Chapter 4, Part E.1.*
- D. Vehicle Access: Facing street: One 20' curb cut per lot, other than alley access. Access curb cuts shall come from numbered or side streets, unless demonstrated to be impossible.

#### 4. Sustainability

Development should meet the criteria required for LEED certification (or another appropriate rating system) at a minimum.

#### 5. Historic Buildings and Neighborhoods

- A. New low/mid-rise commercial buildings in Historic Districts should be designed at street level in a manner sensitive to the architectural character of the surrounding Historic District. This requires coordination with Preservation staff.
- B. If well-designed, low/mid-rise commercial buildings can be complimentary to and enhance the character of historic districts, although significantly taller than their surroundings. Many historic neighborhoods in the city have historic mid-rise buildings in the 50' - 100' range of exceptional quality and character. Height alone should not be cause for denial of a project, but rather design quality. The City of Sacramento's Historic Preservation director shall be consulted on proposals for this building type in an Historic District.



## C. Building Types

### 2.b - Commercial High-Rise

**PRINCIPLE: High-rise commercial development shall be provided as desirable building type in dense employment centers, and shall contribute to a strong pedestrian environment and a distinctive metropolitan skyline.**

#### Rationale

This section covers projects which are in excess of 8 stories, typically 150' to 200' high in the River District. High rise commercial office towers (which include hotels) may often have a limited number of lower floors of non-offices, such as ground floor retail and structured parking. They may also be combined with other lower-rise building types as part of the development. This category requires Type I construction, in steel or concrete frame. The following guidelines are meant to serve as a brief introduction to the recommended parameters for this category.

#### Guidelines

##### 1. Site planning

- A. As allowed by Zoning Code.
- B. Setbacks: Should be consistent with adjacent buildings and Zoning Code. Otherwise:
  - I. For building base (up to 85'):
    - a. Front: 0'
    - b. Side: zero setback allowed
    - c. Back: zero setback allowed
  - II. For tower component (above 85'):
    - a. Front: zero setback allowed
    - b. Side: zero setback allowed; 5' min. if windows in wall
    - c. Back: zero setback allowed
    - d. 80' min. setback between towers
- C. Lot Coverage (above parking): As per Zoning code.
- D. Open Space: Not required.
- E. Public Open Space: Not required.
- F. Landscaping: Required in all open spaces, designed to CPTED standards.

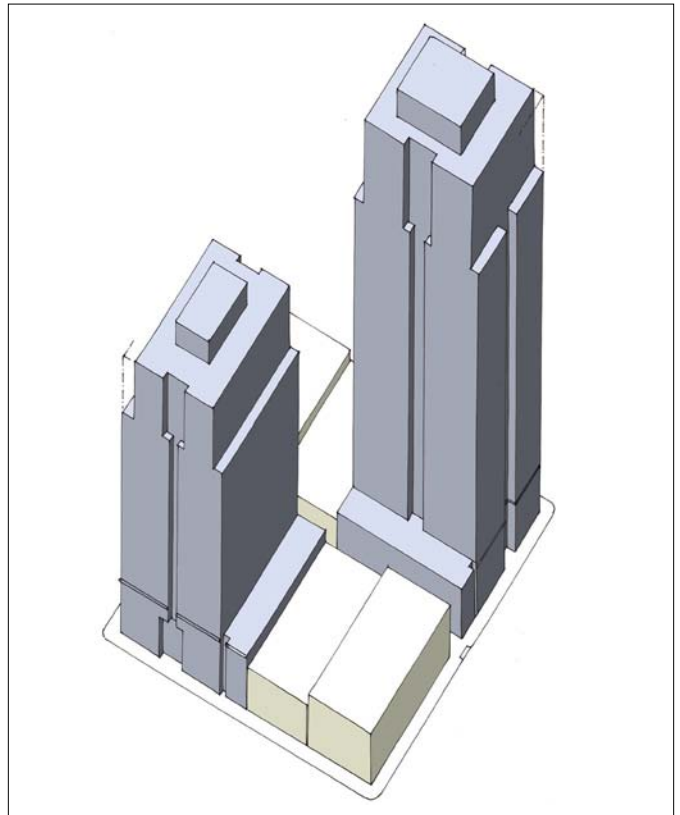
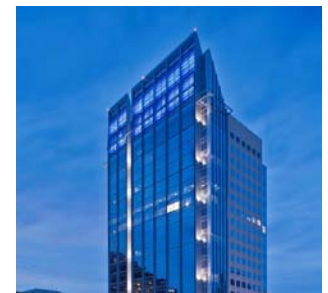
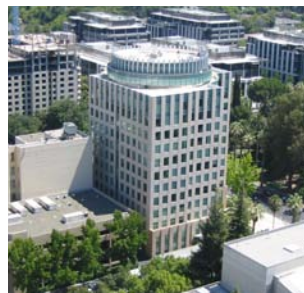


Figure 1. These diagrams illustrate the building volume used by a commercial office building in Sacramento. The left and right towers each start as a 1/4 block (25,600 sf) parcel; and completely fill the site to the base height of 85'. From there, each steps back to a maximum 20,000 sf floorplate, which rises until the top 20% of the building, where a 10% bulk reduction is required.



Figures 2 and 3. Urban commercial office buildings generally require larger floor plates. A well-articulated form can produce a more elegant and graceful solution for the Sacramento skyline.

## C. Building Types

### 2.b - Commercial High-Rise (cont.)

#### 2. Massing & Building Configuration

- A. Height Limits: As allowed by Zoning Code
- B. Bulk controls: See *Chapter 4, Part D.3*. Generally, above the street-wall height of 80', bulk controls apply, related to tower heights as follows:
  - I. Mid-rise (Up to 85' / Life-safety limit height)
    - a. No bulk reduction required (see Facade Articulation)
    - b. No stepback from street required
  - I. Above 85' height
    - a. Maximum average tower floor plate: 20,000 sq ft
    - b. Maximum plan dimension: 160'
    - c. Maximum diagonal dimension: 200'
    - d. 10% bulk reduction required for the top 20% of the tower height, measured from grade.
    - e. No stepback from street required
- C. Facades:
  - I. Ground level uses: Shall be retail or other active commercial uses.
  - II. Transparency: Any active ground floor use shall have walls at least 60% transparent, with 75% preferred.
  - III. Articulation of street-wall: Articulations should be spaced no further than 40' o.c.
  - IV. Lighting: Should be appropriate to the ground floor uses, and respectful of adjacent property uses. Feature elements of the facade/massing should be lit, including the top. The lighting design should focus light on the building and avoid light pollution. See the IESNA's Recommended Practice RP-33-99: "Lighting for Exterior Environments", Section 5.1.
  - V. Entries: Entry locations should be obvious, easy to find, clearly visible from the sidewalk, and safe. Main entry should be scaled relative to the overall mass that it is set within, its location in the city, and the amount of users. Entries lobbies of 30'-50' or more are encouraged.
- D. Fenestration & Windows: See *Chapter 4, Part D.4.e*.
- E. Roofs and mechanical penthouse enclosures: Mechanical equipment located at roof level should be integrated into the building design, e.g. as a screened volume. Reference *Chapter 4, Part D.3.e - Rooftops & Mechanical Penthouse Enclosures* for further elabora-

tion of the subject.

#### 3. Parking

- A. Ratios: The number of parking spaces provided should not exceed the minimum allowable by code by more than 10%.
- B. Location: Parking should not be located on the front 40' of the lot. Lots with alley access should locate access to all parking and garages off the alley.
- C. Screening of Parking: Parking should not be exposed to view from the street. Structured parking should be wrapped with liner uses. If site conditions prohibit wrapped parking, the parking structure shall be designed with articulation and fenestration patterns consistent with the overall project. See *Chapter 4, Part E.1*.
- D. Vehicle Access: Facing street: One 20' curb cut per 25,000 gsf of parcel area, other than alley access.

#### 4. Sustainability

Development should meet the criteria required for LEED certification (or another appropriate rating system) at a minimum.

#### 5. Historic Buildings and Neighborhoods

- A. New high-rise buildings in Historic Districts should be designed at street level in a manner sensitive to the architectural character of the surrounding Historic District. This requires coordination with Preservation staff.
- B. If well-designed, high-rise buildings can be complementary to and enhance the character of Historic Districts, although significantly taller than their surroundings. Many historic neighborhoods in the city have historic high-rise buildings which exceed 100', which are often considered some of the city's defining buildings, e.g. 926 J Street and the Elks Club building at 921 11th Street. Height alone should not be cause for denial of a project, but rather design quality. The City of Sacramento's Historic Preservation director shall be consulted on proposals for this building type in an historic district.

## D. Massing and Building Configuration

The Massing & Building Configuration Guidelines are intended to give guidance to the development of the buildings, and cover a range of topics from the height, massing and setbacks of the buildings to its articulation and materials. The goal of the guidelines is to establish a framework for dialogue between city departments, developers and their designers regarding appropriate architectural solutions for the River District.

Categories of guidelines include:

1. Building Component & Term Illustrations
2. Street Wall & Building Base Height
3. Massing & Bulk Controls
4. Façades
5. Rooftops & Mechanical Penthouse Enclosures
6. Development along Alleys
7. Sustainability
8. Public Art in the Private Realm

Massing & Building Configuration discusses seven categories of building design which together allow individual buildings to create and define the public realm as envisioned according to the Vision and Framework for the River District. The Categories, taken together, will work to deliver architecture and urban design in line with both City policies and best practices as witnessed in the similar areas of other thriving and successful cities.

### *Street Wall & Building Base Height*

Sacramento's public realm is defined by the buildings that surround it and the "street-walls" that the buildings collectively create. The street-wall is the line of buildings along a street edge that establishes the predominant definition of the public space. The placement, scale and design quality of the building's street-wall determines the nature and character of the streetscape and reinforces desired pedestrian or broader public realm objectives. Generally, a consistent street-wall contributes to a clearer public realm identity and a more comfortable pedestrian experience. Unlike the older historic commercial buildings in the Central Core which create well-defined street walls and visually accessible ground floor uses, the River

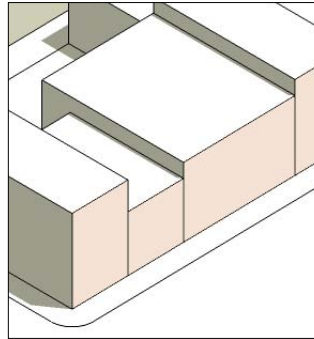


Figure 1. Building Component and Term Illustrations

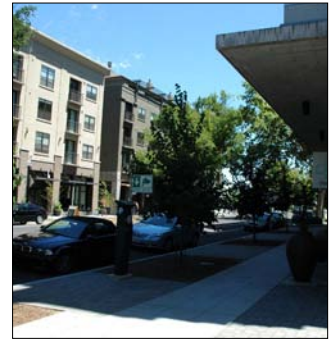


Figure 2. Street Wall and Building Base Height

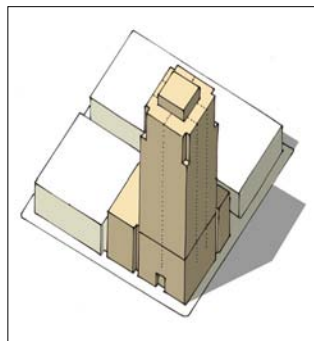


Figure 3. Massing & Bulk Controls

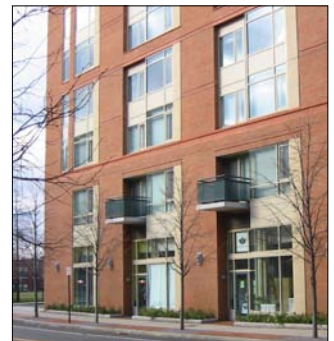


Figure 4. Façades



Figure 5. Rooftops and Mechanical Penthouse Enclosures



Figure 6. Development Along Alleys



Figure 7. Sustainability



Figure 8. Public Art in the Private Realm

## D. Massing & Building Configuration

district will establish a streetwall appropriate for the scale of buildings and width of streets, this generally to be set at 40 feet in height. Buildings that do not hold the street wall detract from the definition and quality of the public realm. The height of the street-wall at the setback or build-to-line is also an important element in shaping the character of the public realm. In combination with the width of the public street right-of-way, it is a primary factor in giving scale to the public realm and ensuring a comfortable human-scaled street enclosure.

### *Massing & Bulk Controls*

As the River District matures and incorporates more mid- and high-rise structures, the massing, bulk, and separation of buildings will become important. Densely packed massing can have numerous adverse effects: decreasing solar access; increasing wind tunnel effects; creating a visually oppressive public realm; and, with the introduction of residential towers, creating privacy conflicts. In order to protect views, solar access, air circulation, the quality of the public realm, and the character of the skyline, the new guidelines mandate a two-tiered approach that requires smaller floorplates for all towers, and smaller floor plates for residential towers.

### *Façades*

After Massing & Bulk Controls, Façade design will have the most impact on a city's urban and architectural character. Categories in this section to address a range of issues – materials, uses, articulation, fenestration & transparency, projections – that will ultimately give the building its look and feel. Criteria in this section offer a range of possibilities for designers to consider during the review and decision-making process, as a basis for what are some expected minimum outcomes of their proposals. This section, more than any other, should be considered a guide to minimum expectations rather than as limitations or prescriptive requirements.

### *Rooftops & Mechanical Penthouse Enclosures*

Rooftop design should be integrated into the overall design scheme of the building, especially for buildings which exceed the height of the City's tree canopy. In addition to the desire to design a form that will be a distinctive & memorable contribution to the city skyline, rooftop design balances and integrates other competing demands, including servicing and life-safety requirements and open

space possibilities.

### *Development along Alleys*

As a city-wide resource, Sacramento's alleys provide a literal network of development opportunity. If properly utilized and enhanced, this can become the location for residential, commercial and retail development of a different yet complementary character to that of the existing River District. Smaller scaled and intimate in contrast with the width and scale of the primary vehicular streets and urban frontage, the alley system can offer the city a distinctive urban experience, unique to Sacramento. (See Ch 3 Alleys)

### *Sustainability*

As the center of the city and the region, and the State's Capitol, Sacramento should be the main stage for demonstrating how to create a sustainable city. The amount of development projected for the River District provides a unique opportunity to promote more energy and resource efficient buildings, support greater recycling and waste reduction, and create greater biodiversity within the urban setting. A Sustainable River District should achieve measurable goals in terms of the performance of its buildings. New development should take a comprehensive and measurable approach to sustainability. All development should meet the criteria required for LEED certification (or another appropriate rating system) at a minimum. The Sustainable Design of buildings requires an evolving palette of design tools. Some tools require the application of common sense and best practices for the region. Others require designers to incorporate the latest technologies for mechanical systems and material use.

### *Public Art in the Private Realm*

Artwork provides a building with an enhanced opportunity to contribute to the decoration of the City, to enhance the public and private realms. Whether required as part of a Public Art program or not, an art component should be incorporated into the architecture of the building, in a complimentary way. These integrated strategies – including sculptural relief panels, architectural ornaments, murals and mosaic – ensure that the initial investment can contribute to the long term civic art program for the City.



**D. Massing & Building Configuration**

**1. Building Component and Term Illustrations**

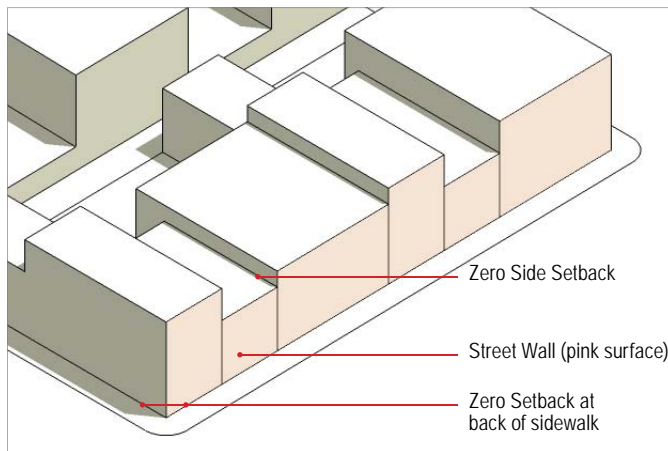
**Rationale**

Some terms discussed in this section are illustrated and identified below, and clarify architectural, urban design, and planning terminology.

**Building Components & Terms**

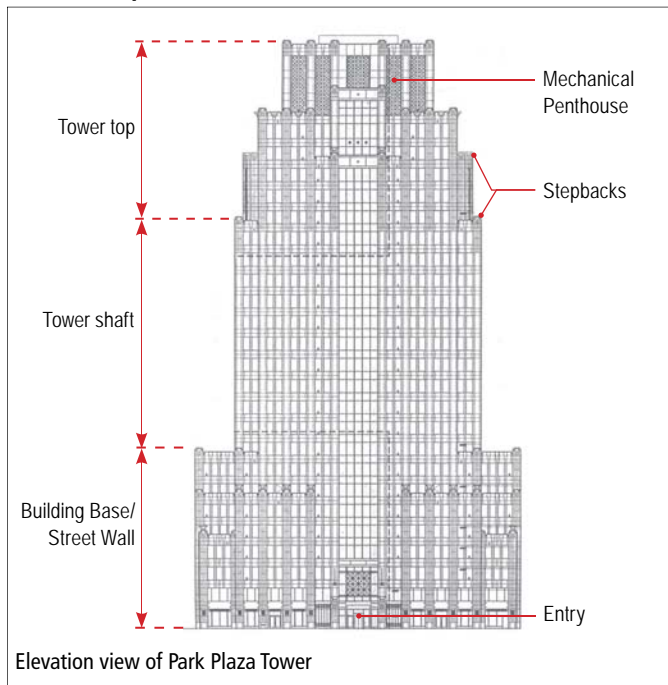
**Street Wall & Setbacks**

Figure 1



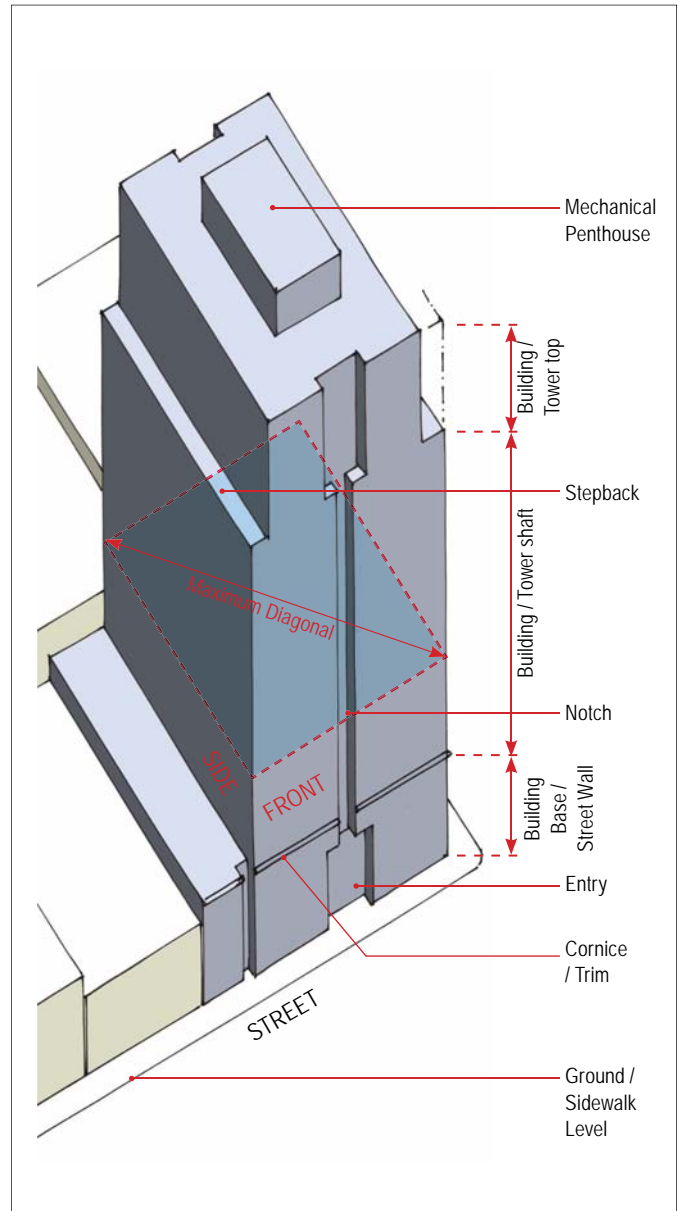
**Tower Components**

Figure 2



**Building & Bulk Control**

Figure 3



## D. Massing & Building Configuration

### 2. Street Wall and Building Base Height

**PRINCIPLE: The public space of the street shall be defined on both sides by buildings forming a street wall of a consistent height and defined articulation.**

#### Rationale

The public space of the street is defined by the buildings and, in Sacramento's residential areas, by tree canopies. The River District does have a fairly consistent building height, but only in the North 16th Street Historic District, can one discern an actual street wall in part. As the District develops, there is an opportunity to create more regular street wall heights. A building base height established at approximately 50', or 3 stories would be appropriate for much of the River District where typical local streets are 68 ft wide. This produces a street section with 3:4 proportions (see Figure 2). On streets of 80 ft the street wall shall not exceed 65 ft. On streets wider than 100 ft, the street wall height shall not exceed 85 ft.

#### Guidelines

- A. In order to support a pedestrian-oriented public realm, retail and commercial streets should be framed by buildings uniformly placed at the sidewalk with no setback. In other areas that are more residential or institutional in character, street-wall setbacks should reflect the predominant historic development pattern.
- B. The height of the street-wall is an important element in shaping the character of the public realm. Buildings which are taller than the preferred street wall height in their particular corridor should be articulated at the top of the street wall height, or stepped back, in such a way as to ensure the visual primacy of the street wall's building base height. Above the building base height, bulk controls apply. See *Part D.3 - Bulk Controls*.
- C. Breaks in the street walls within a development block or site should employ plantings, walls, archways, fences, or other features to maintain the spatial definition of the street edge.
- D. A building may have multiple horizontal course articulations in order to pick up the articulations or heights of adjacent buildings. See Figure 3.

#### Building Base Height

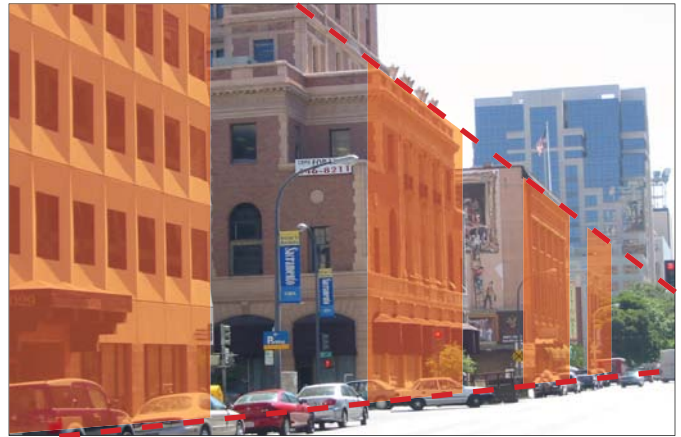


Figure 1. Consistent building wall defining the space of the street, as seen along J Street.

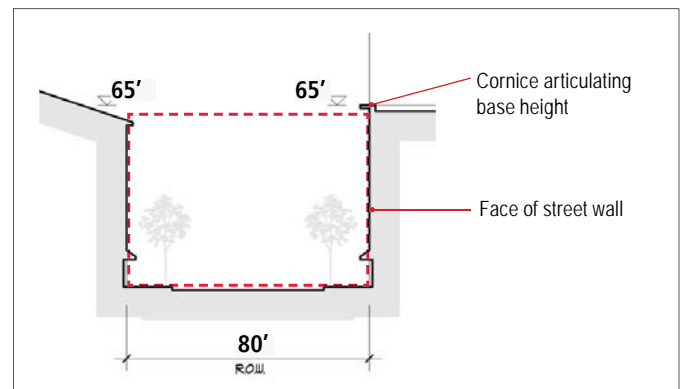


Figure 2. Street section with 3:4 proportions, with cornice articulation defining building base height.



Figure 3. A consistent streetwall is maintained in the 1400 block of R Street with four individual 20th century warehouse buildings.

## D. Massing & Building Configuration

### 3. Bulk Controls

**PRINCIPLE: Bulk controls shall be implemented to foster a distinctive and metropolitan city skyline with buildings of varied shapes, sizes, and articulated tops.**

#### Rationale

As the River District matures and incorporates more and more mid- and high-rise structures, their massing and separation will become an important issue to address. Densely packed towers can have numerous deleterious effects: decreasing solar access; increasing wind tunnel effects; creating a visually oppressive public realm. Two recent buildings stand out – the EPA headquarters and the Courthouse. Though they are fine pieces of architecture, their towers' east-west slab configurations create severe shadow impacts on the adjacent neighborhoods to the north. And with the introduction of residential towers, privacy conflicts are created. In recognition of these issues, many cities are adopting the approach pioneered by Vancouver to require slenderer towers with greater separation between them which will add in maintain view corridors to the rivers, Downtown, and the Sierra mountains.

#### Guidelines

##### *Floor-plate Size*

In order to protect views, solar access, air circulation, the quality of the public realm, and the character of the skyline, these guidelines require high-rise buildings use small to medium sized floorplates. This reduction allows the generous floor-plates required for certain buildings, but reduces the building dimensions enough to produce a slenderer appearing profile up to the maximum height limits in the River District. The guidelines also encourage even smaller floor-plates where possible, not just for aesthetic reasons, but also to facilitate more energy efficient buildings that provide better natural lighting and ventilation possibilities. Massing and building configuration are directly related to the size of the building's floor-plates, and the ability of those floorplates to repeat as they rise up. That ability is different for commercial office and residential buildings.



Figure 1. Aerial view of the Downtown, focusing on Cesar Chavez Plaza. This picture emphasizes the dramatic shadows cast by wide-floorplate buildings.



Figure 2. Vancouver, BC, requires slenderer towers with greater separation between them.



Figure 3. Portland, OR, has small urban blocks. The more recent high-rise residential and office buildings have transitioned away from the full-block model and towards narrower, more elegant, and more articulated designs.



**D. Massing & Building Configuration****3. Bulk Controls (cont.)***Building Stepbacks*

The requirements for stepbacks should acknowledge the differences between building programs. Commercial buildings can accommodate step-backs of their upper floors within their massing without compromising the integrity of the internal spaces. High-rise residential floor plans are normally stacked one above the other without step backs. The depth of residential floor plans rarely has the ability to vary from floor to floor. This integral consistency results in a vertical facade for the majority of the building's height. It is for this reason that the design guidelines do not require residential towers to step-back their floors above the street-wall base height.

An unfortunate drawback of requiring stepbacks is that stepbacks permit, and by default encourage, above-grade parking levels to occupy the levels up to the base height limit and expose the parking levels to the street-wall. This creates the undesirable condition where there are no windows or occupied spaces from ground level to where the occupied floors start, resulting in a dead street-wall as seen from the sidewalk. (This parking location issue is addressed in *Chapter 4, Section E - Parking & Vehicle Access.*)

In principle, stepbacks - the process of stepping back a building's bulk at designated height thresholds - are not required from the street-wall (except as required in the Zoning Code). However, bulk-reduction stepbacks are required at the top 20% of high-rise buildings

*Tower Separation*

As the River District becomes a district with a higher concentration of high-rise buildings, greater setbacks are recommended for all the same reasons for reducing floor-plate size. Future commercial and residential towers should be required to maintain at least an 80-foot setback from adjacent towers, the width of a typical Sacramento Central City street, in order to ensure protection of views and privacy. See *Part D.3.c - Bulk Controls - Tower Separation & Height Differentiation.*

At the edge of rivers, highrise towers should be separated a minimum of 200 feet to ensure open views and reduce shadow impacts in these areas.



Figure 1. View of the River District, from the top of the Empire Building, looking west. These buildings employ a variety of stepback strategies, ranging from stepbacks only at the top to frequent stepbacks applied at various stages of as the buildings rise.



Figure 2: High-rise residential buildings- shown here in downtown San Diego- typically have minimal ability to accommodate stepback recommendations, due to the requirements for residential units to "stack" in a repetitive fashion. Massing articulations are often found in balcony and terrace configurations.

**D. Massing & Building Configuration**

**3. Bulk Controls (cont.)**

*Tower Proportion*

Tower proportion is the relationship of floor plate width to height. These guidelines are set according to building type and height. Residential high-rises in the District will be about 2.6:1 for 240' high buildings. A series of given height thresholds are set, each with maximum floorplate dimensions (plan and diagonal) and illustrated in the following section, *D.3a and D.3b - Bulk Controls for Residential and Commercial Buildings*. These proportions and maximum floorplate dimensions ensure the avoidance of stocky or bulky buildings that block views and cast overwhelming shadows on the streets and sidewalks.

*Alternative Designs & Flexibility Regarding Bulk Controls*

The Bulk Control Guidelines are intended to be a framework and basis for the review of projects by the City of Sacramento. Staff will review a project for overall compliance to ensure it meets the intent of the design criteria set forth in this document. As such, alternative designs that can be proven to achieve the design principles in some form will also be considered by City Staff.

Alternative Designs may be appropriate when the proposed design provides equal or greater amenities and benefits to compensate for areas of the project design not in compliance. Projects that do not adhere to the Bulk Control criteria set forth in this document should ensure, at a minimum, that tower designs take into consideration shadow casting, heat island effect, solar orientation, wind tunnel effects, prevailing winds, as well as view sheds.

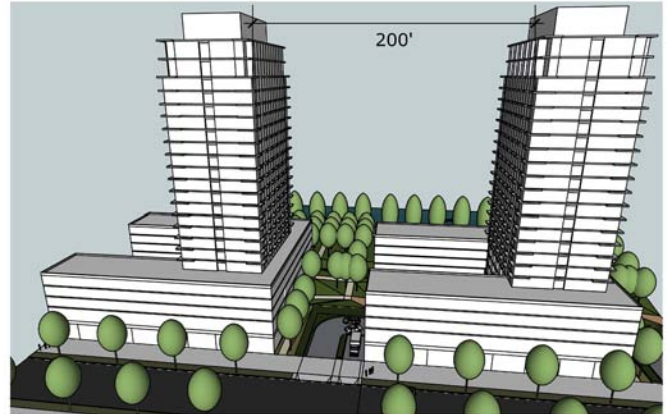
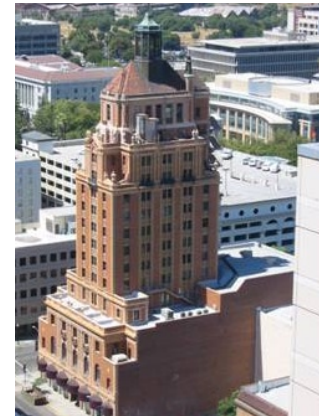
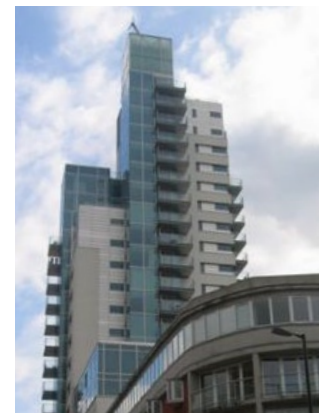


Figure 1: Tower separation at the riverfront shall be a minimum of 200 feet with separation at the base for public access to the river.



Figures 2 and 3: Two approaches to stepbacks are illustrated by two of Sacramento's signature historic buildings, the Elks Club and 926 J Street (now the Citizen Hotel). Both designs delineate the base, tower shaft, and top. Whereas the Elks club uses stepbacks at each location, 926 J Street uses cornices and string course to articulate its massing.



Figures 4 and 5: Two views of a new 25-story high-rise residential tower in London. The floorplates have no stepbacks until the top eight stories, where the "bundled" vertical masses successively end, creating terraces for the upper floors.

**D. Massing & Building Configuration**

**3.a - Bulk Controls - Residential and Residential/Mixed-Use Buildings**

*Residential Bulk Controls*

The allowable bulk of residential development varies by project height. The urban role of low-rise buildings is primarily to hold the street-wall, while high-rise buildings should be tall, slender, and well-proportioned. The design of high-rise buildings should establish or continue the urban street-wall as well as contribute a significant form to the city skyline. Bulk controls thus specifically govern floorplate area, maximum plan dimensions and bulk reductions relative to height.

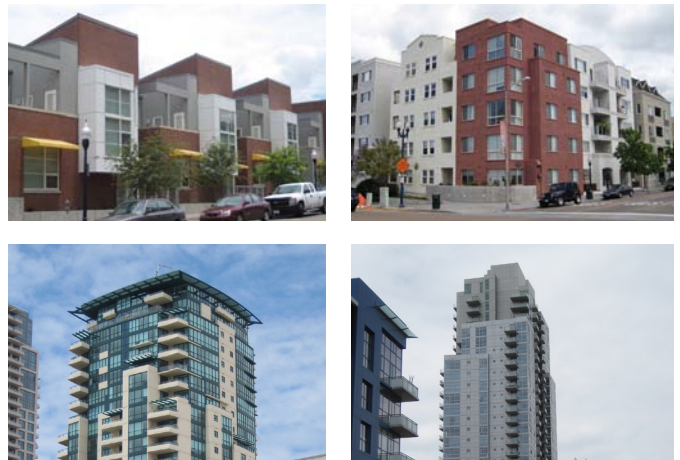
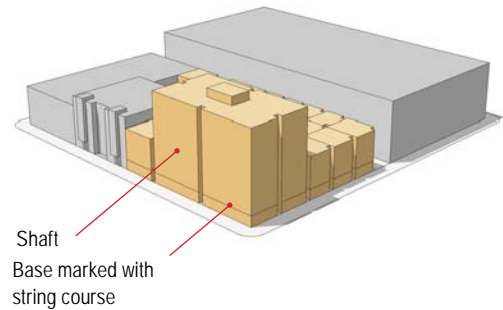


Figure 1. Various bulk reduction strategies employed on residential developments in San Diego, CA.

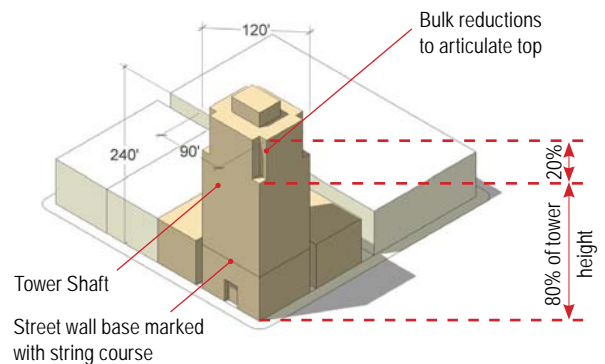
*1. Low & Mid-Rise (Up to 85' / Life-safety limit height):*

- i. No bulk reduction required
- ii. No stepback from street required



*2. Up to 240' height*

- i. Maximum average tower floor plate: 7,500 sq ft
- ii. Maximum plan dimension: 90'
- iii. Maximum diagonal dimension: 120'
- iv. 10% bulk reduction required for the top 20% of the tower height, measured from grade. (Bulk reductions need not be at corners, as pictured)
- v. No stepback from street required at street wall base height





D. Massing & Building Configuration

3.b - Bulk Controls - Commercial Office and Commercial Office / Mixed-Use Buildings, and Hotels

Commercial & Commercial/Mixed-Use Buildings

1. Low-rise (Up to 50' height)

- i. No bulk reduction required
- ii. No stepback from street required

2. Mid-rise (Up to 85' / Life-safety limit height)

- iii. No bulk reduction required
- iv. No stepback from street required

3. High Rise - Above 85' height

- v. Maximum average tower floor plate: 20,000 sq ft
- vi. Maximum plan dimension: 160'
- vii. Maximum diagonal dimension: 200'
- viii. 10% bulk reduction required for the top 20% of the tower height, measured from grade. No stepback from street required

Typical Bulk Controls for Commercial Office and Commercial Office / Mixed-Use Buildings, and Hotels

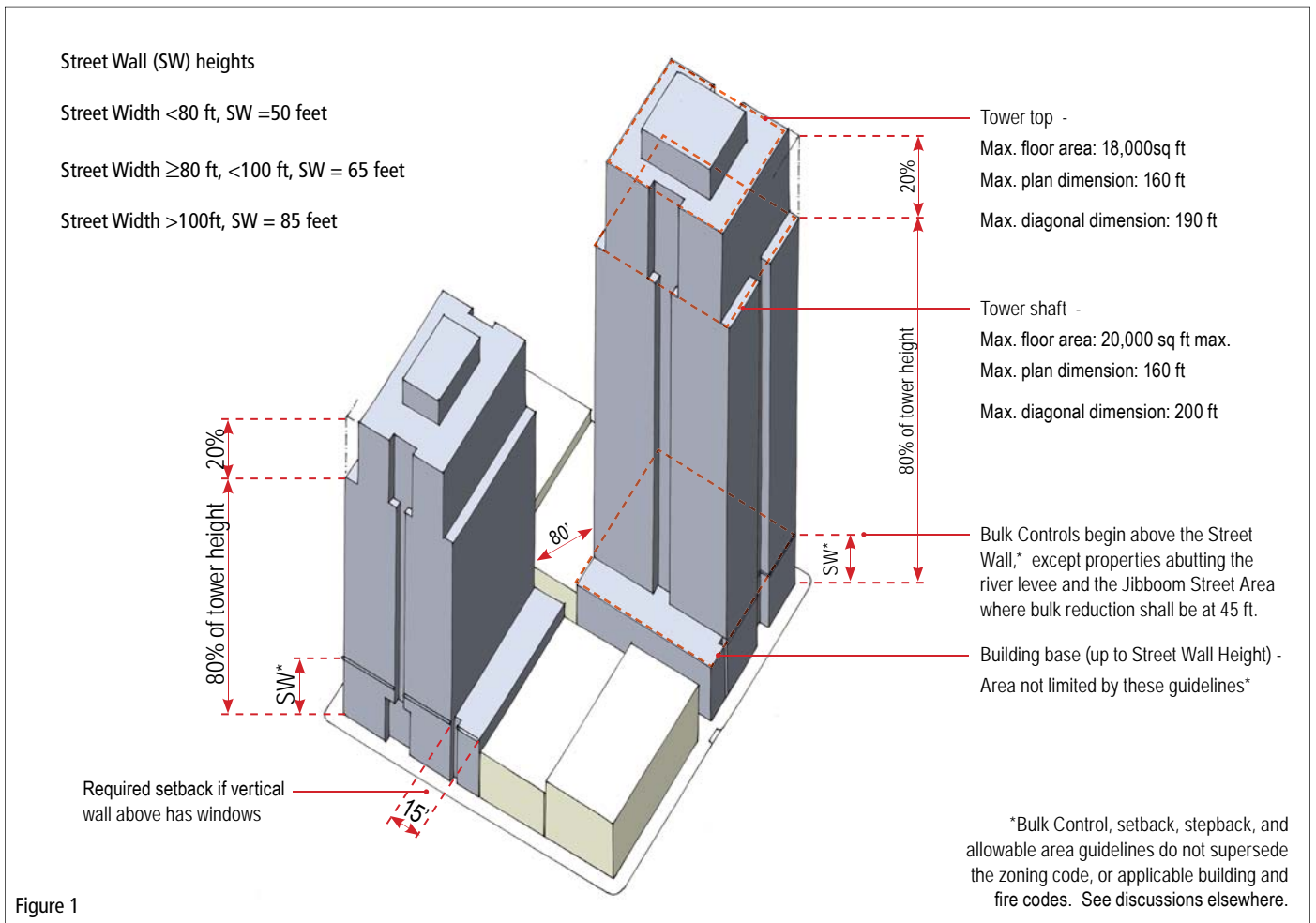


Figure 1



**D. Massing & Building Configuration**

**3.c - Bulk Controls - Tower Separation and Height Differentiation**

**PRINCIPLE:** The spatial separation of any two towers on the same block - and the related qualities of solar access, shadows, views, and privacy - shall be no more restrictive or constricting than if they were on opposite sides of a typical 80 foot-wide street; and a tower shall be distinct in size/ scale from those adjacent to it.

**Rationale**

One of the benefits of towers is to have unobstructed views for the upper floors. This is particularly important in narrow lots in a multi-parceled block, as is common in the commercial zone of the River District. It is thus appropriate to control how closely towers can be located.

Cities such as San Francisco have controls to establish minimum distances between towers, generally the same dimension as a typical street. This ensures that the spatial separation of any two towers on the same block - and the related qualities of solar access, shadows, views, and privacy - would be no more onerous or constricting than if they were on opposite side of the street.

**Guidelines**

*1. Tower Spacing & Separation*

A minimum separation of 80' in all directions is required between residential towers (200' along the river-front). This applies to existing and new residential towers, including where multiple towers are part of the same design scheme / development and applies to the street right-of-way in the River District which may be less than 80 feet in width.

After the first tower is built on a narrow parcel in a multi-parcel block, subsequent towers on the same block would have to adhere to this rule. This will diminish view blockage and preserve sky exposure at street level.

*2. Along the riverfront, towers should be staggered to maximize the viewshed of each tower.*

The curvilinear form of the riverfront should be followed in the placement of towers to ensure that view corridors remain open

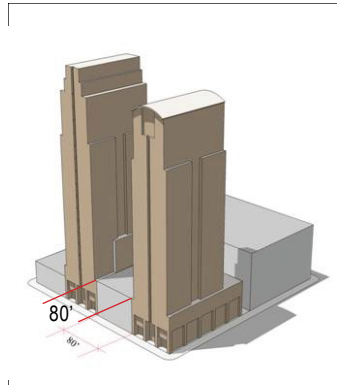


Figure 1: Typical permitted tower spacing



Figure 2: Residential tower spacing in downtown San Diego, CA.

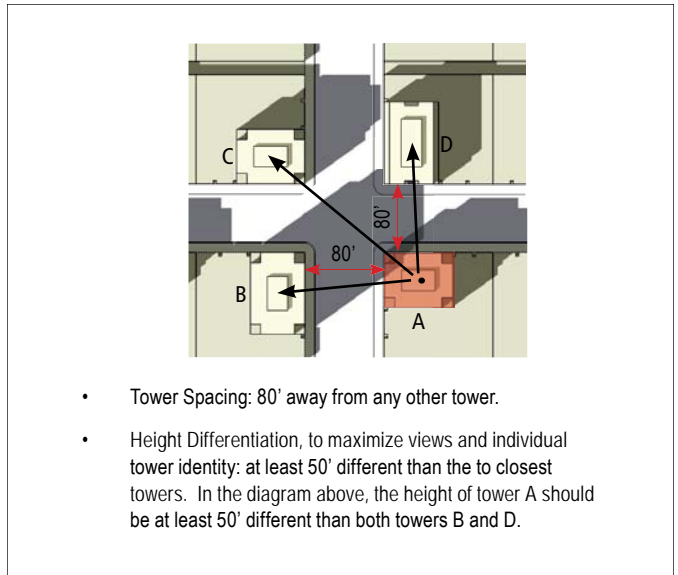


Figure 3: Towers should be spaced at least 80' apart from each other - the equivalence of the predominant Central City street width - and vary considerably in height from those closest to it.

*3. Height Differentiation*

Any new high rise should be at least 50' shorter or taller than the two towers closest to it (measured in plan as a radius from the center of the diagonal). Thus, in Figure 3, if towers B, C and D are existing, new tower A should be approximately 50' shorter or taller than both tower B and tower D.

**D. Massing & Building Configuration**

**3.d - Bulk Controls - A Distinctive Top**

.....  
**PRINCIPLE: River District highrise buildings shall terminate with a distinctive top, to contribute to an architecturally dynamic city skyline.**  
.....

**Rationale**

*Tower Articulation - A Distinctive Top*

There is a well established architectural tradition of high-rise buildings having a distinctive top terminating the tower. Sacramento has many fine examples of this design strategy, from the historic Elks Lodge of 1926 to 621 Capitol Mall, completed in 2008 and the River District will make its own unique contribution to our City skyline.

**Guidelines**

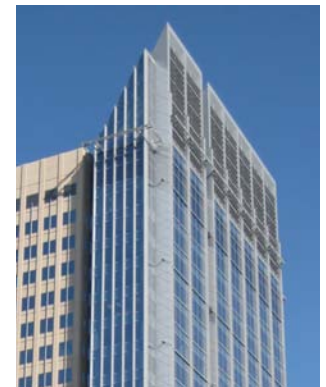
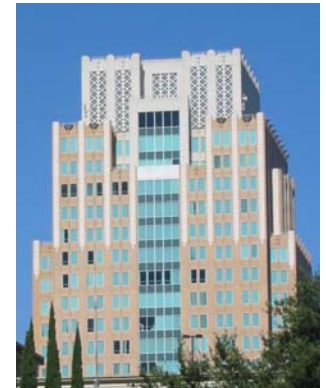
To achieve a distinctive top, a 10% bulk reduction for the top 20% of the building height is required. This helps define an upper / penthouse zone at the top of the building and reduces the apparent bulk of the tower as seen against the sky.

Mechanical penthouses should be screened and integrated into the form of the building. Consideration should be given to various ways of handling this design element without compromising safety or creating a monotonous skyline. (See Photos, this page)

Designs should avoid flat topped profiles, which make a building look stocky and top-heavy.

Commercial hotel towers in the Jibboom Street area may receive a height incentive for providing a public observation area or viewing deck which should be distinguishable at the building's top.

**Tower tops**



Figures 1, 2, 3, and 4. Bulk reductions and integrated mechanical penthouses contribute to the distinctive tops of these Sacramento towers. Figure 5. Observation balconies, Chicago's Sears Tower (renamed Willis Tower).



## D. Massing & Building Configuration

### 3.e - Bulk Controls - Rooftops and Mechanical Penthouse Enclosures

**PRINCIPLE: Rooftop design shall be integrated into the overall design scheme of the building, including mechanical penthouse enclosures and green design elements.**

#### Rationale

The roof levels of a building need to accommodate servicing and life-safety requirements, while retaining a form that will be a distinctive and memorable contribution to the city skyline. A key issue of rooftop design is balancing the integration of building services, such as mechanical and drainage systems, with building amenities, such as potential rooftop open space and natural cooling strategies, stormwater management, and, where applicable; design of the rooftop to reduce heat-island effect.

#### Guidelines

##### 1. Mechanical Penthouses

Mechanical penthouses should be screened and integrated into the formal design of the building. See Figures 1-4.

##### 2. Roof Surfaces

To reduce heat island effects, follow one of these strategies:

- A. Specify roofing materials that have high solar reflectivity and high emissivity of the life of the material. Materials should achieve a solar reflectance index (as per LBNL Cool Roofing Materials database) of at least 78 for low-sloped roofs and 29 for high sloped roofs.
- B. Use green roofs, planted with any of the following: vegetated surfaces, plants, shrubs, small trees, etc. Green roofs should be installed on at least 75% or the roof area, not including helicopter landing pads and occupiable roof terraces (in residential buildings only).
- C. Install photo voltaic panel arrays on at least 50% of roof areas.

##### 3. Open Space

Roofs offer an excellent opportunity to provide users with common open space in the form of roof decks or gardens (where the roofs are not already planted for stormwater management purposes). If roofs are flat, designers should endeavour to make roofscapes occupiable by users. Publicly accessible roofs may help meet park requirements.

#### Rooftops

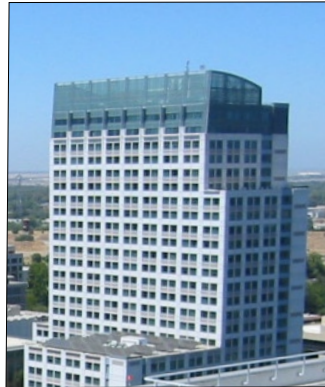


Figure 1



Figure 2



Figure 3

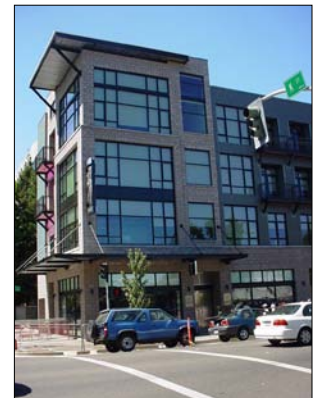


Figure 4

Figures 1, 2, 3 & 4. Mechanical penthouses at roof level integrated into the overall design of the building's massing and "distinctive top".



Figures 5. Green roof on an urban high-rise residential building.



**D. Massing & Building Configuration**

**4.a - Façades - Ground Level Uses**

**PRINCIPLE: The ground floor, especially the area facing onto public sidewalks, shall incorporate the most public and active spaces within the building, to activate the street. Parking shall not be an appropriate use along a building's public frontage.**

**Rationale**

In order to have lively mixed-use district retail areas, commercial and community uses are encouraged at sidewalk level, ensuring the maximum transparency and permeability of the street facade. Since the River District's population of workers, residents and visitors can support only a limited amount of retail, provision for ground floor live/work loft space should be considered where retail is not feasible.

**Guidelines**

*1. Location*

In the River District area, ground floor uses should be retail, commercial, community or live/work. Ground floor retail location requirements are specified in the River District Special Planning District (SPD).

*2. Ground Floor Heights*

- A. Development with retail, commercial, community or public uses on the ground floor should have a clear floor-ceiling height of at least 12'. Where mechanical venting is required, facade vents should be either at least 9' above the sidewalk level, or placed on a side elevation, away from pedestrian traffic.
- B. The ground floor elevation of a non-residential building is preferable to be flush with the sidewalk however, in no case should it be more than 2' above the adjacent sidewalk, and maintain handicap access.
- C. Main entrances for each use should be accessible from sidewalk level. See Figure 2.

*3. Residential Uses*

Residential ground floor uses in multi-family buildings, other than accessible units, should be no more than 4' above the public sidewalk grade, if setback is 15' or less. See Figure 2.

*4. Blank Walls Due to Screening of Parking*

Blank walls due to grade-level parking or service spaces are to be avoided. Parking shall be screened with an active use (residential, etc.) or depressed by a half or full level. See Figures 3 & 4. See also *Chapter 4, Part E.1- Parking & Vehicle Access*.

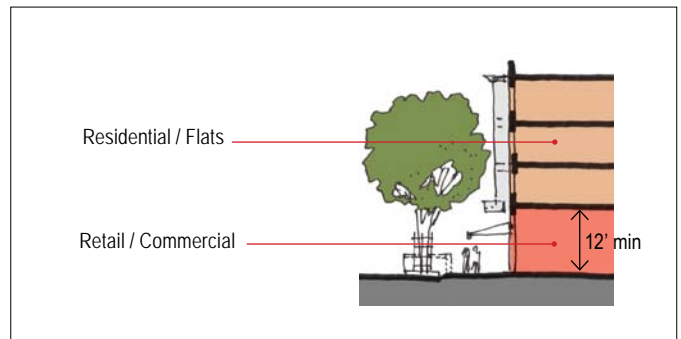


Figure 1. Ground floor mixed uses along retail street

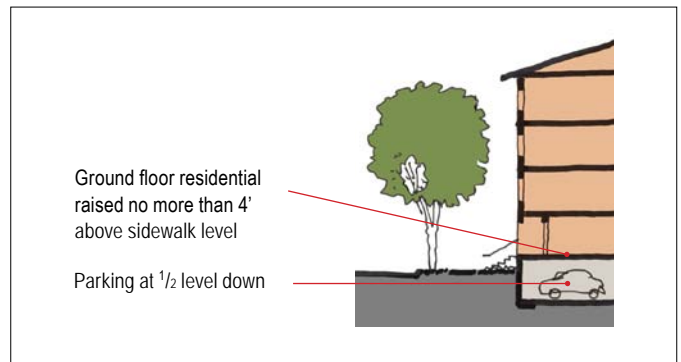


Figure 2. Residential street

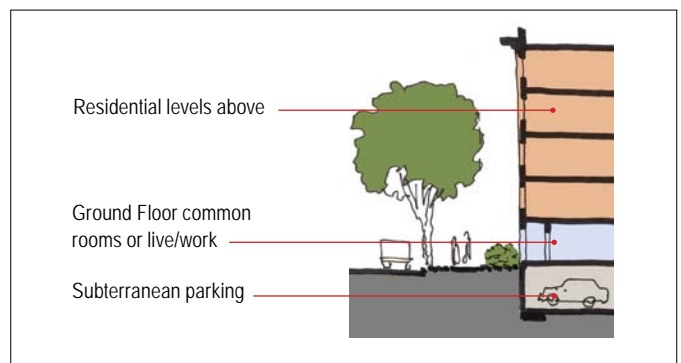


Figure 3. Residential street subterranean parking



**D. Massing & Building Configuration**

**4.b - Façades - Transparency**

**PRINCIPLE: The facade of a building shall be appropriately transparent to allow active ground floor uses, such as retail, commercial or community uses, to be visible from the street.**

**Rationale**

Where retail, commercial, community or other active uses occur, it is imperative that they are visible from the street, to both pedestrians and motorists. The facade thus needs to have a high level of transparency in order for these uses to get the amount of visibility required for their healthy business operation (See Figures 1 & 2). These facades should also have a high degree of permeability (through doors and entryways).

**Guidelines**

1. Where retail, commercial, community or other active uses occur, the retail level facade should be 60%-75% transparent. See 4.a - Façades - Ground Level Uses for required locations per the retail front-age map
2. Opaque and translucent glass do not qualify as transparent.
3. A facade need not be all glass, nor must it be built out of a storefront system.
4. The qualifying area of a facade is from top of finished sidewalk to top of finished floor level of first non-retail (e.g. residential or commercial office, etc.) level.
5. Doors should be spaced no more than 40' apart to ensure a high degree of permeability.
6. Blank walls, more than 12' in length are discouraged. If they can not be avoided, one of these strategies should be used:
  - I. Set the wall back behind a planting strip of at least 18". The planting strip may be recessed within the column grid.
  - II. The wall should be either articulated or decorated with artwork, or both.

**Ground Level Transparency**



Figures 1 & 2: Appropriate levels of transparency need not require all-glass buildings. These two buildings - one an grocery store in a mixed-use development in Portland, OR, the other a retail chain store in San Francisco - both have appropriate and successful levels of ground floor transparency.

**D. Massing & Building Configuration**

**4.c - Façades - Articulation of Street-Wall**

**PRINCIPLE: The street walls defining urban blocks shall be articulated to create rhythm and variety, achieving a fine-grained pattern to the urban fabric.**

**Rationale**

Sacramento’s urban blocks are historically divided into 40’ and 80’ wide lot increments. While the new blocks in the River District are not as uniform in size, the importance of scale and articulation of the streetwall gives the urban blocks their predominant rhythm and variety and creates a fine-grained pattern to the urban fabric. In order to avoid block-long, unbroken facades, unarticulated façade planes should be limited in order to create visual variety and interest.

**Guidelines**

*1. Vertical Articulation*

Facade articulation elements should include notched set-backs, projecting bays, balconies, etc. Articulations should begin at the 2nd or 3rd floor. Ground level articulations, in the form of recesses, should be limited as they create dark and unsafe areas.

- A. The maximum unbroken length of the facade of a commercial building should be limited to 100’.
- B. Articulation of residential buildings should respond to multiples of 40’, in response to the typical historic graining of the lot patterns.
- C. Articulation between facade sections should be at least 5’ deep and at least 10’ wide.

*2. Repetition of Articulation*

A project should not repeat the same wall surface design:

- A. Horizontally, across more than 1/3 of a block
- B. Vertically, over more than 50% of its floors

Figure 1 illustrates how design strategies like rhythm and notching can be used to design large buildings where expansive and potentially repetitive facades can be challenging.

**Articulation of street-wall**

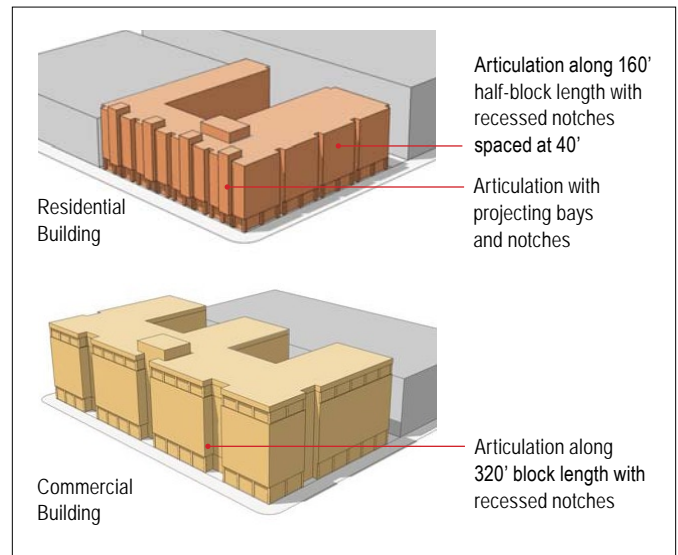


Figure 1: Projections & notches articulating the street wall.

**Façade Articulation**



Clockwise from top left.

Figure 1. Building facades should be inviting and engaging for people.  
 Figure 2. The facade of One Hawthorne in San Francisco has vertical articulation in contrast to a flush glazing system and projecting exterior balconies.  
 Figure 3. A wide street frontage is articulated with bay windows, projecting balconies, and recessed zones. The major massing articulations begin above the 2nd floor.





**D. Massing & Building Configuration**

**4.d - Façades - Corners**

**PRINCIPLE:** Building corners are a placemaking element that should be designed to accentuate the unique location of the urban corner.

**Rationale**

Building projects within the River District located on corner lots present an excellent opportunity to accentuate the unique location of the corner across the width and length of the urban block and at terminal views on diagonal intersections. Some urban corner design strategies include articulated corners, projecting and receding balconies, and accentuating features at various scales. See Figures 1-8.

**Guidelines**

Building projects located on corner lots should accentuate the corner’s unique location on the urban block. Buildings should use one or more of the following design strategies:

*1. Articulated corners*

Chamfered or rounded corners allow for a seamless transition from one street facade to the next. This is an especially good strategy where a corner entrance is used. Chamfered corners are illustrated in Figures 3, 4 and 7; rounded corners in Figures 5 and 8.

*2. Projecting and recessed balconies and entrances*

Projecting and recessed balconies and entrances allow for the corner to capture a volumetric expression distinct from the typically repeating elements of a facade. See Figures 1, 5, 7 and 8.

*3. Accentuating features at various scales*

Buildings may incorporate accentuating features at the building corner. These can be designed at various scales, from embellished doorways (see Figures 3 and 4), to material and volumetric manipulations (see Figures 1 and 6) to circular drums (see Figures 5 and 8). In some cases the entire building massing may transform to become a corner pavilion feature (see Figures 2 and 5).

*4. Other Strategies*

Other innovative design strategies which accentuate the corner may also be submitted for review.

**Corner Strategies**



Figure 1



Figure 2



Figure 3

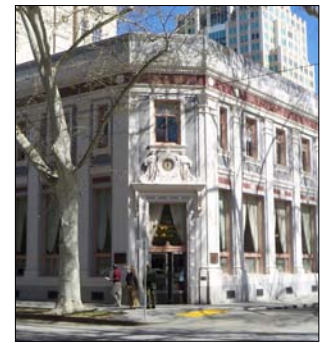


Figure 4



Figure 5

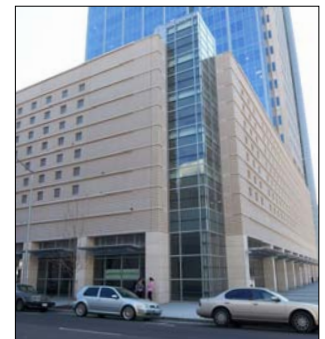


Figure 6



Figure 7

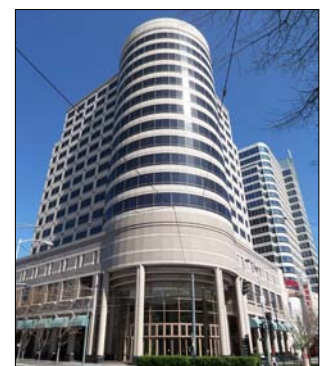


Figure 8

These Sacramento buildings illustrate a variety of corner design strategies, including rounded and chamfered corners and accentuating features at various scales.

## D. Massing &amp; Building Configuration

## 4.e - Façades - Fenestration: Window and Facade Systems and Patterns

**PRINCIPLE: To provide human scale to buildings, windows shall be well-proportioned, varied across a project, articulate the wall system, and be operable where appropriate.**

## Rationale

From the outside, windows give human scale to buildings, and animate façades with their varying sizes, patterns, arrangements and treatments. From the inside, they provide for natural light and views. Operable windows also provide for natural ventilation, and are sensible in many types of projects.

Fenestration is the arrangement, proportioning and design of windows. Window types and patterns include: horizontal banding, punched, grouped, recessed, glass curtain wall, etc. Windows should be used as an element which helps to articulate the character of a façade, and designed to reveal the thickness/depth of the facade wall. Windows should be well-proportioned, and operable where appropriate.

Window design is inherently related to the facade system employed. Windows are traditionally referred to as “punched openings” in masonry walls, whereas in curtain walls they are not treated as a separate element from the façade system. Curtain wall systems can also incorporate sunshading systems which are discussed in *Part 4.g - Canopies, Awnings & Sunshades*. Further, many buildings use a hybrid of systems, for example where a curtain wall system sits within a larger punched opening of a masonry wall. Thus, the following guidelines and illustrations should be considered to illustrate a range of possible solutions, but is not inclusive of all sound combinations and scenarios.

## Guidelines

1. Windows within solid walls (walls not designed as glass curtain wall systems) should not sit in the same plane as the wall surface. They should be recessed at least 4”, with the wall material turning the corner at the window jambs, in order to demonstrate materiality of the wall thickness. See Figures 1, 2 & 4.
2. Windows should have design and scale appropriate to the spaces behind them.
3. Windows should be grouped to establish rhythms across the façade and hierarchies at important places on the façade. See Figure 3.

## Window Types for the River District

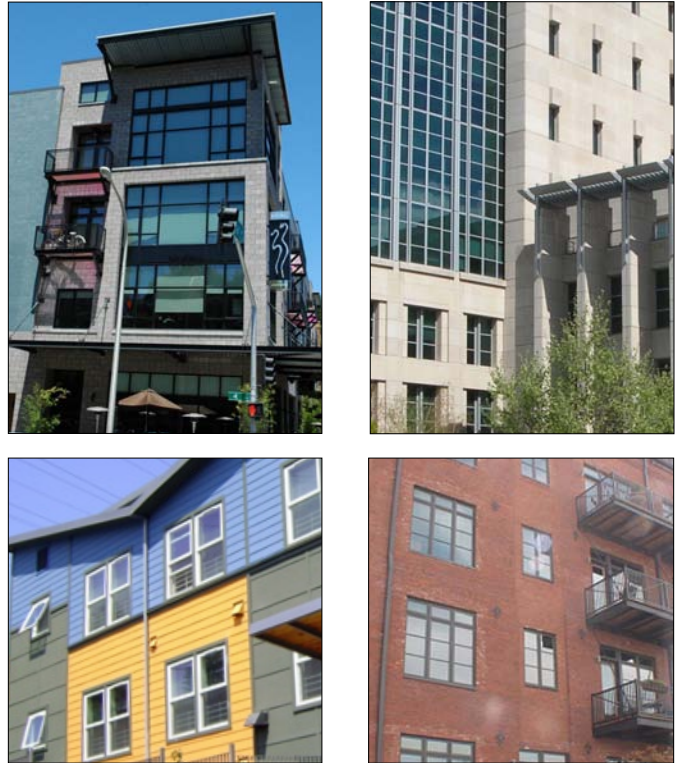


Figure 1 to 4. The River District will have a variety of window types consistent with the variety of building types throughout the District, including curtain wall / storefront systems within punched openings (top), operable sash windows residential windows and door systems (above left and right).



Figure 5. The windows in this mid-rise building provide operable window systems, which in the River District would be advantageous to collect delta breezes for occupant comfort.



**D. Massing & Building Configuration**

**4.e - Façades - Fenestration: Window & Facade Systems & Patterns (cont.)**

- 4. Curtain wall systems should be designed with projecting vertical and/or horizontal mullions (see Figure 3), or other modulating features.
- 5. The location of the glass line should be varied across the façade, to create depth and shadow effects. See Figures 3, 4 & 5.



Figure 1. This building also combines curtain wall window systems with solid punched-opening walls. The wall is given a visual thickness by the varying placement of the glass line.



Figure 2. This university building in Cambridge, MA, has a repeating double window bay module which sets a rhythm across the facade, which is then interrupted by special conditions at the corner and above the entry.



Figure 3. This office building at 560 Mission Street in San Francisco has a sophisticated system of projecting mullions and framing members, establishing an intricate dialogue between structure, skin and appendage.



Figure 4. This project inserts a curtain wall system within a punched opening. The red brick wall turns to reveal the wall's thickness, and the curtain wall is placed at varying depths within the apparent thickness of the brick wall opening.

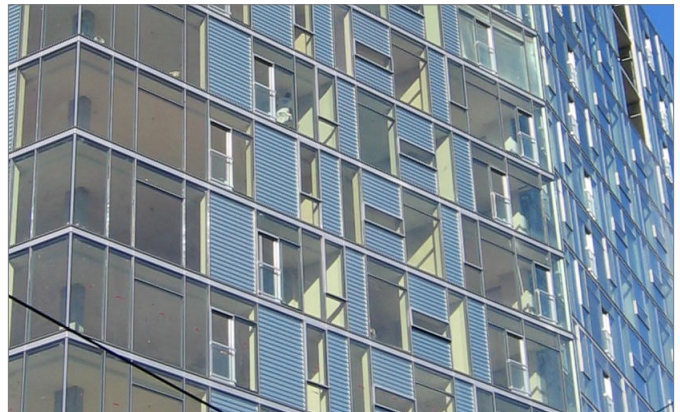


Figure 5. This curtain wall, on an apartment building in Portland, is modulated by the strong horizontal lines of the concrete floors and a rhythm of alternating metal panels which establish private and public zones within the building.

**D. Massing & Building Configuration**

**4.f - Façades - Entrances**

**PRINCIPLE: Entrances shall be well-designed, appropriately scaled, and easy to find. They shall be a special feature in the design of the building.**

**Rationale**

It is important that entrances to buildings, both commercial and residential, be located in the best possible place. They need to be special features in the design of the building, with a size and scale appropriate to the amount of use. They should be easy to locate from the street for both drivers and pedestrians. Entrances are an ideal location for the incorporation of public/private art which can be integrated with the building.

**Guidelines**

*1. Entrances should:*

- A. Be given prominence on the street frontage.
- B. Be located to achieve the highest amount of visibility on the site.
- C. Be sized and scaled appropriately for the amount of use and/or prominence of function.
- D. Incorporate craftwork and/or public/private art.
- E. Have a change in material and/or wall plane.
- F. Be appropriately lit, for safety and legibility of signage and inscriptions.
- G. Have double height lobbies for buildings with more than 30 dwelling units or 4 floors of commercial space
- H. Be individual, with steps, porches or stoops when facing streets, greenways or courts, for ground floor residential units.

*2. Entrances should not:*

- A. Employ excessive storefront systems.
- B. Employ projecting storefront cubicle pavilions.

**Entrances**



Figure 1. Vertical elements and canopy mark the entrance to the Department of Transportation building, Sacramento



Figure 2. This vertical drum punctuates the entry from the street, recessed beneath an archway.



Figure 3. Entrances to individual units should orient to the street & be characterized by stoops, porches etc.



Figure 4. A monumental entrance to a California State office building marked by the official seal



Figure 5. Entrance to the city library, appropriately designed and decorated.



Figure 6. New library entrance, designed with a simple storefront glazing system.



**D. Massing & Building Configuration**

**4.g - Façades - Canopies, Awnings, Sunshades**

**PRINCIPLE: Canopies, awnings and sunshade shall be used to provide shade and cover for people and buildings, contributing to comfort and sustainability.**

**Rationale**

Of the many elements of facade design, canopies, awnings and sunshades have a combined role of providing shade for both human activity and for the building itself. Entrance canopies provide cover from sun or rain. Awnings, likewise, provide similar protective cover for the retail activity at ground level. Sunshade, in the form of vertical or horizontal fins, operable louvers or other types of brise-soleil keep the direct sunlight from entering, or hitting the facade of a building, thereby keeping it cool and ensuring more comfortable interior environment.

Taken as a group, these elements play a significant role in the appearance and function of a building. And due to Sacramento’s climate, they are a welcome addition to any building in the city.

**Guidelines**

*1. Canopies*

Canopies should be generous in height. They may cantilever over the right of way, or rest on columns, like a portico projected over a sidewalk. See Figure 1.

*2. Sunshades*

The use of sunshading elements is recommended on all projects, especially on their south & west faces. They may be an integrated part of the facade system, or act as applied or detached elements. See Figure 2.

*3. Awnings*

In busy pedestrian areas, awnings may encroach the public right-of-way by up to 75% of its width, with 8’ minimum clearance above the finished sidewalk level. See Figures 3 & 4.

*4. Quality of Materials*

Designers should select durable materials for all shading elements, avoiding the use of vinyl, shiny & flimsy fabrics.

**5. Encroachments**

A. All removable awnings, canopies, and sunshades

**Canopies**



Figure 1. Entrance canopy to a residential apartment building on a downtown street.

**Sunshades**



Figure 2. Applied sunshading elements on a building at Stanford University, Palo Alto, CA.

**Awnings**



Figure 3. Awnings projecting over the right-of-way at ground-level retail.

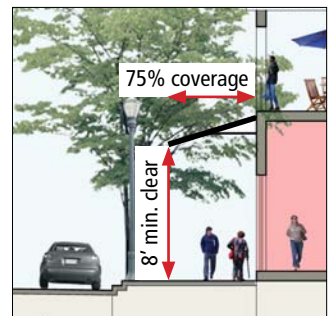


Figure 4. Awning section with minimum clear height above sidewalk & desired coverage.

require the issuance of a revocable encroachment permit.

- B. All permanent overhead fixtures such as awnings or overhangs (part of the building structure) which infringe into the City ROW require the execution of an encroachment agreement, to be handled on a case by case basis.
- C. At any time that any part of the actual building infringes into the City ROW the execution of an encroachment, agreement is required.

**D. Massing & Building Configuration**

**4.h - Façades - Projecting Elements and Encroachments**

**PRINCIPLE: Elements that project from a building façade shall serve to animate the building’s elevations, by adding visual variety & interest while enhancing the connection between public & private realms.**

**Rationale**

Façade projections, such as bay windows on residential buildings, are a desirable feature and are part of California’s architectural vocabulary. They add visual variety and interest while enhancing the connection between public & private realms. Because they usually either encroach into the public right-of-way or beyond an established setback, regulating dimensions are required to maintain an appropriate limit on the amount of encroachment. For example, San Francisco permits bay windows a 3’ encroachment with a maximum 9’ length horizontally and either angled or squared-off returns.

The inclusion of ground floor arcades also can enhance the connection of public and private realms, provided that their design, context and frontage uses are carefully considered.

**Guidelines**

*1. Bay Windows*

Bay Windows may encroach no more than 3’ with a maximum 8’ length horizontally and either squared-off or angled returns. (The angled return is in addition to the 8’ length.) At least 6’ should separate bay windows horizontally. Projections should allow at least 12’ clear from top of sidewalk to underside of projection. See Figures 1-3.

*2. Balconies*

- A. Facades may be articulated with balconies.
- B. Balconies may encroach no more than 3’ over the public r.o.w., and up to a 12’ encroachment over a setback line, permitted that the balcony does not cross into the public r.o.w. Balconies should have a maximum 12’ length horizontally. At least 10’ should separate balconies horizontally. Grouped balconies should employ integrated screens or other privacy measures. Balconies should allow at least 12’ clear from top of sidewalk to underside of balcony if projecting over sidewalk; otherwise, a balcony at the ground floor is considered a porch and requires no clearance above grade. See Figures 1 and 2. Consult the Zoning Code for governing regulations.

**Bay Windows**

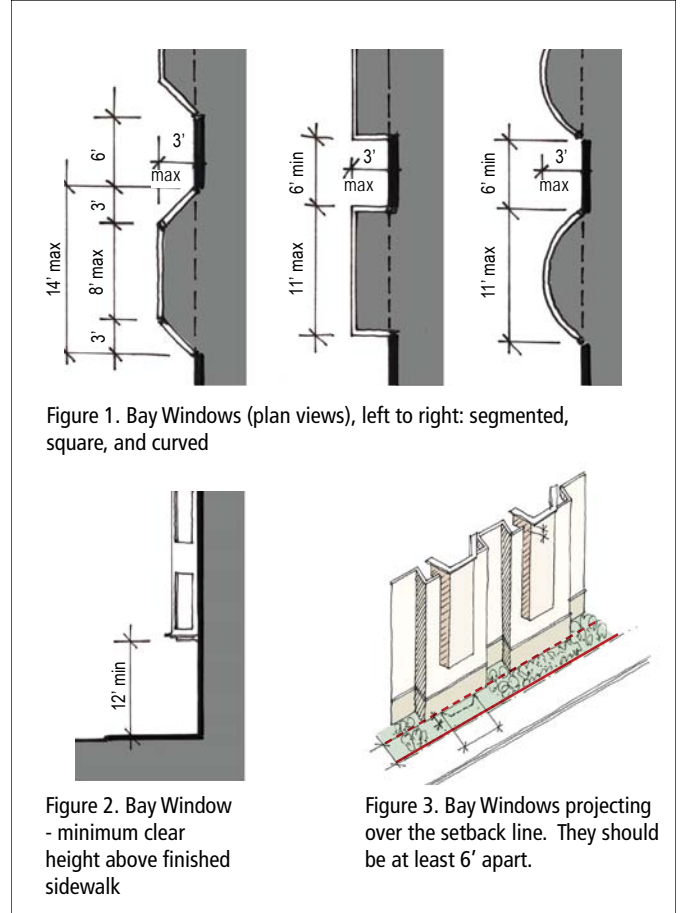


Figure 1. Bay Windows (plan views), left to right: segmented, square, and curved

Figure 2. Bay Window - minimum clear height above finished sidewalk

Figure 3. Bay Windows projecting over the setback line. They should be at least 6’ apart.

**Balconies**



Figure 4. Stacked balconies on an apartment building



Figure 5. French balcony covering windows & operable doors



**D. Massing & Building Configuration**

**4.h - Façades - Projecting Elements & Encroachments (cont.)**

C. Some portion of the glazing behind a French Balcony must be operable. French Balconies are not permitted in front of solid wall surfaces.

*4. Porches and Stoops*

Elements such as porches and stoops are allowed to encroach within a required setback from the public right-of-way/property line up to 12'. Though they cannot go beyond the parcel line. See Figure 6.

*5. Cornices*

Projecting cornices are encouraged to help form a distinct profile to the building's top edge. They may project up to 5' over the right-of-way. See Figure 8.

*6. Arcades*

- A. Arcades are encouraged, especially when facing south or west. They may project over the public right-of-way, and should have active uses in the ground floor space facing onto them. See Figures 9-11.
- B. If projecting over the public right-of-way, they should not have occupied space above, except for restaurant dining terraces.
- C. If placed in the private parcel, free access should be given throughout the colonnade to the adjoining sidewalk.
- D. Arcades should be vertical in proportion, in both height & depth, at a ratio of at least 1.25:1.
- E. Arcades, though an historic element in Old Sacramento and parts of the commercial core, are not required to replicate their historic design and detailing.
- F. Arcades should only be used where active uses occupy the frontage zones of a building. Otherwise they become dead, problematic spaces.

*6. Encroachment Agreements*

- G. All permanent overhead fixtures such as awnings or overhangs (part of the building structure) which infringe into the City ROW require the execution of an encroachment agreement, to be handled on a case by case basis.
- H. At any time that any part of the actual building infringes into the City ROW the execution of an encroachment agreement is required.

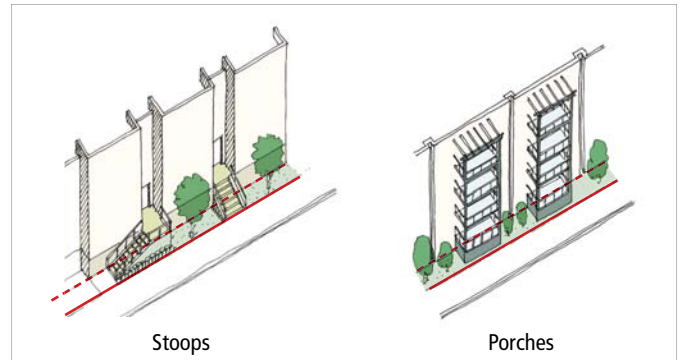


Figure 6. Stoops and porches are permitted to cross the setback line (red dotted) into the landscaped setback zone, permitted that they do not cross the property line (red).



Figure 7. Stoops projecting into the setback zone



Figure 8. Generous projecting cornice atop mixed-use loft development in Sacramento

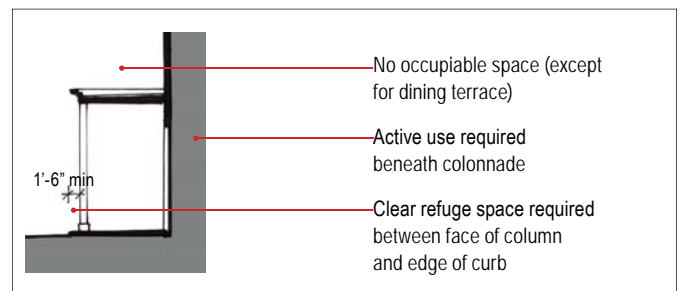
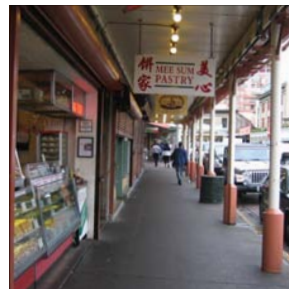


Figure 9. Projecting Arcade Diagram



Figures 10 and 11. Projecting arcade (colonnade) over retail sidewalk with dining terrace above, Pike Place Market, Seattle, WA

**D. Massing & Building Configuration**

**4.i - Façade Materials**

**PRINCIPLE: Buildings shall be constructed with exterior materials of the highest quality. Exterior materials, textures and colors shall be selected to further articulate the building design.**

**Rationale**

Early buildings in the River District were typically built from unreinforced brick masonry or reinforced concrete. Subsequent construction varied little until recently when exterior stucco for smaller commercial developments were incorporated. Since a predominant palette of materials is absent, buildings in the District can be more eclectic in the use of materials.

**Guidelines**

Buildings should be constructed of quality, natural materials, as they tend to last longer, be more durable, look better, and age better than artificial and simulated materials. Materials and colors should be related to masses and volumes, with changes in material/color following changes in mass.

*1. Material Uses*

- A. New developments should respond in a compatible manner to the existing color, texture and materials used on surrounding buildings by emulation or contrast.
- B. Projects should utilize compatible materials on all four sides of the building to create a coherent vocabulary of form and material.
- C. Durable, quality natural materials should be used on the street level portion - at least the bottom 20', from finished grade - of all new developments. Examples of these materials include stone (e.g. granite, marble), terra cotta or tile, brick, transparent glass, metal (e.g. bronze, brass, chrome, baked enamel) when used judiciously, etc.
- D. More than two colors and materials should be incorporated in a design. Intense colors, are welcome as an essential expression of the design. Mono-chromatic schemes are also acceptable.
- E. On a wall surface, a change in material or color should be designed with a change in wall-plane of at

**New Material Variety in Sacramento's River District**



Figure 1. Painted Stucco and Wood Siding

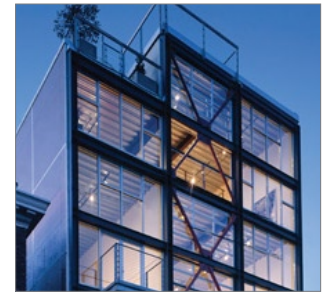


Figure 2. Exposed Structural Frame



Figure 3. Exterior wood panels



Figure 4. Cement panels



Figure 5. Industrial metal siding



Figure 6. Metal wall and roof panels

**Change in wall-plane / volume at change in material**



Figures 7 & 8. Different materials and colors should be separated with a change in plane.

## D. Massing & Building Configuration

### 4.i - Façade Materials

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least 4 inches. Thus, a reveal channel would not be a desirable way to transition from one material/color to another.

- F. Materials should wrap corners and continue for at least 12 inches before a material change.
- G. Graffiti resistant coating should be applied on the lower portions of alley elevations and side elevation where exposed.

#### 2. Material Restrictions

- A. Extensive use of non-durable materials should be avoided on all projects, but especially on buildings over three stories.
- B. The uses of reflective glass, mirrored glass and dark colored glass should be avoided.
- C. The use of vinyl as an exterior building material shall be avoided.
- D. No material should simulate another material.
- E. If plaster is used, it should have a smooth finish.
- F. Imitation plaster should not be used on the bottom 30' of any building.
- G. Fiber cement board should not have imitation textures.

#### 3. Sustainable Practices

Projects should be designed and developed using the best green practices, and seek to use materials that are mined/grown/harvested/assembled locally.



## D. Massing & Building Configuration

### 4.j - Façades - Lighting

**PRINCIPLE:** Building façades shall have illumination appropriate to their use and location, with light fixture design selected to best complement the architectural design of the project.

#### Rationale

Façade lighting should be designed to enhance the massing and vertical surfaces of the project. Building façades should have illumination levels appropriate to their use and location. The design needs to carefully balance the need to provide appropriate, often robust, lighting levels while avoiding light-trespass and facilitating night-sky access.

#### *Lighting Goals for the River District*

- Employ lighting strategies as an urban art form and a key element in after-dark place-making of the highest quality.
- Create a vibrant night image for the River District which is sustainable and highly creative.
- Facilitate after-hour tourism and vital urban life for residents and visitors alike.
- Create safe and enticing paths of travel for pedestrians and cyclists.
- Create a distinctive evening character for the River District by show-casing it's unique destinations.
- Enhance public safety through lighting clarity and recognition for pedestrians, cyclists and motorists.
- Reinforce path edging along river walkways, while minimizing extraneous light to sensitive habitat areas.

#### Guidelines

##### *1. Lighting Design Goals for New Buildings*

- A. New buildings present dramatic opportunities to implement innovative lighting approaches using color, fiber optics, and neon to create distinctive character which can also be recognizable as public art forms. Color change effects should reinforce a distinctive River District identity.
- B. The use of color washes should be integrated into the architecture of a structure. Care must always be taken to control light spillage and to protect the amenity of adjacent buildings and not to cause nuisance to residential buildings or sensitive areas.



Figure 1. Retail lighting should be vibrant and inviting in the commercial districts.



Figure 2. Building façades in the Jibboom Street Area and western Sequoia Area should be lit to dramatize the area on the skyline.



Figure 3. Lighting design along the American River should be sensitive to the natural environment using Dark Sky lighting design or other standards such as LEED exterior lighting criteria.



**D. Massing & Building Configuration**

**4.j - Façades - Lighting (cont.)**

- C. Lighting designers should be purposeful in the design and selection of luminaries and electrical equipment to conceal actual light sources and ensure unobtrusive installations without clutter. Bulky over sized fixtures are not appropriate and should never conflict with architectural detailing.

*2. Lighting Design Goals for Historic Buildings*

- A. Use carefully concealed lighting to complement the inherent architectural quality of historic buildings. Select light sources to accent architectural details. Lighting color and temperature should be carefully selected to reinforce existing hues and coloration of exterior materials. Color should not be used for its own sake on historic buildings.
- B. Lighting designers should be purposeful in the design and selection of luminaries and electrical equipment to conceal actual light sources and ensure unobtrusive installations without clutter, and respect historic standards.
- C. Avoid fixtures that may stain the exterior building fabric.

*3. Levels, Direction, and Quality of Illumination*

- A. Levels of illumination should be responsive to the type and level of anticipated activity, without under- or over-illuminating. Higher lighting levels should be provided on buildings or in areas with high levels of nighttime activity. Thus, commercial shopping buildings should have higher levels of illumination than residential buildings with lower levels of nighttime activity. Buildings adjacent to the American River shall reduce light pollution with Dark Sky lighting design.
- B. Facade lighting should focus on illuminating the building's surfaces. Light fixtures should include internal reflector caps, refractors, or shields that provide an efficient and focused distribution of light and avoid glare or reflection across property edges or onto adjacent buildings. Illumination design should avoid lighting of the night sky.
- C. For the lighting of open spaces within the private realm, refer also to *Chapter 3, Section C.3.d Street Furnishings and Amenities - Street Lighting*.

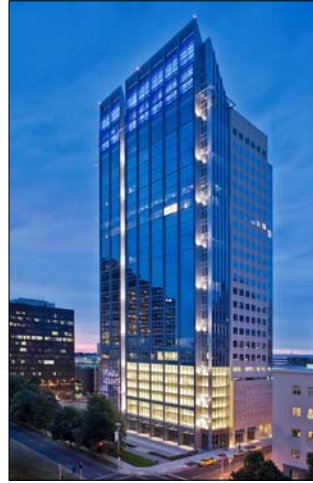


Figure 4. Exterior Lighting on 621 Capitol Mall highlights the massing and articulations of the building.



Figure 5. The Esquire Building's lighting design includes a dramatic illuminated corner.



Figure 6. Lighting needs to be appropriate to a building's use and location. It should be integrated into the facade design, as seen here in the Fine Arts building along Shattuck Avenue in Berkeley.

- D. Provide lighting at appropriate scales for the component being illuminated, including accent lighting where appropriate.
- E. Fixture design should complement the architecture, and be integrated into the whole of the building design. On historic buildings, fixtures should be concealed within the building's ornaments and articulations as much as possible.
- F. Comply with both Title 24 and the IESNA's Recommended Practice RP-33-99: "Lighting for Exterior Environments", Section 5.1.

**D. Massing & Building Configuration**

**4.k - Façades - Signage**

**PRINCIPLE: All signage on the exterior, or visible from the exterior, of a structure shall be designed to carefully integrate with the structure’s architecture, and should enhance the appearance of the structure as well as contribute to the overall character of the streetscape.**

**Rationale**

Attractive, artistic, well-proportioned, and carefully located signs of quality materials can enhance the character of commercial districts. Signage should be used for information, direction, and wayfinding.

**Guidelines**

*1. General*

- A. All signage shall comply with the City Sign Code, the following guidelines and standards, Caltrans regulations for signs adjacent to the freeway, and any other applicable restrictions, typically related to sign size, placement, materials and construction methods.
- B. Ensure clear legibility for universal accessibility that meets or exceeds ADA standards for signage, including type size, type style, contrast, messaging and locations. Avoid hard to read and intricate type faces.
- C. All commercial signage is subject to a City sign permit. Contact the Sign Permits Coordinator of the City Community Development Department for more information.
- D. Buildings with multiple tenants should have a common signage program and include a multiple directory.
- E. Projects involving new building construction or major rehabilitation must submit a conceptual signage program with the building elevation plans for design review and approval before individual signs will be reviewed. The sign program shall address:
  - i. Proposed location of signage;
  - i. General dimensions of signage area; and
  - ii. Design & materials guidelines, including colors, letter size, use of logos/graphics, illumination method, etc.

*2. Location and Size*

- A. Location and size shall preserve sight lines and enhance visual corridors to foster wayfinding and circulation. Blade signs along pedestrian corridors will



Figure 1. Architecturally integrated neon signage appropriately scaled to fit tis location.

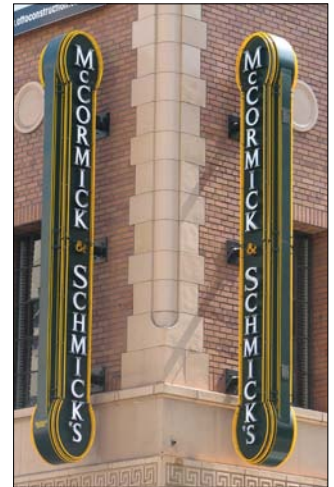


Figure 2. New exposed neon blade signs wrap the corner of an historic building.

foster circulation through the retail/ commercial areas in the District. Note, blade or other projecting signs that project over the Public Right-Of-Way require an Encroachment agreement.

- B. All signs should relate proportionately in placement and size to other building elements, and sign style, materials and color should complement the building façade.
- C. Signs shall respect architectural features such as vertical piers and trim work. Signage should be placed in accordance with façade rhythm, scale and proportion, including windows, storefronts and entries.
- D. Wall mounted signs and their support brackets shall maintain vertical clearance above the finished floor to prevent any physical contact with pedestrians..
- E. Orient all signage to the pedestrian
  - iii. i. Signage should be oriented to the pedestrian with less orientation toward vehicular activity.
  - iv. ii. Signs should generally not exceed 20'-0" above the ground or be higher than the building cornice line or street wall height.
  - v. iii. See the City Sign Ordinance for additional requirements.

*3. Type*

- A. The types of signage listed below are recommended

**D. Massing & Building Configuration**

**4.k - Façades - Signage (cont.)**

- Flat or stud mounted wall signs with routed out copy
- Individual letters (individual channel or reverse pan channel)
- Wall plaques
- Logos
- Projecting signs or blade signs with urban level detail.
- Flush mounted, three dimensional, individual letters are encouraged over flat can signs.
- Innovative or interesting signage (exposed neon highly encouraged)

B. The types of signage listed below shall be prohibited.

- Illuminated unarticulated acrylic sign boxes or cabinet signs.
- Illuminated canopies or awnings with inferior quality materials, i.e. vinyl.
- Signs with exposed conduit, junction boxes, transformers, visible lamps, tubing, or neon crossovers of any type.
- Back lighted can signs with a single translucent lens with multiple images or letters should not be used.
- Pole signs and other signs with exposed structural supports not intended as a design element, except for code-required signs and signs that reconstruct or rehabilitate an historic sign.
- Balloons and inflatable signs.

4. Text

- A Sign message should be simple and clear.
- B. The wording of signs should be limited to the tenant's trade names and/or company logo. The sign should not include advertising slogans, services rendered, or merchandise offered for sale. Words describing the type of commercial use are permitted.
- C. All residential or commercial properties should have addresses that are clearly readable from the street and illuminated. Buildings with a single entry and a range of addresses should identify the range associated with the entry. Address numbers should not exceed 12 inches, nor be smaller than 4 inches.
- D. Elements that are discouraged include the following:
- vi. Phone numbers or words describing products sold, prices or other types of advertising except as part of the tenant's trade name or logo.



Figure 1. New block letter signage wrapping the corner of the Cathedral Building.



Figure 2. New bronze and neon sign, corner-mounted to a brick building such as typical to the River District.

- vii. Window signs of any type except those identifying a business that is the only sign for the business.

5. Materials and Color

- A. All signs shall be composed of high-quality materials that enhance the character of the area it is located within the River District. All fascia signage shall be integrated into the architecture, such as mounted to architectural canopies or painted or mounted directly onto building surfaces without a back plate.
- B. The signage material will be weather proof and fade resistant. High quality materials and finishes are required. Appropriate materials should be used for all elements of signs including: all text, exposed edges, and surfaces.
- C. Signage should generally have a maximum of two to three colors for prominent sign parts and icons, with no more than two accent colors for letters and perimeter line work.
- D. Appropriate materials may include the following: Metal, Wood (except chip board, plywood, etc.), Plexiglas or Hard Plastic, Neon, stone, cast & engraved metals, fired ceramics, Screen Print on Canvas Awnings, and Painted Graphics (durable paints) on Building Surface.
- E. Inappropriate materials may include the following: Paper, Stucco, and porous material, i.e. Styrofoam, simulated materials, i.e. wood grained plastic lami-



**D. Massing & Building Configuration**

**4.k - Façades - Signage (cont.)**

- nate, wall covering, paper, cardboard or foam, or flexible/rigid PVC board
- F. A project proposed with inappropriate materials may apply for special constructions if:
- i. The proposed materials, in the particular application will blend well with the existing or new material;
  - ii. Other materials would not achieve the same desired theme of the proposed use; or
  - iii. The overall architectural design and detailing is of such quality as to justify its use.
- G. Conduit, tubing, raceways, conductors, transformers, mounting hardware, and other equipment shall be concealed.

*6. Illumination*

Illumination should be consistent with the type of use/tenant, such as office, retail, restaurants, and entertainment or residential. Signage and lighting should be integrated. External lighting should avoid glare and be unobtrusive, attractive and in character with the architecture of the building. See also *Chapter 4, Part D.4.j - Façades - Lighting*.

*7. Special Signage*

Special signs that do not strictly adhere to the sign criteria are allowed subject to the review and approval of the Planning Director, if otherwise allowed by the City Code.

Examples of special signs include but are not limited to the following: exposed neon tubing, flashing, or traveling lights on theater marquees or nightclubs, etc.

*8. Historic Properties*

Signs proposed for historic properties are subject to Preservation review and shall comply with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties. (See City Community Development Department website-Preservation Standards).

Signs proposed for historic properties should be designed to complement the design, scale and materials of the structure.

Signage on historic structures shall be installed in a manner that avoids impacts on historic materials, character-defining features and the integrity of the structure.  
River District Design Guidelines



Figure 1. Creative signage that complements existing historic building fabric.



Figure 2. Sign programs for multi-tenant spaces allow for synergy & relationship to building design, while allowing individuality.



Figure 3. New blade sign with classic exposed neon further defines building details.



Figure 4. Rehabilitated historic exposed neon signage is encouraged.

## D. Massing & Building Configuration

### 4.1 - Façades - Temporary Construction Screening

**PRINCIPLE:** Temporary construction screening should have a strong graphic appearance in addition to providing for safe pedestrian routes along exposed sides of a construction site.

#### Rationale

Temporary construction fencing / screening has many required functions, but may also offer design possibilities. While the screening must of course provide for safe pedestrian access around a project, it may be thought of as a temporary urban- scaled art installation. The screening may be treated as “public art, with an expiration date”. Owners and designers should take advantage of this opportunity and use the screening to promote the neighborhood, the local history and culture, etc.

#### Guidelines

1. Temporary construction fencing / screening should be treated as a temporary urban-scaled art installation. It should have a strong graphic appearance.
2. Screening should visually screen construction sites by means of solid opaque screening enclosures, including along all pedestrian routes. Screening should be maintained in a true vertical condition at all times. Where necessary, screening should have a protective cover over the top of the walk. All enclosed walkways shall be lit 24 hours a day.
4. Screen walls should have view portals into construction site.
5. Chain link fencing should not be used.
6. Provide a Project Sign for all construction sites. (Renovation or remodeling entirely within a building is excepted.) Information to include: an artist’s conception of the proposed project, project name, principal occupant or use, owner, project architect and consultants, general contractor, and a project start and end date.



Figure 1. Temporary construction fencing on a project in Sacramento.

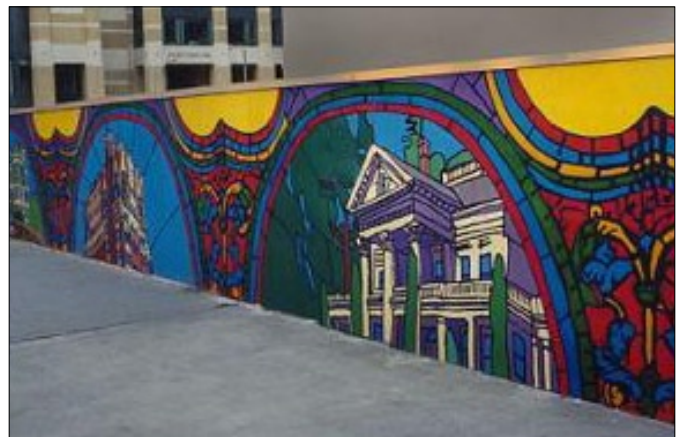


Figure 2: This temporary construction fencing titled “Oakland Gems” depicts twenty-five of Oakland’s architectural historic treasures. This screening, specially commissioned by the Oakland Department of Public Works, is by Bay Area muralist Dan Fontes.



Figure 3: The temporary construction screening for the new City of Cardiff (Wales) Library depicts giant book spines.



**D. Massing & Building Configuration**

**5. Development along Alleys**

**PRINCIPLE: Protect and enhance existing railroad spur lines and future alleys by utilizing them as frontage for housing, parking, commercial activity and open space.**

**Rationale**

Sacramento’s alleys are emerging as a city-wide resource. Existing rail spur line right-of-ways and new alleys built in the District should be fully utilized and enhanced, rather than remain as primarily service ways, especially in the commercial areas of the River District. There are, however, opportunities where small scale residential buildings and courts open onto the alleys, creating a contrast with the width and scale of the regular. Beyond the River District, alleys typically provide primary or secondary vehicular access to residential properties, and occasionally support residential, commercial or industrial uses.

The 25’ alley right-of-way minimum in the River District width is wide enough for one-way vehicular traffic without either sidewalks or curbs. This width, with structures built at zero-lot line, is insufficient for proper head-in turning into a garage.

**Guidelines**

1. New buildings facing the alley should be scaled appropriately, to permit light and air relative to the width of the alley itself and the uses it supports.
2. Alley surfaces should be designed as shared surface spaces. The continuous horizontal surface should be uninterrupted from the public alley right-of-way to the private parcel r.o.w. The parcel line may be marked with a strip in distinct paving. Curbs and truncated domes should be avoided.
3. Refer to the discussion of alleys and their development potential in *Chapter 3, Part B*, including Commercial District Alleys, Shared Use Alleys, Residential District Alleys, and Commercial District Pedestrian Alleys.

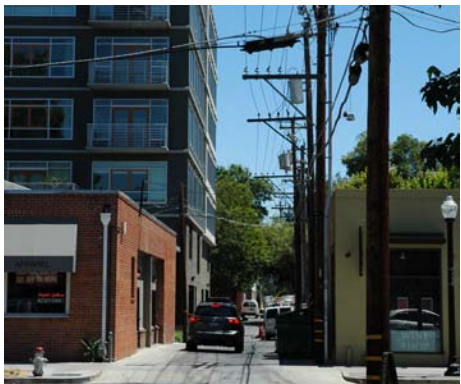


Figure 1. The cobblestone alley between L and Capitol Streets at 18th services midrise condominium in background, provides entry to existing and future loft units.



Figure 2. Example of 10th Street Mews, Natoma Street, South-of-Market in San Francisco. The right of way is just 35’, but still wide enough for sidewalks, one-way traffic and on-street parking.



Figure 3. Redevelopment along alley between L and Capitol Streets at 18th includes two loft unit in a courtyard common fronting the alley.



Figure 4. Restaurants which flow into the alley in San Francisco’s Financial District



Figure 5. Abandoned rail spur as part of Bikeway also provides opportunity for alley fronting development.



Figure 6. Midtown bakery cafe fronting alley.



## D. Massing & Building Configuration

### 6. Bridges and Portals

**PRINCIPLE:** Bridges and portals should be designed to reinforce the continuation of the street wall, and further define the more intimate alleys and shared court areas within a block.

#### Rationale

Building projects within the River District will typically require vehicular access. Bridges and portals are design elements which both reinforce and continue the street wall, while allowing for vehicular access into alleys and other shared surface spaces within the perimeter of the project and block. Bridges and portals allow blocks to be permeable and accessible to pedestrians and cars, while signaling to the driver that the space is shared.

#### Guidelines

##### 1. Bridges over pedestrian / vehicle access routes

Building projects within the River District should use bridges and portals to span over vehicular and/or pedestrian access routes from the public realm into the private, for example when a project includes parcels on both sides of an alley, or at car access to a parking court (Figure 3). Spanning elements may be enclosed (Figures 2 and 4) or exterior (Figures 1 and 3) space. Encroachment agreements are required where portals span a public right-of-way, like an alley.

##### 2. Bridges over streets

Pedestrian bridges over streets should be avoided (see Figure 1), as they remove pedestrian activity from the street and do not foster the street-life envisioned for the complete, integrated urban neighborhoods that the City is seeking to foster.



Figure 1

Pedestrian bridges over streets should be avoided as they remove pedestrian activity from the street.

#### Portal and Bridge Examples



Figure 2



Figure 3



Figure 4



Figure 5

These buildings illustrate a variety of bridge and portal design strategies, showing access to private garages, parking courts, and cross-block alleyways.

## D. Massing & Building Configuration

# 7. Sustainability

**PRINCIPLE: New buildings shall be designed for optimum sustainability, especially with respect to energy performance and resource conservation.**

### Rationale

Sacramento's Sustainability Master Plan—Creating a Sustainable City—was developed in recognition of the threats that climate change and global warming pose to the community's quality of life. As part of the center of the city and the region, the River District should set the stage for demonstrating how to create a sustainable city. The City of Sacramento already requires that new city buildings be certified LEED Silver, at minimum. The amount of development projected for the River District provides a unique opportunity to promote more energy and resource efficient buildings, support greater recycling and waste reduction, and create greater biodiversity within the urban setting. A Sustainable River District should achieve measurable goals in terms of the performance of its buildings.

New buildings and renovations should be designed to be sustainable, especially with respect to energy performance. This is important for a city like Sacramento, located in a predominantly warm and dry climate. Building design, construction and operation should clearly attempt to reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, and achieve high energy performance.

### Guidelines

#### 1. Rating Systems

New development should take a comprehensive and measurable approach to sustainability. All development should meet the minimum criteria listed below for each project type:

##### A. Retail & Commercial Buildings and Hotels

LEED Certified minimum rating, Build It Green, or equivalent.

##### B. Multifamily

LEED Certified minimum rating, Build It Green, Enterprise Green Communities criteria, or equivalent; or according to the Green Multi-family Design Guidelines by the California Integrated Waste Management Board.



Figure 1. NASA fly-over photograph of Sacramento, July 1998

Figure 2. Thermally sensed image of Sacramento



Figure 3. The LEED-certified CalPERS Building incorporates many sustainable design features that significantly impact the formal design of the building, including light shelves and abundant daylighting.

##### C. Single-family houses

LEED for Homes Certified minimum rating, Build It Green, or equivalent.

##### D. All other project types:

LEED Certified minimum rating, Build It Green, or equivalent.

#### 2. Alternate Measures

If an owner, designer or developer feels that the above rating systems are not appropriate for their project, they



## D. Massing & Building Configuration

### 7. Sustainability (cont.)

are welcome to propose an alternate rating system, or clearly illustrate how their project is holistically equal or more sustainable than as measured using one of the above strategies. Acceptance of this strategy would be at the discretion of the planning reviewer, and should not be presumed.

#### 3. Sustainability Targets

Building designers, owners and operators should consult the City of Sacramento Waste Management Standards and Sustainability Masterplan. With regard to waste reduction in buildings, the State of California requires 50% landfill diversion, while the City's Sustainability Masterplan calls for 70%.

#### 4. Sustainable Design Features

The Sustainable Design of buildings requires an evolving palette of design tools. Some tools, like proper solar orientation, require the application of common sense and best practices for the region. Other tools require designers to incorporate the latest technologies for mechanical systems and material use. The following items describe and picture a few suggestions from the expanding tool palette which can significantly impact the form of a building.

#### 5. Shading Strategies: Sunshades, canopies and light shelves

Shading helps to keep the walls - and thus the inside - of a building cool, which is particularly an issue for commercial buildings, which tend to have mostly glass skins. Shading can be in the form of applied horizontal or vertical fins, or as large scale canopied, projecting well above and/or beyond the building envelope. See also *Chapter 4, Section D4.g - Façades - Canopies, Sunshades, Awnings*.

#### 6. Natural Daylighting

Natural daylighting allows for lower energy consumption and a more productive workplace. In addition to narrow floorplates, daylighting can be enhanced by interior covered atria, and light shelves, both inside and outside of the building's envelope.

#### 7. Narrow Floor-plates

Narrow floorplates are a key building design & layout strategy that facilitates other sustainability goals, like daylighting a maximum amount of interior space, efficient HVAC systems including natural ventilation, and optimum building orientation.

#### Sunshading



Figure 1. Giant canopy applied to a commercial office building, Chiswick Park, London, UK.



Figure 2. Giant sun-control canopy covering a the courtyard of a science building on the Stanford University campus.

#### Natural Daylighting



Figures 3 and 4. Internal sky-lit atria, allowing daylight light to penetrate to a maximum amount of internal space, at all floors

#### Light Shelves



Figure 5. Internal light shelves bounce daylight deeper into the space.



Figure 6. The CalPERS building, with horizontal sunshades and light shelves.



**D. Massing & Building Configuration**

**7. Sustainability (cont.)**

*8. Natural Ventilation*

Like daylighting, natural ventilation allows for lower energy consumption and a more productive workplace. Operable windows should be standard on all new construction, except for those few spaces where exact temperature and humidity control is required.

*9. Thermal Chimneys*

Thermal chimneys can be used to passively regulate temperature and natural air ventilation, allowing warm air to exhaust through a vertical space connecting multiple levels the stairwells. Thermal chimneys are often created with stairwells and atrium spaces.

*10. Green & Solar Roofs*

The roof of a building provides several opportunities for green design. Green roofs allow for lower energy consumption by keeping a building cooler. The also facilitate stormwater management, enabling its on-site recycling. Green roofs can also be used as open space for occupants. See also *Chapter 4, Section D5 - Rooftops & Mechanical Penthouse Enclosures*. Roofs are also a smart

**Narrow Floorplates**

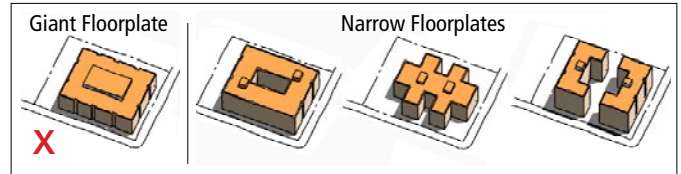


Figure 1. Building diagrams comparing the “giant” floorplates of conventional suburban commercial office development with the narrow floorplates of more sustainable buildings, which perform better in terms of energy consumption, daylighting, and ventilation.



Figure 2. The commercial office buildings of the Inland Revenue Campus in Nottingham, England, utilizes narrow floorplates, allowing the buildings to passively regulate temperature and natural air ventilation whilst conserving energy.

**Thermal Chimneys**



Figure 3. Inland Revenue Center, UK. The building passively regulates temperature and natural air ventilation, allowing warm air to exhaust through the stairwells.



Figure 4. The CalPERS Building, Sacramento, CA. The building regulates air ventilation by channelling warm air up and out through the glass atrium.

**Integrated Systems**



Figure 5. Cross section of an office building showing integrated ventilation and daylighting strategies.

**D. Massing & Building Configuration**

**7. Sustainability (cont.)**

location for generously scaled arrays of PV or other solar panels (see below, and Figure 3).

*11. Building Integrated Photo Voltaic (BIPV) Panels*

Building Integrated Photo Voltaic Panels are typically integrated into the building’s vertical surfaces as a facade material, or “cladding element”. BIPVs can cover vast areas of building walls, turning the building into an energy producing element. See Figures 5 and 6. They can also be used as a sunshading element, as shown in Figures 4 and 6.

**Green roofs**



Figures 1 and 2. Green roofs can also be used as open space, can facilitate stormwater management, and reduce energy consumption by keeping a building cooler.

**PVs**



Figures 3 and 4. Photo Voltaic panel arrays, used to cover vast areas over a building roof (above) or mounted on a giant trellis (below), where they also function as a sunshading element.

**BIPVs**



Figures 5 and 6. Building Integrate Photo Voltaic Panels, used as an integrated cladding element as well as for sunshading.



**D. Massing & Building Configuration**

**8. Public Art in the Private Realm**

**PRINCIPLE: Art shall be used to enhance the public and private realms, and is best incorporated into the building's design in a way that complements the architecture of the building.**

**Rationale**

Sacramento has a wealth of public art, including the integrated ornamentation schemes which embellish many of the historic buildings in the River District. Until the early part of the 20th century public art related directly to, and was incorporated within, the architecture of the building. The City of Sacramento and its buildings benefited from their close proximity to the famous terra cotta manufacturer Gladding, McBean. The city's civic buildings —beloved local icons such as the U.S. Post Office at 801 I Street, the Sacramento Public Library, 926 J Street, the Elks Building at 921 11th Street, and the Masonic Temple at 1123 J Street - hold a special place in Sacramento for just this integrated detail-oriented approach. (See the collection of examples in Figure 1)

While many later twentieth century “public art” pieces have been distinct and detached from their accompanying development projects, recent years have seen a new integration of artwork into building designs. Public art has transformed from the scaleless abstract sculptures of the 60's and 70's to site-specific works that are created with the building, the city, and the users in mind.

Two excellent Sacramento examples of integrated public art are the old and new US Bank Towers. At the old US Bank tower on Cesar Chavez plaza, the public art component consists of four specially commissioned allegorical paintings (Figure 7) depicting the history of Sacramento, and a pair of sculptures framing the building's main entrance forecourt (Figure 8). At the new US Bank tower at 621 Capitol Mall, the LED sculpture “Rapids” (Figure 10) by Michael Hayden is a beacon dramatically activating the lobby and plaza approach.

**Guidelines**

1. The art component of a project should be incor-

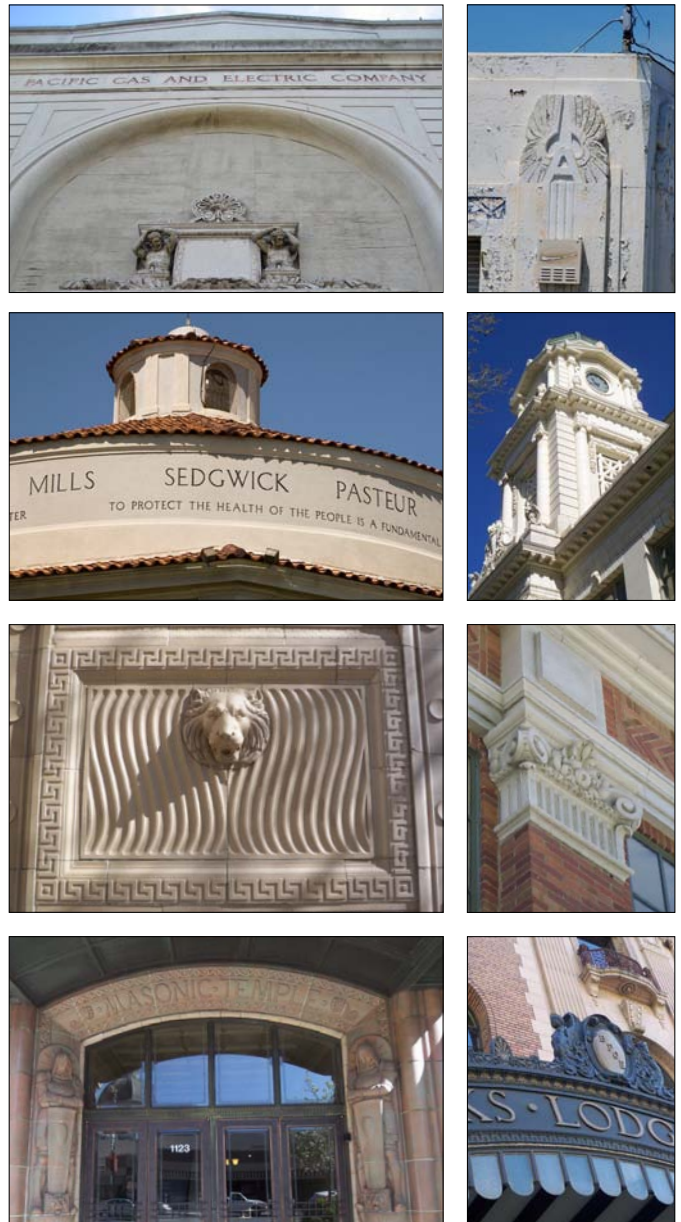


Figure 1. Examples of integrated building art in Sacramento's civic buildings, including City Hall, City Water Intake Facility, the Public Library, the Elks Building, and the PG&E Powerhouse.



Figures 2 and 3. These figural sculptures contribute art to the city's public realm, animating its civic spaces, and inform the viewer with history or provocative text.



**D. Massing & Building Configuration**

**8. Public Art in the Private Realm (cont.)**

porated into the architecture of the building, in a complimentary way. Suggested strategies include sculptural relief panels, integrated architectural ornaments, signage, lighting/light sculpture, entablatures, wall paintings or mosaics, ornamental ironwork and artistic floorwork.

2. New projects that contain art components should locate them in the most public areas of the building(s), including on the building's exterior, in the main lobbies, in forecourts or courtyards, etc.
3. Source content for the artwork may include the history of the state or city, notable local historical figures, and reference to local culture.
4. Artwork may be stand-alone, with appropriate scale & placement.
5. Paving patterns should not fulfill the art component, unless they are pictorially representing an image, map, etc.



Figure 4. Ornamental window screen at Reagan National Airport, Washington, DC, 1997.



Figures 5 and 6. Foliated scroll decorative panels, Nashville Public Library, 1998. Scroll in context, above, and detail, below.



Figure 7. US Bank Tower lobby murals by artist Richard Piccolo.



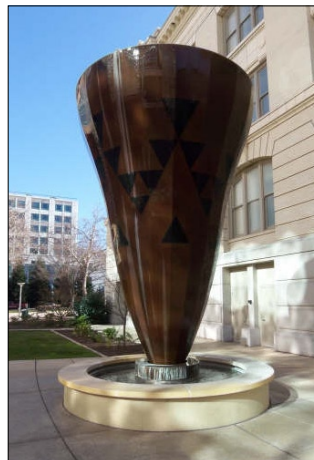
Figure 8. A pair of lounging jaguars frame the main entrance forecourt to old US Bank Tower.



Figure 9. Giant inscriptions on the inner courtyard wall at the Secretary of the State of California building.



Figure 10. The LED sculpture "Rapids" dramatically activates the monumental entrance lobby and plaza approach at 621 Capitol Mall.



Figures 11 and 12. Sculptural fountain and family group adorn Sacramento's outdoor plazas, at City Hall and the Convention Center respectively.

## E. Parking and Vehicle Access

Creative parking solutions are essential for allowing Sacramento to continue to foster residential and commercial redevelopment in the River District.

New development must balance the need for automobile parking with the requirements of an active urban environment, which is often at odds with generous vehicular provisions. Large reservoirs of surface parking have detrimental effect on street life, as it produces a void in the street wall and subsequently no activity.

The design of commercial and residential buildings can sufficiently accommodate required parking while still contributing good urban design to the city. Adequate parking provision need not produce a dead public realm of sidewalks lined with parking garages.

Commercial and retail parking requirements should utilize creative parking solutions such as, but not limited to, shared parking with other uses, mechanical parking lifts, attendant or valet parking, and off-site parking in public or private garages.

With the DOT's updated Parking Masterplan, the City will be looking to promote car-share programs, reduced minimum parking requirements, in-lieu fees and other options. As parking options become linked to transit services, reduced parking will become more viable as the City's multi-model transit systems are strengthened.



Accommodating all of the cars



VS. Places to live, work and park



Figure 1: Vehicle access to the parking area is integrated into the massing of this mixed use building in building San Francisco. The parking is "wrapped" on all sides, with retail at ground level and residential uses above. The parking entry is recessed into a notch and kept narrow.



**E. Parking & Vehicle Access**

**1. Location and Configuration**

**PRINCIPLE: New development shall balance the need for automobile parking with the requirements of an active urban environment, employing creative parking solutions**

**Rationale**

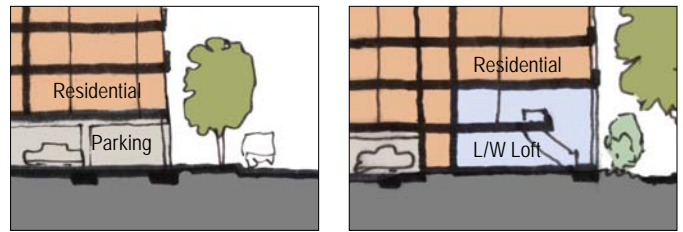
The design of commercial and residential buildings can sufficiently accommodate required parking demands while still contributing a well-designed public realm to the city.

**Guidelines**

*Parking location & Access*

1. Ground floor parking should not be exposed to the street. It should always be wrapped with an active street front uses. See figures 1, 2, 3 & 4.
2. Avoiding exposed parking levels above street level. Any parking above street level should be wrapped with other uses (unless constrained by parcel), as in Figure 4. Since Sacramento has a high water-table level, basements beyond one level are inadvisable and can be financially prohibitive. The relatively high required parking ratios typically produce the need for multiple parking levels above grade. When wrapped with residential or other uses, such as in the 800 J Street Loft building, this is both an attractive and a practical solution. It is significantly less desirable when parking levels are exposed to the street.
3. For single-family dwellings and half-plexes, refer to the Central City Neighborhood Design Guidelines for Design Guidance.
4. Residential parking requirements should be accommodated on-site.
5. Surface parking lots should be avoided as a land use in the River District.
6. If the site conditions are so restricted that exposed parking is unavoidable:
  - a. The parking structure shall be designed with articulation and fenestration patterns consistent with the overall project. See Figures 5, 7 and 10.
  - b. If the parking structure is a stand-alone development project, it shall be designed with articulation and fenestration patterns consistent with

**Frontage to Street**



Figures 1 & 2

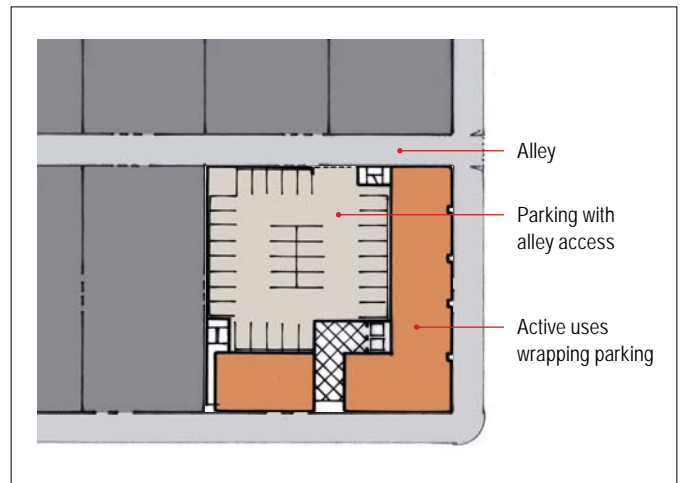


Figure 3. Parking not exposed to street, but wrapped with active uses

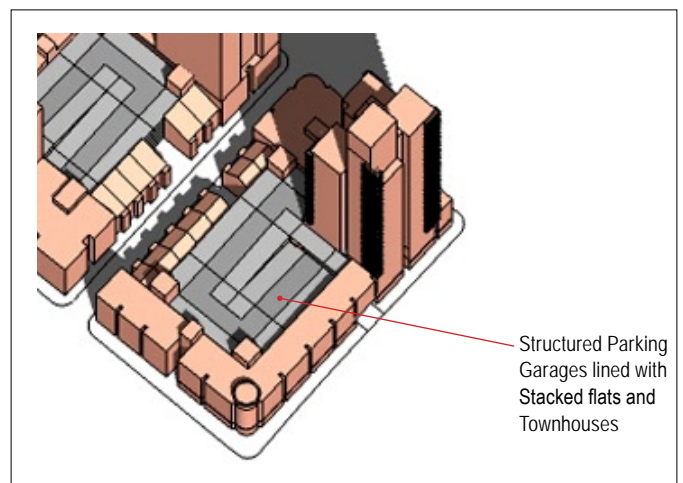


Figure 4. Even the high parking volumes accommodated with structured parking can be wrapped with narrow buildings to hold the street wall and allow the public realm to be defined with active uses, like commercial offices or residential uses.



E. Parking & Vehicle Access

1. Location and Configuration (cont.)

- predominant patterns in area. See Figures 6, 8, 9, 11 and 12.
- c. It is preferable to have parking levels exposed on the east or west elevations of the buildings as is the current pattern in downtown with several large commercial buildings, and to avoid this condition on the north or south facades.
7. Garage night lighting should not be directly visible from the street. See Figures 11 and 12.



Figures 8 and 9. Parking structure at 13th & P Streets, Sacramento. Designed like a good urban building rather than a parking structure, this multi-level parking garage uses quality materials, facade articulation, and “green screens” to make a urbane contribution to the public realm.



Figure 5. The Hyatt parking garage, where the facades are designed in manner consistent with the overall project. The street-facing facade is articulated with a rhythm of archways ending in a notched entry corner.



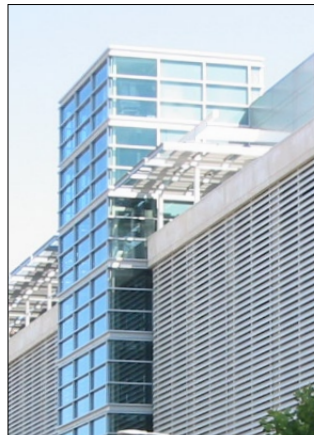
Figure 10. The Hyatt parking garage is lined with active uses at the sidewalk level.



Figure 6. Parking structure in downtown Portland, Oregon, where the facades designs emulate the character of the neighborhood.



Figure 7. Parking structure at 621 Capitol Mall, with mixed uses lining the street-level spaces.



Figures 11 and 12. Parking structure at City Hall in San Jose, CA, uses horizontal metal louvers (left) and perforated metal panels (right) to control the glare produced by night lighting.

E. Parking & Vehicle Access

### 1.a - Parking Location and Configuration - Structured Parking

**PRINCIPLE: Creative parking solutions include structured parking, provided to achieve parking requirements on site while maintaining active-use development along the edge of a parcel.**

#### *Structured Parking*

Following are a series of parking solutions for medium to high density urban development. These solutions are based on the key design parameters of new development in the River District: a limited amount of below grade parking; a typical parcel depth of 160'; available vehicular access from a rear alley; and the desire to park a large number of cars on the parcel, rather than in remote garages.

Figure 1. One-Level Podium Parking (Corner Parcel)

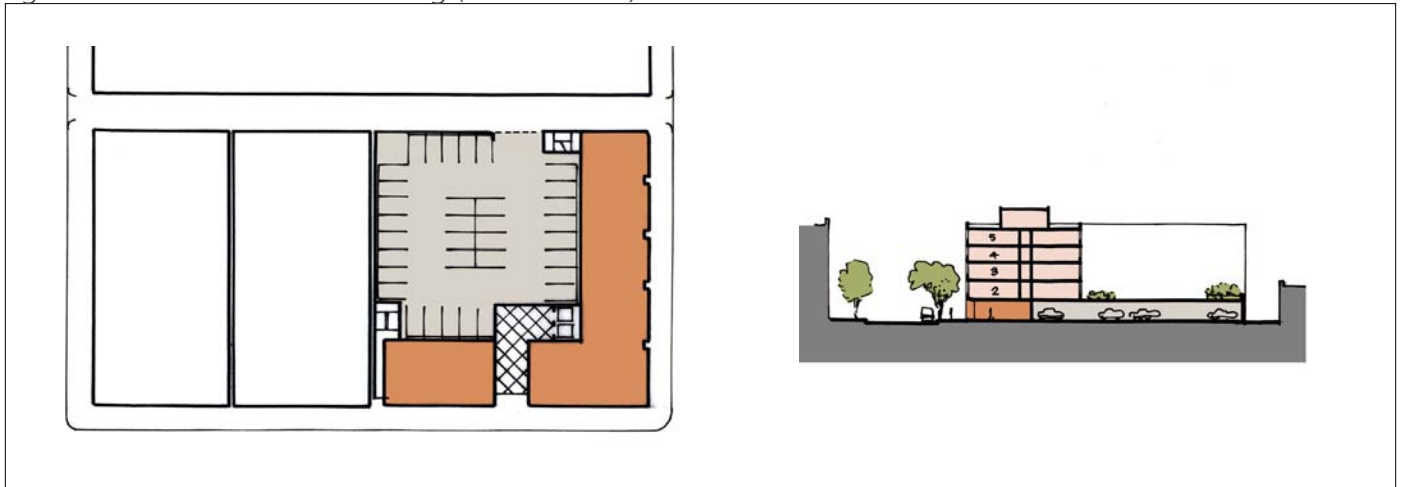
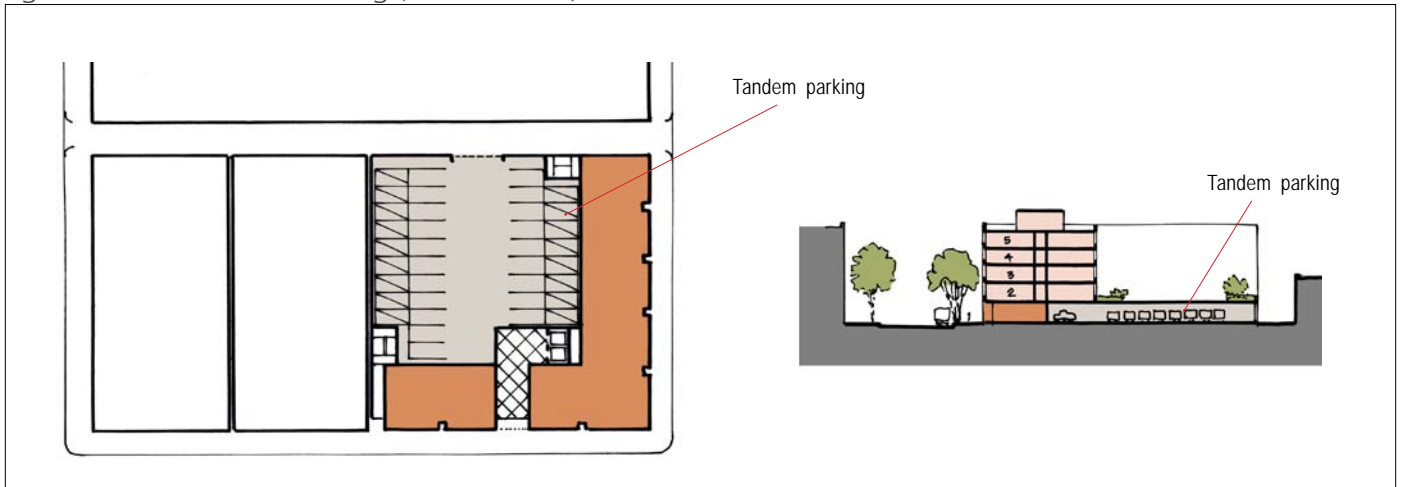


Figure 2. Tandem/Valet Parking (Corner Parcel)



E. Parking & Vehicle Access

1.a - Parking Location and Configuration - Structured Parking (cont.)

Figure 3. Two-Level Podium Parking with Ramp (Mid-Block Parcel)

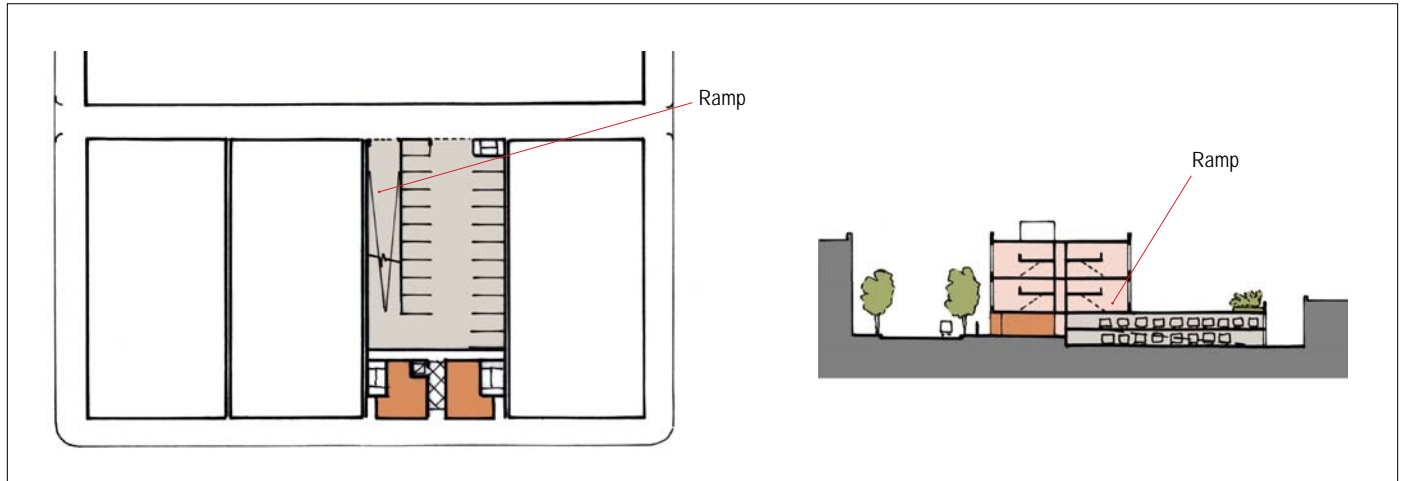
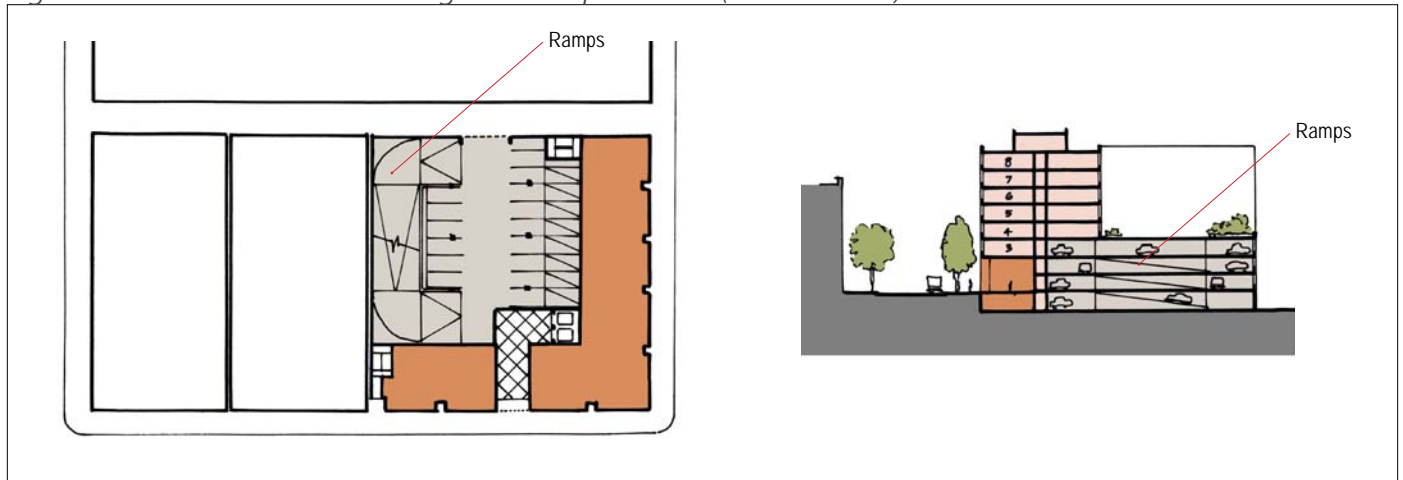


Figure 4. Four-Level Podium Parking with Ramped Decks (Corner Parcel)





E. Parking & Vehicle Access

1.a - Parking Location and Configuration - Structured Parking (cont.)

Figure 5. Multi Level Podium Parking with Ramps (Half-Block Parcel)

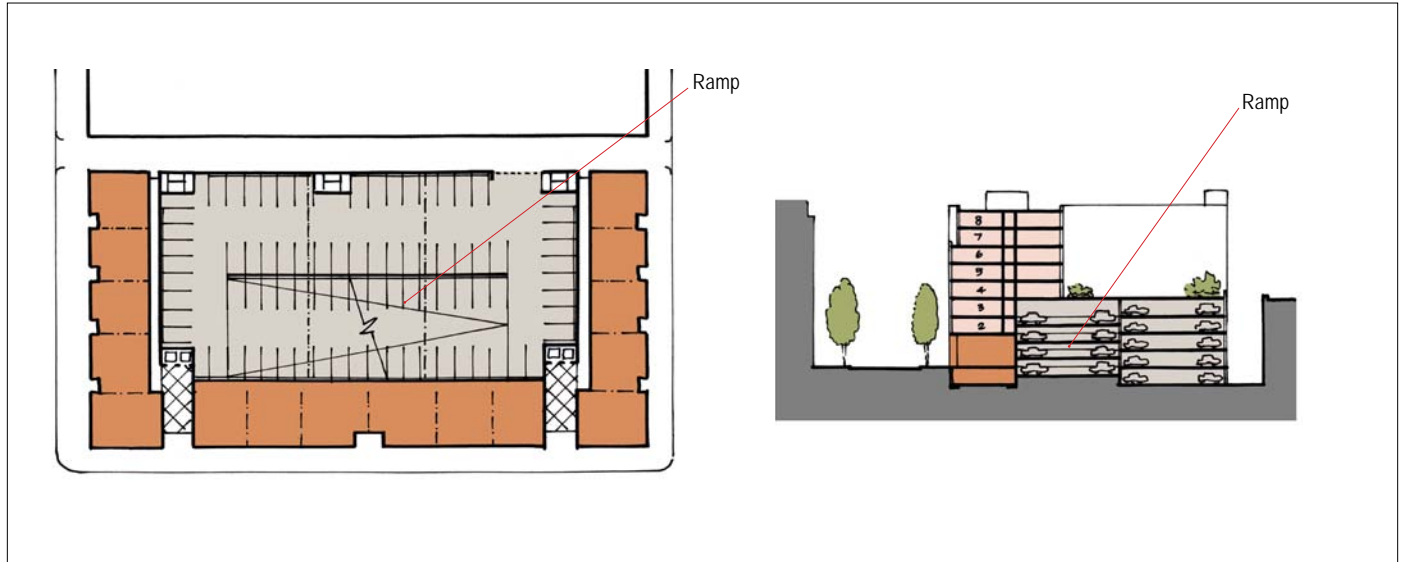
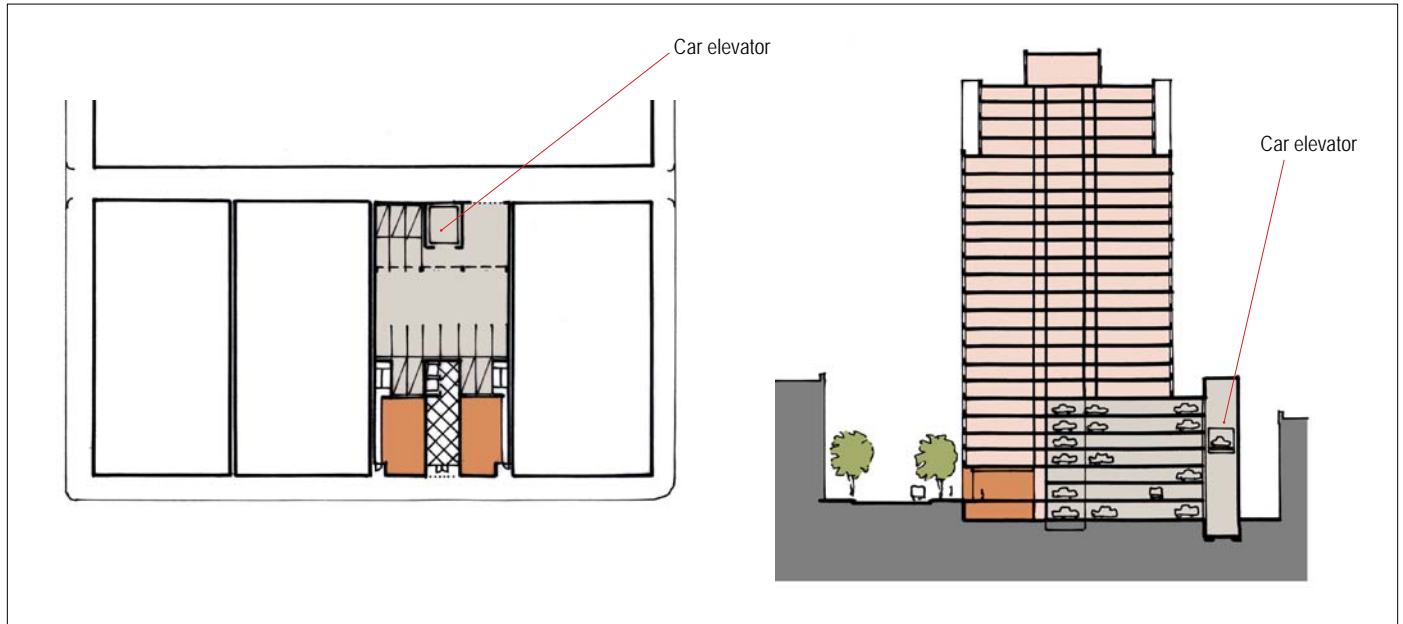


Figure 6. Multi Level Garage with Parking Elevator (Eighth-Block Parcel)



**E. Parking & Vehicle Access**

**1.b. - Location and Configuration - Surface Parking**

.....  
**PRINCIPLE: Surface parking shall be located on the side of, or behind, any use, and should be designed with sustainability measures to mitigate its environmental impacts.**  
.....

**Rationale**

Surface parking on private parcels is not an efficient land use in the River District, and inherently accelerates storm-water runoff and raises temperatures in the city. In the rare occasion that surface parking may be deemed an acceptable and appropriate parking solution - such as in very low-intensity use areas of the city, measures should be taken to minimize its environmental impact.

**Guidelines**

1. Surface parking areas should be landscaped with trees, shrubs and planting. In the rare locations where parking areas are exposed to the sidewalk they should be separated from the public right-of-way by a landscaped strip or hedge. (See Figure 1)
2. Chain link fencing is not permitted as boundary screens for parking or secure areas.
3. Parking areas should be designed with sustainable storm water management practice. This can include draining to bio-swales and rain-gardens (see Figure 2); or permeable paving materials allowing rainwater to filter directly into the ground. On-site retention and filtering strategies are encouraged. Retention ponds are discourages in urban areas.
4. Service areas should be screened from view with landscaping or screen walls.
5. Surface parking areas should incorporate canopies of photo-voltaic panel arrays over the parking areas. See Figure 3.



Figure 1. Parking area should be screened with low wall and landscaping



Figure 2. Sustainable stormwater management: parking area drains to bioswale rain-garden



Figure 3. Canopies of photo-voltaic panel arrays covering the parking areas.

## E. Parking & Vehicle Access

### 2. Bicycle Parking

.....  
**PRINCIPLE: Development projects shall foster Sacramento's long term sustainability strategy by providing ample well-designed bicycle parking on-site.**  
.....

#### Rationale

Sacramento is an ideal city and region for bicycle ridership. The climate and topography provide excellent commuting and recreational opportunities for cyclists. On-site bicycle parking ensures that cycling is a viable alternative to driving.

#### Guidelines

##### 1. Bicycle Parking: Amount

All new development projects should provide adequate bicycle parking, storage and shower/changing rooms as part of the development, as follows:

##### A. For non-residential uses

- I. Parking for 7.5% or more of all building users, measured at peak periods.
- II. Shower/changing facilities for 0.5% full-time equivalent occupants.

##### B. For residential uses

- I. Covered bicycle storage facilities for 15% or more of building occupants.
- II. No shower/changing facilities required.

##### 2. Bicycle Parking: Location

- A. Avoid locating bicycle parking in hidden areas, dark locations, or garage recesses.
- B. Bicycle parking should be located close to the building entrance to help prevent vandalism.
- C. Include bicycle lockers in all parking garages. Lockers should be located in areas visible to the parking attendants and/or providing easy access to bicycle uses. Monthly key lockers may be preferable to the coin operated varieties in some locations since they discourage vandalism.
- D. Separate bicycle parking from vehicle access areas to reduce the ability of vehicles to be used in theft. Provide bicycle lockers in areas where theft may



Figure 1. Bicycle parking area in public open space of parcel

become a problem.

##### 3. Regional Policies

Projects should be consistent with and supportive of the policies of the SACOG Regional Bicycle, Pedestrian, and Trails Master Plan (May 2007 Amendment)



## F. River District Infill With Respect To Historic Resources

### Rationale

Infill development in River District Historic District is encouraged to enhance the value, vibrancy and character of the district, keeping it functioning and relevant for future generations.

Sacramento's rich and diverse heritage is reflected in its individually-listed Landmarks and the many Historic Districts throughout the City. The preservation of these resources and their character-defining features is an important part of the city's identity and vitality. The contribution of individual industrial use Landmarks, such as the Globe Mills just to the south of the River District, as well as the variety of historic districts such as the industrial R Street Historic District, cannot be overstated. The prevalence of these resources provides a rich resource base upon which to build. Historic resources add texture and character to the urban fabric that cannot be replicated by new development. For future development adjacent to or

involving historic resources, the new design should honestly reflect its' contemporary era, as well as take special care to ensure that orientation, form, massing and materials respects the historic structures, features or spaces.

#### 1. Historic Districts

New buildings in Historic Districts should be designed in a manner consistent with the dominant characteristics of the surrounding Historic District, especially related to scale, orientation, form, materials, and setbacks.

#### 2. Building Types

Most kinds of development, including residential, mixed use, and commercial have the potential to contribute to an Historic District, and be an urbane and civil neighbor to a landmark building. As long as the use is permitted by zoning, the appropriateness of the project should be dependent on the design (form, massing, scale, character,

North 16th Street (Recommended) Historic District



Figure 1. Map of Historic Resources recommended in the River District Specific Plan for inclusion in the North 16th Street Historic District.



Figure 2. The masonry brick building containing Pipeworks is an iconic building at the entry of North 16th Street.



Figure 3. 1501 North C Street.

## F. River District Infill With Respect To Historic Resources

etc.) rather than on the density or building type. If well-designed, building types ranging from mid-rise commercial to high-rise residential buildings can often work within River District areas, although they may be significantly taller than many or most of the surroundings. Several historic landmarks in the River District exceed 100', and clearly contribute to the character of the district.

The City of Sacramento's Preservation Staff should be consulted on appropriate solutions to ensure a new building's height or program can be accommodated within its' context.

### 3. Context

In-fill projects in historic districts, and adjacent to landmark parcels are always unique cases. No single solution will be appropriate for all occurrences. Thus, the key guidance is that new development should be responsive to context, ensuring that the scale, form and materials used relate positively to the historic resources and character defining features of the district. Shown here are such examples.

### 4. Review Process:

See *Chapter 1 - Applicability of Preservation Standards/ Plans and Urban Design Guidelines* for a description of the Preservation Review process.



Figure 1. The new building on the left maintains the scale and proportion of mass and fenestration in keeping with the historic building on the right.



Figure 2. On Sacramento's J Street, the Sheraton Grand hotel is designed with a similar rhythm and transparency at ground level as its historic neighbor.



Figure 3. The extension, at left, to the Sacramento Hall of Justice, on 6th Street, a good example of a contemporary addition to a Landmark building.