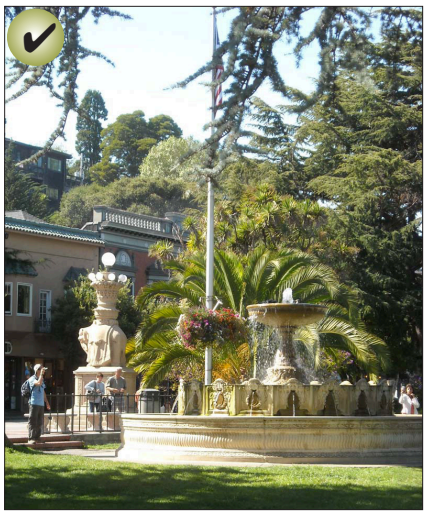
D. Outdoor Public Amenity Space

Outdoor public amenity space is a characteristic of the community. Where it is located, it should be integrated with the traditional streetscape character. This space occurs as an accent along the street in several conditions: as a front yard on a residential site, as a small plaza or pocket park, and as an entry court to a building. The character and setting of the site or a historic building will influence the form, location or appropriateness of such a space. Outdoor amenity space should be integrated with the design of the site and the building.

3.7 Outdoor public amenity space should meet all of the following requirements:

- Be level with the sidewalk
- Be open to the sky
- Be paved or otherwise landscaped
- Remain subordinate to the line of building fronts



Outdoor public amenity space is a characteristic of the community. Where it is located, it should be integrated with the traditional streetscape character.

Small Public Plazas and Pocket Parks

Small accent public plazas and pocket parks may be considered. However, within the heart of the Downtown Historic District, where the greatest concentration of historic storefronts align, creating new gaps in the street wall is discouraged.

3.8 A small plaza or pocket park should contain features to promote and enhance its use.

These may include one or more of the following:

- Street furniture
- Public art
- Historical/interpretive marker

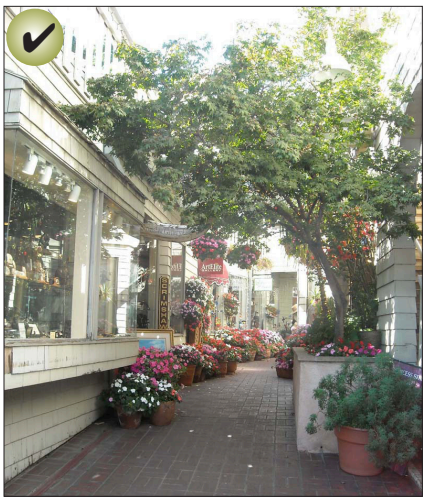
Front and side yard amenity space may be considered in the context of a historic residential type building.

Front Yard Amenity Space

Certain areas retain a distinct historic residential character. These are defined by a landscaped front yard and side yard setback. To maintain and enhance this tradition in certain areas, a landscaped front yard amenity space may be considered.

3.9 Front and side yard amenity space may be considered in the context of a historic residential type building.

- Plantings should remain the prominent feature in this setting.



An entry court is appropriate where a break between buildings occurs.

The use of public art is encouraged.

Entry Courts

Entry courts may occur as a part of an established alley right-of-way or where a break occurs between buildings. Entry courts are used to allow access to multiple businesses or other type of use.

3.10 An entry court may be considered in limited conditions.

- They are allowed when they occur as a part of an alley right-of-way.
- They are appropriate where two buildings are separated by a space between property lines.

E. Public Art

Public art is welcomed as an amenity. It should be designed as an integral component of the urban environment. It should be strategically located to serve as accent to a streetscape, plaza, park or other public area.

3.11 The use of public art is encouraged.

- Incorporate art into streetscapes or building elements that complement the context and character of the setting.
- Strategically place public art at civic facilities to serve as accents.

3.12 Public art should be compatible with the historic context of downtown.

- Art installation should not impede one's ability to interpret the historic character of downtown.
- Locate public art such that the ability to perceive the character of historic buildings nearby is maintained. Placing a large sculpture in front of a historic building front, for example, is inappropriate.

3.13 Locate public art installations to enhance the urban environment.

- Locate artwork in strategic locations such as gateways or as focal points in public plazas or parks.
- Also, place public art within the urban environment. In this case, an artist could "customize" or reinterpret conventional features of a streetscape or seawalk. For example, an artist might design a gate feature, tree grate or planter.

F. Signs

Historically, a sign mounted and/or painted on the exterior of a building advertised the primary business conducted on the premises. Many of these signs still remain today and should be preserved.

3.14 Preserve a historic sign where it exists, when feasible.

- See City's Zoning Ordinance for further sign regulations.

G. Awnings and Canopies

Traditionally, awnings and canopies were noteworthy features of buildings in the downtown core, and their continued use is encouraged. These elements are simple in detail, and they reflect the character of the buildings to which they are attached.

3.15 A fabric awning is encouraged.

- Historically, fabric awnings were most commonly found in Sausalito's downtown area.
- Operable awnings are encouraged, but rigid frame types may also be considered.
- Using an operable awning is encouraged because it can be an energy efficient mechanism for managing interior light and air conditions.

3.16 A fixed metal canopy may be considered.

- Appropriate supporting mechanisms are wall mounted brackets and chains consistent with the style of the building.

3.17 An awning or canopy should be in character with the building and streetscape.

- Mount an awning or canopy to accentuate character-defining features. The awning or canopy should fit in the opening of the building.
- Use colors that are compatible with the overall color scheme of the facade. Solid colors are encouraged.
- Simple shed shapes are appropriate for rectangular openings. Odd shapes, bullnose awnings and bubble awnings are inappropriate.
- Internal illumination of an awning is inappropriate.
- Awnings should remain a subordinate feature on the facade, where they are used.

H. Outdoor Site Amenities

3.18 Locate a new deck to minimize visual impacts on historic resources.

- Placing it to the side or rear of a property is preferred, especially in a residential context.

3.19 Locate outdoor spas, swimming pools and other water features to minimize visual impacts on historic structures and landscapes.

- This includes pergolas and other shelters for these features.

Historic signs, such as this one mounted and painted on the exterior of a building, should be preserved.

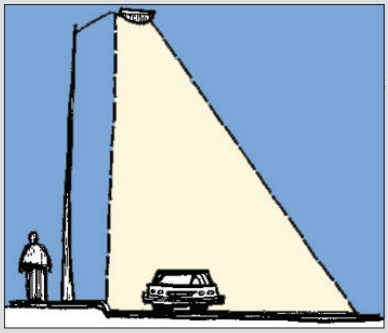
A fabric awning is encouraged.

An awning or canopy should be in character with the building and streetscape.

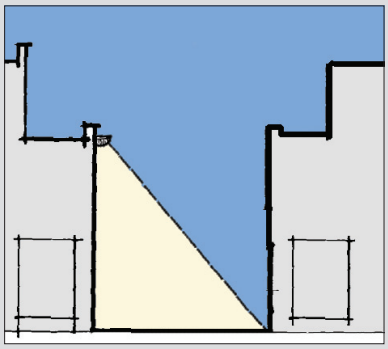
Sight Lighting Design

Pedestrian Lighting

Street Lighting



Walkway/Plaza Lighting



It is appropriate to use different lighting designs to express different functions.

I. Site Lighting

The light level at the property line is a key design consideration. This is affected by the number of fixtures, their mounting height, and the lumens emitted per fixture. It is also affected by the screening and design of the fixture. Light spill onto adjacent properties and into the night sky should be minimized.

3.20 Shield lighting to prevent off-site glare.

- Light fixtures should incorporate cut-off shields to direct light downward.
- Luminaires (lamps) must not be visible from adjacent streets or properties.

3.21 Provide lighting for a pedestrian way that is appropriately scaled to walking.

- Mount lights for pedestrian ways on short poles or consider using light posts (bollards).

3.22 Light fixtures should be in character with the setting.

- Fixtures should be compatible with architectural and site design elements.

J. Buffers

When site development, such as parking, storage and equipment areas, creates an unavoidable negative visual impact on abutting properties or to the public way, it should be mitigated with landscaping or a screen wall to buffer or screen it. The design should complement the existing natural character and context of the site.

3.23 Provide a landscape buffer along the edge of a parking lot or service area.

- Provide a landscape buffer or screen wall at the edge of a parking lot and between parking lots.
- Provide an evergreen landscape buffer or screen wall by ground mounted mechanical equipment, service and/or storage areas.

K. Service Areas

Service areas should be visually unobtrusive and should be integrated with the design of the site and the building.

Service areas should be visually unobtrusive and should be integrated with the design of the property.

3.24 Orient a service entrance, waste disposal area and other similar uses toward service lanes and away from major streets.

- Screen a service entrance with a wall, fence or planting.

3.25 Position a service area to minimize conflicts with other abutting uses.

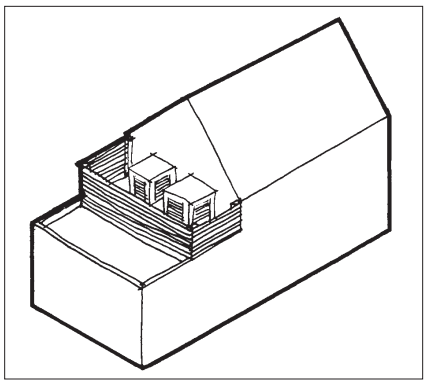
- Minimize noise impacts by locating sources of offensive sounds away from other uses.
- Use an alley when feasible.

3.26 Minimize the visual impacts of service areas.

- Screen a service area with a wall, fence or planting.
- A service area screen should be in character with the building and site it serves.

L. Mechanical Equipment

Junction boxes, external fire connections, water back-flow devices, telecommunication devices, cables, conduits, satellite dishes, HVAC equipment and fans may affect the character of a historic property. These devices must be screened from public view to avoid negative effects on all properties.



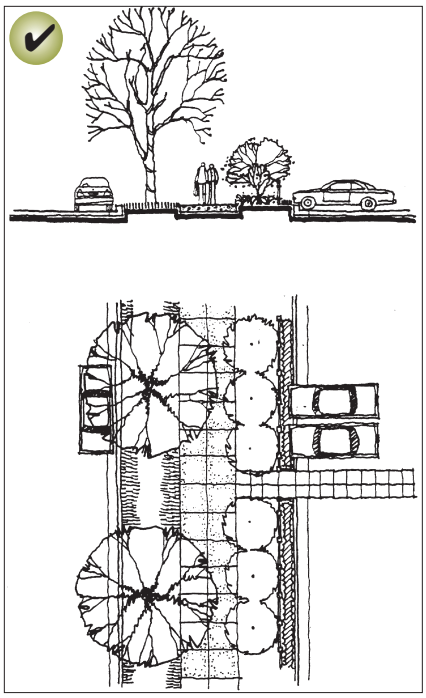
Minimize the visual impacts of mechanical and HVAC equipment from public vantage points and surrounding neighborhood.

3.27 Minimize the visual impacts of building equipment on the public way and the surrounding neighborhood.

- Screen equipment from view.
- Do not locate equipment on a primary facade.
- Use low-profile or recessed mechanical units on rooftops.
- Locate satellite dishes and mechanical equipment out of public view.

3.28 Minimize the visual impacts of utility lines, junction boxes and similar equipment.

- Locate utility lines and junction boxes on secondary and tertiary walls, and group them, when feasible.
- Paint these elements, to match the existing background color, when feasible.
- Locate utility pedestals (ground mounted) to the rear of the building.



Consider the use of a landscaped strip or planter to provide a visual buffer where a parking lot abuts a public sidewalk.

M. Surface Parking

The visual impact of surface parking should be minimized. On-site parking should be subordinate to other uses and the front of the lot should not appear to be a parking area.

3.29 Minimize the visual impact of surface parking in residential neighborhoods.

- Locate a parking area at the rear or to the side of a site.
- Do not use a front yard for parking. Instead, use alley access where it occurs or a driveway that leads to parking located to the side or behind a building.

3.30 Locate a surface lot in the interior of a block whenever possible.

- This acknowledges the special function of corner properties. They are generally more visible than interior lots, serve as landmarks and provide a sense of enclosure to an intersection.

3.31 Site a surface lot so it will minimize gaps in the continuous building wall of a commercial block.

- Where a parking lot shares a site with a building, place the parking at the rear of the site or beside the building.

3.32 Provide a visual buffer where a parking lot abuts a public sidewalk.

- This may be a landscaped strip or planter. A combination of trees and shrubs can be used to create a landscape buffer.
- Consider the use of a low or decorative wall as screen for the edge of the lot. Materials should be compatible with those of nearby buildings

4 New and Infill Construction

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Downtown Historic District	
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Construct a New Building in the Historic Overlay District	✔
Work on a Local Register Property	
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Work on Arks in the Residential Arks Zoning District	✔
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This chapter provides design guidelines for improvements to non-contributing buildings and new infill construction. The first section addresses principles for architectural character and energy efficiency that apply to all new construction. Two sections that follow provide guidelines specifically for new commercial and residential building types.

Contemporary interpretations of traditional designs and details are encouraged.

A. General Principles for New Construction

Architectural Character

In order to assure that historic resources are appreciated as authentic contributors to the Historic Overlay District, it is important that new buildings be distinguishable from them. Therefore, new construction in the Historic Overlay District should appear as being a product of its own time, while also being compatible with the historically significant features of the area.

4.1 Design a new building to reflect its time, while respecting key features of its context.

- See the guidelines for the design of new commercial and residential building types beginning on page 64 and 67.

Use exterior or facade integrated (seasonal) shading devices to block direct summer sun.

4.2 Contemporary interpretations of traditional designs and details may be considered.

- New designs for window moldings and door surrounds, for example, can provide visual interest while helping to convey the fact that the building is new.
- Contemporary details for new storefronts can also be used to create interest while expressing a new, compatible style.

4.3 The exact imitation of older historic styles is discouraged for newer structures.

- This blurs the distinction between old and new buildings as well as makes it more difficult to visually interpret the architectural evolution of the Historic Overlay District.
- An interpretation of a historic style that is authentic to the District may be considered if it is subtly distinguishable as being new.

Energy Efficiency in New Designs

The conservation of energy is a key objective in site design, building design and orientation, and landscapes. The site design process should include an evaluation of the physical assets of the site to maximize energy efficiency and conservation in the placement and design of a building. Designs should consider seasonal changes in natural lighting and ventilation conditions.

A design should also take into account the potential effects on an adjoining property, in terms of its solar access and ability to implement the same environmental design principles. Careful consideration should also be given to balancing sustainable design principles with those related to maintaining the traditional character of the area.

4.4 Locate a new building to take advantage of microclimatic conditions for energy conservation.

- Orient a building to be consistent with historic development patterns.
- Consider solar and wind exposure in all seasons.

4.5 Design a building, or an addition, to take advantage of energy saving and generating opportunities.

- Design windows to maximize daylighting into interior spaces.
- Use exterior shading devices to manage solar gain in summer months.
- Energy-producing devices, including solar collectors and wind turbines, are encouraged where they also respect the character of the District.

Utilize landscape areas and features to promote energy efficiency. In this example deciduous landscaping provides summer shading.

4.6 Maximize solar access for all properties.

- New development should avoid or minimize impacts to solar access on adjoining properties.
- Shading of south facing facades on adjoining properties should be minimized.
- This is especially important for residential sites.

4.7 Use landscape designs to promote energy efficiency. Appropriate strategies include the following:

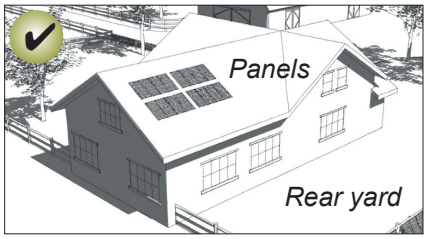
- In residential settings, group deciduous trees and plants to provide summer shade and allow solar access in winter.
- In some settings, plantings can be oriented to provide wind protection of plazas and entries in wintertime.
- Use natural storm water systems and retention basins that also serve as amenities.
- Plant species that require low levels of water.
- Plant species that are native and non-invasive.
- Use porous materials in drainage and detention areas to promote percolation into the soil.

Solar Panels

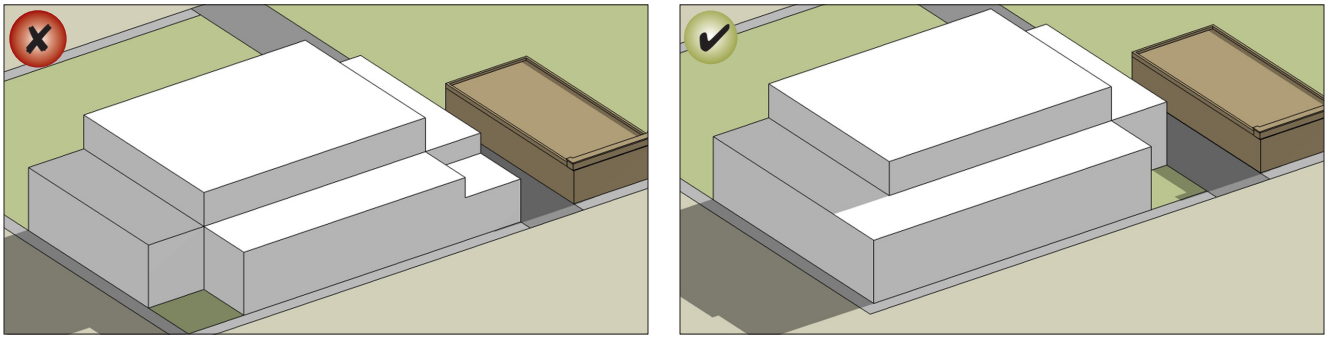
Solar panels should be designed and positioned to have a minimal effect on the character of the building and its context.

4.8 Minimize the visual impacts of energy devices on the character of the district.

- Where feasible, mount solar panels where it has the least visual impact.



Where feasible, solar panels should be mounted where they are screened or minimally visible from public vantage points.



Articulate building mass to take advantage of solar energy. The plaza to the left is shaded during peak winter hours; the plaza to the right is enhanced by solar rays during peak winter hours.

Energy Efficiency in Building Massing

A building should be oriented to maximize the potential for natural daylighting as well as solar energy collection. In doing so, careful consideration should be given to first relating the building's mass to the historic context.

4.9 Shape a building's mass to maximize solar energy potential. Consider the following strategies:

- Design a building to allow natural daylighting to the interior.
- Consider articulating wall planes as a way to provide shade or increase solar access to interiors.
- Orient roofs to accommodate solar collectors.
- Use thermal storage walls on a portion of the south facing building exposure, where appropriate.

4.10 Orient a building to maximize "green" building principles while ensuring compatibility with adjacent, lower-scale buildings or neighborhoods. Appropriate strategies include:

- Positioning the taller portion of a building along a north-south axis to minimize shading on lower scale structures to the north.
- Designing building mass to minimize shading south-facing facades of adjacent buildings during winter months.

Environmental Performance in Building Elements

The elements that make up a building, including windows, mechanical systems and materials, can significantly impact environmental performance. These should be designed to maximize the building's environmental performance, while promoting compatibility with surrounding sites and structures. New materials that improve environmental performance are appropriate if they have been proven effective in this climate.

4.11 Use green building materials whenever possible.

Such materials include:

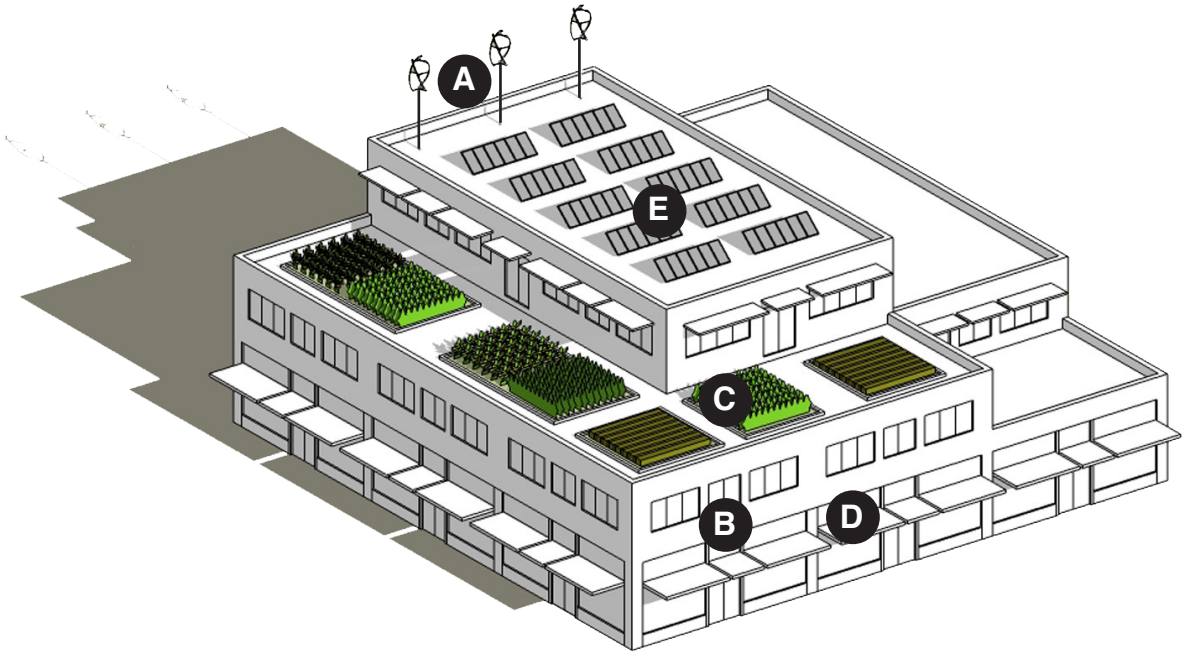
- Locally manufactured
- Low maintenance
- Materials with long life spans
- Recycled materials

4.12 Incorporate building elements that allow for natural environmental control.

Consider the following:

- Operable windows for natural ventilation
- Low infiltration fenestration products
- Interior or exterior light shelves/solar screens above south facing windows

Commercial Building Energy Efficiency Diagram



A Wind Devices
Set back from primary facade to minimize visibility from street

B Operable Transoms
Allows for natural air circulation

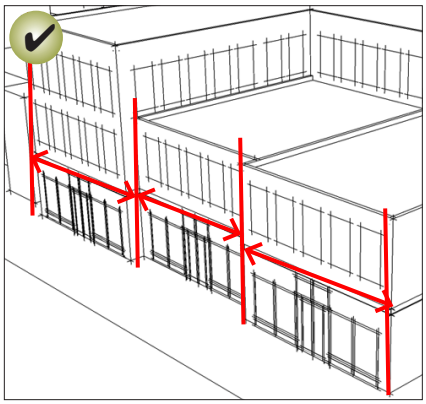
C Green Roofs
Roof gardens

D Shading devices
Operable canopies, located-above displays windows

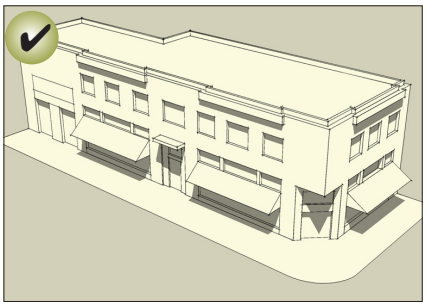
E Solar Collectors
Solar panels mounted on the roof

Design a building or addition to take advantage of energy saving and energy efficiency opportunities.

Facade heights of new buildings should fall within the established range of the block, and respect the traditional proportions of height to width.



New facade widths should reflect the established range of the building widths seen on the block.



Use architectural details that create visual interest and convey a three-dimensional facade to establish a sense of human scale.

B. Commercial Buildings

The following guidelines apply to the design of new commercial type buildings.

Mass and Scale

Traditionally commercial buildings had varied heights, articulated masses, visually interesting skylines and pedestrian-scaled street fronts. A new building should continue to provide a variety of pedestrian-friendly scales and visually appealing masses. Buildings should not be monolithic in scale or greatly contrast with the existing scale in the area.

A sense of human scale is achieved when one can reasonably interpret the size of a building by comparing features of its design to comparable elements in one's experience. Using building features and materials of a familiar dimension, such as traditional brick, storefronts and upper story windows, is an example.

4.1 Maintain the traditional size of buildings as perceived at the street level.

- The facade height of a new building should fall within the established range of the block, and respect the traditional proportions of height to width.
- Floor-to-floor heights should appear similar to those of traditional buildings in the area, especially the ground level.

4.2 Maintain traditional spacing patterns created by the repetition of uniform building widths along the street.

- A new facade width should reflect the established range of the building widths seen on the block.
- Where a building must exceed this width, use a change in design features to suggest the traditional building widths. Changes in materials, window design, facade height or decorative details are examples of techniques that may be used. These variations should be expressed consistently throughout the structure such that the composition appears to be a collection of smaller building modules.

4.3 A new building should incorporate a base, middle and cap.

- Traditionally, buildings were composed of these three basic elements. Interpreting this tradition in new buildings will help reinforce the visual continuity of the area.

4.4 Position the taller portion of a structure away from neighboring buildings of lower scale.

- A taller portion should be located to minimize looming effects and shading of lower scaled neighbors.
- Buildings should step down towards lower scaled neighbors, including adjacent historic properties.

4.5 Establish a sense of human scale in a building design.

- Use vertical and horizontal articulation to break up large facades.
- Incorporate changes in color, texture and materials in building designs to help define human scale.
- Use architectural details that create visual interest and convey a three-dimensional facade.
- Use materials which help to convey scale through their proportions, detailing and form.

Building and Roof Form

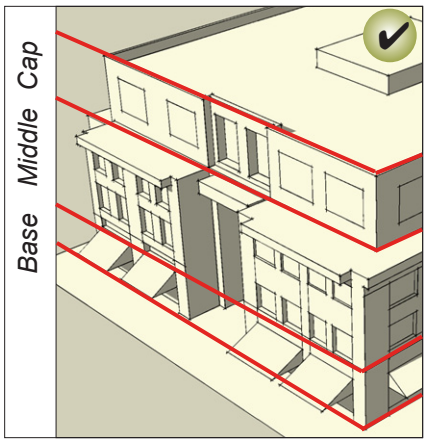
A prominent unifying element in the commercial area is the similarity in building forms that exists. Most are simple rectangular solids. This simplicity of form should continue, in terms of the predominant features of any new building.

4.6 A rectangular form should be dominant on a commercial facade.

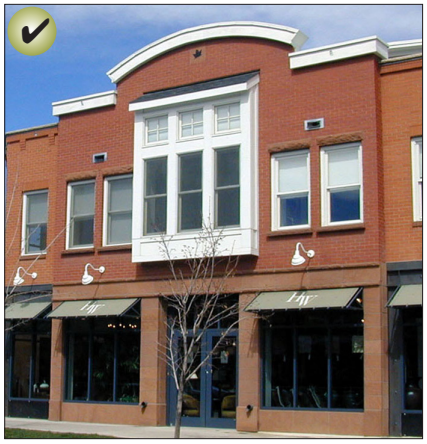
- The facade should appear as a flat surface, with any decorative elements, and projecting or setback "articulations," appearing to be subordinate to the dominant form.

4.7 A roof form should be similar to those used traditionally.

- Flat roofs are appropriate.
- "Exotic" roof forms, such as A-frames and steep shed roofs are inappropriate.



A new building should incorporate a base, middle and cap.



Incorporate changes in color, texture and materials in building designs to help define human scale.

Building materials shall appear similar in scale, color, texture and finish to those seen historically in the context.

Materials

Building materials of new structures and additions to existing buildings should contribute to the visual continuity of the neighborhood. They should appear similar to those seen traditionally to establish a sense of visual continuity.

4.8 Building materials shall appear similar in scale, color, texture and finish to those seen traditionally in the context.

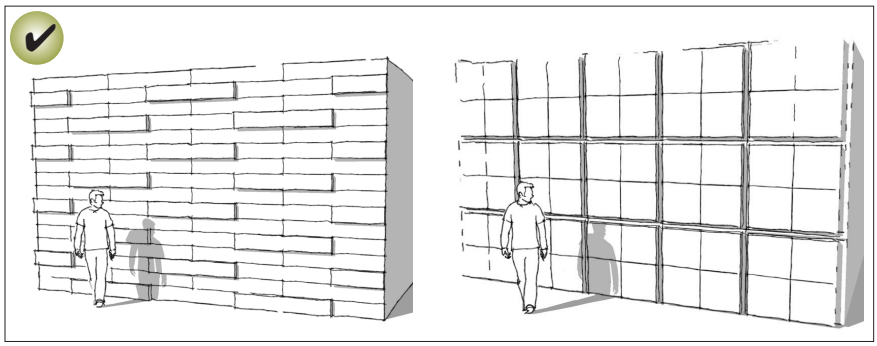
- Traditional materials, including wood, brick and stucco are preferred.
- Imitation or synthetic materials, such as aluminum or vinyl siding, imitation brick or imitation stone and plastic, are inappropriate.
- All wood siding should have a weather-protective finish.
- The use of highly reflective materials is discouraged.

4.9 Use masonry that appears similar in character to that seen historically.

- For example, brick should have a modular dimension similar to that used traditionally.

4.10 New materials that are similar in character to traditional ones may be acceptable with appropriate detailing.

- Alternative materials should appear similar in scale, proportion, texture and finish to those used traditionally.



New materials that are similar in character to traditional materials may be acceptable with appropriate detailing. Alternative materials should appear similar in scale, proportion, texture and finish to those used traditionally.

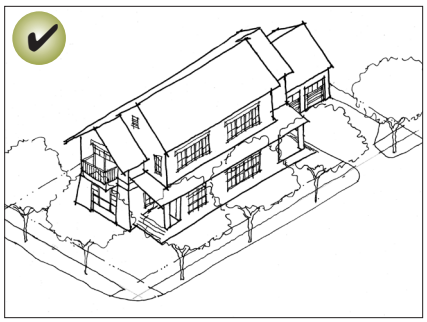
C. Residential Buildings

The following guidelines apply to the design of new residential type buildings.

Mass and Scale

Traditionally residential buildings had varied heights, articulated masses and pedestrian-scaled front facades. A new building should continue to provide a variety of pedestrian-friendly scales and visually appealing masses. Buildings should not be monolithic in scale or greatly contrast with the existing scale in the area.

A sense of human scale is achieved when one can reasonably interpret the size of a building by comparing features of its design to comparable elements in one's experience. Using building features and materials of a familiar dimension, such as traditional brick, porches, windows and doors, is an example.



Construct a new building to be similar in mass and scale to traditional buildings in the neighborhood.

Include horizontal elements in the design of residential buildings. For example, use porches, eaves and groupings of windows to convey human scale.

4.1 Construct new building features to reflect the mass and scale of traditional residential buildings.

- Use features of traditional dimensions. For example, the use of windows, doors and porch elements in scale to those seen traditionally is appropriate.

4.2 Express facade component in ways that will help to establish a human scale.

- Include horizontal elements in the design of residential buildings. For example, use porches, eaves and groupings of windows to convey human scale.
- Articulate a building mass to create visual interest and convey a three-dimensional facade. Provide vertical and horizontal facade offsets.

4.3 A facade should reflect dimensions similar to traditional buildings in the area.

- Facade heights of new buildings should respect the traditional proportions of height to width.
- Floor-to-floor heights should appear similar to those of traditional residential buildings.

4.4 Position taller portions of a structure away from neighboring buildings of lower scale.

- Where permitted by the base zoning, taller structures should be located to minimize looming effects and shading of lower scaled neighbors.
- Buildings should step down towards lower scaled neighbors, including adjacent historic properties and districts.

Position taller portions of a structure away from neighboring buildings of lower scale.

Building materials shall appear similar in scale, color, texture and finish to those seen historically in the context.

Building materials shall appear similar in scale, color, texture and finish to those seen historically in the context.

4.5 Clearly define the primary entrance by using a defined entry or a front porch in residential buildings.

- The porch should be "functional," in that it is used as a means of access to the entry.

4.6 Orient a front porch or covered landing to the street.

- While the porch serves as a transition area from the street to the building, it is also an essential element of the residential streetscape. It provides human scale to the building, offers interest to pedestrians, and is a catalyst for personal interaction.
- This should not be interpreted to exclude side porches.

4.7 On larger structures, subdivide larger masses into smaller "modules" that are similar in size to traditional buildings in the neighborhood.

- Other subordinate modules may be attached to the primary building form.

Building and Roof Form

A similarity of building and roof form also contributes to a sense of visual continuity. In order to maintain this sense of visual continuity, a new building should have basic building and roof form similar to those seen traditionally.

4.8 Use building and roof forms similar to those seen traditionally on the block.

- Exotic roof forms are inappropriate on primary structures in a traditional neighborhood setting.
- Noteworthy contemporary architecture may be an exception and will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

Materials

The major building materials for a new structure should appear to be similar to those in its historic setting.

4.9 Building materials shall appear similar in scale, color, texture and finish to those seen historically in the context.

- The use of traditional materials, including wood, stucco, brick and stone, is preferred.
- Imitation or synthetic materials, such as aluminum or vinyl siding, imitation brick or imitation stone and plastic, are inappropriate.

5 Downtown Historic Overlay District

Chapter 5 Application	
Downtown Historic District	
Work on a Contributing Property	✔
Restore a Non-Contributing Property	✔
Work on a Non-Contributing Property	✔
Construct a New Building in the Historic Overlay District	✔
Work on a Local Register Property	*See Note A*
Work on a California Register Property	*See Note A*
Work on a National Register Property	*See Note A*
Work on Arks in the Residential Arks Zoning District	
Site Improvements	*See Note A*
Other	*See Note A*

Notes
A. Guidelines within this chapter will apply to those projects located within the Downtown Historic Overlay District.

This chapter provides a description of the context of the Downtown Historic Overlay District and identifies special design objectives for the District. It also provides design guidelines that address characteristics of the District that are not covered by other guidelines in this document.

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A. Existing Conditions

The Downtown Historic Overlay Zoning District is centered around the downtown intersection of Princess Street and Bridgeway. This older commercial district exhibits a consistent architectural grouping of late 19th Century styles. The scale is one that complements the view of San Francisco. This is one of the primary attractions of Sausalito, and the people who come here to enjoy being by the Bay and its play of light, boats, city and seascape.

The northern portion of the District, on Bridgeway north of Princess Street, can be characterized as two and three story attached row buildings that relate to one another in a harmonious way, while representing different styles of architecture and modernizations.

The time period represented here dates from the 1890s through the decade following World War II. The facades share a similar scale, height and style, with several notable exceptions, and they have in common some or all of the following building elements: bay windows, boxed cornices, false fronts, Italianate roofline detail, recessed entries and storefronts.

The central portion of the District is oriented to Plaza Vina Del Mar, a small, triangular park/plaza with pedestaled elephants and a fountain from the 1915 San Francisco Panama Pacific International Exposition. The park is filled with shrubs, specimen trees and flowering plants, and combines the feeling of a Victorian garden with that of a Mediterranean plaza. This impression is enhanced by the 1915 Mission Revival style Sausalito Hotel. North and east of the hotel are the last remnants of the railroad/ferryboat era--the vestigial pilings of the old ferryboat slip.

Bridgeway south of Princess Street has an unrestricted view of Richardson's and San Francisco Bays. Yee Tock Chee Park is a small, multi-level area of concrete and wood pilings built on the site of the original ferryboat landing (the Ferry Princess, 1868).

The buildings along this portion of Bridgeway are more diverse than those of the northern portion. Many were either built or remodeled in the 1920s. They are functional structures that suggest their original uses as stores and garages. Others are representative of the "Victorian" era.

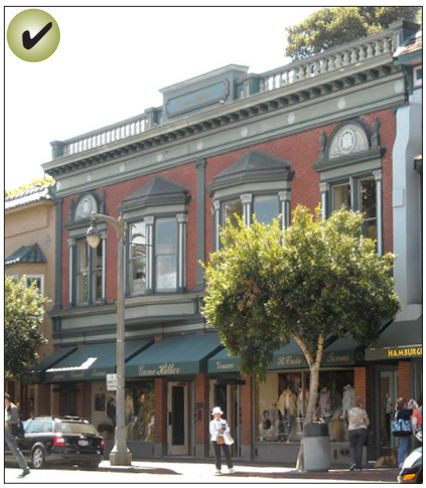
Princess Street is the transition between Bridgeway and the Hill. At its base, a continuation of commercial buildings is apparent, then a gradual transition to residential buildings occurs to the top. At the intersection of Bulkley Avenue on the south side, a small wood Greek Revival house is all but obscured by trees. Two homes across the street on Bulkley Avenue have been converted to apartments and have been included in the District, as they are prominent in early photos from the water and represent the styles of many early hillside homes.

At the top of Princess Street, on Bulkley Avenue, are the "Portals of the Nook"--an arched brick and terra cotta entryway which acted as the entrance to a former Willis Polk designed Shingle-style Queen Anne mansion. Just to the north, on Bulkley Avenue, is the "crown jewel" of the District, Laneside. Built only months after the Nook was completed, the style and use of materials suggests that Polk may have inspired its design as well. (New condominiums have been added to the original house.)

B. Design Goals and Vision

All improvements in the Historic District should help to achieve these goals:

- Preserve the historic character of the District.
- Preserve the intimate scale of the District.
- Preserve the harbor community.
- Preserve access to the water.
- Preserve the architectural integrity of its historic resources.
- Preserve the scale of the streetscape.
- Preserve the historic stonework and pathways through the District.
- Design new infill to be compatible with the District.
- Preserve view corridors.



Reflect the traditional setbacks seen within the block. In predominately commercial areas align the building at the sidewalk edge.

Special Design Guidelines

Commercial Setbacks within the Downtown Historic Overlay District

Buildings create a strong edge to the street because they are traditionally aligned on the front lot line and usually built out the full width of the parcel to the side lot lines. Although small gaps do occur between some structures, they are the exception. These characteristics are vitally important to the District where the street wall is a prominent feature.

5.1 Reflect the traditional setbacks seen within the block.

- Place the facade of the building at the property line. This should only vary in very special circumstances.
- Locating entire building fronts behind the established storefront line is inappropriate.

Commercial Facade Character

The street level of a traditional commercial building in the Historic Overlay District is clearly distinguishable from the upper floors. The first floor is predominantly made of fixed plate glass with a small percentage of opaque framing materials, a kickplate and a recessed entry. An upper floor, where it occurs, is the reverse—opaque materials dominate, and windows appear as smaller openings puncturing a more solid wall. These windows are usually double-hung. The street level also appears taller than the upper floors. A historic storefront of twelve to fourteen feet high is typical, whereas a second floor is usually ten to twelve feet. This traditional characteristic of storefront proportions should be continued in new construction.

Maintain the traditional spacing pattern created by upper story windows.

5.2 Maintain the traditional spacing pattern created by upper story windows.

- Use traditional proportions of windows, individually or in groups.
- Headers and sills of windows on new buildings should maintain the traditional placement relative to cornices and belt courses.

5.3 Maintain the distinction between the street level and the upper floor.

- The first floor of the primary facade should be predominantly transparent glass.
- Upper floors should be perceived as being more opaque than the lower floor.
- Highly reflective or darkly tinted glass is inappropriate.
- Express the distinction in floor heights between street levels and upper levels through detailing, materials and fenestration. The presence of a belt course is an important feature in this relationship.

5.4 A new storefront should incorporate traditional building components.

- Express a kickplate, display window and transom in a new storefront design.
- Storefront components and upper story windows should be similar in height and proportion to traditional downtown buildings.
- When portions of a storefront are folding (operable panels), all of the storefront components should still be visible.

5.5 Maintain the pattern created by recessed entryways along the street.

- On commercial type buildings, set a primary entry door back an adequate amount from the front facade to establish a distinct threshold for pedestrians.
- Where entries are recessed, the building line at the sidewalk edge should be maintained by the upper floor(s).
- Use a transom over a doorway to maintain the full vertical height of the storefront.
- Oversized (or undersized) interpretations are discouraged.

This historic building provides a visually interesting facade along the waterfront. This includes an articulated mass and transparent first floor. Similar treatment should be reflected on new infill buildings or additions.

Reflect the traditional setbacks seen within the block. In a residential setting, provide a front yard similar in size to neighboring buildings.

Multi-Fronted Buildings

In some cases, a building is double-fronted or otherwise, in that it faces two or more public ways, including the waterfront. These building facades should provide a pedestrian-friendly (visually interesting) ground floor.

5.6 Provide a pedestrian-friendly ground floor on buildings that face a public way.

- All sides of a buildng should include interesting details and materials to avoid presenting a “back side” to a neighboring property, public way, plaza, waterfront and/or a major pedestrian route. For example, the sides of a commercial building that houses a restaurant or specialty shop should incorporate a storefront.
- A large expanse of blank wall is inappropriate.

Residential Setbacks within the Historic District

Building setback within a typical residential context reflects a hierarchy of public and private space. It is a progression that begins at the street, which is the most public space, then proceeds through the front yard, which appears "semi-private," and ends at the front door, which is the "private" space. This sequence enhances the pedestrian environment and contributes to the character of a residential neighborhood; it should be maintained where it dominates the block.

Where the majority of the buildings align near the sidewalk edge, new infill buildings should maintain this alignment.

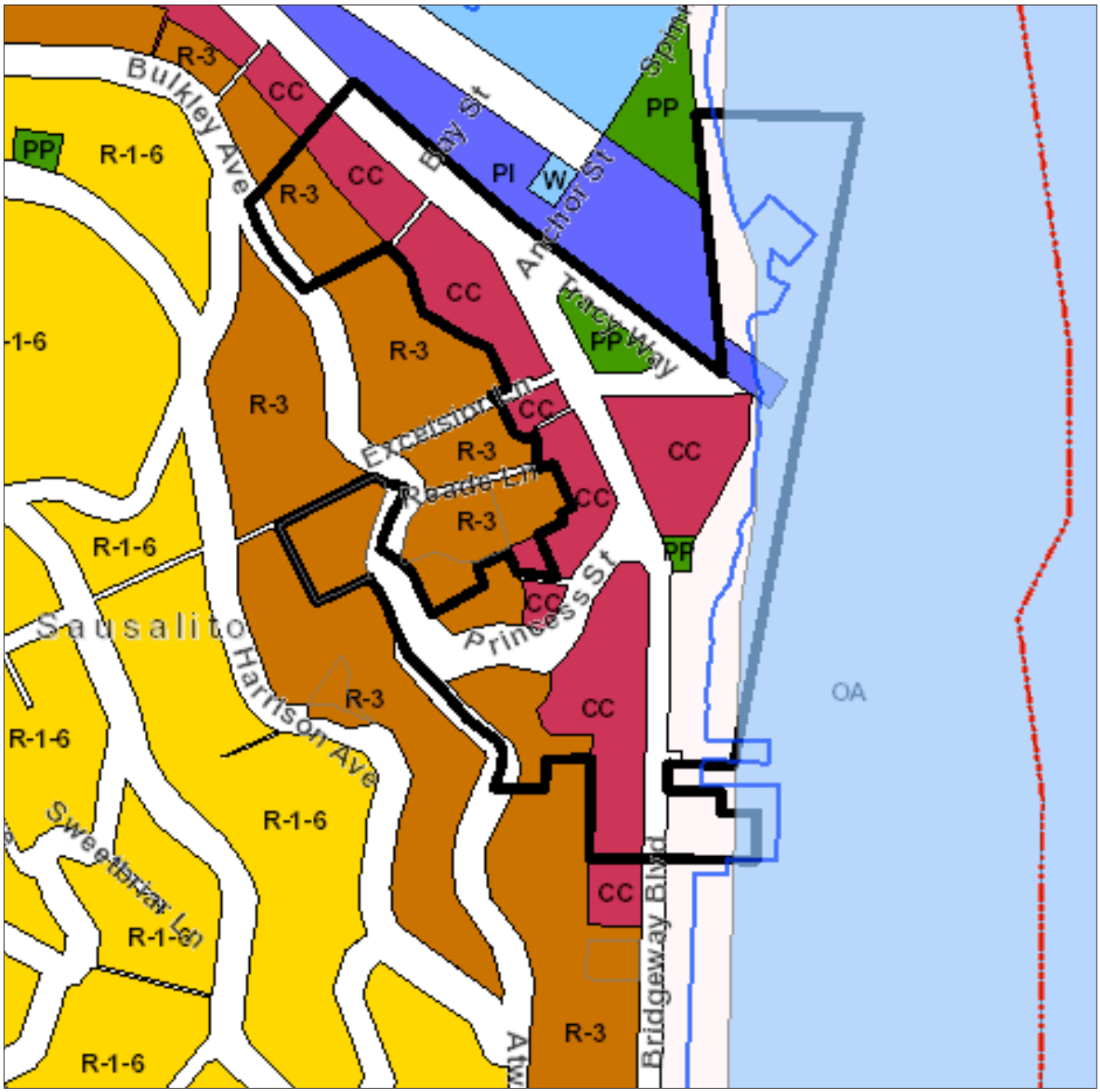
5.7 Maintain the traditional building setback.

- In a traditional residential neighborhood, the front yard should be maintained with planting material and not covered with paving or large outdoor decks.
- Align buildings near the sidewalk where this is the traditional development pattern found within the neighborhood.

5.8 Provide a walkway from the street to the building in residential settings.

- A walkway running from the street to the front porch provides unity to the streetscape. Where a walkway has been an element of the hierarchy, this should continue.

C. Map of the Downtown Historic District



Historic District Boundary