



October 2009

City of Antioch Citywide Design Guidelines

Prepared for the City of Antioch

Prepared by Downtown Solutions

A Division of Civic Solutions, Inc.

this page intentionally left blank



table of contents

1.0 user guide to the design guidelines manual

- 1.1 introduction and background 1-1
- 1.2 what is community design? 1-8

2.0 rivertown design guidelines

- 2.1 introduction 2-1
- 2.2 design objectives 2-2
- 2.3 site planning 2-5
- 2.4 architectural guidelines 2-7
- 2.5 storefront design 2-13
- 2.6 lighting 2-16
- 2.7 parking and circulation 2-17
- 2.8 building additions and renovations 2-19

3.0 commercial design guidelines

- 3.1 general commercial guidelines 3-1
- 3.2 specific use guidelines 3-25

4.0 business park design guidelines

- 4.1 introduction 4-1
- 4.2 design objectives 4-1
- 4.3 site planning 4-1
- 4.5 parking and circulation 4-9
- 4.6 loading facilities 4-10
- 4.7 landscaping 4-11

5.0 mixed-use design guidelines

- 5.1 introduction 5-1
- 5.2 design objectives 5-1
- 5.3 site planning 5-2
- 5.4 architecture 5-8
- 5.5 storefront design 5-14
- 5.6 parking and circulation 5-15
- 5.7 landscaping 5-16
- 5.8 lighting 5-17

6.0 residential design guidelines

- 6.1 single-family residential 6-1
- 6.2 multi-family residential 6-22
- 6.3 rivertown residential 6-35

7.0 sign design guidelines

- 7.1 introduction 7-1
- 7.2 design objectives 7-2
- 7.3 general guidelines 7-2
- 7.4 Allowable Sign Type and Location Matrix 7-6

8.0 streetscape design guidelines

- 8.1 introduction 8-1
- 8.2 design objectives 8-1
- 8.3 street materials and furnishings 8-2
- 8.4 traffic calming 8-15
- 8.5 navigational sign system 8-17
- 8.6 public art 8-18
- 8.7 utilities 8-18

9.0 sustainability

9.1 sustainability	9-1
--------------------	-----

10.0 glossary of terms

appendix

plant palette	A-1
---------------	-----



1.0 user guide to the design guidelines manual

1.1 introduction and background

For the past three decades, Antioch has served as a bedroom community for the major job centers of the San Francisco Bay Area. The city is now focused on becoming a more dynamic and diverse city. The growth in local employment, greater variety in the housing types, and the reemergence of historic Rivertown provides many opportunities to make Antioch a vibrant city with a strong quality of life. In the future, the design of new development and redevelopment projects will play a particularly important role in creating a distinct, high-quality image for the city while promoting walking, bicycling, and public transit. The Citywide Design Guidelines, which supplement the City's Zoning Code, will seek to enhance the design of streetscapes and commercial and residential projects.

1.1.1 Purpose and Goals

The purpose of this manual is to establish guidelines that will reinforce a common identity for the City of Antioch, clarify expectations about desired design quality, challenge stakeholders to think outside the box and provide a method to help ensure objectivity, consistency, and predictability during the design review process. These guidelines encourage design freedom and innovative design, while emphasizing basic design principles, community needs, and sensitivity to surrounding context. The design guidelines complement the City's Zoning Code by providing good examples of appropriate design solutions and by providing design interpretations of the various mandatory regulations. The guidelines contain both quantitative and mandatory development standards and may be interpreted with some flexibility in the application to specific projects.

Specifically, the design guidelines attempt to achieve the following goals based on those outlined in the General Plan:

- Preserve and enhance Antioch's identity as a community with small city charm and big



Figure 1.1.1 Antioch serves as the "Gateway to the Delta"

city opportunities, while maintaining existing community values;

- Create opportunities to attract residential, commercial and recreational projects that will stimulate the economy and create an exciting live-work-play environment;
- Define standards and provide guidance for the design of new development that will encourage exceeding the desired design quality;
- Encourage architectural and landscaping criteria that stimulate walking, facilitate bicycling and reduce dependence on the automobile;
- Protect and maintain the quality and unique heritage and historical characteristics of the community and ensure compatible design standards for new projects;



Figure 1.1.2 Historic buildings such as the El Campanil Theater reinforce Antioch's heritage.

- Guide the revitalization of existing developed areas blending seamlessly the quality of newer and older portions of the community;
- Establish diverse, highly effective programs that instill community pride and produce tangible local benefits for years to come; and
- Communicate a clear public vision for the community.

The interpretation and implementation of the design guidelines will be based on these goals.

1.1.2 Applicability

The provisions of the Design Guidelines are applicable to any new buildings, additions, exterior alterations, landscaping, and any modification to an approved landscaping plan or parking lot design, with the exception of single-family residences within an existing subdivision. These guidelines do not affect any existing buildings that are not proposed for new construction, exterior alterations, landscaping, or changes in the parking lot layout.

1.1.3 Exemptions

When in compliance with all other City ordinances, the following projects are exempt from design review:

- A. Underground construction, which will not leave any significant, permanent structure at or above grade level upon completion. Utility boxes, pipes, and poles shall be considered a "significant permanent structure."
- B. Roof maintenance and repair with similar like materials. Roof reconstruction or replacement with different materials is not subject to design



review if so determined by the Community Development Director or his/her designee.

C. Routine maintenance of buildings, landscaping (including relatively minor replacement of plants other than trees), exterior painting, or grounds (including parking lots) that does not significantly alter the appearance or function of the building, landscaping, or grounds. Exterior colors shall be soft and warm, rather than bright and bold, thus eliminating a visual intrusion into the communities appearance and character.

D. Temporary uses and structures and signs as defined by the City of Antioch Zoning Code or other applicable codes and ordinances.

E. Interior remodeling.

1.1.4 Relationship to Design Review Process

The Design Guidelines Manual will be utilized during the City's development review process to implement the highest level of design quality. The manual also provides project designers with the flexibility necessary to respond to existing site conditions.

Applicants of any new development or rehabilitation must follow a development review process to complete site and building improvements. Design review is one element of the overall process. At the onset of any project, and prior to undertaking significant design efforts, applicants should meet with a staff member from the Community Development Department. At this meeting, City staff can provide information on permits, processing timeliness, required steps for project approval, and City codes and ordinances that may affect or apply to a particular project. In addition, the meeting can be useful to better understand project-specific design objectives.

1.1.5 Interpretation

A development applicant should understand the meaning of "*should*," "*encouraged*," and "*discouraged*" when interpreting these guidelines. Guidelines that employ the word "*should*" are intended to express the City's desire and expectation. However, an alternative measure may be considered that meets or exceeds the intent of the guideline. Guidelines using the words "*encouraged*" or "*discouraged*" are meant to express a more or less desirable design solution. Standards using the words "*shall*" or "*must*" are meant to express an absolute minimum and are required.

Qualitative Guidelines

Many of the guidelines in this manual are qualitative. They provide descriptions and graphic illustrations that show the manner in which design should be carried out with a given land use, building type, or spatial setting. By their nature, qualitative guidelines allow for flexibility and individuality within the design parameters so long as the intent of the guidelines is upheld.

Quantitative Guidelines

Throughout this manual, some design guidelines are written with a specific numerical or measurable component. In some instances, guidelines may include a minimum measurement (e.g. sidewalk width). In other instances, a number may be included in a design guideline that specifies a preferred quantity (e.g. ratio of trees to parking spaces). Quantitative guidelines still allow flexibility in design within the given parameters, i.e. specifications may be given for percentage of lot to be landscaped but the plant choices and design may be creatively interpreted using the approved plant list.



Figure 1.1.2 Good examples of the type of architectural diversity found in Antioch

1.1.6 Visual Preference Survey

Downtown Solutions conducted an online Visual Preference Survey between February 14th and March 14th, 2007 that was accessible through the City website. The community was invited to vote on 125 images of community design elements (including 18 from Antioch). The images illustrated different commercial and residential architectural styles, building materials, landscaping, signs, site plans, and streetscapes.

The results of the Visual Preference Survey were presented at the Design Subcommittee meeting on March 22, 2007. The survey received 145 responses over the study period. Respondents favored images that showed the following characteristics:

- Regional architectural styles (such as Mission Revival and Victorian styles);
- Stone, stucco, and iron materials; and
- Streetscape amenities such as seating, lush landscaping, shade, and paving treatments that provided interesting public spaces and a positive pedestrian experience.

Meanwhile, respondents tended to dislike those images that showed the following characteristics:

- Plain, unadorned architecture;
- Plastic and concrete materials;
- Evergreen plants; and
- Pole signs.



this page intentionally left blank



1.1.7 Organization of Document

The design guidelines are generally organized in chapters according to major land use categories. A brief description of each chapter is provided below:

Chapter 1 — User Guide to the Design Guidelines Manual

This chapter contains an introduction and background to the design guidelines and how the design guidelines will be used.

Chapter 2 — Rivertown Commercial Design Guidelines

This chapter addresses design guidelines that are applicable to commercial properties in Rivertown, Antioch's traditional city center. The guidelines attempt to preserve Rivertown's historic character and enhance its vitality and walkability. Topics include site planning, architecture, storefronts, lighting, parking and circulation, and building additions and renovation.

Chapter 3 — Commercial Design Guidelines

This chapter is divided into two sections. The first describes design guidelines that are common to all types of commercial development. This section covers site planning, architecture, storefront design, parking and circulation, landscaping, lighting, public space, and commercial building and center rehabilitation.

The second section addresses preferred design characteristics for specialized development types (specifically, malls and regional centers, neighborhood centers, specialty retail centers, mini-malls, big box retail, office buildings, vehicle dealerships, service stations and car washes, automotive repair services, mini-storage

facilities, drive-through businesses, and hotels and motels). Not only are these guidelines intended to improve overall design quality but, since they are specific to the project type, they will emphasize the distinguishing characteristics of each commercial development type. Subject areas include site planning and building design.

Chapter 4 — Business Park Design Guidelines

This chapter includes general design standards that are applicable to business parks. The objective of these guidelines is to create cohesive, high-quality projects that will attract a variety of businesses. Topics include site planning, architecture, parking and circulation, loading facilities, landscaping, and lighting.

Chapter 5 — Mixed-Use Design Guidelines

This chapter consists of design guidelines that are applicable to mixed-use projects, which combine retail, office, and residential uses. Mixed-use guidelines seek to blend different types of uses and create a pedestrian-friendly environment so residents can work, shop, and recreate within walking distance. The chapter discusses site planning, architecture, storefronts, parking, circulation, landscaping, and lighting.

Chapter 6 — Residential Design Guidelines

This chapter is divided into three sections. The first provides general design guidelines that are common to single-family detached residential subdivisions with three (3) or more units. Subject areas include site planning, architecture, landscaping, walls and fences, and community facilities and open space.

The second section contains general design guidelines that are common to multi-family residential projects. These guidelines address

design issues for higher density living and how to blend new projects with existing development. This section includes site planning, architecture, landscaping, walls, trash and storage facilities, and community facilities and open space.

The third and final section in this chapter addresses design issues specific to preserving and enhancing the character of residential development in Rivertown.

Chapter 7 — Sign Design Guidelines

This chapter offers guidelines for signage, which plays a critical role in conveying activity, pedestrian scale, and high quality design. Topics include general guidelines as well as specific direction for monument, wall, projecting, window, awning, freeway-adjacent, and navigational signs.

Chapter 8 — Streetscape Design Guidelines

This chapter provides guidance for streetscape elements, which can create a unified character for the City of Antioch. The guidelines will cover street materials and furnishings, traffic calming, navigational systems, public art, and public transit.

Chapter 9 — Sustainability

The sustainable design guidelines provide an alternate vision for the built environment. Individual property developers are encouraged to consider sustainable design principals within their projects. This consists of encouraging an environment that is sympathetic and in harmony with the natural environment.

Chapter 10 — Glossary of Terms

This chapter provides definitions for all technical terms used in the manual.

1.2 what is community design?

Community design is the art of enhancing the vitality, meaning, and physical form of neighborhoods, towns, and cities by ensuring quality, sensible development. Design is one of several factors that must be considered in community development. The others include economic conditions, business promotion and marketing, and maintenance. In this manual, design guidelines are presented that aim to also strengthen these other community development factors and foster a publicly-supported image and character.



Figure 1.2.1 Community Design is critical to developing more vital places