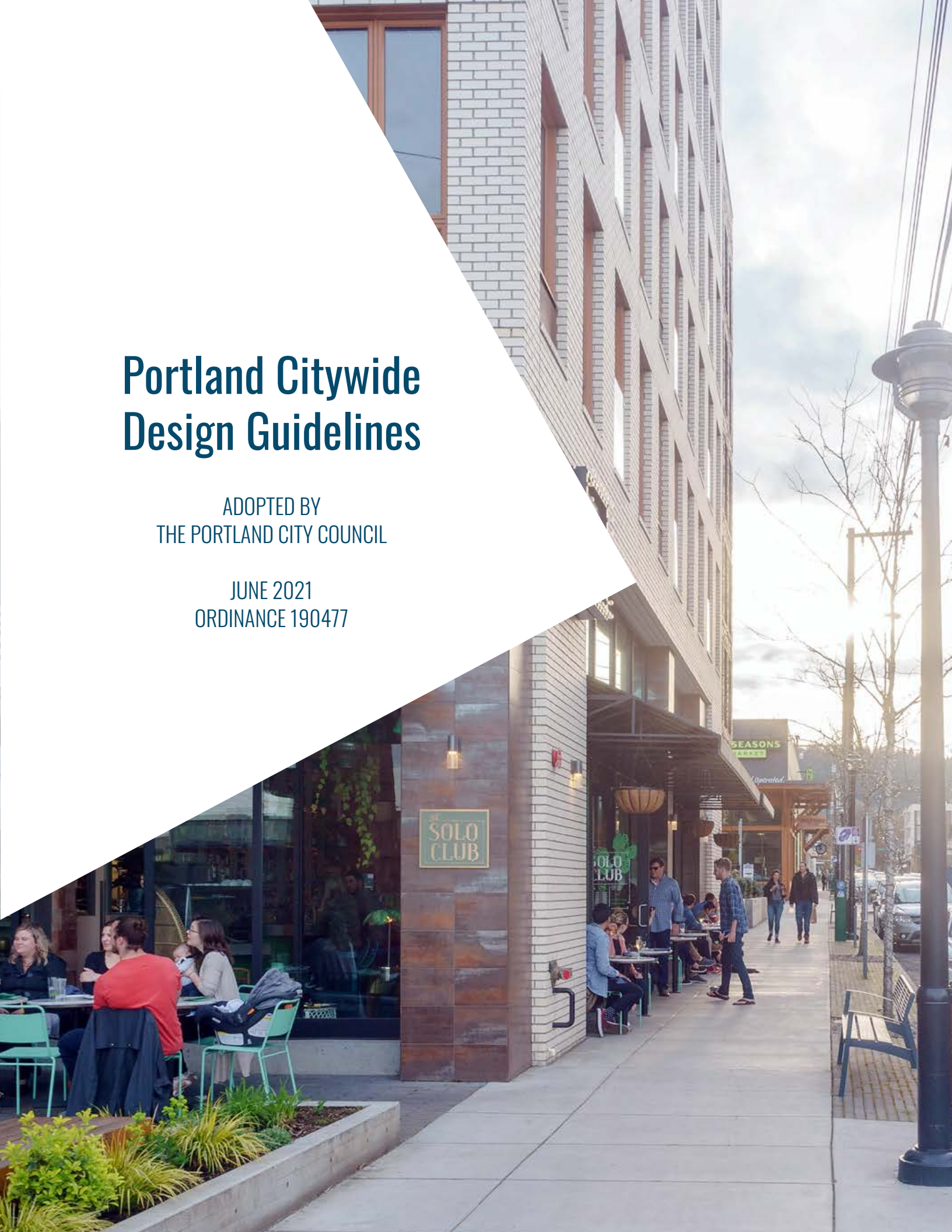
Portland Citywide Design Guidelines

ADOPTED BY
THE PORTLAND CITY COUNCIL

JUNE 2021
ORDINANCE 190477



Portland City Council
Ted Wheeler, Mayor
Jo Ann Hardesty
Mingus Mapps
Carmen Rubio
Dan Ryan

Design Commission
Julie Livingston, Chair
Jessica Molinar, Vice Chair
Brian McCarter
Chandra Robinson
Sam Rodriguez
Zari Santner
Don Vallaster

Planning and Sustainability Commission
Eli Spevak, Chair
Katherine Schultz, Vice Chair
Jeff Bachrach
Ben Bortolazzo
Mike Houck
Katie Larsell
Oriana Magnera
Daisy Quiñonez
Steph Routh
Chris Smith

The Portland Citywide Design Guidelines were approved by the Portland City Council on June 30, 2021.

They became effective on August 1, 2021.

Information on amendments is located in the Appendix.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Bureau of Planning and Sustainability

Carmen Rubio, Commissioner in Charge
Andrea Durbin, Director
Joe Zehnder, Chief Planner

Project Team
Bureau of Planning and Sustainability

Lora Lillard, Senior Planner
Kathryn Hartinger, former Project Manager
Phil Nameny, City Planner
Sandra Wood, Principal Planner

Bureau of Development Services

Kara Fioravanti, Supervising Planner
Staci Monroe, Senior Planner
Gina Tynan, City Planner

Additional Contributors

Cassie Ballew, City Planner
Hannah Bryant, City Planner
Shannon Buono, Senior Planner, Code Editor
Kristin Cooper, Senior Planner
Eden Dabbs, Communications
Troy Doss, Senior Planner
Krista Gust, Graphic Design
Kathryn Hartinger, City Planner
Jean Hester, Senior Planner
Tim Heron, Senior Planner
Grace Jeffreys, City Planner
Laura Lehman, City Planner
Neil Loehlein, GIS Mapping, Data Analysis
Derek Miller, GIS Mapping, Data Analysis
Thomas Ngo, Communications
Ben Nielsen, Senior Planner
Brandon Spencer-Hartle, Senior Planner
Emily Volpert, Senior Administrative Specialist
Stephanie Yao, Video Production Specialist

Former Staff

Puja Bhutani, Equity and Policy
Sarut Choothian (Jung), Planning Assistant
Karen Guillen-Chapman, Equity and Change Manager
Emily Hays, City Planner
Love Jonson, Planning Assistant
Jeffrey Mitchem, City Planner
Mark Raggett, Senior Planner

Consultant Team

David Hyman, DECA Architecture
Shem Harding, DECA Architecture
Kate Howe, VIA
David Horsely, DAO Architecture
Joann Le, DAO Architecture

Photo Credits

All photographs were taken by the Bureau of Planning and Sustainability, unless noted below:

page	photo	credit
22	Rivers	Walker Macy © Bruce Forster Photography
28	02 B	Holst © Sally Schoolmaster
28	02 C	GBD Architects Inc. © Richard Strode
28	02 D	SERA Architects © Peter Eckert
29	02 E	GBD Architects Inc. © Peter Eckert
29	02 F	Hacker © Josh Partee
32	03 A	SERA Architects © Jeff Amram
33	03 E	Hennebery Eddy Architects ©Josh Partee
33	03 G	Hacker © Jeff Amram
36	04 B	Hennebery Eddy Architects ©Josh Partee
40	05 B	GBD Architects Inc. © Christian Columbres
42	06	GBD Architects Inc. © Andrew Pogue
45	06 H	Holst © Sally Schoolmaster
46	07	MWA Architects © Thomas Harris
48	07 C	Holst © Andrew Pogue
48	07 D	MWA Architects © Thomas Harris
52	08 C	LEVER Architecture © Jeremy Bittermann
52	08 D	Holst © Christian Columbres
56	09 B	LEVER Architecture © Jeremy Bittermann

Former Community Service Aides

Kristina Fivecoat
Razieh Hoorshenas
Arva Hussain
Betty Lou Poston

TABLE OF CONTENTS

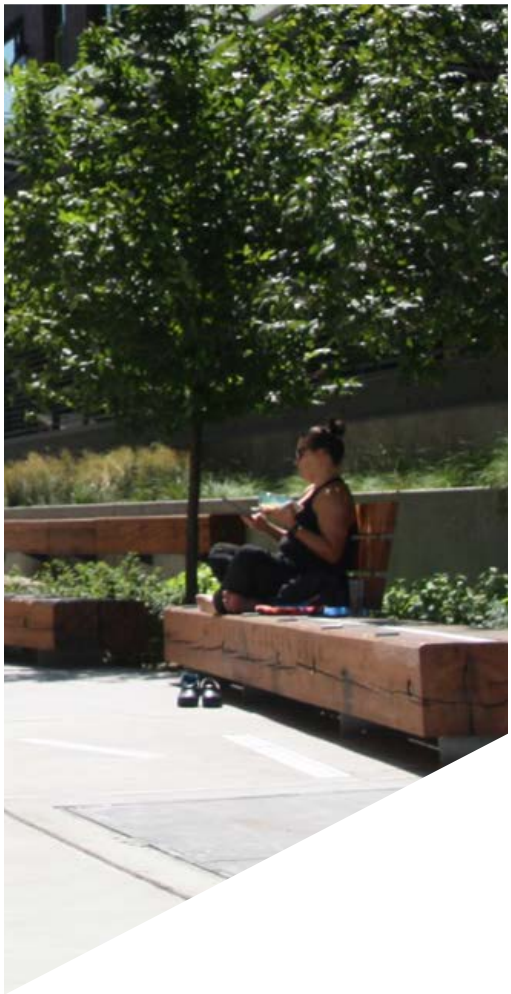
INTRODUCTION

Portland's ecological setting, nestled between the Cascade and Coast mountain ranges and carved by the Columbia and Willamette Rivers, offers abundant beauty and a climate that beckons people outside, along its streets, parks, and trails. Development of the built environment over time has further influenced the Portland landscape, shaping how the city looks and functions today. Architecture and site design impact people's interaction with the city, and design can create positive experiences as places continue to transform. Future development, and the treatment of our built and natural landscape, has the potential – and the responsibility – to create a better city for all Portlanders.

Portland has received national and international acclaim for supporting a high-quality built environment through planning and urban design. This is due, in part, to its long-standing tradition of design review, which has resulted in pedestrian-oriented and context-responsive development in Portland's active and vibrant urban spaces.

As the city has evolved, so have our aspirations. The goals and policies Portlanders set out in the 2035 Comprehensive Plan envision a prosperous, equitable, healthy and resilient city. They envision **a city designed for people** and **a city built in harmony with nature**.

Design review will continue to play an important role in shaping the built environment that serves a broad range of people, from the general public — to future residents, workers, and visitors. It offers an opportunity for designers to innovate and be creative, exploring new methods and designs that are responsive to climate and context.

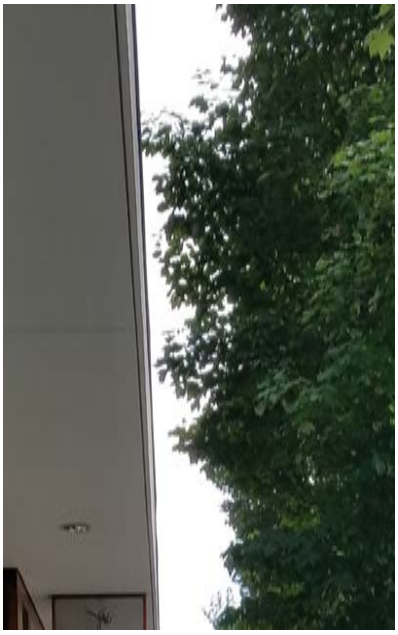


Design review offers direct and timely public engagement in the development review process. Successful collaboration and discussions during the design review process results in projects that provide opportunities for inclusion, foster social interaction, and create places where people feel connected to each other and to the place they inhabit. Such projects will inspire long-term stewardship and community investment across the city.

The City's design program upholds Portland's key design-related values, or "tenets." The three tenets are the framework for the *Portland Citywide Design Guidelines*:

- Build on **context**
- Contribute to the **public realm**
- Promote **quality and resilience**

These tenets do not supersede adopted policies, guidelines, and regulations, but rather provide a lens through which to apply them. They are rooted in the 2035 Comprehensive Plan, and they serve to help decision-makers and the public evaluate a proposal's response, using a set of qualitative, value-based regulations. Thoughtful application of the design guidelines through the design review process moves us closer to achieving our collective vision for Portland.



I. DESIGN OVERLAY ZONE IN PORTLAND

BACKGROUND

The Design Overlay Zone (d-overlay) was established in the late 1950s in Portland's downtown, with the purpose of "conserving and enhancing the appearance of the city of Portland, especially in areas of existing or potential scenic value, of historical note, of architectural merit, or for interest to tourists."

After the 1972 Downtown Plan, it was reinforced with the creation of the Downtown Design Guidelines. At the time, Portlanders recognized and intentionally tried to resist a national trend of the abandonment of downtowns, which resulted in a lack of street life and vitality in city cores throughout the country. Building design in the 1950s and 1960s had generally responded to the dominance of the automobile rather than building on and supporting a rich urban environment for pedestrians. The creation of new design guidelines and the process of design review in Portland brought attention to the design of buildings and their role in contributing to the public realm and the character of downtown districts. Both the review process and the tool were intended to encourage flexible, creative building designs that reinvigorated downtown's pedestrian experience while promoting quality architecture.

In the 1990s, design overlay zone expanded to outside the Central City – into the Albina neighborhood, and more guidelines were created to respond to areas with specific characteristics that were not the same as downtown. Guidelines were written to both enhance the character of Portland's neighborhoods and support a pedestrian environment. The Albina Community Plan adoption prompted the City of Portland to create a two-track system to offer developers a clear and objective alternative to design review.

Over the years, updated base zones have improved design of buildings at the street level with regulations for new development such as main entry, ground floor window, and outdoor area requirements. At the same time, the City has added areas to the d-overlay zone with incremental adoption of neighborhood plans and planning for high-capacity transit.

In 2018, with the adoption of the 2035 Comprehensive Plan, the City expanded the Design overlay zone to all town centers and inner ring neighborhood centers. In doing this, the City recognized that areas expected and planned for growth and increased development warrant an added focus on design to support its long-range vision.

Design review has evolved over time, along with zoning regulations and new design guidelines and processes, all of which have raised the bar on design excellence and meaningful public engagement. It will continue to encourage creativity and public participation, inspiring new development to support Portlanders as the city changes.

TWO-TRACK SYSTEM

Design overlay (d-overlay) is typically added through a legislative planning project or quasi-judicially in conjunction with more intense base zone changes. The Design overlay zone is shown on the Official Zoning Maps with a letter 'd' map symbol.

For new development and large alterations outside of the Central City, Portland uses a **two-track system** within the Design overlay zone. The two tracks are separate options for approving development proposal: the Objective Track and the Discretionary Track, or design review.

Objective Track

Many projects, depending on location, use, and size, may opt to go through the Objective Track instead of Design Review, meeting the objective **Design Standards** found in the Zoning Code. Unlike design guidelines, design standards are non-discretionary: they are quantitative and measurable. Evaluation to determine if projects meet the design standards is conducted as part of the application for a residential or commercial building permit through a design plan check. Building permits do not provide opportunities for public comment. Oregon law requires local governments to provide this objective track as an option for projects that provide housing and are outside of regional centers. Evaluation to determine if projects meet the design standards is conducted as part of the application for a residential or commercial building permit through a design plan check. Building permits do not provide opportunities for public testimony as the design review process does.

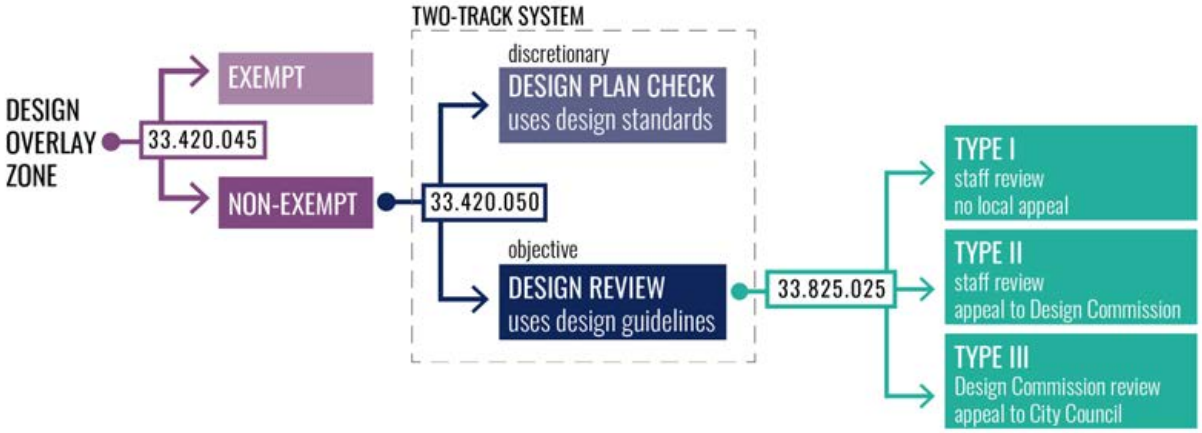
Projects located within the Central City are required to go through the design review process. Projects located outside of the Central City may go through the design review process if they do not or cannot meet the design standards, or where they want to provide an opportunity for public testimony.

Discretionary Track: Design Review

In the Discretionary track – called **Design review** – decision-makers use design guidelines adopted by City Council to approve projects. Design guidelines give qualitative direction for each project. Though they offer flexibility and the ability for designers to respond to context and site, they are regulatory approval criteria and must be met. There are many acceptable ways to meet each guideline.

Most d-overlay sites that go through design review will use the Portland Citywide Design Guidelines, provided in this document. Within designated design districts, including the Central City Design District and Gateway Design District, the approval criteria are the design guidelines adopted for that area.

Design reviews are processed through a Type I, Type II or Type III land use procedure, depending on location and project size. Type I and II reviews are conducted by staff. Type III reviews are reviewed by the Design Commission and may be appealed to City Council. Public testimony is welcomed for all three types of review.



THREE TENETS OF DESIGN

While both tracks follow separate processes and use different sets of tools, they each carry out the purpose of the Design overlay zone and the three tenets:

- Build on **context**
- Contribute to the **public realm**
- Promote **quality and resilience**

These inter-related tenets are rooted in design guidelines that have guided the city's core areas of growth for decades, and they have been identified by the Design Commission as important and grounding topics to organize their deliberations.

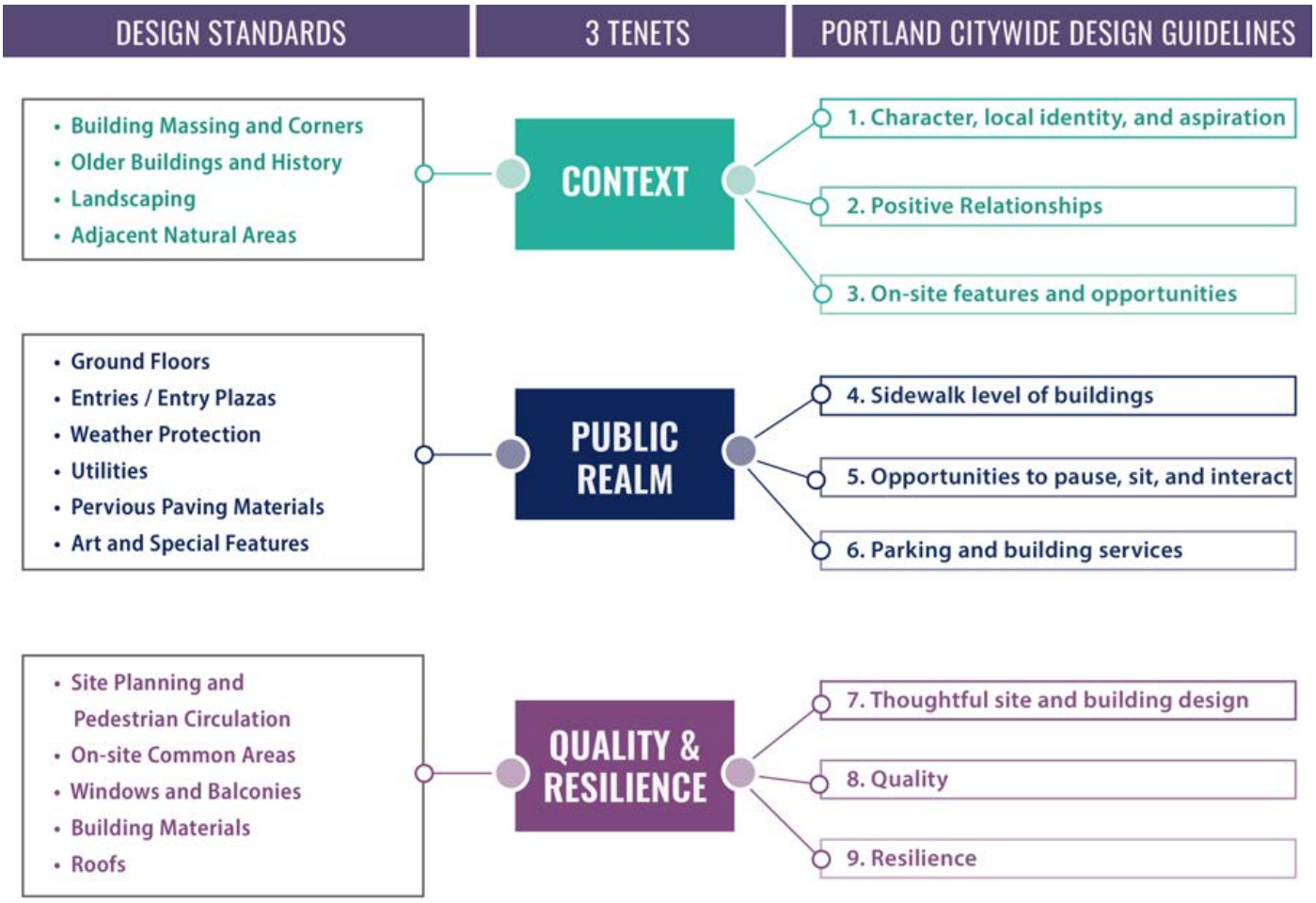
The three tenets are benchmarks that frame how the design standards and the Portland Citywide Design Guidelines are written. While the standards provide clear and objective measures, and the guidelines provide criteria that offer flexibility and encourage innovation, these parallel regulations both strive to achieve the same outcomes rooted in these three tenets.

The *Portland Citywide Design Guidelines* propose:

CONTEXT-RELATED GUIDELINES balancing the aspirations of the future desired character with today's setting. The guidelines are sequenced to telescope from big-picture to site-specific.

PUBLIC REALM-RELATED GUIDELINES that strengthen a building and site's relationship with the public rights-of-way and open spaces.

QUALITY AND RESILIENCE-RELATED GUIDELINES that underscore holistic site and building designs that benefit people and climate.



II. ABOUT THE DESIGN GUIDELINES

PORTLAND'S CITYWIDE CONTEXT

Paramount to understanding the design guidelines is recognizing and acknowledging the greater context of Portland, Oregon.

Situated at the confluence of the Willamette and Columbia Rivers, Portland lies midway between the Cascade Range to the east and the lower Coast Range to the west, each about 30 miles away. Its skyline is dominated by two Cascades volcanoes: Mount St. Helens and Mount Hood. The city's location at the northern end of the fertile Willamette Valley, its long growing season, moderate annual temperatures, and rainy winters have resulted in a rich and diverse ecosystem that have sustained people for thousands of years.

Though the city's overall geography and its history are intertwined and unique, Portland's neighborhoods and streets each have distinct histories and geographies that are as rich and diverse as its natural setting. It should be acknowledged that development has played a role in erasing the uniqueness and culture of the city's beloved places, upholding or exacerbating racial disparities, and worsening barriers to opportunities for communities of color and under-represented communities. These guidelines should be used to ensure that places undergoing change will be inclusive and foster a sense of place and belonging. The design response should intentionally promote an anti-racist built environment that honors and preserves the localized history and culture.

As the city grows, development should be designed to recognize that one size does not fit all across Portland's neighborhoods.

URBAN DESIGN FRAMEWORK

Portland's ***2035 Comprehensive Plan*** provides a blueprint to ensure that new development responds to its context: the Urban Design Framework.

The Urban Design Framework (UDF) provides four distinct layers:

- **Pattern areas** – Western, Inner, and Eastern Neighborhoods; Rivers *(Pattern Areas also includes the Central City, where these guidelines do not apply.)*
- **Centers** – Town Centers and Neighborhood Centers *(Centers also include the Central City and Gateway Regional Center, where these guidelines do not apply.)*
- **Corridors** – Civic Corridors and Neighborhood Corridors
- **Transit stations** – Center Transit Stations, Transit Neighborhood Stations, Employment Stations, and Destination Stations

Of the four layers, Pattern Areas apply to all sites. Pattern Areas reflect general existing conditions that give guidance for how sites should develop based on physical and natural characteristics, while building a future that is compact, transit-oriented, and designed for people.

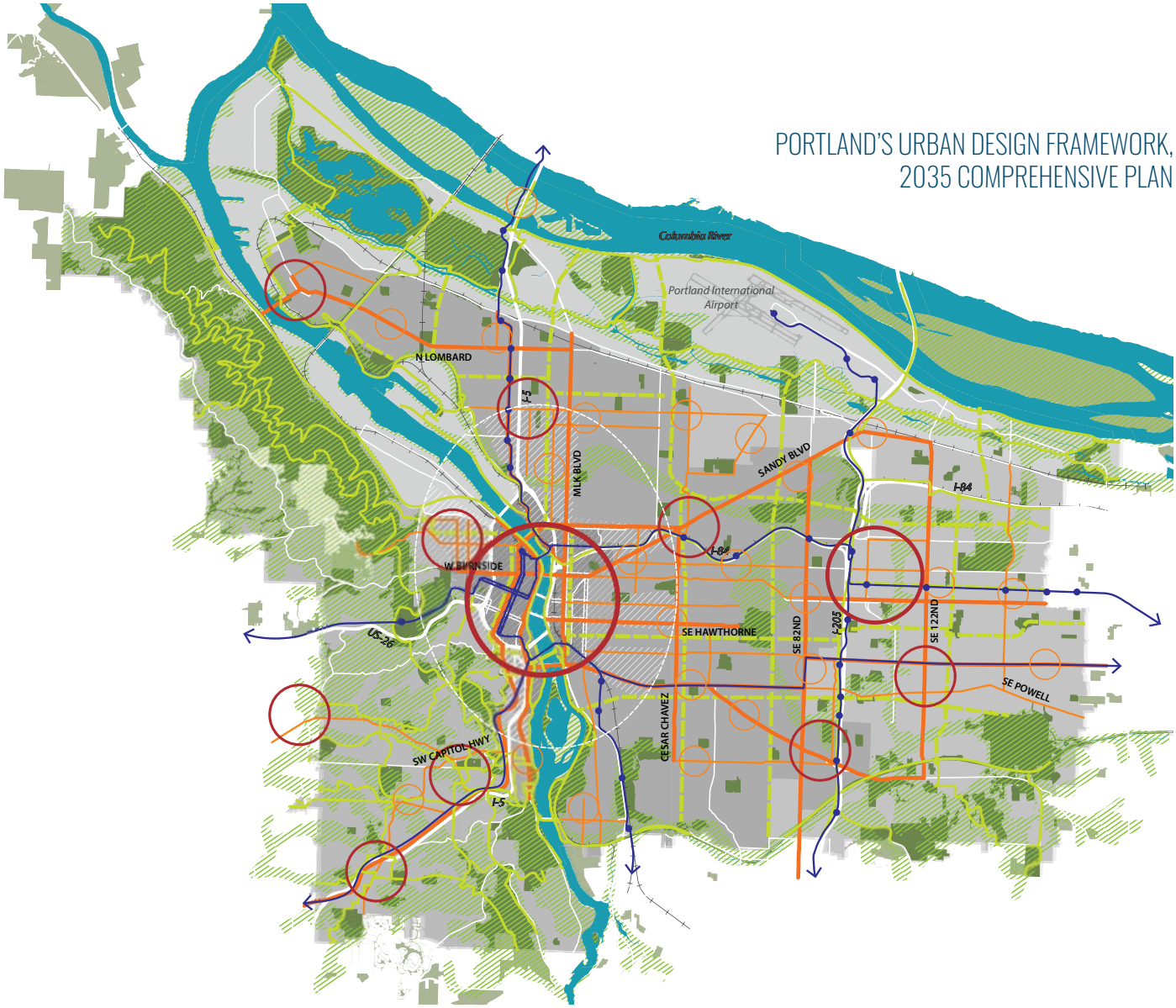
Natural resources make up much of Portland's land area, providing safe, healthy places for migratory fish and wildlife species to live in and move through the city. Urban habitats encompass the city's most valuable and unique natural features – the rivers, streams, and sloughs, wetlands, buttes, and large forested areas and parks. Other urban habitats are woven throughout the built environment, including street and yard trees, ecoroofs, landscaping, parks, trails, and bridges – which provide opportunities for wildlife and maintain Portland's distinctive natural character.

The UDF guides new growth to Centers, Corridors, and Transit Station areas, where people can access jobs, housing options, services, and transit connections. These areas reflect an aspirational future where new development should respond to the opportunity presented by its location within major areas of growth and natural setting.

To ensure that these areas function successfully and foster strong and inclusive communities, new development should be designed to support the desired character of growing centers, corridors, and transit stations, while building on positive physical and natural characteristics that are rooted in the city's Pattern Areas.

PATTERN AREAS

Portland's pattern areas are a formal acknowledgment that the city's natural and built landscapes aren't all the same. They have distinct characteristics that have been influenced by both the natural environment and how or when these parts of the city were developed. Pattern areas are described in detail in Guideline 01.



CENTERS
- Central City
- Gateway Regional Center
- Town Centers
- Neighborhood Centers
- Inner Ring Districts

CORRIDORS
- Civic Corridors
- Neighborhood Corridors
- High Capacity Transit
- Rail

CITY GREENWAYS
- Enhanced Greenway Corridors
- Trails (Existing & Proposed)

URBAN HABITAT CORRIDORS
- Parks & Open Spaces
- Habitat Corridor
- Waterbodies

PATTERN AREAS
- Central City
- Inner Neighborhoods
- Western Neighborhoods
- Eastern Neighborhoods
- Rivers

WHERE IS THE URBAN DESIGN FRAMEWORK?

Find site-specific UDF components online: www.portlandmaps.com/bps/designguidelines

CENTERS, CORRIDORS, TRANSIT STATION AREAS

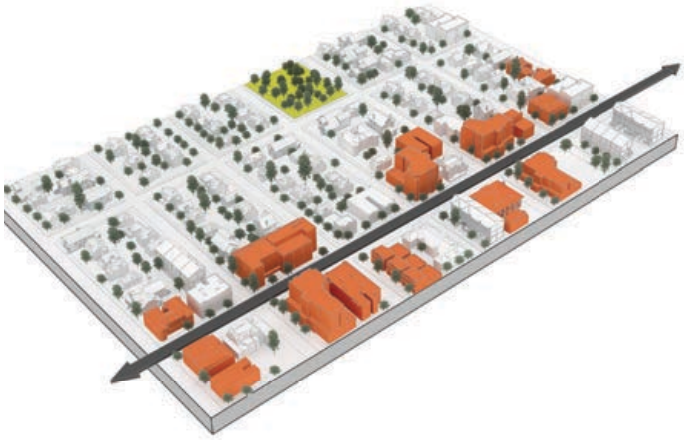
Centers, Corridors, and Transit Station Areas are poised for growth. They will become multi-functional places that support working, living, and shopping, and they will serve a diversity of people.

Today they represent a broad spectrum of places in transition. On one end of the spectrum, many areas are defined by a pattern and rhythm of compact buildings and active streetscapes. On the other end are pockets of largely underdeveloped or vacant sites, where new development has a role in creating and activating vibrant places supported by transit.

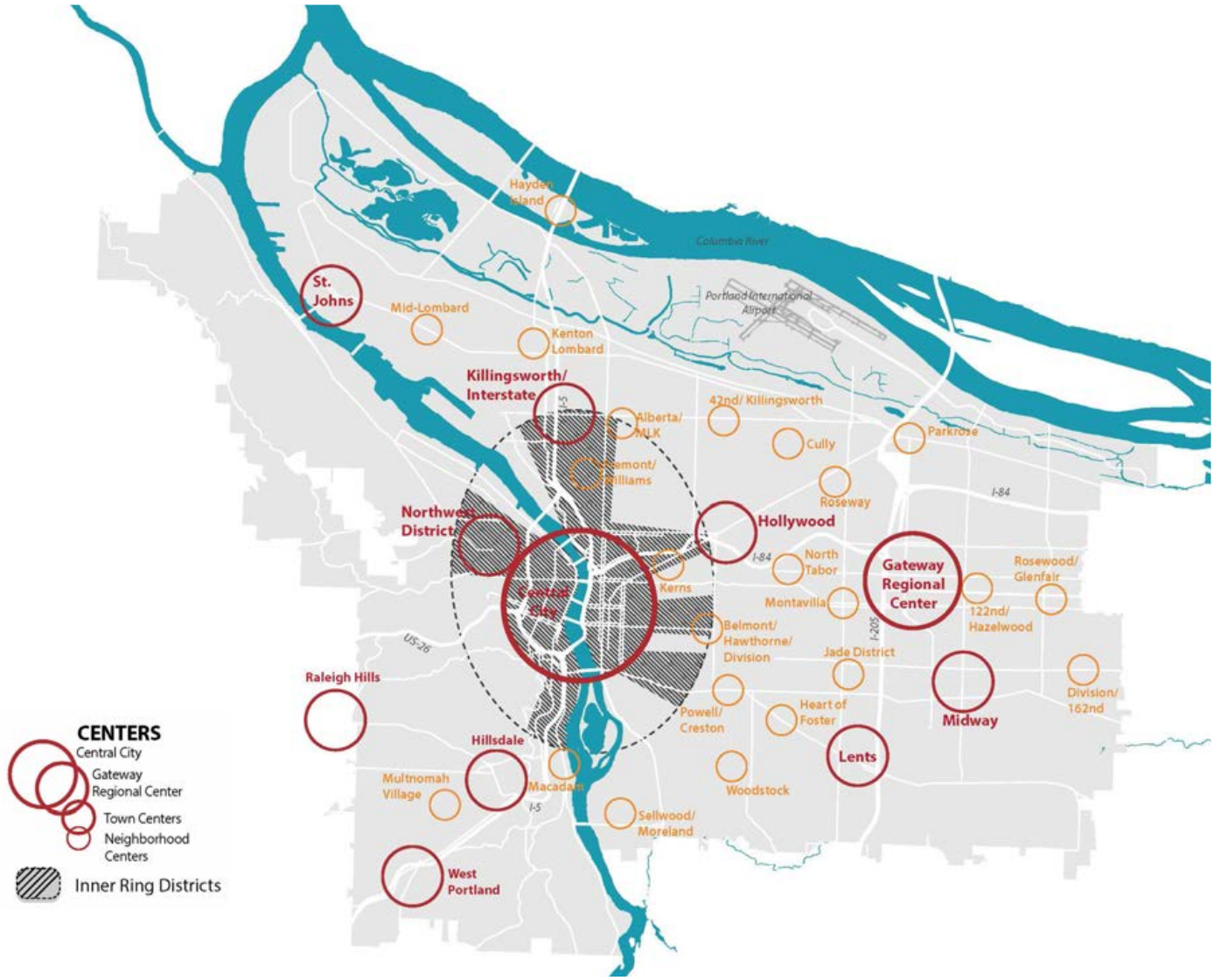
Central City
(these guidelines do not apply; included for scale)

Gateway Regional Center
(these guidelines do not apply; included for scale)

Town Center



Neighborhood Center



CENTERS

Centers are envisioned to develop as the foundations that serve complete neighborhoods. They can include larger-scale buildings located close to high-capacity transit stations or near the Central City (Inner Ring Districts).

Town Centers anchored by high-employment and institutional uses will be supported with mid-rise development (five to seven stories or greater, depending on geography) that features a wide range of community services, commercial options, and housing.

Within Town Centers, development should provide links to and amenities for the region's high-capacity transit system. Open spaces such as plazas created by new development should support business operations, social interaction, gathering, waiting, and augmenting large community-focused events and activities.

Neighborhood Centers are opportunities for low-rise commercial and residential development (four to five stories or greater, depending on geography), which feature focused businesses and housing options. Development should provide neighborhood amenities and places that encourage social activity and serve local transit and bicycle networks.

CORRIDORS

Corridors are areas of growth and redevelopment potential along busy, active streets. They define and are supported by surrounding neighborhoods. Important transportation functions of these corridors should be balanced with their roles in supporting businesses and residential livability with tree canopy and landscaped areas. The largest places of focused activity and density along corridors are designated as centers.

Development along **Civic Corridors** is intended to be up to mid-rise in scale (five to seven stories), with lower scale generally more appropriate in locations away from the Central City or transit stations.

Development along Civic Corridors should support the city's busiest, widest, and most prominent streets with design approaches that contribute to a pedestrian-friendly environment. Development should allow for placement of abundant trees and high-quality landscaping that distinguish and beautify Civic Corridors, offsetting the impacts of their wide rights-of-way. New buildings along corridors should incorporate green infrastructure, cleaning and soaking up stormwater runoff and minimizing urban heat island effects, while providing places to live, work, and gather.

With high levels of traffic and pedestrian activity, new buildings along Civic Corridors should support programming, layout, and designs that improve livability for building users.

Neighborhood Corridors are narrower main streets that will include a mix of commercial and higher-density housing development. Development along Neighborhood Corridors should strive to support neighborhood business districts and provide housing options close to local services. New buildings should continue a compact urban form with amenities that enhance walkability and connectedness to adjacent residential areas and transit lines.

TRANSIT STATION AREAS

Development at Transit Station Areas should offer pedestrian- and bicycle-friendly access to transit, augmented with places to sit, wait, and interact.

Within **Center Transit Station Areas**, development should provide high-density concentrations of housing and commercial uses that maximize the ability of residents to live close to both high-quality transit and commercial services.

Within **Transit Neighborhood Station Areas**, development should include mixed-income residential development and supportive commercial services close to transit neighborhood stations. Transit neighborhood stations serve mixed-use areas that are not in major centers.

Within **Employment Station Areas**, development should support the concentrations of jobs and employment-focused areas.

Within **Destination Station Areas**, development should enhance connections between major destinations and transit facilities, strengthening the role of these areas as places of focused activity.

A GUIDE TO THE DOCUMENT

Each design guideline addresses an important design topic and has the same structural components.

THE GUIDELINE PAGES:

Design Guideline serves as the approval criteria.

04 DESIGN THE **SIDEWALK LEVEL OF BUILDINGS** TO BE ACTIVE AND HUMAN-SCALED.

Northwest District, Location

BACKGROUND

A strong public realm is framed by a built environment that supports and feels comfortable to all users, especially our most vulnerable populations – people with disabilities, youth, and historically marginalized people. Cities designed for people depend on the success of a welcoming and active streetscape, and ground floor architecture should contribute to this space.

Though people arrive in Portland's busiest centers, corridors, and transit stations by many different modes, they are on foot or using a mobility device at either end of their destination, making the sidewalk level of a building its most important contribution to people's experience in these areas.

In addition, the sidewalk level is the most directly accessible to the public, so this portion of the building should especially be designed to enrich public life with active ground floors that are visible, attractive, inviting, and interesting at the human-scale. Activity and vibrancy at the sidewalk level ensures that Portland's densest areas will flourish because they beckon people to experience and enjoy them.

Successful commercial ground floors are active, visually accessible and appealing from the outside. They provide large storefront windows, interesting signage, multiple entries, outdoor seating, and visual displays. Ground floors should be tall and full of light and air, welcoming passersby as an extension of the public sidewalk, facilitating movement and interaction between people.

Corner intersections and building entries, with their high visibility and foot traffic volumes, should be prominent and considered prime locations for shifts in massing and features that welcome pedestrians along the street, such as generous awnings, signage and lighting. These features should be integrated into the design of the building with

34 RECOMMENDED DRAFT PORTLAND CITYWIDE DESIGN GUIDELINES NOVEMBER 2020

04

the highest levels of design attention and texture where people will be entering and exiting.

Building facades need to reinforce the human scale of the public realm through articulation and depth at the boundaries of public and private spaces. Weather protection at main entrances are necessary for pedestrians as well as for people entering and exiting the buildings. The provision of ample upper story windows should contribute to the public realm's safety, activity and visibility. Architectural detailing along building facades should include rich spatial layering, for interest and texture that enhances the public realm and streetscape experience. Blank walls on the street-facing facades should be avoided. Public art, when mitigating blank walls, should play a role in activating the sidewalk through curiosity, vibrancy or storytelling.

Building projections should limit intrusion into the right-of-way, avoiding deep, heavy bays that dominate the ground floor plane. Oriel windows should be limited in use, and where they are provided, they should contribute to the rhythm of the architecture and not detract from the public realm. Balconies should invite and provide permeability for, not detract from, street trees and urban canopy to spread across the sidewalk. They should contribute to the social interaction of the public realm by providing ample outdoor room to encourage eyes on the street.

Residential ground floors also have a role in an active public realm. They can contribute to the vibrant streetscape with graceful transitions from private to public space using stoops, porches, or buffered setbacks with layers of landscaping and semi-private spaces. The programming of ground floor residential buildings should provide more "public" rooms, to avoid privacy issues between residents and passers-by. The placement of bedrooms on the street-facing façade should be avoided. On upper stories, windows offer eyes on the street, interaction, and visual interest.

Along trails, river, and greenway, windows and balconies contribute to create a safe and successful trail experience for all users. Entrances along the greenway setbacks should include a buffer and transition from public right-of-way to semi-private space and private entries and not a direct connection to the greenway. Lighting along the greenway should be downcast to protect wildlife.

Awnings protect passers-by from rain and create a sense of entry.

Residential stoops provide separation from the sidewalk and allow eyes on the street.

Tall ground floors allow light, air, and visibility into shops and businesses.

DESIGN APPROACHES

GROUND FLOOR HEIGHTS
Designing buildings with taller, more adaptable ground floors

MULTIPLE ENTRIES AND WINDOWS
Offering more than one entrance along the ground floors of buildings to provide "eyes on the street" and avoid blank expanses of walls

WEATHER PROTECTION
Providing protection from wind, rain, and sun

LIGHTING
Enhancing safety and visibility for pedestrians and highlighting special building features

RESIDENTIAL SETBACKS
Creating soft transitions while separating private spaces from public spaces

NOVEMBER 2020 RECOMMENDED DRAFT PORTLAND CITYWIDE DESIGN GUIDELINES 35

Background
Outlines why the guideline is important. The beginning paragraphs within the grey box describe the rationale, and the subsequent paragraphs describe what specific circumstances and issues the guideline addresses. This section is the design intent of the approval criteria.

Diagram
Supports the Background statement and illustrates potential design approaches.

Design Approaches
Provide examples of ways to meet the guideline. These approaches function as an extension of the Background and are not intended to be used as a checklist of recommended solutions. Other approaches not listed may also be used. On balance, the design approach(es) employed in the proposal should meet the design guideline.

THE EXAMPLE PAGES:

04 Design the **sidewalk level of buildings** to be active and human-scaled.

THIS GUIDELINE MAY BE ACCOMPLISHED BY...

A

Designing covered entries, signage, seating, and glazing details that contribute to interest and activity at the human-scale.
Alberta, *NE Alberta and NE 21st*

B

Including wide, flexible openings. This restaurant's large bay of windows transforms to allow an expansion of seating during warmer, sunnier months, creating a versatile, active public realm.
Pearl, *NW Everett and NW9th*

C

Activating a corner with a welcoming entry, weather protection, and seating.
Ladd's Addition, *SE Ladd and SE Division*

D

Incorporating distinctive paving patterns, landscaping, artwork, and large entry canopies. Creating an extension of the sidewalk contributes to more interaction among patrons and passersby.
Northwest District, *NW Quimby and NW 22nd*

36 RECOMMENDED DRAFT PORTLAND CITYWIDE DESIGN GUIDELINES NOVEMBER 2020

04

THIS GUIDELINE MAY BE ACCOMPLISHED BY...

E

Featuring multiple windows and doors, signage, and room for informal retail displays and planters.
Alberta, *NE Alberta and NE 18th*

F

Locating active uses directly adjacent to the public sidewalk. Providing covered seating, string lights, and multiple windows and entries within the setback creates an active streetscape.
Division, *SE Division and SE 30th*

G

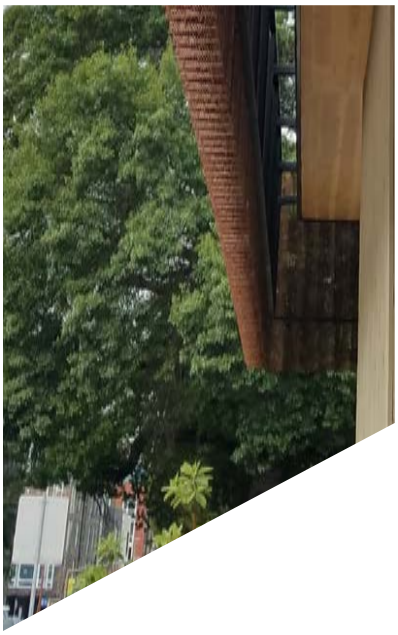
Buffering ground floor residential units with generously landscaped planters to provide privacy and safety for residents. Multiple layers softens the street edge and can allow for a more pleasant streetscape.
Williams, *N Williams and N Mason*

H

Offering signage, tall ground floors, and weather protection for pedestrians. High levels of visual permeability on the ground floors make sidewalks feel safe and inviting.
Division, *SE Division and SE 26th*

NOVEMBER 2020 RECOMMENDED DRAFT PORTLAND CITYWIDE DESIGN GUIDELINES 37

"This Guideline May be Accomplished by..." pages
Include photographic examples and written descriptions of projects that successfully meet the guideline being addressed. The photographs are identified by the names of their center location or neighborhood and nearest intersection.



PREAMBLE:
USING THE DESIGN GUIDELINES

Design guidelines are mandatory approval criteria that must be met as part of design review. They also intend to serve as parameters for discussion and deliberation.

During the design review process, **applicants** are responsible for explaining, in their application, how their proposed design meets each guideline.

The **public** is encouraged to weigh in on the proposed design, based on the guidelines.

Decision-makers must tie their comments and responses, and ultimately their decision, to the guidelines. Discussion and deliberation should be organized around and focused on whether the proposal meets the guideline or does not meet the guideline.

Proposals that meet all the applicable guidelines will be approved. Proposals that do not meet all of the applicable guidelines will be denied.

If the decision-maker approves the proposed design, they may add conditions to their approval, which require revisions to the design to ensure the proposal's compliance with the guidelines.

III. PORTLAND CITYWIDE DESIGN GUIDELINES

01 BUILD ON THE **CHARACTER, LOCAL IDENTITY, AND ASPIRATION** OF THE PLACE.

Heart of Foster, *SE Foster and SE 73rd*

BACKGROUND

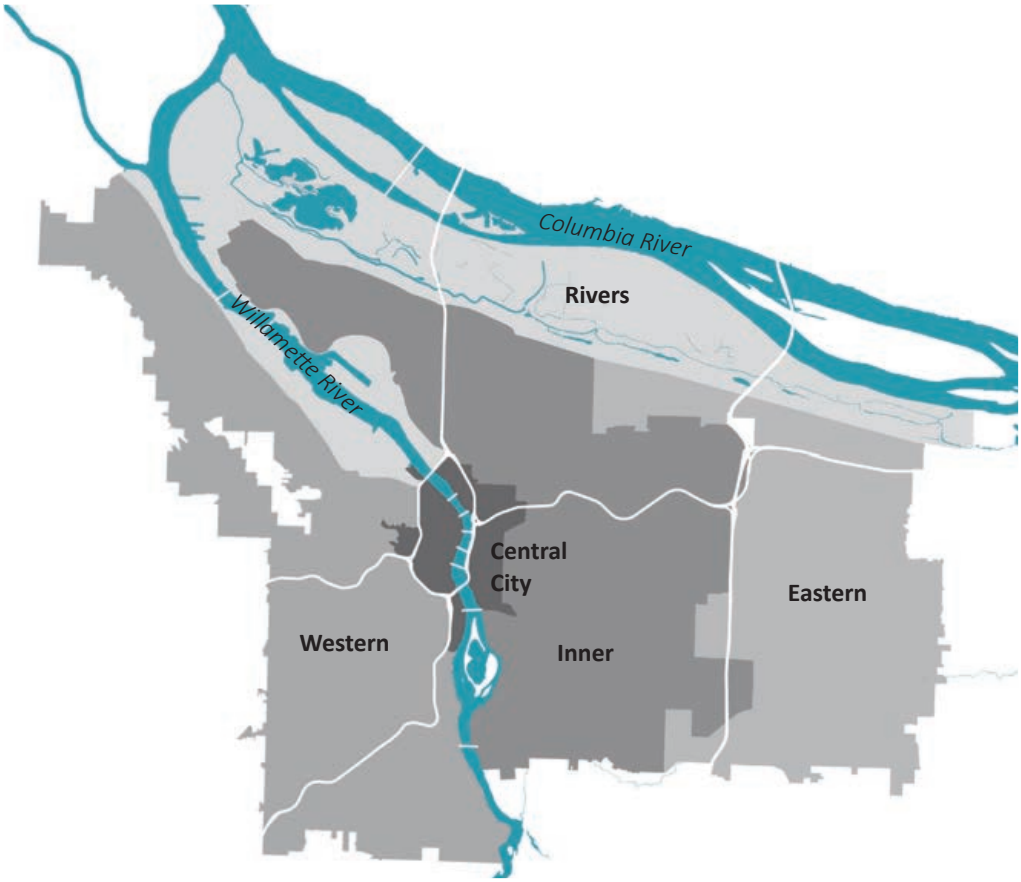
Development should complement the place it inhabits. Place refers to an area's qualitative physical characteristics, such as the natural and built environment, and to an area's social characteristics, such as the histories, cultures, and needs of the communities it serves.

By responding to place, development in Portland can represent and support the diversity of its neighborhoods and the people who will continue to be a part of its evolution.

Portland's pattern areas provide a basis for understanding the context of the city's past, present and future and the characteristics and aspirations of distinct and unique places. Building on the local identity of a pattern area is also an opportunity to engage the community in discussion about the contributions a development makes to the neighborhood, and a precaution against increasing uniformity and loss of authenticity across the city. Over time, the changing face of new development should augment the character and nature of a place rather than deplete it.

At the citywide scale, the Urban Design Framework described in the Introduction gives a blueprint for future development in areas across the city. Development should contribute to the future aspiration outlined in the Urban Design Framework, as well as the context of the area's historic and cultural past and the character of its present. Pattern areas should be a starting place for applicants in defining the character, local identity and aspiration.

The pattern areas are described on the following pages. The UDF also gives a framework for anticipated growth within centers, corridors, and transit station areas, which are described in the Introduction. These layers all serve to guide future development.



Portland's pattern areas each have unique physical, social, cultural, and environmental qualities that differentiate them and help to define their sense of place. The following descriptions identify key positive characteristics that are related to future development and design priorities in these areas.

The **Western Neighborhoods** are distinguished by the terrain of Portland's west hills and a network of trails, tree-covered forests, and streams.

In Western Neighborhoods, new development should minimize impacts on the area's streams and slopes with sensitivity to the site's topography. It should preserve and enhance the area's surface water, wetlands, habitat areas, and tree canopy. New development should provide connections to pedestrian trails and pathways.

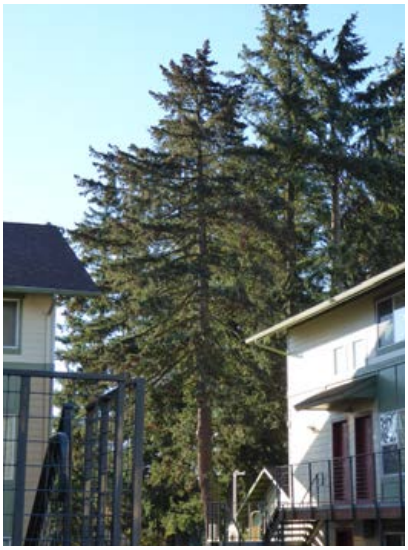
Building forms can take advantage of opportunities provided by irregular spaces carved from curvilinear streets, changes in topography, and site vistas by providing places that stitch together habitat and places for viewing and gathering. While moving toward a more compact, less auto-oriented urban form, architecture can take cues from prevailing post-war language found in Western centers and along corridors and consider features such as low-slung pitched roofs, landscaped or set-back frontages, and courtyard entries and vista points that are shaped to fit the topography.

01 Build on the **character local identity, and aspiration** of the place.

The **Inner Neighborhoods** were platted and developed during the streetcar era of the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

Within Inner Neighborhoods, new development should enhance the pattern of street-oriented buildings along Civic and Neighborhood Corridors. Many centers and corridors within the Inner Neighborhoods have a historic mixed-use urban pattern centered along vibrant main streets. The repetition of multiple doors, transom windows, prominent entrances, and the texture of materials and signage have established a fine-grained design vocabulary. New development can complement the form and texture of existing older buildings and patterns while adding density.

Large sites in Inner Neighborhoods should break up building massing, allow multiple connections and entries, and support a strong, active street wall. New development should reinforce Portland's commitment to active transportation and transit ridership through bicycle amenities and stopping and waiting areas.



Portland's **Eastern Neighborhoods** feature a diverse range of built and natural landscapes. Many structures in the Eastern Neighborhoods were developed after World War II, and most of this area was annexed into the City of Portland in the 1980s and 1990s.

Eastern Neighborhood development can build on positive aspects of the area's large blocks while adding much needed connectivity and gathering spaces. Grouping buildings on deep lots can maximize community spaces and encourage placemaking. At the same time, development should create mid-block connections that make it easier for people to access community destinations.

New development should preserve and enhance groves of coniferous trees, protecting the area's forests, streams, and wetlands. Site and building design should strengthen views of the area's skyline of buttes.

Along the **Rivers**, Native Americans settled at the confluence of the Willamette and Columbia because it offered them plentiful food, natural resources, and critically important trade and transportation opportunities. The rivers, as Portland's initial and most powerful form-giving features, continue to define and shape the city today.

New development should recognize, enhance, and protect the historic and multi-cultural significance of the Willamette and Columbia Rivers. Access to the rivers should be strengthened and made visible and prominent, repairing connections between neighborhoods that have been cut off from the rivers and public trails.

Development within the Rivers pattern area should enhance the rivers' ecological roles as locally and regionally significant habitat for fish and wildlife.

Significant or iconic community structures and spaces, such as historic or cultural resources, civic amenities, natural areas, bridges, and boundaries should be acknowledged. Development can be responsive to these features with inclusive and inviting design, providing opportunities for people to recognize and experience nearby community assets. Potential approaches may include pocket plazas for seating, viewing, and gathering; wayfinding to help locate points of interest; and interpretive signage or art.

References to local character-defining architectural features should be incorporated in development. Integrating materials, building proportions, setbacks, entry features, and architectural details and patterns found within the area into new development and building alterations acknowledges and reinforces the local context. If alterations, additions, or new buildings result in the loss of these character-defining features, new development should provide the same level of texture and quality.

A site's ecological context should be recognized. Designs should reintroduce nature into the city and incorporate vegetation and stormwater features that enhance the distinctive beauty of Portland's neighborhoods, respond to the local climate, and improve watershed health. Responsive site planning maintains habitat corridors, increases tree canopy, and adds green spaces as appropriate to the needs and identity of each place.

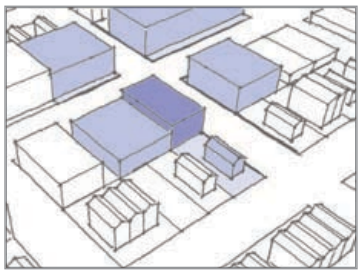
How are character and local identity defined?

Applicants, decision-makers, and the public can rely on several sources to draw inspiration, information and guidance. These sources should be balanced with community voices that engage throughout the design process.

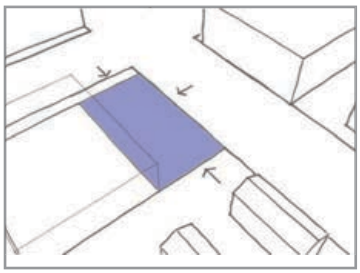
- **Character Statement.** Where provided, read the Character Statement of the area offered in the Appendix and respond to the desired current and future local identity and character.
- **Urban Design Framework (UDF).** Look up the site's applicable layers on the UDF, as described in the Introduction and within this guideline. Respond to the aspirations for growth and development and the pattern area context.

  www.portlandmaps.com/bps/designguidelines
- **Site and area observations.** Study the natural and built environment of the area. How is it intended to grow and what key characteristics can be integrated into new development?
- **Adopted City policies and plans.** Read place-specific characteristics and features previously identified and adopted by the City. (See *2035 Comprehensive Plan* Policy 1.19c and Figure 1-2, Area-Specific Plans Adopted by Ordinance Prior to May 24, 2018)
- **Designated historic and natural resources.** Identify designated historic resources and natural resources in close proximity.

Context Design Guidelines telescope in scale from larger context to smaller. This design guideline addresses community and neighborhood context.



Adjacent context is addressed in Guideline 02



Site-specific context is addressed in Guideline 03

DESIGN APPROACHES

COMMUNITY
Relating to the local community's identity, history, and cultural values and places

ARCHITECTURE
Taking cues from desired character of existing architecture

NATURE
Reflecting and enhancing local natural resources such as rivers, streams, buttes and vegetation

01 Build on the **character local identity, and aspiration** of the place.

THIS GUIDELINE MAY BE ACCOMPLISHED BY...

A

Orienting a building's mass and landscaping to enhance natural topography.
Terwilliger, *SW Barbur and SW Hooker*

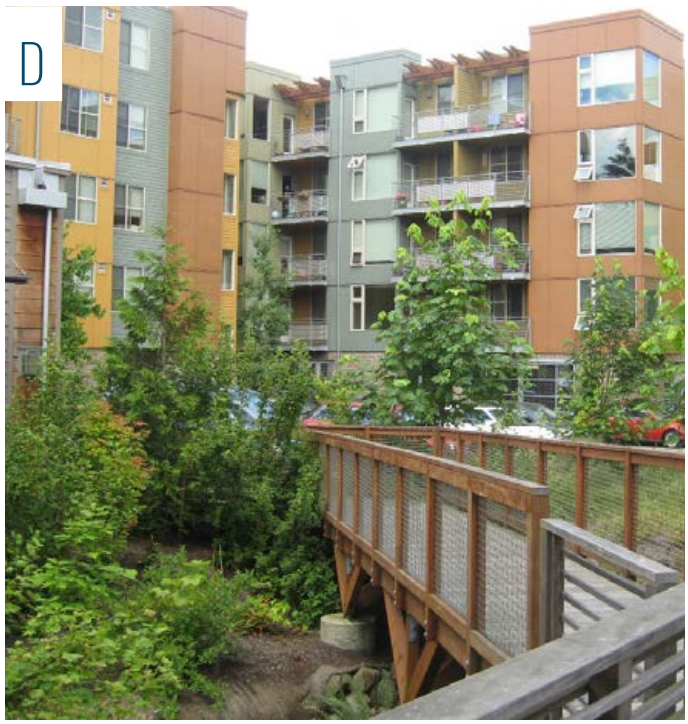
B

Transforming a Center Transit Station Area and linear superblock to provide a prominent street wall along the transit line, broken up with a series of outdoor spaces and ground floor retail.
Hazelwood, *NE 122nd and E Burnside*

C

Utilizing landscaped setbacks and entry sequences that mimic nearby residential patterns.
Alberta, *NE Alberta and NE 26th Ave*

D



Designing the site to respond to the ecology and beauty of the place. This project uncovered and restored Tryon Creek's headwaters, providing a connection to the area's natural landscape.
Multnomah Village, *SW 30th and SW Marigold*

THIS GUIDELINE MAY BE ACCOMPLISHED BY...

E

Evoking early streetcar architecture forms and patterns within Inner Neighborhood Centers and along Neighborhood Corridors.
Alberta, *NE Alberta and NE 19th*

F

Designing buildings that integrate topography. This buildings retaining walls support sitting and pausing within Western Neighborhood centers.
Hillsdale, *SW Sunset Blvd and SW Dewitt*

G

Featuring historic architectural remnants, such as this series of paintings on pillars of the old Lovejoy Ramp, to display artwork and celebrate a period in the district's history.
Pearl, *NW 10th and NW Flanders*

H

Transforming Civic Corridors into green, lush pedestrian-oriented streetscapes. This frontage sets back and devotes space for a double allee of trees to encourage walking on a busy street.
Jade District, *SE 82nd and SE Division*

02 CREATE **POSITIVE RELATIONSHIPS** WITH SURROUNDINGS.

Sellwood/Moreland, *SE Milwaukie and SE Claybourne*

BACKGROUND

New development must respond to its surroundings, both abutting sites and sites located directly across the street. Designers should consider how to harmoniously relate to sites with lasting qualities and characteristics, such as neighboring designated historic landmarks, historic resources, natural resources, open spaces, and trails. In addition, new development should balance its response to lower-density zoning, recognizing that the city will grow and evolve over time.

New Development should forge positive relationships with neighboring sites through conscientious massing, transitions, and connections. On large projects, building scale should respond to adjacent conditions. Smaller contextual responses include site edge treatments such as buffering and landscaping, and architectural features such as placement of openings and ornamental details.

New development adjacent to designated historic landmarks or historic districts should be designed thoughtfully and deferentially towards its neighbors. Responsive urban form approaches include stepping down toward the landmark height or allowing a wide berth through setbacks or a pocket plaza if the landmark is a standalone building, such as a church or theater. Appropriate architectural responses to neighboring landmarks include continuity of setbacks and cornice lines; matching ground floor heights; repetition of bay and window rhythms; and complementary materials, architectural features, or details.

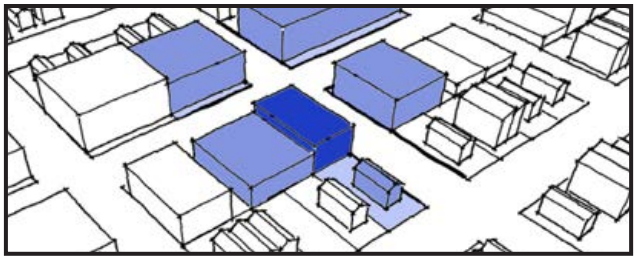
Infill development within Portland's historic main street blocks should reinforce a vibrant street wall: maintaining consistent setbacks, cultivating active ground floor uses, and continuing patterns of entries, windows, and awnings. While new infill may result in a taller building than its neighbors, it should acknowledge adjacent historic resources, even while materials and architectural styles may be very different.

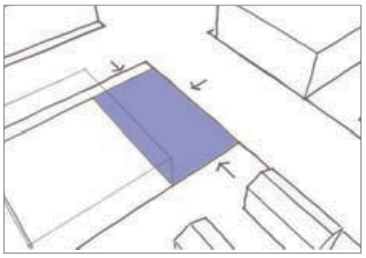
New development adjacent to pedestrian pathways, trails and open spaces should provide visual and physical connections to improve local mobility. Setbacks should offer pathways, trails and open spaces ample space and buffering. Windows and openings should face adjacent open spaces and trails.

Where new intense uses and forms abut lower-density zoning, development should be designed to carefully consider the relationships of building footprints and volumes through massing, proportions, and building setbacks. Well-sited outdoor spaces, generous landscaping, porches, and multiple housing unit entries can effectively ease transitions between new, denser development and existing, less dense development. Architecturally, the placement of windows, lighting, entries, utilities, and services should avoid negative conflicts with neighboring residential uses.

Context Design Guidelines telescope in scale from larger context to smaller. This design guideline addresses adjacent context.

Community and neighborhood context is addressed in Guideline 01





Site-specific context is addressed in Guideline 02

DESIGN APPROACHES

BUILDING MASSING
Developing effective placement and proportion of building massing toward adjacent lower-scale development and residential uses

STREET WALL
Maintaining a vibrant street wall with continuous storefronts along historic main streets

CONNECTIVITY
Creating visual and physical links to adjacent pedestrian pathways and neighboring open spaces

ADJACENT HISTORIC LANDMARKS
Deferring to the neighboring historic landmark through massing and urban form

02 Create **positive relationships** with surroundings.

THIS GUIDELINE MAY BE ACCOMPLISHED BY...

A

Scaling building mass to respond to varied context by increasing height and bulk at a prominent corner, while stepping down height and mass adjacent to a low density residential zone.
Williams, *N Williams and N Beech*

B

Siting open spaces to take advantage of views to local points of interest. This courtyard offers a glimpse of the historic landmark tower.
Old Town/Chinatown, *NW Broadway and NW Glisan*

C

Providing landscaping and canopy against an adjacent blank wall. This podium courtyard softens the edge and offers a wide buffer along its adjacent neighbor.
West End, *SW Main and SW 11th*

D

Using scale and setbacks to defer to an adjacent historic resource. This new community space is a subtle design that sits further back and uses muted materials and a lower roofline as a response to its neighbor.
Martin Luther King Jr., *NE 6th and NE Prescott*

THIS GUIDELINE MAY BE ACCOMPLISHED BY...

E

Aligning belt courses and window heights. This newer building on the left uses the same vocabulary as its historic neighbor: materials, repetition of bays and windows, and continuity of setbacks.
Old Town/Chinatown, *SW 3rd and SW Ash*

F

Intentionally connecting open spaces to open spaces. The central gathering area between two office buildings leads across the street to more open space and a trail that eventually connects to the river.
Pearl, *NW Front and NW 17th*

G

Breaking up building massing where it is adjacent to lower density residential to reduce the contrast between scales in height.
Mississippi, *N Albina and N Blandena*

H

Reinforcing neighboring historic structures through the use of physical cues and architectural gestures, such as matching building heights and setbacks along street edges.
Williams, *N Vancouver and N Mason*

03 INTEGRATE AND ENHANCE **ON-SITE FEATURES AND OPPORTUNITIES** TO CONTRIBUTE TO A LOCATION'S UNIQUENESS.

Hillsdale, *SW Capitol Highway and SW 26th*

BACKGROUND

Building on context includes seeking and drawing inspiration from the existing conditions of the development site itself. A project's architecture and programming should respond to natural features, physical features, and historical features of the site, where applicable.

Natural features include topography, views, sightlines, solar and wind orientation, trees and vegetation. These features add value and should be woven into the site and building design.

Physical features refer to site dimensions, boundary limitations, and any structures or buildings that will remain with redevelopment. Complementary additions to existing older buildings enhance the evolving urban fabric and connect different periods of Portland's history, while moving towards a desired future. Development should build upon and reflect site and building history, passing along the narrative of the site.

Specific responses to natural features include integrating existing trees, vegetated slopes and topography into site design, respecting the natural landform. Streams, wetlands, rocky outcrops, or other geological attributes are rare and important, and incorporating these features not only preserves resources but roots development specifically to the site. Building programming and placement of entries, open areas, windows, and balconies can take advantage of topography,

natural views, and sightlines to community or natural points of interest, historic landmarks, and pedestrian paths.

Physical features of sites and their boundaries may offer unique opportunities to provide vantage points and prominent entries, especially at high-visibility corners or along curving streets. Unusually shaped site boundaries offer space that can be incorporated into the public realm, especially along busy streets where pedestrians desire buffering from moving vehicles.

Site and building renovations should recognize and draw from the architecture of the existing buildings as products of their own time. New additions to older buildings should enhance the existing building's use of scale, proportion, and construction materials and methods, where appropriate.

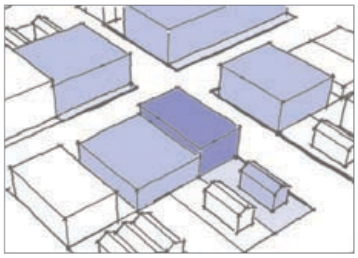
Additions to historic resources not subject to Historic Resource Review require increased levels of design sensitivity. The original structure should be enhanced through continuity of proportions and vertical and horizontal lines within the existing architecture. Additions can take cues from existing rhythms of pilasters, windows, bays, cornices, and spandrels, while expressing newer forms and materials. The building's distinguishing qualities and features should be maintained as a part of the proposed rehabilitation or addition.

Archaeological and historic features of the site can be retained and incorporated, influencing the site layout where possible, to help augment the sense of place and its unique value. When existing buildings or site features are relocated or removed, an applicant should employ the deconstruction and reuse of materials, such as lumber, machinery, stone, or architectural features on or within the development.

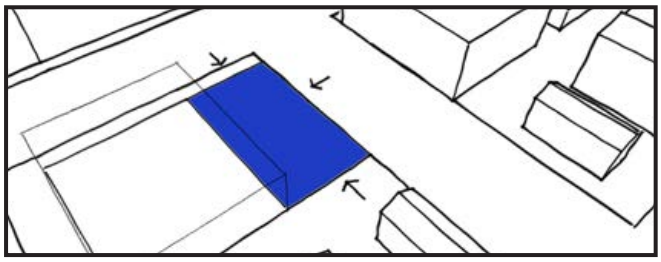
Characteristics identified by the site history and the lived experience of communities, where applicable, should be integrated into site and building design, so that buildings and open spaces may highlight and honor them. In addition to tangible attributes, site-specific social and cultural history can be interwoven into the design of new development through signage, art, and plazas. These features can share knowledge and wisdom of Portland's older and under-represented populations and contribute meaningfully to the place's narrative and its contribution to the city's evolution for future generations.

Context Design Guidelines telescope in scale from larger context to smaller. This design guideline addresses site-specific context.

Community and neighborhood context is addressed in Guideline 01



Adjacent context is addressed in Guideline 02



DESIGN APPROACHES

NATURAL RESOURCES
Minimizing site disturbance and integrating topography and natural resources found on-site

VIEWPOINTS
Integrating views to community points of interest

ON-SITE OLDER BUILDINGS AND HISTORIC RESOURCES
Retaining existing older buildings and historic resources

SOCIAL AND CULTURAL SIGNIFICANCE
Incorporating a site's significant cultural or social history

03 Integrate and enhance **on-site features and opportunities** to contribute to a location's uniqueness.

THIS GUIDELINE MAY BE ACCOMPLISHED BY...

A

Emphasizing the corner through massing shifts. This corner site offers an opportunity to provide a prominent entry and upper level terrace.
Northwest District, *NW 19th and NW Quimby*

B

Maintaining a site's uniqueness by re-purposing architectural elements, such as sculptural neon signage and character defining canopies.
St. Johns, *N Lombard and N Charleston*

C

Creating an addition that references existing architecture. This addition integrates similar materials in its new entry and the new building and connects both with special paving and a shared courtyard.
Alberta, *NE Alberta and NE 18th*

D

Designing the site to retain a grove of Douglas fir trees, preserving multiple benefits, including shade and privacy, and protecting a distinct feature of Portland's natural landscape.
Division Midway, *SE 130th and SE Division*

THIS GUIDELINE MAY BE ACCOMPLISHED BY...

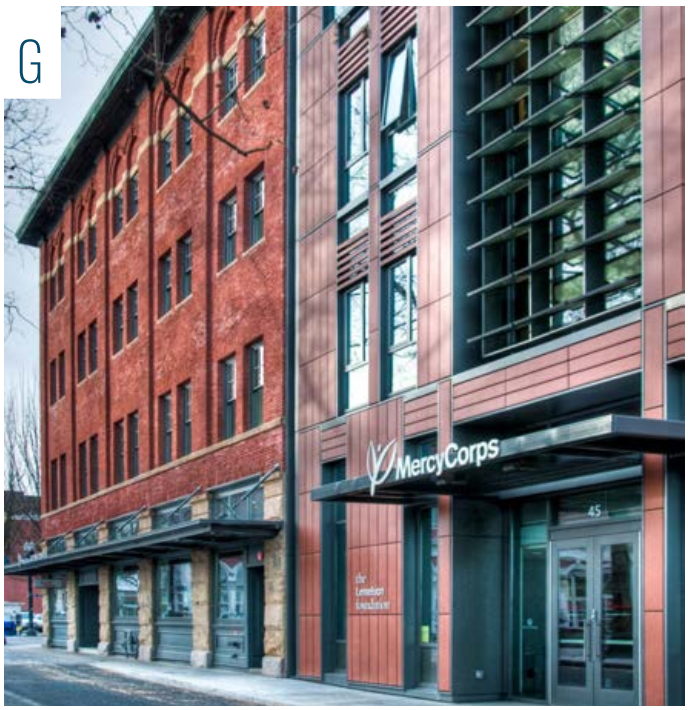
E

Retrofitting existing buildings with new storefront systems, while retaining character-defining details such as brick pilasters and decorative cornice.
Central Eastside, *NE Martin Luther King, Jr. and NE Couch*

F

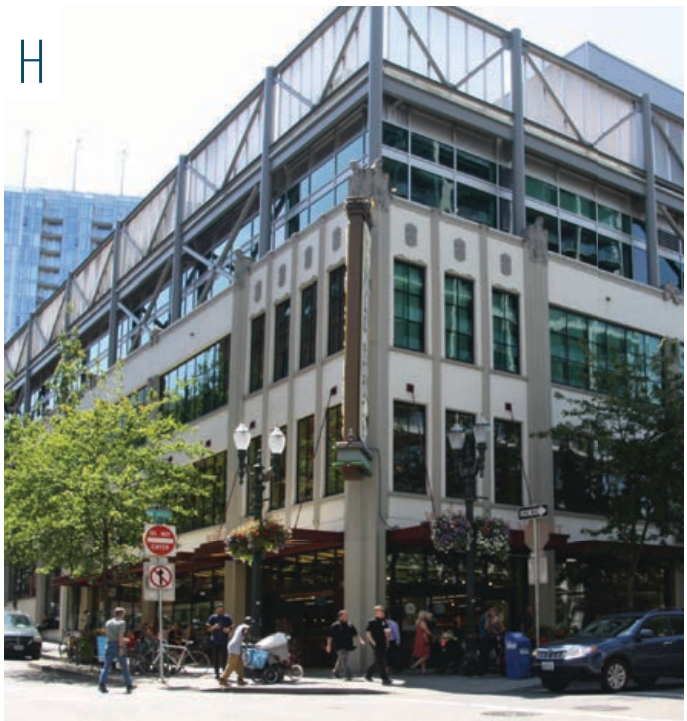
Integrating new development to take advantage of vegetated slopes and topography. Thoughtful placement of building programming can enhance a site's unique natural attributes.
Marquam Hill, *SW US Veterans Hospital Road*

G



Designing additions to historic buildings that continue features and proportions. This addition takes cues from the materials found on the original structure and the rhythm and spacing of building openings.
Old Town/Chinatown, *SW Ankeny and SW Naito*

H



Designing building additions that enhance existing on-site structures. This upper story addition maintains similar proportions and extends vertical lines from the undesignated historic building below.
Pearl, *NW 12th and NE Couch*

04 DESIGN THE **SIDEWALK LEVEL OF BUILDINGS** TO BE ACTIVE AND HUMAN-SCALED.

Northwest District, *Location*

BACKGROUND

A strong public realm is framed by a built environment that supports and feels comfortable to all users, especially our most vulnerable populations – people with disabilities, youth, and historically marginalized people. Cities designed for people depend on the success of a welcoming and active streetscape, and ground floor architecture should contribute to this space.

Though people arrive in Portland's busiest centers, corridors, and transit stations by many different modes, they are on foot or using a mobility device at either end of their destination, making the sidewalk level of a building its most important contribution to people's experience in these areas.

In addition, the sidewalk level is the most directly accessible to the public, so this portion of the building should especially be designed to enrich public life with active ground floors that are visible, attractive, inviting, and interesting at the human-scale. Activity and vibrancy at the sidewalk level ensures that Portland's densest areas will flourish because they beckon people to experience and enjoy them.

Successful commercial ground floors are active, visually accessible and appealing from the outside. They provide large storefront windows, interesting signage, multiple entries, outdoor seating, and visual displays. Ground floors should be tall and full of light and air, welcoming passersby as an extension of the public sidewalk, facilitating movement and interaction between people.

Corner intersections and building entries, with their high visibility and foot traffic volumes, should be prominent and considered prime locations for shifts in massing and features that welcome pedestrians along the street, such as generous awnings, signage and lighting. These features should be integrated into the design of the building with

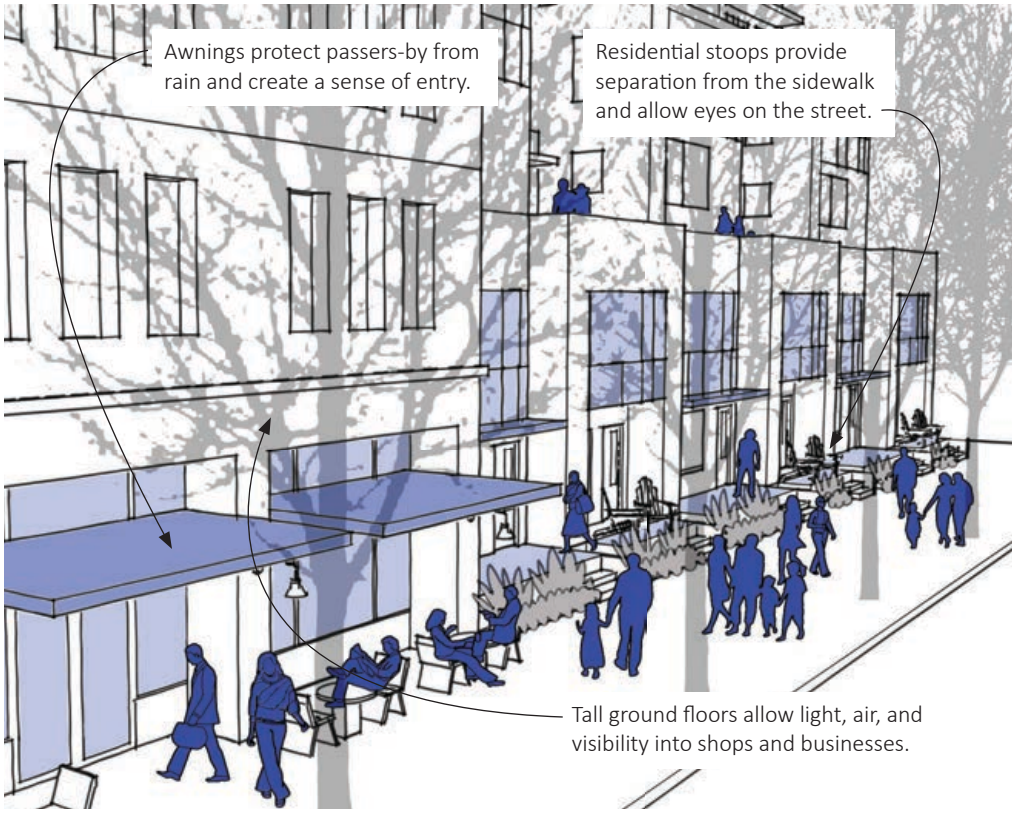
the highest levels of design attention and texture where people will be entering and exiting.

Building facades need to reinforce the human scale of the public realm through articulation and depth at the boundaries of public and private spaces. Weather protection at main entrances are necessary for pedestrians as well as for people entering and exiting the buildings. The provision of ample upper story windows should contribute to the public realm's safety, activity and visibility. Architectural detailing along building facades should include rich spatial layering, for interest and texture that enhances the public realm and streetscape experience. Blank walls on the street-facing facades should be avoided. Public art, when mitigating blank walls, should play a role in activating the sidewalk through curiosity, vibrancy or storytelling.

Building projections should limit intrusion into the right-of-way, avoiding deep, heavy bays that dominate the ground floor plane. Oriel windows should be limited in use, and where they are provided, they should contribute to the rhythm of the architecture and not detract from the public realm. Balconies should invite and provide permeability for, not detract from, street trees and urban canopy to spread across the sidewalk. They should contribute to the social interaction of the public realm by providing ample outdoor room to encourage eyes on the street.

Residential ground floors also have a role in an active public realm. They can contribute to the vibrant streetscape with graceful transitions from private to public space using stoops, porches, or buffered setbacks with layers of landscaping and semi-private spaces. The programming of ground floor residential buildings should provide more "public" rooms, to avoid privacy issues between residents and passers-by. The placement of bedrooms on the street-facing façade should be avoided. On upper stories, windows offer eyes on the street, interaction, and visual interest.

Along trails, river, and greenway, windows and balconies contribute to create a safe and successful trail experience for all users. Entrances along the greenway setbacks should include a buffer and transition from public right-of-way to semi-private space and private entries and not a direct connection to the greenway. Lighting along the greenway should be downcast to protect wildlife.



DESIGN APPROACHES

GROUND FLOOR HEIGHTS
Designing buildings with taller, more adaptable ground floors

MULTIPLE ENTRIES AND WINDOWS
Offering more than one entrance along the ground floors of buildings to provide "eyes on the street" and avoid blank expanses of walls

WEATHER PROTECTION
Providing protection from wind, rain, and sun

LIGHTING
Enhancing safety and visibility for pedestrians and highlighting special building features

RESIDENTIAL SETBACKS
Creating soft transitions while separating private spaces from public spaces

04 Design the **sidewalk level of buildings** to be **active** and human-scaled.

THIS GUIDELINE MAY BE ACCOMPLISHED BY...

A

Designing covered entries, signage, seating, and glazing details that contribute to interest and activity at the human-scale.
Alberta, *NE Alberta and NE 21st*

B

Including wide, flexible openings. This restaurant's large bay of windows transforms to allow an expansion of seating during warmer, sunnier months, creating a versatile, active public realm.
Pearl, *NW Everett and NW9th*

C

Activating a corner with a welcoming entry, weather protection, and seating.
Ladd's Addition, *SE Ladd and SE Division*

D

Incorporating distinctive paving patterns, landscaping, artwork, and large entry canopies. Creating an extension of the sidewalk contributes to more interaction among patrons and passersby.
Northwest District, *NW Quimby and NW 22nd*

THIS GUIDELINE MAY BE ACCOMPLISHED BY...

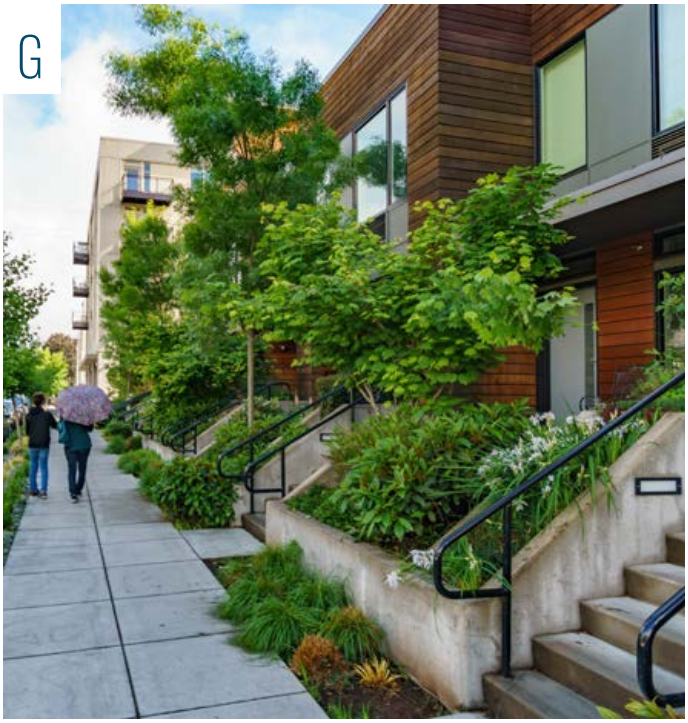
E

Featuring multiple windows and doors, signage, and room for informal retail displays and planters.
Alberta, *NE Alberta and NE 18th*

F

Locating active uses directly adjacent to the public sidewalk. Providing covered seating, string lights, and multiple windows and entries within the setback creates an active streetscape.
Division, *SE Division and SE 30th*

G



Buffering ground floor residential units with generously landscaped planters to provide privacy and safety for residents. Multiple layers softens the street edge and can allow for a more pleasant streetscape.
Williams, *N Williams and N Mason*

H

Offering signage, tall ground floors, and weather protection for pedestrians. High levels of visual permeability on the ground floors make sidewalks feel safe and inviting.
Division, *SE Division and SE 26th*

05 PROVIDE **OPPORTUNITIES TO PAUSE, SIT AND INTERACT.**

Pearl, *NW Front and NW 16th*

BACKGROUND

New buildings should provide room for a diversity of publicly accessible spaces for sitting, resting, eating, socializing, or just experiencing city life. Providing a broad array of intentional spaces allows for freedom of movement. These spaces are important for community-building because they invite social interaction among people from different socioeconomic, generational, and cultural backgrounds.

Successful spaces are those that support a variety of interrelated activities, engage a diverse public, and will result in vibrant streets and sidewalks. Publicly accessible spaces can also provide an important buffer and gradual transition from the vitality and activity of the public realm, to semi-private entries and porches, to the interior spaces where people live and work.

Publicly accessible spaces need enclosure and features appropriate to the scale of the space, including weather protection, changes in grade and materials, and outdoor furniture. Designs should support safety and be well-integrated into the site, with active adjacent building programming and openings. Successful spaces do not feel like leftover spaces, but they are provided intentionally, to offer protection from the street, social gathering, and quiet respite. Trees, landscaping, native planting, and stormwater features create visual and auditory buffering while mitigating the urban heat island effect and weaving beauty and nature into the city. Covered

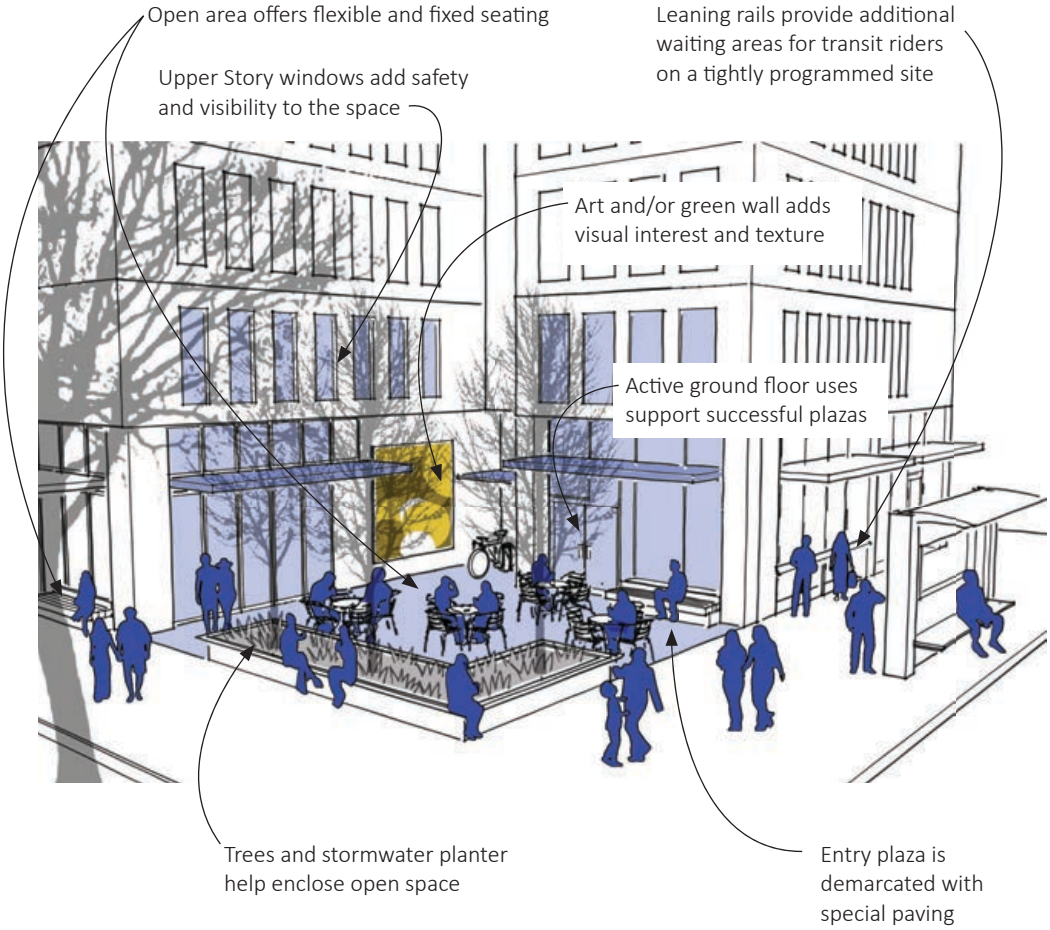
bicycle parking and universally designed seating or leaning rails in front of transit stops should be employed to activate areas for people arriving by different modes.

Within a tightly programmed site, potential approaches include front entry courts or spaces integrated into the building form itself: space tucked within setbacks or articulations in building form, wide windowsills, leaning rails, low retaining walls, landscape planters, or wide steps. Intermittent breaks in urban form should behave as an expansion of the public realm—places for people to share space together—and development should provide seating or points of interest for stopping, viewing, and gathering.

Larger open spaces, such as plazas and entry courtyards, where provided, should welcome engagement by any member of the public. These spaces should not feel privatized or exclusive, but accessible and open, with inclusive amenities such as seating, shade, and points of interest like art or water features.

Along the Willamette River Greenway, ddevelopment should offer places to enjoy wildlife, the river, and the trail. Opportunities to pause, sit, and interact can both contribute to a vibrant waterfront and protect riparian vegetation and the river's ecological functions.

Art or water can play a role within open spaces by providing a visual focal point to inspire conversation and contemplation or to reflect the identity of Portland, its communities, and its history. Water features can encourage interaction with water, provide an immediate calming and cooling effect, and highlight and celebrate the larger geographic setting of the Willamette Valley and its abundance of rain.



DESIGN APPROACHES

SEATING
Providing a variety of seating types for passersby and building users

INTEGRATE BICYCLES
Designing open spaces that accommodate parking for bicycles

ART/WATER
Designing spaces that can integrate opportunities for art, stormwater or water features

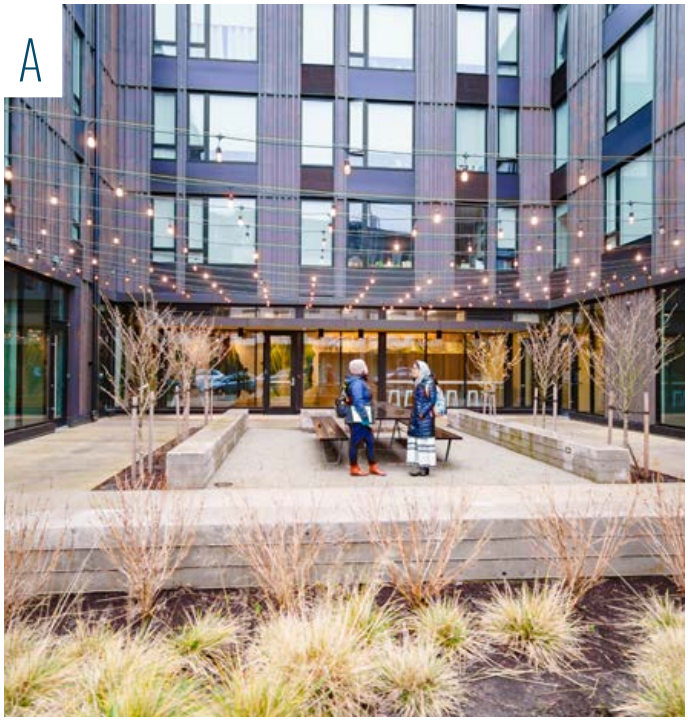
ENCLOSURE
Offering a comfortable buffer and distinction from the public realm

TREES AND LANDSCAPING
Promoting health and wellness by helping to mitigate the effects of urban heat island

05 Provide **opportunities to pause, sit, and interact.**

THIS GUIDELINE MAY BE ACCOMPLISHED BY...

A



Offering an open courtyard with a variety of seating. Formal and informal plantings and overhead string lights offer texture and a human scale, contrasting with the building's walls and glazing.
Lents, *SE Foster and SE 92nd*

B

Creating flexible, multi-functional spaces that consider sunlight and shade. Offering a variety of spaces encourages more use, activity, and interaction.
Northwest District, *NW Savier and NW 22nd*

C

Creating a sense of enclosure with the use of trees and special paving patterns or materials.
Sellwood/Moreland, *SE Milwaukie and SE Claybourne*

D

Incorporating large-scale artwork and a low planter wall for seating. These features help buffer and define the edges of this space along prominent corners while providing visitors a place to gather and rest.
Northwest District, *NW 21st and NW Raleigh*

THIS GUIDELINE MAY BE ACCOMPLISHED BY...

E

Shaping seating opportunities on fully built-out sites. Designing wide sills or leaning rails as seating can have large impacts on expanding the public realm.
Pearl, *NW Overton and NW 11th Ave*

F

Carving out building edges at ground floor entries can help expand the sidewalk and allow for flexible seating and covered areas that provide moments of reflection and respite from a busy streetscape.
Williams, *N Williams and N Mason*

G

Providing pedestrian pathways and internal connections on full block developments. These connections can offer opportunities for seating, landscaping and artwork to create intentional shared spaces.
Pearl, *NW Johnson and NW 13th*

H

Considering the placement and programming of courtyards and other public spaces to ensure they remain well-utilized. Easy access from the sidewalk, multiple entries and active uses can ensure a space succeeds.
Division, *SE Division and SE 33rd*

06 INTEGRATE AND MINIMIZE THE IMPACT OF **PARKING** AND **BUILDING SERVICES.**

Northwest District, *NW Quimby and NW 22nd*

BACKGROUND

Development sites are complex, and they include necessary functional areas and elements that may not directly support the pedestrian environment. Parking, utilities, and other services often must share locations with people, especially when space is limited. These functions and services should be located in ways that minimize their impact on the public realm and do not detract from the overall pedestrian experience.

Where possible, the design of surface parking and vehicle areas should allow multiple functions, such as active play or gathering spaces. The placemaking needs of an active public realm and building occupants should inform how and where parking and services are located.

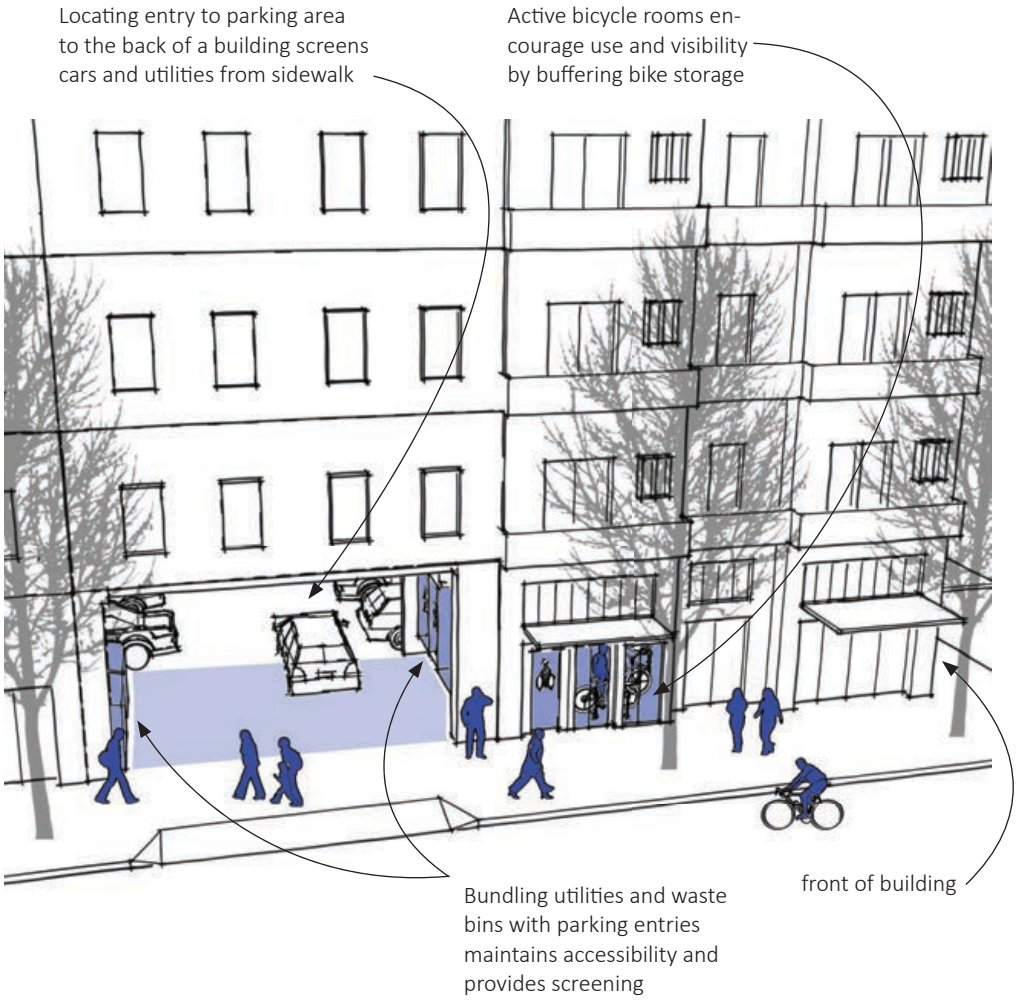
Parking areas should be carefully sited away from the public sidewalk or the greenway trail and screened through landscaping and other buffers. Sites need to optimize spaces dedicated to people, mitigating the physical and visual impacts from cars and spaces dedicated to them. Especially as parking may not be required within new development along a majority of centers and corridors, surface parking should integrate safe alternative functions such as play, seating, and gathering spaces.

Structured and tuck-under parking and on-site loading areas should be integrated into the building form, and their contact with the public realm should be minimized. Above-ground parking should be hidden behind active spaces and uses.

Long-term bicycle parking should also be integrated into the site and building design so that these facilities are easily accessible, visible, safe, and active, by buffering amenities such as bicycle lobbies and repair amenities at the street façade .

Utilities, such as gas meters and mechanical equipment should be tucked away within parking areas, alleys, and building alcoves where possible, and they should be effectively screened. Trash and recycling enclosures should be sited inside of the building wall or within parking areas and screened away from public sidewalks or public trails and plazas. Utilities optimally are sited behind a building wall and co-located rather than distributed.

Large below-grade functions, such as electrical vaults and stormwater utilities, if provided on site, can be integrated into plazas and large setback areas. Underground areas need to prioritize sufficient soil volumes to support large trees.



DESIGN APPROACHES

VEHICLE AREAS AND PARKING
Screening and buffering vehicle areas from pedestrians and integrating parking into the building design

UTILITIES, TRASH, AND RECYCLING
Siting and screening utilities, trash, and recycling enclosures away from public realm

VAULTS
Integrating and concealing vaults within open areas

STORMWATER PLANTERS
Integrating stormwater with multiple uses, such as buffering, placemaking, and seating opportunities

LONG-TERM BICYCLE PARKING
Designing bicycle parking to encourage use by adding bike lobbies and bike repair amenities

06 Integrate and minimize the impact of **parking** and **building services**.

THIS GUIDELINE MAY BE ACCOMPLISHED BY...

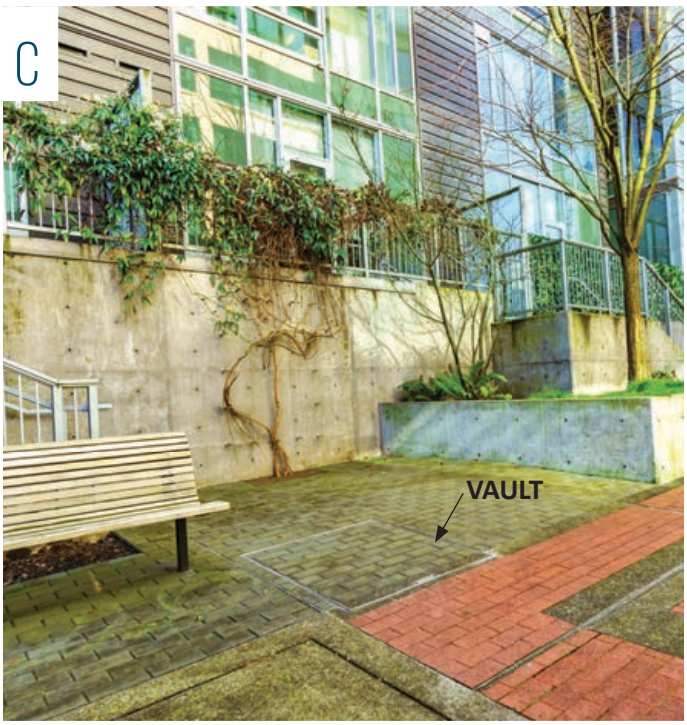
A

Activating bicycle parking along the building's ground floor with windows that face an interior lobby and bike repair amenities.
Central Eastside, *SE Morrison and SE 6th*

B

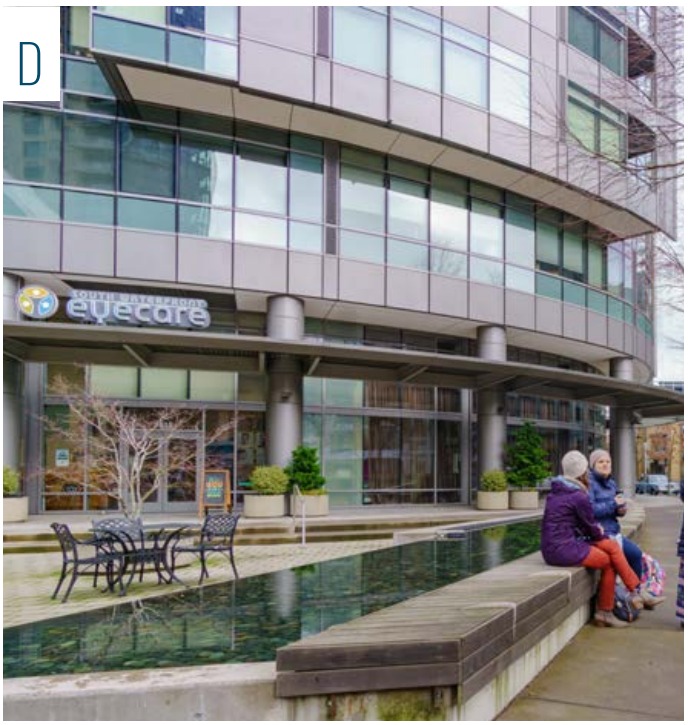
Buffering residential uses from vehicle areas with landscaping and gathering paces. This development provides multi-functional spaces internal to the site which allow for both cars and people.
Williams, *N Vancouver and N Alberta*

C



Integrating vaults into the paving design. This underground utility is well-hidden, while the design of the space includes room for trees.
South Downtown/University, *SW Mill and SW 4th*

D



Incorporating stormwater into the design of open areas. This stormwater system uses the grade change to provide a seat wall amenity.
South Waterfront, *SW Gaines and SW River Parkway*

THIS GUIDELINE MAY BE ACCOMPLISHED BY...

E

Following the rhythm of storefront and entry bays in the placement of openings for structured or underground parking.
Pearl, *NW 12th and NW Everett*

F

Tucking and screening waste bins. This trash and recycling area is well-hidden from the building's street-facing façade and artfully screened behind a planter designed to capture rainwater.
Division, *SE Division and SE 38th*

G

Placing mechanical and utility rooms away from the street-facing facades and providing well-integrated screening.
Gateway, *SE 105th and E Burnside*

H

Using screens as an opportunity to provide art, spur interest and be a local storyteller or wayfinder.
Old Town/Chinatown, *NW Broadway and NW Hoyt*

07 SUPPORT THE COMFORT, SAFETY, AND DIGNITY OF RESIDENTS, WORKERS, AND VISITORS THROUGH **THOUGHTFUL SITE AND BUILDING DESIGN.**

Hillsdale, *SW 26th and SW Capitol Highway*

BACKGROUND

Site design and the relationship of on-site spaces and active building programming is critical in maintaining comfort, safety, and dignity for all building users. As areas within Portland evolve toward a more compact urban form, development should support people's movement and activity throughout the site, including points of entry and open spaces for active and passive recreation.

The program of the building needs to relate to and optimize the characteristics and features of the site, both large and small. On-site spaces should be sources of pride and belonging rather than spaces that feel unwelcome and back-of-house. Successful site design approaches can bolster social and physical health and emotional well-being by integrating natural features and enhancing the entire experience for building users.

On-site pedestrian circulation should facilitate comfort. Pathways universally designed for all ages and abilities should link the public realm, building entries, parking, and open areas throughout. Pedestrian pathways should be safe, visible and well-lit, and building entries and windows should orient towards them. All people entering the site should have equitable access to the same positive user experience: accessible paths should not be relegated to the back-of-house. Site design should avoid visual barriers such as high fences or tall hedges.

On-site windows should be located to balance visibility with privacy while offering a comfortable, safe, and attractive experience throughout the site. The

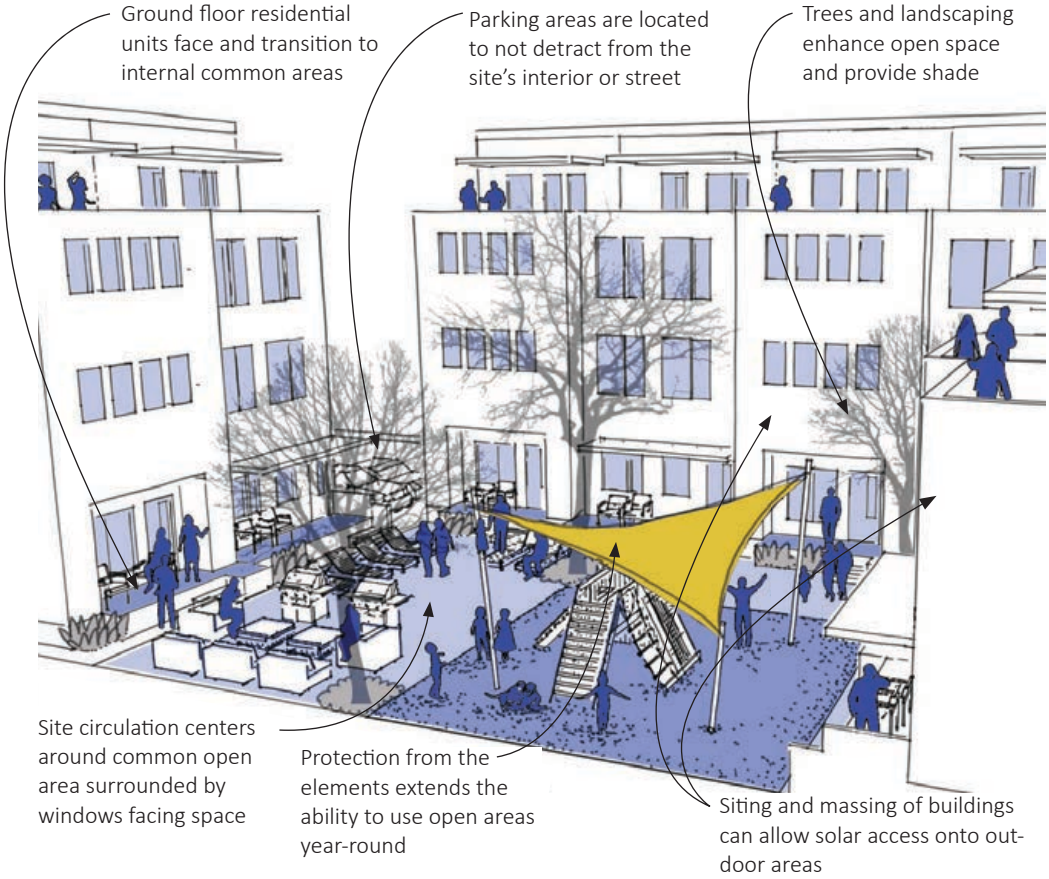
placement of windows should avoid directly facing other windows or otherwise creating awkward sight lines or relationships between building users.

On-site entries to multiple units should provide ample space between them to feel comfortable to residents entering and exiting, and entries should feel welcoming and protected from the weather. Entries should incorporate "eyes on the street" principles, by facing common courtyards, open spaces or walkways.

The siting of multiple buildings should optimize areas between buildings to create usable, inclusive open spaces that are intentionally designed for building users. On-site building facades should employ concepts used in the public realm, such as active spaces, multiple windows and the avoidance of blank walls, to ensure that building users can safely and comfortably move throughout.

Outdoor spaces, appropriately scaled, can successfully be designed for year-round use. Thoughtfully shaping building massing to optimize solar access, providing protection from rain, and carefully placing furnishing can all contribute to increased use. Landscape design should incorporate trees for shading, comfort, buffering between units or tenant spaces, and to enhance the urban canopy. The needs of children, families and the elderly should be integrated into the design of outdoor spaces with play areas, gardens and plenty of seating. Well-designed sites foster activation and moments for impromptu gathering, placemaking, and stewardship of places that offer local sources of enjoyment and lead to long-term investments and pride in local communities.

Spaces designed solely for vehicles should not dominate the site. Buildings should provide safe and comfortable access to parking areas that prioritize people through clear pathways, paving patterns, and lighting. Where residential entries face parking lots, generous buffering should create separation that balances a sense of welcome with the need for privacy and screening.



DESIGN APPROACHES

INTERNAL OPEN SPACES
Offering a variety of multi-functional spaces such as balconies, stoops, plazas, play areas, and passive sitting areas

INTERNAL CONNECTIONS
Creating safe and visible pedestrian circulation through sites

VEHICLE AREAS
Ensuring that vehicle areas do not impair the usability and enjoyment of the site.

SOLAR ACCESS Providing solar access to open areas

WINDOWS AND ENTRIES
Orienting windows and entries toward on-site circulation and open areas

07 Support the comfort, safety, and dignity of residents, workers, and visitors through **thoughtful site and building design**.

THIS GUIDELINE MAY BE ACCOMPLISHED BY...

A

Providing comfortable access through sites with wide walkways, seating, and multiple windows. PCC Southeast links directly to the public realm with a well-lit path that feels welcome and safe.
Jade District, *SE 82nd and SE Division*

B

Orienting residential units around a common shared green space. Stormwater gardens, seating areas, and internal pathways are integrated to create a comfortable and multi-functional shared space.
Eliot, *NE Williams and NE Tillamook*

C

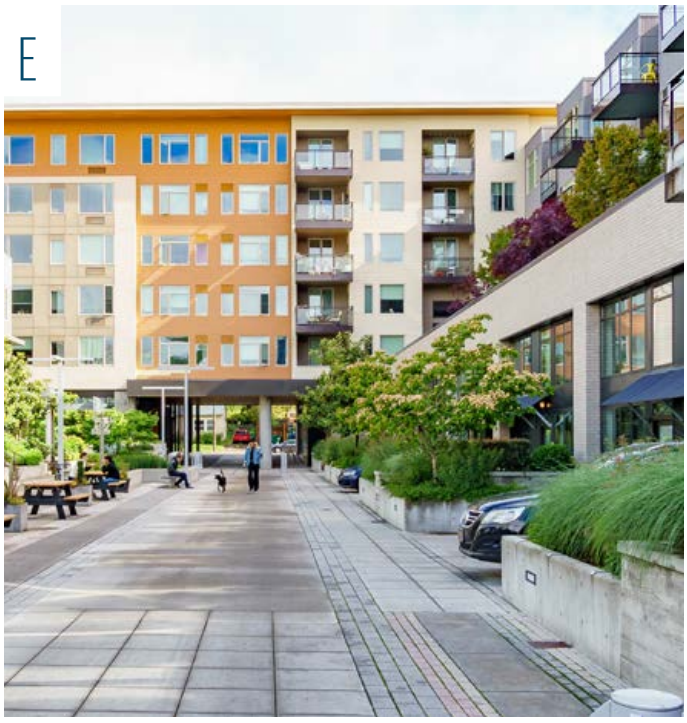
Connecting retail and office spaces with a courtyard linked to the public sidewalk. This gathering spot includes seating, planters and trees, and multiple terraces that offer vantage points and visibility.
Williams, *N Williams and N Fremont*

D

Designing development to include gathering and play spaces in central locations. Maintaining clear visibility through the space can improve access and safety for all users.
Hillsdale, *SW 26th and SW Capitol Highway*

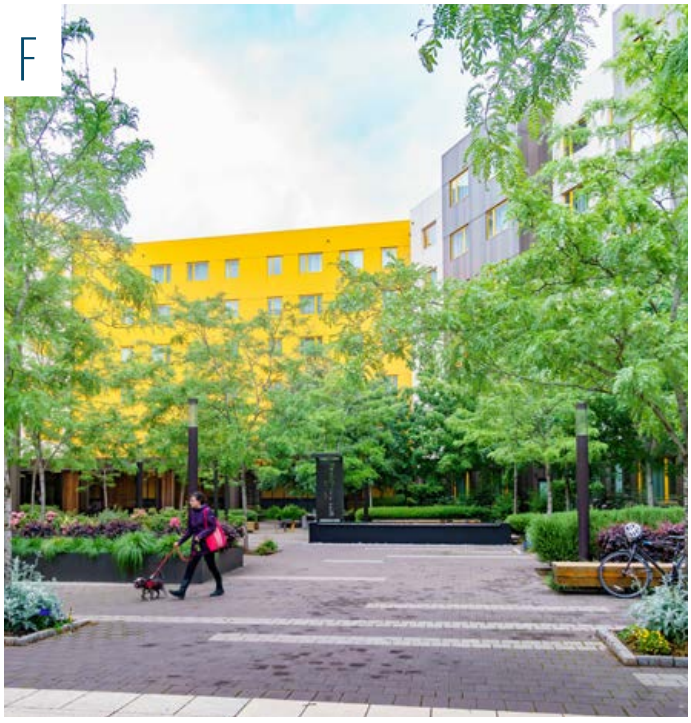
THIS GUIDELINE MAY BE ACCOMPLISHED BY...

E



Offering pedestrian circulation through the site that connect the public realm, building entries, parking, and open areas. This project's parking area is well integrated into the site with an open courtyard.
Williams, *N Williams and N Mason*

F



Creating an open and centrally located courtyard allows for eyes on the space. This plaza provides access to an entry lobby and features an outdoor lounge.
Pearl, *NW Marshall and NW 9th*

G

Providing a multi-functional pedestrian pathway between buildings. This mid-block crossing includes seating and walkways on various levels, landscaping, and a bocce court.
Pearl, *NW Johnson and NW 13th*

H

Designing a facade that offers multiple views, light and ventilation. This spatial arrangement allows privacy from passersby and neighboring units while maintaining eyes on the street.
Martin Luther King, Jr., *NE Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd and NE Monroe*

08 DESIGN FOR **QUALITY**, USING ENDURING MATERIALS AND STRATEGIES WITH A COHERENT APPROACH.

Marquam Hill, *SW US Veterans Hospital Rd*

BACKGROUND

The decision of future generations to retain and adapt buildings that are built today in Portland's highest-density areas will depend upon their enduring and timeless design.

Design of the site and building should clearly convey an overarching idea, design concept or project intent throughout. The architecture should evoke clarity and consistency of the concept to unite the building holistically with a sense of beauty and logic.

Buildings should employ sturdy, durable exterior materials with reliable construction methods that ensure resistance to heavy use and to weathering caused by the Pacific Northwest climate.

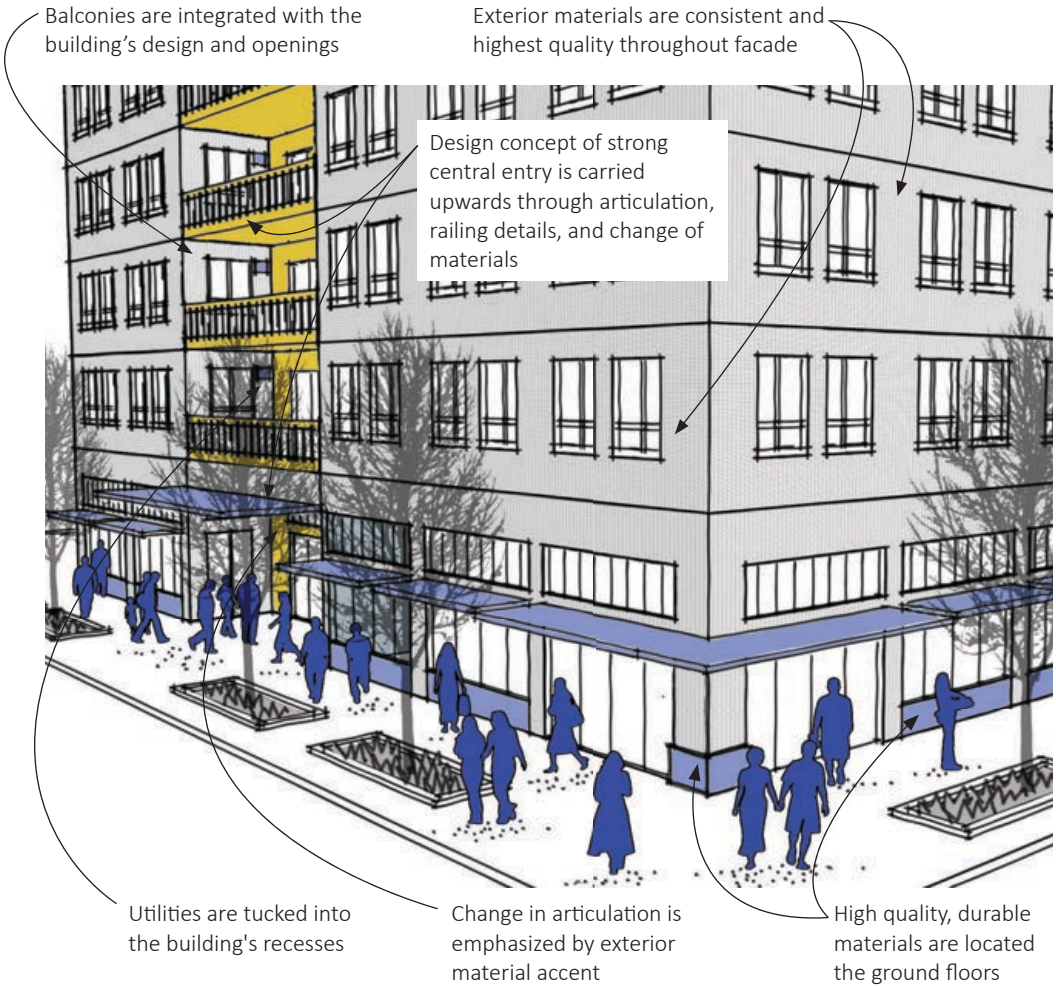
The overarching design concept can be reinforced in the site design through public and private spaces and the locations of entries. Buildings can reinforce the design concept with exterior lighting, building openings, and emphasis of articulation, or shifts in the building wall plane. Facades can use exterior materials, texture, and depth together to reinforce the design. For instance, a change in material may be used in conjunction with articulation to distinguish and express the building openings. High levels of visual interest, texture, repetition, and detail should be balanced with thoughtful design simplicity and design coherence.

Exterior materials can also express where uses and activities belong, illustrate the spectrum of public to private spaces, or convey hierarchy. Heavier materials like masonry can be used at the ground level to depict the structure of the building and lighter materials can be deployed within recesses or on upper stories. Transitions between materials should be thoughtful, carefully concealing seams by responding to changes in building massing, articulation, or through the application of architectural details.

"High touch zones" of buildings particularly warrant special attention to detail, quality, and durability. These areas along the ground floor, balconies, and building openings, need to resist wear and tear while also providing interest at the human-scale due to frequency of use.

Exterior building features, such as balconies, awnings, railings, exterior lighting, signage, and stairs—can add depth and texture. They should be well-integrated into the design and form of the building so as not to compete visually. Doors and windows and other building openings should add permeability through the building along with visual interest and depth from contrasting shadow lines.

Building utilities, such as vents and air conditioner units, should be hidden within building recesses or integrated into the façade design, using complementary colors and materials. Rooftop mechanical equipment should be well integrated and screened on the roof.



DESIGN APPROACHES

UNITY
Expressing a clear and coherent design approach to unify building

ARTICULATION
Highlighting function, hierarchy, or spaces through small breaks in form

APPLICATION OF EXTERIOR MATERIALS
Expressing the building design with hierarchy, shifts or repetition

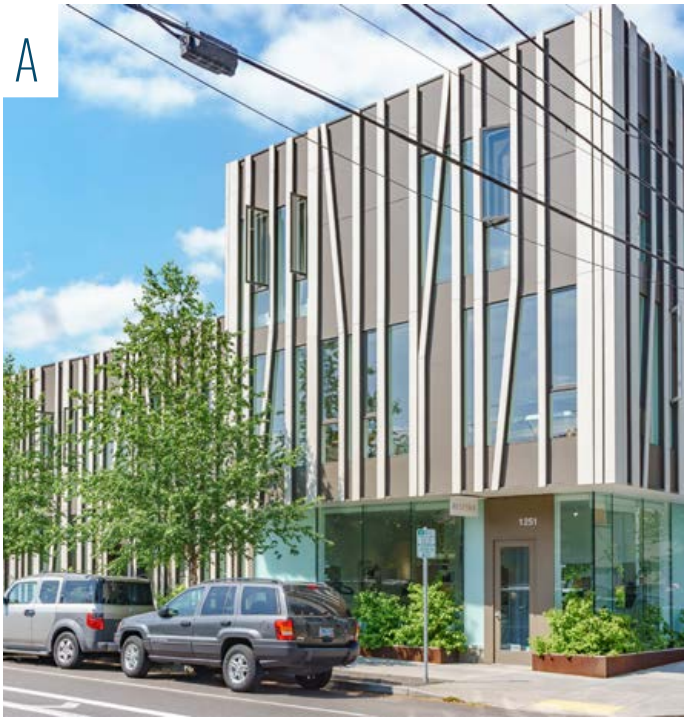
QUALITY OF MATERIALS
Providing quality, resilience, and durability in construction and execution of details

BUILDING OPENINGS
Offering permeability, depth, and texture

08 Design for **quality**, using enduring materials and strategies with a **coherent** approach.

THIS GUIDELINE MAY BE ACCOMPLISHED BY...

A

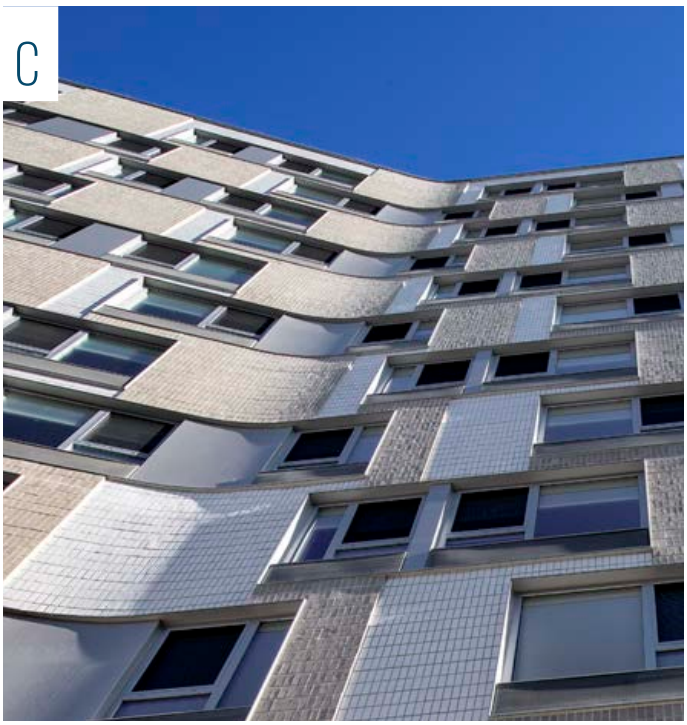


Applying materials and forms consistently. This building undulates both the pattern of its façade and along the ground floor, where entries are tucked in and planters push out toward the sidewalk.
Northwest District, *NW 19th and NW Overton*

B

Integrating detail and craftsmanship at the ground floor. This multistory building utilizes durable materials at the base, increasing levels of texture and interest around the lobby entrance.
Pearl, *NW 11th and NW Glisan*

C



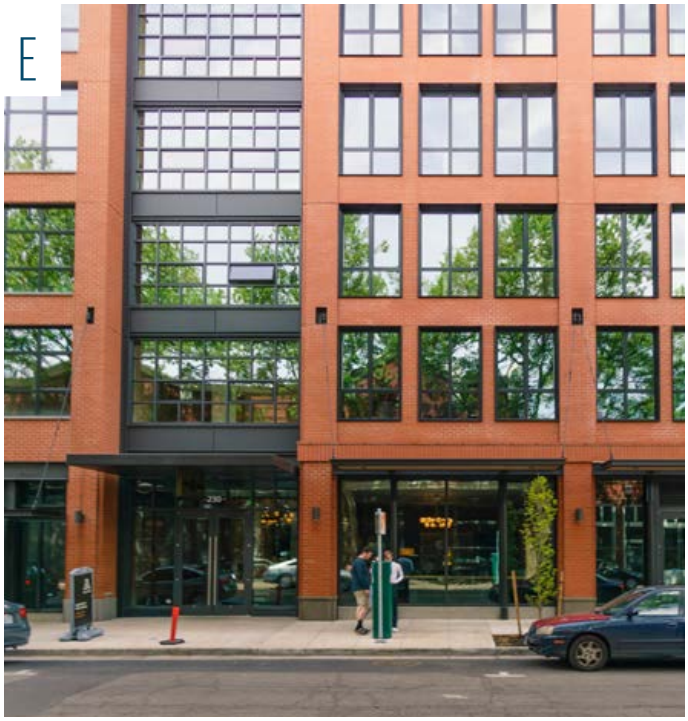
Integrating mechanical systems within the building grid or window system.
Lloyd, *NE Grand and NE Holladay*

D

Expressing building function and hierarchy by emphasizing the ground floor with high quality materials and using repetition in the design and placement of upper level openings and materials.
Heart of Foster, *SE Foster and SE 72nd*

THIS GUIDELINE MAY BE ACCOMPLISHED BY...

E



Considering the rhythm and proportion of windows to wall area to create a building façade that is organized, coherent and textured.
Old Town/Chinatown, *SW 3rd and SW Ash*

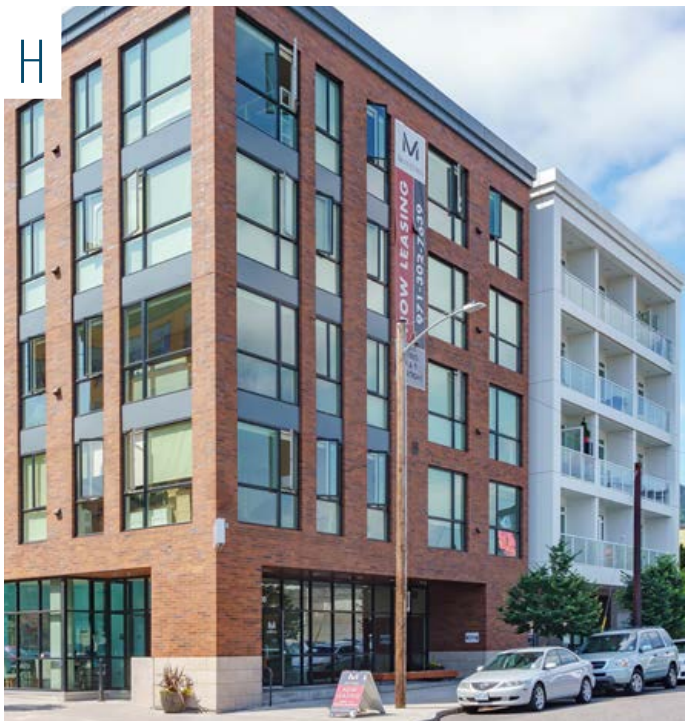
F

Designing street facades using limited materials and a deep overhangs to provide massing relief and visual contrast.
Northwest, *NW 19th and NW Pettygrove*

G

Drawing on traditional materials and patterning to create an organized and articulated ground floor. Heavy masonry materials, such as brick and concrete extend to the ground to express the building's structure.
Alberta, *NE Alberta and NE 19th*

H



Building on historic architectural forms to create a clean and modern design. Traditional time-tested materials, such as brick, evoke quality and resilience.
Northwest District, *NW 20th and NW Pettygrove*

09 DESIGN FOR **RESILIENCE**, HEALTH, AND STEWARDSHIP OF THE ENVIRONMENT, ENSURING ADAPTABILITY TO CLIMATE CHANGE AND THE EVOLVING NEEDS OF THE CITY.

Lloyd, *NE Hassalo and NE 8th*

BACKGROUND

Portland's commitment to a low-carbon future and the integration of nature and green infrastructure in the built environment are rooted in reverence to the greater regional ecology of the Pacific Northwest and a legacy of climate action.

The city's centers and corridors, while well suited for higher capacity transit and higher density housing and jobs, also are the city's warmest heat islands. New buildings and alterations to existing buildings in these areas should ensure healthy and energy efficient housing and businesses, green spaces, and tree canopy.

Development in the city's densest areas should be designed to promote human and environmental health and reduce energy costs, especially for communities who are at higher risk of being burdened by climate impacts. Designing resilient sites and buildings will support a city designed for people and protection of our climate and planet.

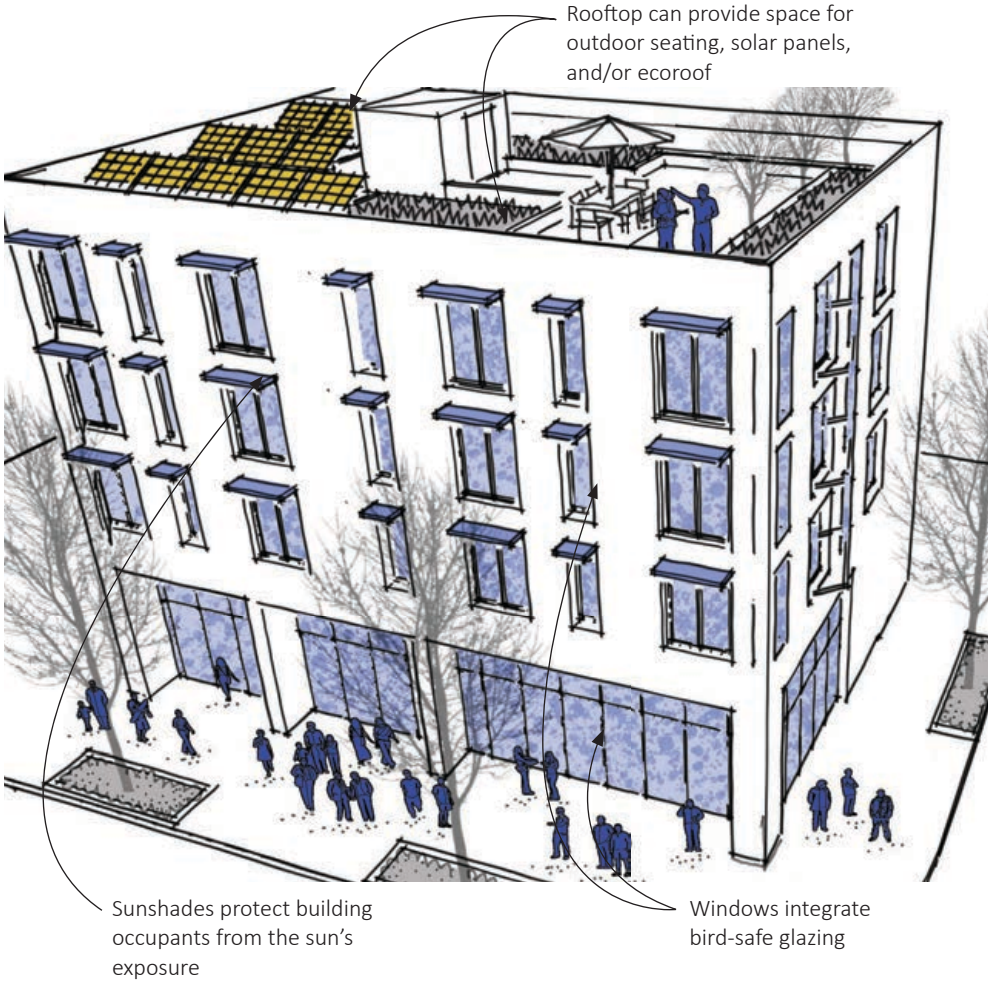
Development in the Pacific Northwest succeeds when it considers climate, light, and nature. Development should draw in natural light in a region where soft, subdued light is constant during much of the year. New development can integrate natural daylight and ventilation and improve indoor air quality to increase thermal comfort. Structures should consider generous overhangs to create cover in Portland's often wet but moderate climate, where temperatures may be comfortable for gathering

outside, sheltered from rain. Development should consider the use of locally harvested wood, stone, and other natural materials that are abundant and characteristic of the Pacific Northwest.

Site designs should protect and incorporate natural features, such as existing trees, rivers, streams, and wetlands. Development should strive to incorporate native shrubs and trees in landscaping, create new stormwater features, and add ecoroofs. These features will help mitigate heat island effects, manage stormwater, provide wildlife habitat, and create space for people to rest, recreate, and interact. Development should incorporate bird-safe design, such as fritted glass, recessed windows, deep awnings or shade screens, to reduce bird strikes.

Long-term environmental impacts, life cycle costs, and embodied carbon of materials should be considered and weighed within each proposal. Incorporating renewable energy systems can preserve natural resources, lower carbon emissions, and provide clean air and water, moving Portland towards its climate goals. Specifying low-carbon concrete and other carbon-intensive materials will help reduce the carbon footprint of the building. Adaptive reuse of existing buildings can not only lead to a broad range of energy savings, it also avoids environmental harm often caused by demolition pollutants, landfill waste, and carbon emissions. Using reclaimed and recycled materials, fixtures and features conserves valuable resources and can integrate historic character.

Development should promote adaptability and the evolving needs of the city over time. Designing buildings with flexible floor plates and taller ground floors will ensure that they last beyond today's users and needs. Parking structures should consider designs that allow adaptive reuse of floor levels, and parking lots should be designed to accommodate future development.



DESIGN APPROACHES

ADAPTABLE BUILDINGS
Providing flexibility in building programming, floor heights, and building openings

RESOURCE CONSERVATION
Prioritizing the use of existing structures or reclaimed and recycled materials

NATIVE LANDSCAPING
Integrating native landscaping and large canopy trees to address heat island and provide for pollinators

ECO-ROOFS
Providing and integrating ecoroofs for pollinators and people

BIRD-SAFE
Reducing bird strikes through careful design

DAYLIGHT AND AIR
Providing daylight and ventilation and improving indoor air quality

ON-SITE STORMWATER
Allowing rain to soak into the ground and filter through lush vegetation and landscaping

09 Design for **resilience**, health, and stewardship of the environment, ensuring adaptability to climate change and the evolving needs of the city.

THIS GUIDELINE MAY BE ACCOMPLISHED BY...

A

Designing stomwater runoff systems to be multi-functional. This installation manages stormwater, covers bicycle parking, and serves as public art.
Dekum, *NE Dekum and NE Durham*

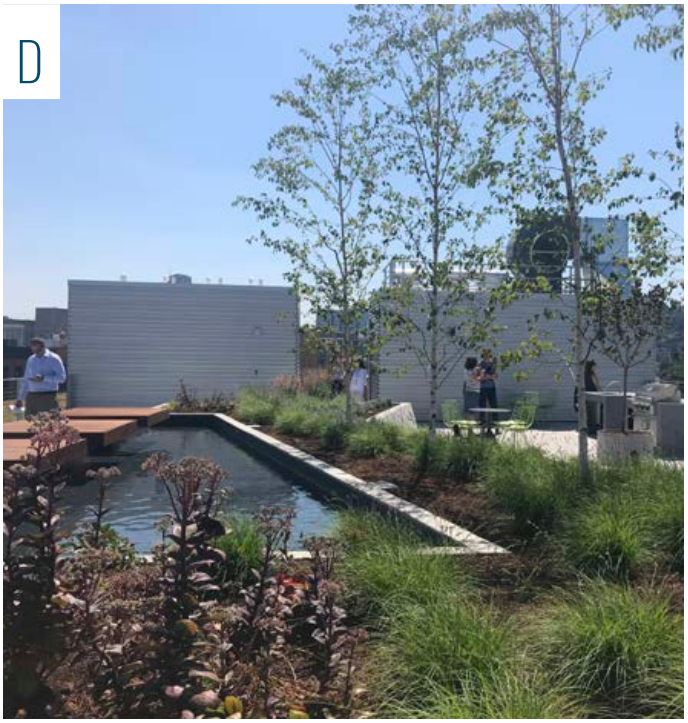
B

Sourcing regionally harvested and locally manufactured materials, including Cross-Laminated Timber (CLT), weathering steel, Oregon juniper cladding, cedar decking, and river rock and boulders.
Belmont, *SE Belmont and SE 14th*

C

Providing sunshades along southern and western sides of buildings. Sunshades can reduce temperatures where sun exposure is direct, and they create deep shadows to reduce bird strikes.
Martin Luther King, Jr., *NE Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd and NE Monroe*

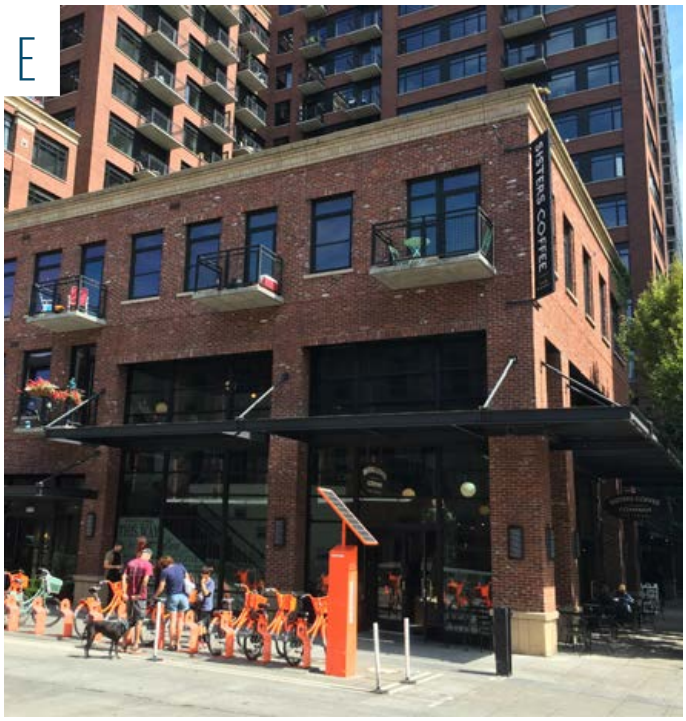
D



Incorporating an ecoroof can reduce the urban heat island effect and provide habitat for pollinators. This ecoroof is integrated into usable open space, featuring a lush rooftop and water feature.
Pearl, *NW Johnson and NW 13th*

THIS GUIDELINE MAY BE ACCOMPLISHED BY...

E



Reusing salvaged brick in the façade of new buildings. This example references its site's history and conserving valuable resources.
Pearl, *NW Marshall and NW 13th*

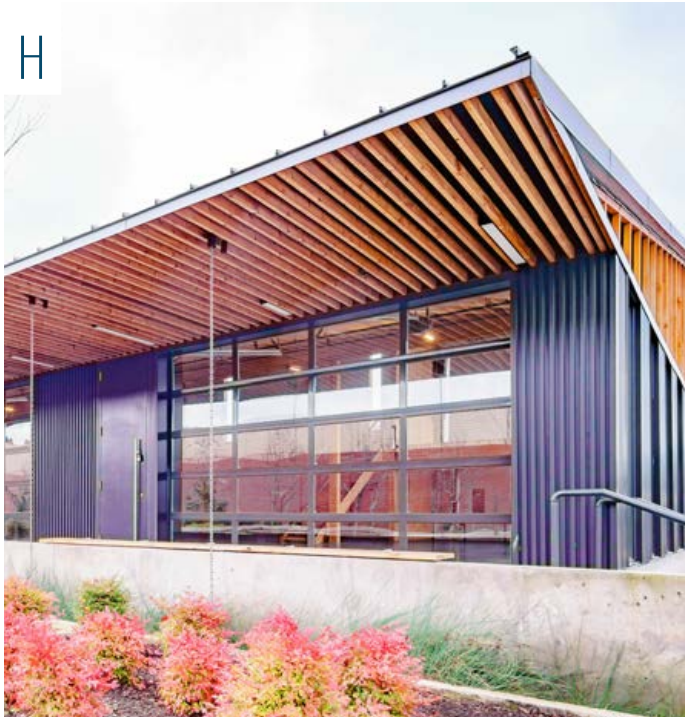
F

Integrating large-scaled trees such as these giant sequoias, which offer multiple benefits: year-round shade, a natural barrier for wind, sound and air pollution, stormwater management and sequestering carbon.
Northwest District, *NW Thurman and NW 22nd*

G

Striving towards net zero with features that include photovoltaic panels on all south-facing roofs, triple-paned windows to limit the amount of hot and cold air and cisterns for collecting rainwater.
Eliot, *NE Williams and NE Tillamook*

H



Collecting stormwater runoff from parking areas and rooftops in a visible and compelling way.
Jade District, *SE 82nd and SE Division*

APPENDIX

AMENDMENTS

Amendments to the Portland Citywide Design Guidelines and Character Statements are listed below:

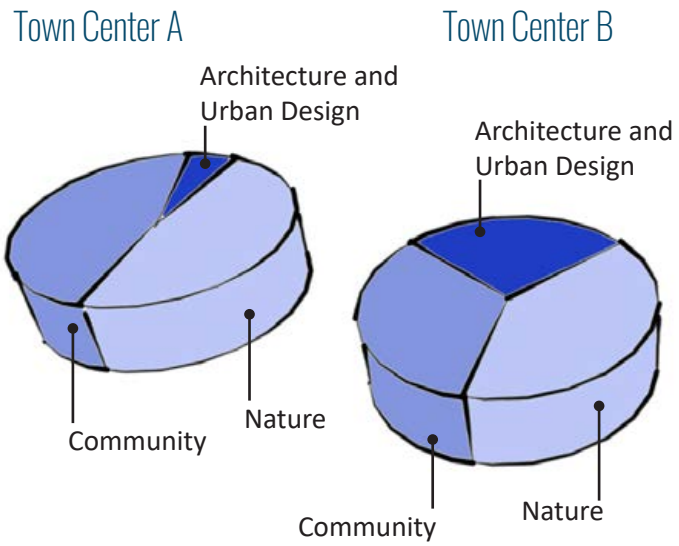
Ordinance Number	Adopted	Effective	Summary of Change	Name of Project
190241	12/16/20	08/01/21	Adopted the Macadam Character Statement	River Plan / South Reach

Character Statements

Character statements for centers and corridors are developed in partnership with the local community members and neighbors, and they are adopted through a legislative process with a recommendation from the Design Commission.

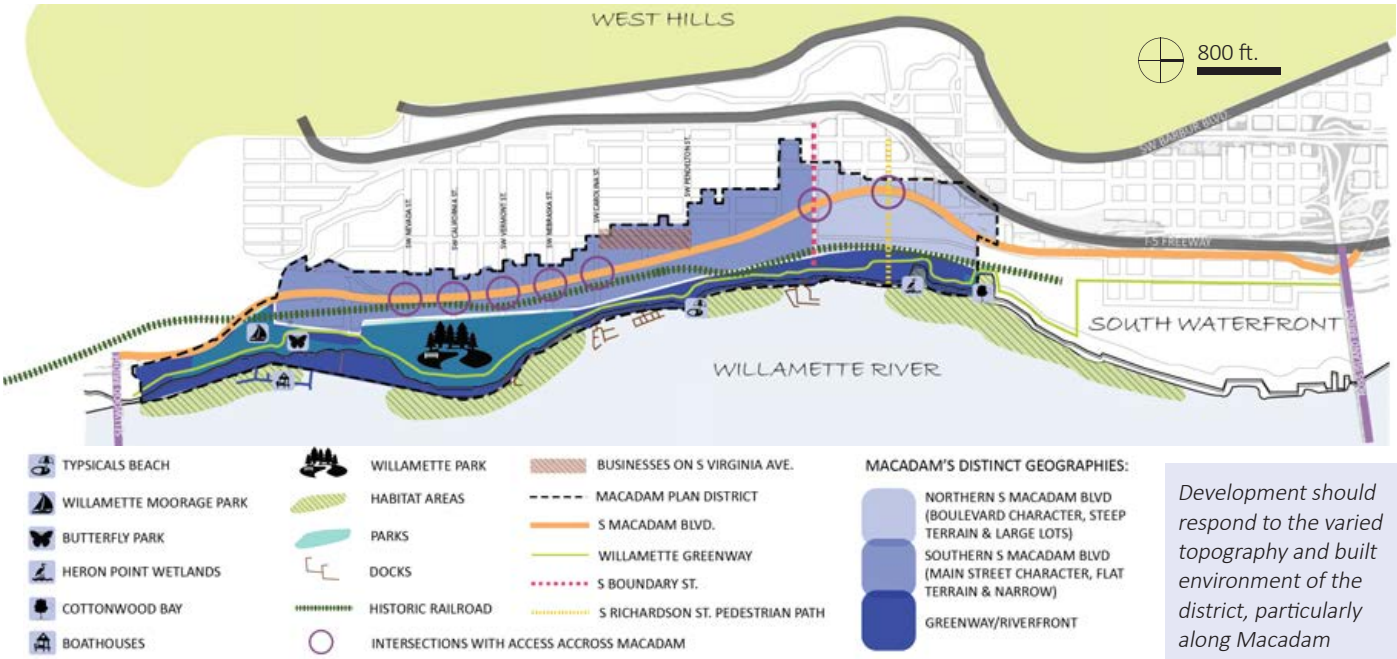
Character statements supplement **Guideline 01: Build on the Character, Local Identity, and Aspiration of the Place** within the *Portland Citywide Design Guidelines*. The statements do not repeat the goals and values of the other guidelines, because those guidelines will also apply. Instead, they describe a brief history of the area and the local character as it relates to community, architecture and nature. They provide a richer, more specific context description that guides how new development should address the area's character-defining features, ecological context, resources, and social and cultural values.

Each Character Statement should use Community, Architecture, and Nature as a three-part framework to describe an area's local context, as established under Guideline 01. The diagram below depicts that each of these categories may not receive equal weight, depending on the place.



Community, Architecture, and Nature may not necessarily be equally represented in each Character Statement. For instance, "Town Center A" may focus most of its Character Statement on the values of its community and natural resources and less about its architectural features than "Town Center B".

CHARACTER STATEMENT: MACADAM CIVIC CORRIDOR & RIVERFRONT NEIGHBORHOOD CENTER



Development should respond to the varied topography and built environment of the district, particularly along Macadam Avenue, which varies from boulevard (northern end) to main street (southern end) in character.

BACKGROUND

HISTORY & EXISTING CONDITIONS

Located between Portland's West Hills and the Willamette River, the Macadam area is shaped by its proximity to the river, abundant natural resources and the Central City. For centuries Native Americans, primarily the Kalapuya peoples, lived and thrived here. The Willamette River was a primary transportation corridor and the riverfront area that is now Willamette Park was part of a large network of wetlands and a popular camping location during the salmon runs. Native Americans also hunted and collected berries, nuts and plants along the riverfront for sustenance and medicinal and cultural purposes. These activities remain central to Native cultures, but development has degraded vital resources and adversely affected Tribal customs, wildlife habitat and watershed health. Buildings have been located too close to the river, vegetation has been removed and the use of impermeable building materials has been unchecked.

From the mid-1800s to the early 1900s, European Americans settled along the north-south S Macadam Avenue and constructed a parallel railroad line. During Portland's early growth much of the land between the Willamette River and S Macadam Avenue was occupied by industries that benefited from easy access to the river and the railroad. Commercial businesses emerged along the west side of S Macadam to support the industrial uses and residential neighborhoods developed to the west of the commercial corridor—in the hills with views of the river. As a result, the east side of S Macadam Avenue has large, irregular shaped lots and the west side has a traditional, well-connected block pattern.

Following World War II, much of the industry in the Macadam area relocated as technology improved and demand declined. Building boomed in the flat land between S Macadam Avenue and the river, as it was doing downtown and other close-in residential neighborhoods. In the 1970s and 1980s former industrial sites were transformed into multi-dwelling residential buildings, commercial office spaces and small shopping centers. These large sites focused their attention on the river and very few provided east/west connections that improved the district's riverfront access.

Planning policies of the period emphasized new residential and commercial uses and encouraged auto-oriented, "campus-like" environments with many trees, deep street setbacks and public access to and along the river. This led to the creation of several significant waterfront residential developments, the greenway trail and Willamette Park, but it also resulted in buildings oriented toward large surface parking lots rather than the street and an unsafe, unwelcoming pedestrian environment.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

The following resources offer some more background information on the history of this district.

- Willamette Greenway Plan (1987)
- Macadam Corridor Design Guidelines (1985)
- River Plan/South Reach Adopted Plan
- River Plan/ South Reach Draft Existing Conditions Report (May 2018)

"...help preserve and protect the natural environment that defines this district..."

CURRENT POLICY FRAMEWORK

The 2035 Comprehensive Plan (2018) identifies the Macadam area as a Neighborhood Center and part of of the River Pattern Area, and S Macadam Avenue as a Civic Corridor. These designations recognize the area's opportunities for growth, redevelopment, a safe and attractive pedestrian environment, and strong riverfront access.

The following sections align with and are derived from content in the Portland Citywide Design Guidelines, specifically Guideline 01. They will each focus on characteristics specific to this Neighborhood Center.

COMMUNITY CHARACTER

Communal open space along greenway at Heron Point.

The riverfront is culturally significant to the regions' Tribal Nations and the local Native community, and nearby residents and visitors enjoy the nearly two miles of accessible Willamette River shoreline with an accessible greenway trail, Willamette Park, Heron Pointe Wetlands and the Cottonwood Bay natural area. New development should acknowledge and address the cultural, social, ecological and recreational value of the riverfront.

South Portland provides residents and the city with a green gateway to downtown. It's topography and proximity to the river creates three distinct geographies: 1) Northern S Macadam Avenue, 2) Southern S Macadam Avenue (South of S Boundary) and 3) the Willamette Greenway. Future development needs to respond to each area's distinct topography, scale, lot size, density, heights and uses. The northern section is dense and mid-rise, providing a transition from the high-rise South Waterfront. It is characterized by multi-family residential and office commercial buildings. In contrast, the south section exemplifies a more main street character with small-scale residential areas and businesses. This area is constrained by steep hills to the west, and the river. New development here should be designed to limit scale impacts to the residential community to the west.

S Macadam Avenue, along with the train tracks, surface parking areas and large irregular lots have created east-west barriers to the river. New development should improve both the quality and quantity of public connections – both physical and visual. Strategic access points should be based on the typical Portland block pattern of 200 feet and should align with streets on the west side of S Macadam Avenue. Alignment will provide unimpeded visibility from public streets and sidewalks to the riverfront and ensure it is accessible to everyone in the district.

ARCHITECTURE + URBAN DESIGN CHARACTER

Adaptive reuse of Water Tower building as a commercial business center.

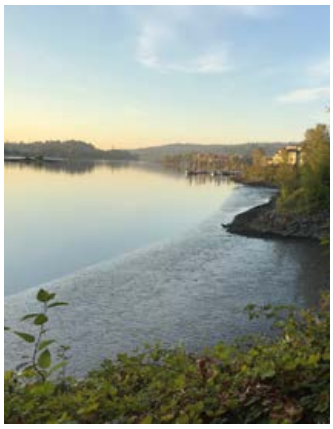
Past City policies envisioned S Macadam Avenue as a tree-lined boulevard with safe routes for both pedestrians and cars. Existing development—a mixture of river-oriented businesses, suburban-style shopping centers, office parks, and apartment buildings—does not support a public realm focused on the comfort and safety of pedestrians and cyclists. Future site and building design should be responsive to this vision for S Macadam Avenue and the context of the Willamette Riverfront.

On S Macadam Avenue, a few buildings from the area's industrial past have been renovated with high quality, durable materials, such as masonry or stucco. New buildings should use texture, color, scale and proportion to complement this existing fabric. Features such as ample glazing, covered entries and integrated landscaping are appropriate to this environment. When used at corner sites, they strengthen and solidify the connections across S Macadam Avenue, and down to the river.

Successful landscaping is particularly important along identified public view streets and where rights of way have limited planting areas.

Along the Willamette Riverfront, existing development has traditionally used balconies, terraces and communal open spaces to promote safety and create visual interest along the greenway and river. To enrich the experience of all residents, new development should incorporate these elements along the riverfront and throughout the district, reinforcing public views to the greenway, wildlife and the river. Locate significant outdoor spaces contiguous with the greenway trail. Transition buildings away from the river setback, using step downs and step backs to erode building mass to preserve access to light and air along sidewalks and the trail and create a pleasant pedestrian experience. Design and orient buildings to facilitate east-west connections to the riverfront and promote its accessibility within the district.

NATURAL RESOURCES + SCENIC RESOURCES



Step back development from greenway to preserve resources and views.

The Macadam area's location along the Willamette River's South Reach is a key factor in the continued health of endangered and threatened fish, wildlife and plants. This riverine corridor is part of the Pacific Flyway for migrating and nesting birds. Future development along the river and trails should both activate the river frontage and minimize impacts from noise and lighting on the trail and riverfront habitat. Include climatic responsive plantings to enhance wildlife habitat, soften building edges, and screen parking areas.

Natural features along the riverfront are valuable community assets, central to the cultural practices of local Tribal Communities and with lush vegetation and views of the mountains, hills, and river. Pay special attention to landscaping within the river setback and protect natural areas by preserving and planting trees along the Willamette River. Development should capitalize on this unique location by incorporating environmentally friendly building practices and techniques to preserve and protect the defining riverfront environment of the district.

Residents and visitors' value direct public access to the Willamette River from neighborhoods and businesses to the west. To strengthen this access, use landscape features to emphasize east/west connections between the greenway, the river, and the interior of the neighborhood. Scenic view streets can strengthen their visual ties to the river by becoming "green" streets. Visual connections to the Willamette and other natural features from both sides of S Macadam Avenue allow Portlanders to appreciate the area's scenic beauty. In response, building roofs and rooftops need to be carefully designed to enhance these public views. Maintaining connections ensures permeability within the district and improves air quality, health, and livability. Preserve public viewpoints close to the river and view streets that are referenced in the Macadam Plan District and the South Reach Scenic Resource Protection Plan.