



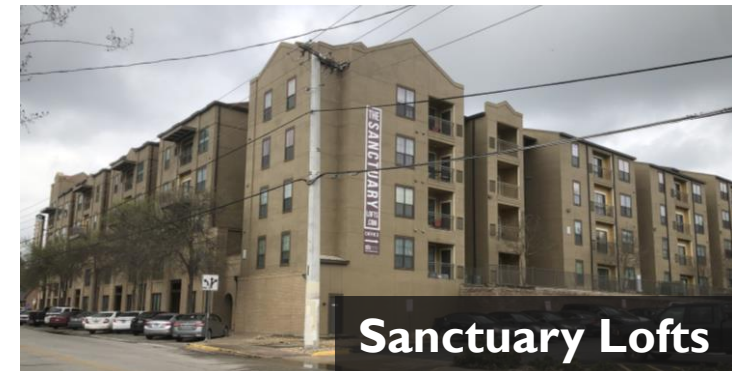
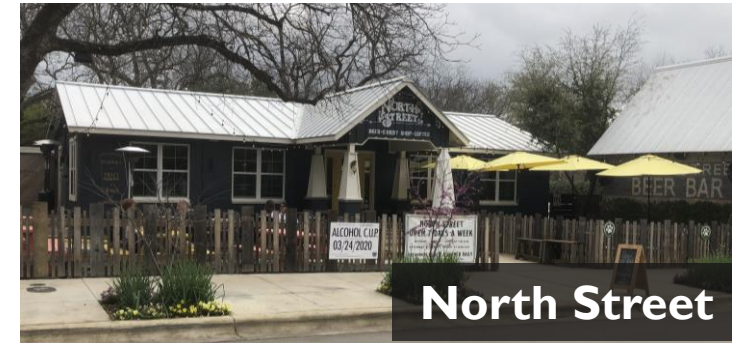
Downtown Design Standards and Guidelines Update

Hold a public hearing and consider approval of Ordinance 2021-XX, on the first of two readings, amending Chapters 3 and 4 of the San Marcos Development Code and Appendix A, Article 1 of the Design Manual, by, among other things, updating provisions concerning nonconforming streetscapes, the Character District 5 Downtown description, the minimum two story building height in downtown, and the downtown architectural design standards and guidelines related to varied massing, transparency, blank wall area, expression elements, building elements, and contextual height stepdown. (A.Villalobos)

About the Update

Key topics to be addressed:

- **Massing** of larger buildings to promote compatibility with traditional downtown scale
- **Articulation** of facades
- Building **materials**
- **Street level design** that promotes a sense of place and activates the public realm
- **Transitions** from high density zones to sensitive edges



Project Timeline To-Date

April – July	August - Nov	December	Dec - Jan	Feb - March
Initial Outreach	Draft Recommendation Development	Present Draft Recommendation	Document Production	Adoption Process
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Kickoff Survey</i>• <i>Workshops</i>• <i>Website</i>• <i>PR</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Analysis of public/policy input</i>• <i>Writing Code</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Workshops</i>• <i>PR</i>• <i>Survey</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Analysis of public/policy input</i>• <i>Code Revisions</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Adoption meetings/ presentations</i>

Common Feedback

- Reference to and compatibility with **historic buildings**
- Designed for **San Marcos**
- Incorporate more effective **transitions** to residential areas
- More appropriate **massing and articulation**
- Designing for the **pedestrian** – activated street, incorporating shade, creating outdoor spaces

Key Points from Focus Group Kickoff Meetings - April 2020 San Marcos Design Standards and Guidelines Update

This document summarizes key feedback from the kickoff focus group meetings held virtually on April 15th and 16th. After a short presentation of the project background and objectives, each group discussed a series of questions regarding strengths of and issues raised by recent development. Historic design contexts, and the existing standards and guidelines documents. Historic preservation questions and questions regarding the public realm were addressed by the appropriate groups. Note that all questions focused on downtown San Marcos, defined by the design context map and stretching from L-35 to the University. The kickoff focus group meetings were held with the following groups:

- Heritage Preservation Commission and Heritage Association
- Main Street Advisory Board and Downtown Design Task Force
- Downtown Association Board

PART 1: THE BIG IDEAS

Design Excellence
Promoting excellence in design is a key objective. That is, projects should do more than simply meeting the minimums required by the standards and in the future. This can be expressed in intent statements in the standards and in the tone of the language used in the standards and guidelines themselves.

Sense of Place
Maintaining the distinct identity that is associated with downtown is important. This sets San Marcos apart from other communities in the region. Factors that contribute to a sense of place are:

- Small scale buildings and their components, including storefronts, entries, signs and architectural details that contribute to a changing scene on one side of a downtown street
- The eclectic mix of architectural styles and building design, especially those that are one-of-a-kind and convey the personality of the owners
- Street edges that invite pedestrian activity, with storefronts, seating areas and product displays
- Iconic landmarks and views that help orient people in the downtown

Four-sided Design
Projects are experienced from all sides and their designs should reflect this. It is especially important where a new project abuts a sensitive edge and along an alley.

- This is a concept that can be addressed in the design standards and guidelines. It may include:
 - » Considering how varied massing is expressed throughout a project, not only along the street frontage
 - » Addressing ground level design in alleys

Community Workshop 1 Summary July 31, 2020 San Marcos Design Standards and Guidelines Update

In January 2020, the San Marcos City Council provided direction to update the design standards and guidelines using the guidance of the previous consultants, Winter & Company. The update to the design standards and guidelines will include new standards to address design issues, new graphics to clearly illustrate the standards and guidelines, and shall be tailored to various contexts within downtown.

The first community workshop for the project was held on July 23, 2020, and asked community members to consider a variety of factors for new development in the downtown including massing, articulation, building materials and street level design. Participants registered ahead of time and received a link to the Zoom meeting. The meeting began with an introduction by city staff in Spanish. The meeting and how to participate virtually and led into the first explanation of the meeting and how to participate virtually, and led into the first set of polling questions, described in the "Workshop Participants" section below.

Workshop Participants
To begin the meeting, staff conducted the live polling tool to ensure participants understood how to answer the questions using the live polling tool on Zoom. These questions also provided important information about the meeting. In total, 39 people participated in these initial polling questions. However, as these questions were asked at the beginning of the meeting, some people could have joined during the presentation and before the later activities and others could have stopped participating before then. A series of three questions were asked through these initial polls.

What type of device are you using?
Computer/ laptop: 32
Phone: 6
iPad/ tablet: 1

How many people are using the same device to participate?
One: 32
Two: 5
More than two: 2

Are you a San Marcos resident?
Yes: 29
No: 10

In addition to learning how many people were participating and had figured out how to respond to the polling option, these questions also provided information about how participants were responding. The first question alerted workshop facilitators that people would be seeing the polling questions in different ways based on the format of their device, so we needed to provide sufficient time for content prior to beginning a polling question as the polling screen covered the content for those using a phone, iPad or tablet. The second question alerted us that since some participants were sharing a device for the workshop,

Key Points from Planning and Zoning Commission/City Council Meeting June 25, 2020 San Marcos Design Standards and Guidelines Update

This document summarizes key feedback from the joint Planning and Zoning Commission/ City Council meeting that was held virtually on the evening of June 25. This meeting followed three initial stakeholder meetings held in April 2020 and a kickoff community online survey available during the month of May. The objective of the initial outreach methods was to understand community member's initial thoughts about recent design in downtown San Marcos. This meeting with the Planning and Zoning Commission/ City Council provided an opportunity to update these groups on initial feedback and confirm the project direction moving forward.

Six members of the City Council and eight members of the Planning & Zoning Commission joined Planning and Development Services staff and the consultants in the workshop. The meeting began with a presentation led by the consultant team that reviewed the project background, community input to-date and an introduction to the design contexts. The majority of the presentation focused on a review of the key design topics to be addressed in this project - massing, articulation, building materials, street level design, and transitions. After an introduction, analysis of existing content and a review of the proposed updates for each design topic, Council members and Commissioners had a chance to weigh in on the proposed approach. Additional questions followed and provided an opportunity for participants to share ideas for other topics to be covered and considerations for the design contexts.

PART 1: BIG IDEAS

Referencing Historic Character

Throughout this joint workshop, participants emphasized the importance of designing new buildings to incorporate features that are compatible with and reflect the character of historic buildings. While a new building should not copy exact features of historic buildings, the design should be compatible with historic resources. For instance, a new building, especially near designated historic resources, should be designed to be of a similar height and massing as the neighboring historic buildings and to reflect traditional architectural details. Details of a new building, however, may be more contemporary in nature. Details of a new building, such as a Victorian cornice, dentils or egg-and-dart patterns.

Encouraging a Mix of Uses Downtown

Downtown should not be limited to one use but accommodate many types of building types and variety in building designs can be expected. Points noted that in order to ensure the downtown remains a vibrant place to live, work and visit, the updated design standards and guidelines should allow for, and promote, a diverse array of building uses.

Design Excellence

Design excellence came up in this meeting as it has in the past.

Online Survey Summary San Marcos Design Standards and Guidelines Update

The City of San Marcos is engaged in an effort to update the design standards and guidelines. As part of these efforts, an online survey was designed to collect community feedback. This survey followed initial focus group meetings that were held in April. The goal of the survey was to provide an initial engagement opportunity for the community and collect feedback regarding design issues and successes downtown.

Two links to the survey were posted on the project webpage - one in English and one in Spanish - in order to increase accessibility. The survey opened on May 1 via SurveyMonkey and ran for approximately one month, closing on May 28. Over the course of these four weeks, 549 people responded to the surveys (546 on the English survey and three on the Spanish survey).

This document summarizes the survey findings of the results collected. The following sections provide an explanation of each part of the survey and the answers provided by survey participants.

SURVEY COMPOSITION

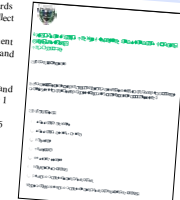
The survey consisted of two sections - demographic questions and design questions. The demographic questions collected important information regarding the affiliation(s) with San Marcos held by each of the survey participants. These questions also allowed participants to enter their name and email address, if desired, in order to stay up-to-date with the project process.

The second set of questions in the survey asked participants their opinions about recent development and design characteristics in downtown San Marcos. There were five questions in this section of the survey. The first was a multiple choice question while the other four were open ended.

SURVEY RESULTS COMPILATION METHODOLOGY

After closing and downloading the raw data from the survey results, compilation of the results began. First, the responses from the Spanish survey link were added to those of the English survey link. The results from the multiple choice questions were updated to include the Spanish survey results and were turned into pie charts, which can be seen in the "Survey Questions" section below.

The data from the remaining questions was then tallied in order to visualize the common results. The answers from each question were tallied by one person for consistency in interpretation, although human error is still a factor. Each written response was read and examined for the common theme, which was entered into a spreadsheet. As the results from each survey question were read, the chart of tallies and common answers expanded. After the tally was complete, each question had over 50 answers, although many of the responses were only stated by one survey participant. In order to visualize the survey results in a concise way, graphics generated incorporated only the top ten (10) responses. The full compiled data is available upon request.



The pie chart above illustrates a sample of the data provided in the survey. Following the survey questions, the Design Contexts map provided context for the survey questions that followed.

Thumbs Up Votes – Design Topics

Based on direction received at the Joint City Council / Planning and Zoning Commission Workshop in December 2020

Design Standards

- Nonconforming Streetscapes
- Character District-5D Zoning District
(Added clarification text)
- Mixed Use Shopfront Building Type
- Minimum Two-Story Requirement
- Transparency *(small text changes to transparency percentages)*
- Blank Wall Area
- Building Elements: Forecourt

Design Guidelines

- Design Principles
- Design Traditions
- Height Strategy by Context *(went back to original Design Context names)*
- Varied Massing Requirement
- Expression – Four Sided Design
- Neighborhood Transitions
- Design Options for a Pedestrian Friendly Ground Floor
- Ways to Create and Activate Outdoor Space
- Connectivity
- Working with Topography
- Strategies for Activating Street Frontages

Direction Provided – Standards

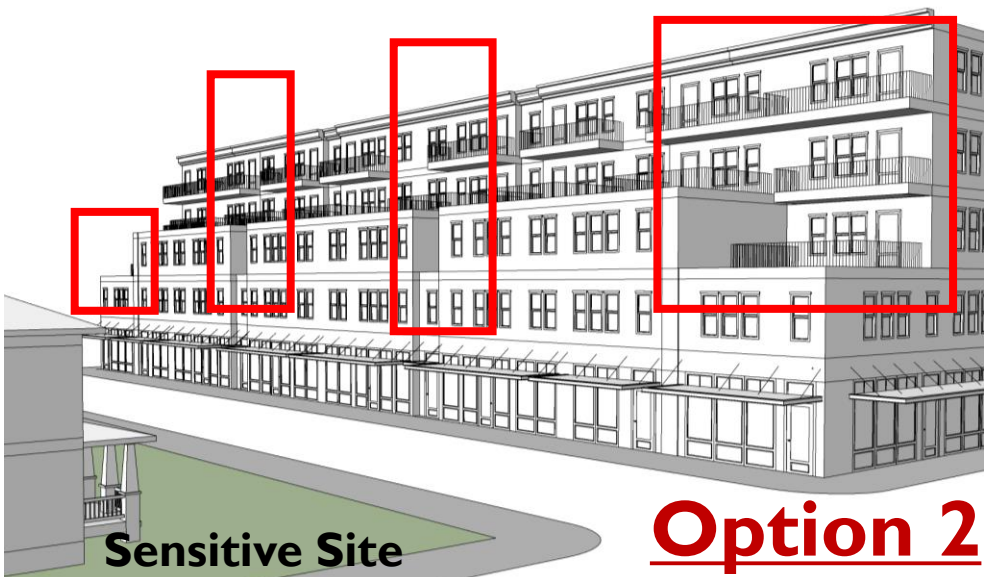
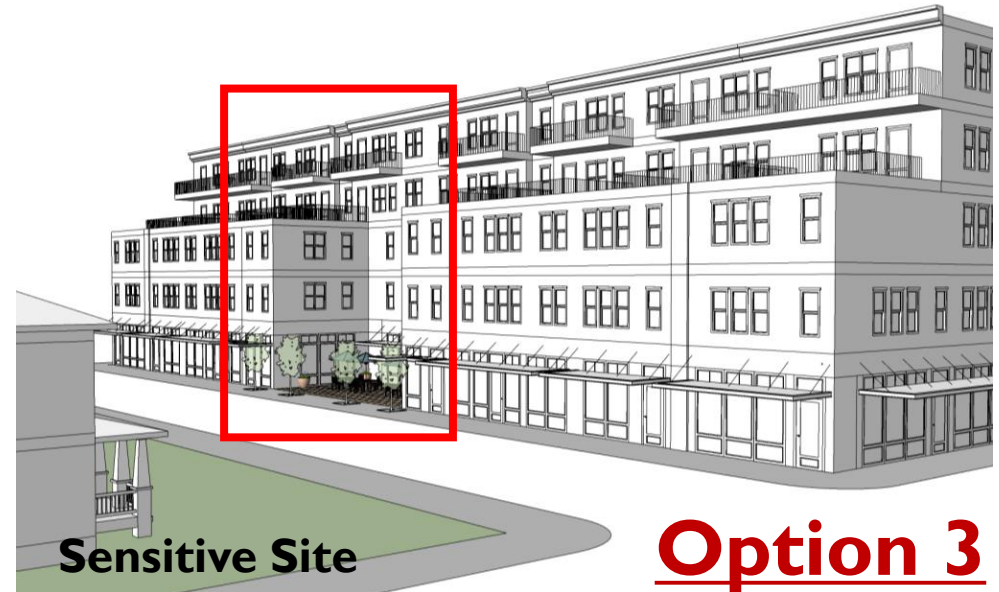
❖ **PZ/CC Workshop:
Direction provided**

Topic	Direction	Final Draft Changes
Varied Massing	Update Option 3 model to fix a typo	Typo was fixed and small text changes were made to Option 1, 2, and 3
Expression Elements	Require more expression elements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased requirements with additional detail • Split into horizontal and vertical categories • The models were edited for clarity
Rooftop Amenity Deck	Include a “setback” in the visual and the requirements.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Setbacks are required based on the frontage • Standards for railings and their transparency. • Emphasized review of the Historic Preservation Commission where needed
Durable Building Materials	Review the glass and steel material standards.	A “combination of glass and steel framework” is now a Secondary Material
Neighborhood Transitions Standards	Provide stronger standards while allowing multiple options. Increase required stepback from 12’ to 25’.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Standards revised / strengthened • Updated the 3 models to reflect the new standards • New table

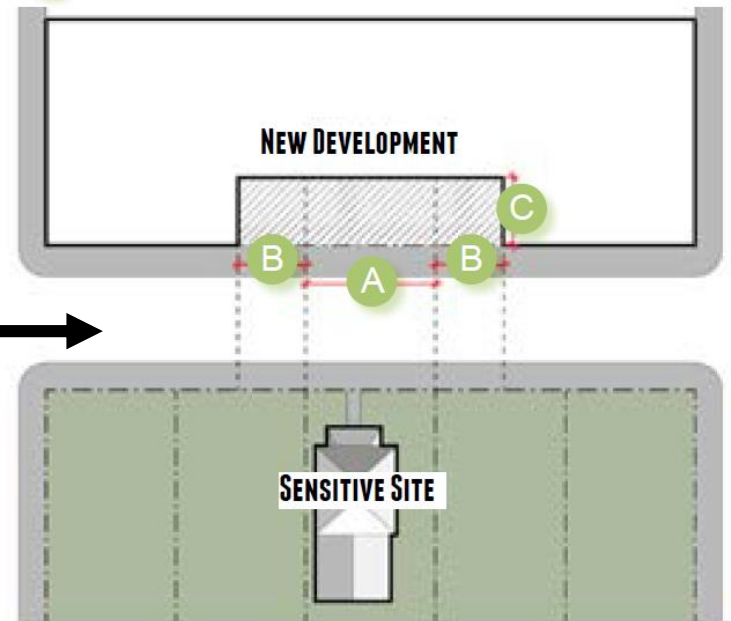
Adjacent to a Sensitive Site



Across the street or alley from a Sensitive Site



New Graphic



Direction Provided – Guidelines

Topic	Direction	Final Draft Changes
Description of Context Areas	Concerns with “West Downtown” and “South Downtown” context area naming	Back to original naming, “Residential Transition Edge” and the “Approach”. Discuss further with Comprehensive Plan.
Expression Elements	Require more expression elements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased requirements in the Development Code. • Guidelines updated accordingly
Views	Desire for more in-depth view standards incorporated downtown	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New overarching view guidelines • Views memo discussing need for further view study
Building Materials	Concerns regarding too much glass and metal and to differentiate between sidings.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New language to the “siding category” • Updated the Development Code regarding metal and glass
Strategies to Define the Street Wall of a Forecourt	The model images should reflect San Marcos	Models updated to reflect San Marcos
Improving an Existing Front Setback	The model images should reflect San Marcos	Models updated to reflect San Marcos

Planning and Zoning Commission Direction

At the February 9, 2021 meeting, the Planning and Zoning Commission recommended **approval** of the Downtown Design standards and guidelines, with an 8-0 vote, with the following amendments:

1. Update the description of the “The Approach” so that it is defined correctly.
2. In Table 4.13, add in a fourth horizontal element of awnings/canopies.
3. Add a formal definition for “Design Context” to Chapter 8, Definitions.
4. Condense Table 4.15 and place it underneath Options 1, 2, and 3 models.
5. Add a formal definition for “Street Wall” to Chapter 8, Definitions.

Staff Recommendation

Staff recommends **approval** of the Development Code and Design Manual with the Planning and Zoning Commission recommended amendments.



The following slides are provided to facilitate Council discussion on specific topics, if necessary.

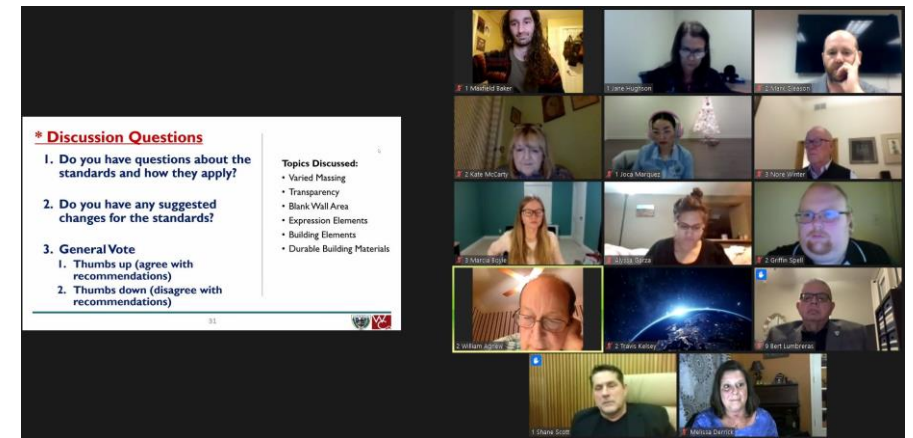
Past Project Outreach

Initial Project Development

- **3 Virtual Focus Group Meetings (April)**
 - Historic Preservation Commission and Heritage Association
 - Main Street Advisory Board and Downtown Design Task Force
 - Downtown Association Board
- **Online Community Kickoff Survey (May)**
 - Spanish and English
- **Virtual Joint PZ/CC Workshop (June)**
- **Virtual Community Workshop (July)**
 - Take-Home Toolkit offered

Public Draft Review

- **Joint Virtual Focus Group Meetings**
- **Virtual Community Workshop**
 - Take-Home Toolkit offered
- **Virtual Joint PZ/CC Workshop**
- **December Follow-up Survey**



Topics Outside Project Scope

- **Parking**

- Parking requirements
 - High minimums create large buildings
- Structured parking
 - Building a parking garage is difficult for lots with the maximum 100' width (Neighborhood Transitions section)

- **Right-of-Way (ROW)**

- Giving space for cars, not pedestrians
 - Note that we address activation, but not the ROW component of this topic

- **Gateways**

- Some discussion of emphasizing gateways as people approach downtown

Presentation Layout

- Present the code topic
- Provide context behind the topic
- Summary of the recommended change
- Snapshot of redline or image
- • Indicate City Council / Planning Commission Direction
- • Indicate Planning Commission Amendments
- Indicate page number

✓ **PZ/CC**
Workshop:
Thumbs Up Vote

**Planning Commission
Amendment**

Section 3.8.1.3.B.1 Nonconforming Streetscapes

Code Context: New development must install public sidewalks and public planting areas with street trees.

Recommended Change:

- Small text change here to ensure that a forecourt can be counted towards the required planting area on a site
 - Note that this is information for the administrative approval process of a nonconforming streetscape

REDLINE

I. Reduce or eliminate planting area or consider counting a forecourt in a new development towards the required planting area.

✓ **PZ/CC Workshop: Thumbs Up Vote**

Section 4.4.3.14 Character District – 5D

Code Context: Each zoning district has a “General Description”

Recommended Changes:

- Update the text to emphasize historical development patterns
- **Final Draft Change:** Footnote to clarify how setback requirements and forecourts work together



✓ PZ/CC Workshop: Thumbs Up Vote

Section 4.4.6.14 Building Types – Mixed Use Shopfront

Code Context: includes standards for building design

Recommended Changes:

- Transparency
- Ground Story Height

Final Draft Changes:

- Ground Story Height – removed maximum
- Upper Story Transparency – increased the maximum from 35% to 45%



**MIXED USE SHOPFRONT IMAGE
FROM CODE**

✓ **PZ/CC Workshop: Thumbs Up Vote**

Section 4.3.4.4. Minimum Two-Story Requirement

Code Context: CD-5D zoning requires buildings be at least two-story (or that the first floor be 24' in height)

Recommended Changes

- Text primarily remains the same
- Alternative Compliance Section
 - Questions added to help staff / Commission determine if allowing a portion of the building to be one-story is appropriate for the context and proposed building use.

✓ **PZ/CC Workshop: Thumbs Up Vote**

EXCERPT FROM REDLINE

Consider:

- If the proposal includes a one-story portion, is this portion being used to transition to a neighborhood context?
- Does the one-story portion have a specific use that is best served by a one story in height?
- Is the location appropriate for just one story?

Section 4.3.4.7 Varied Massing Requirement

Code Context: Required in CD-5D zoning for buildings taller than 3 stories and 60 feet in width.

Final Draft Changes:

- Edits to models
- Changes to text for each of the three options to clarify the requirements

City Council / PZ Workshop Discussion:

- Model edits needed for Option 3

❖ **PZ/CC Workshop: Direction provided**

Section 4.3.4.7 Varied Massing Requirement

UPDATED OPTION 3 MODEL



❖ PZ/CC Workshop: Direction provided

REDLINE

Option 1: A minimum of 40% of the building façade over 3 stories in height shall be set back a minimum of 20' from the front property line.

Option 2: A minimum of 50% of the building façade over 3 stories in height shall be set back a minimum of 15' from the front property line.

Option 3: A minimum of 40% of the building façade over 3 stories is stepped back a minimum of 15' from the property line and a forecourt is incorporated (see Forecourt standards in Table I.3.

Section 4.3.5.2 Transparency

Code Context: This section provides standards for windows.

Recommended Changes

- Remove “Ground Floor” in the title
- Added standards to ensure sight lines are maintained from the street into buildings to see activity and business
- Defined how transparency is measured on upper stories
- Added new graphic

✓ **PZ/CC Workshop: Thumbs Up Vote**

REDLINE

Intent:

These requirements aim to ensure sight lines from the sidewalk to the goods and services provided inside the property.

General Requirements:

The minimum percentage of windows that must cover upper story facades is measured between the top of the floor plate of the upper story and the bottom of the ceiling structure.

Clear glazing must have a visible transmittance rate of 0.5 or greater to count towards the transparency requirements



Section 4.3.5.3 Blank Wall Area

Code Context: Building exteriors must incorporate various building elements to reduce the amount of blank walls.

Recommended Changes

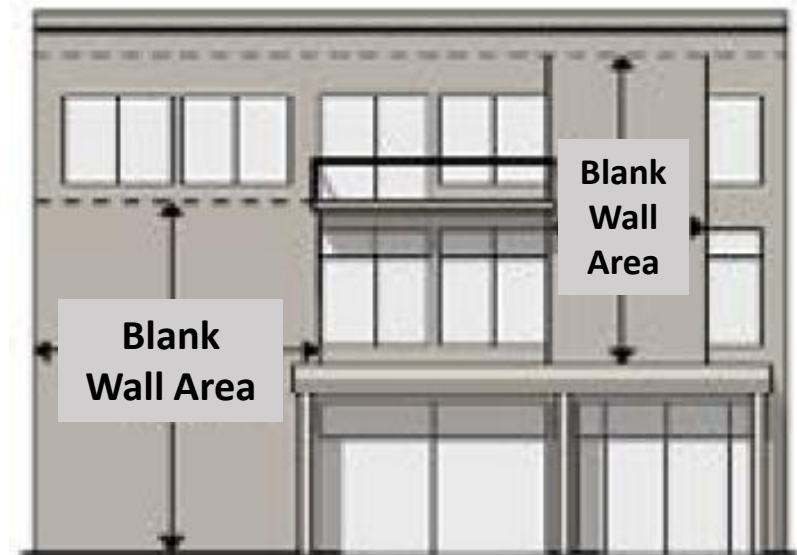
- Language added to the Alternative Compliance section that references the importance of guidance and examples provided in the Design Manual related to the following:
 - Ground Level Design
 - Varied Massing Requirements
 - Expression Elements
 - Building Materials
 - Four-Sided Design

✓ **PZ/CC Workshop: Thumbs Up Vote**

REDLINE

Defined:

3. Four-Sided Design: Ensure a pedestrian-oriented environment around all four sides of a building by designing a building to minimize the blank wall space and include architectural detail, although the degree of detail may vary depending on the location of a wall.



Section 4.3.5.4 Expression Elements

Code Context: Expression Elements are used to satisfy the blank wall area requirements

Recommended Changes

- Increase number of required Expression Elements
- Added language to the Alternative Compliance Section regarding substitution of expression elements
- Diagram updates

❖ **PZ/CC Workshop: Direction provided**

Planning Commission Amendment

City Council / PZ Workshop Direction:

- Require more expression elements to be used

Final Draft Changes:

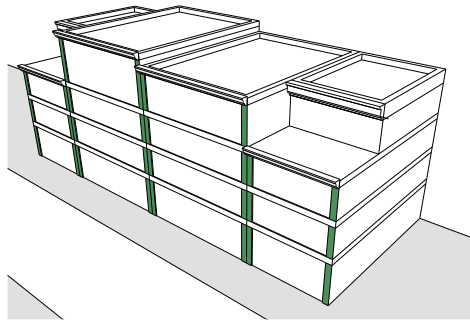
- Increased (even more) requirements on how many expression elements must be used (based on wall length)
- Provided additional detail about Alternative Compliance
- Split vertical and horizontal expression elements
- Provided additional detail in standards for each expression element

Section 4.3.5.4 Expression Elements

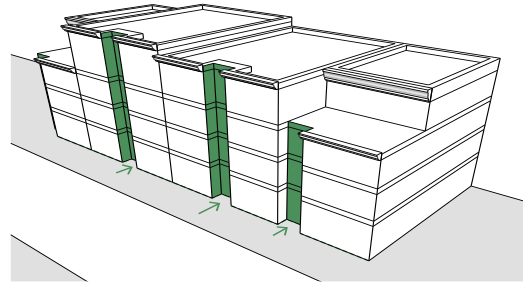
Changes in Final Draft, continued:

- Edits to models – divided between vertical and horizontal expression lines

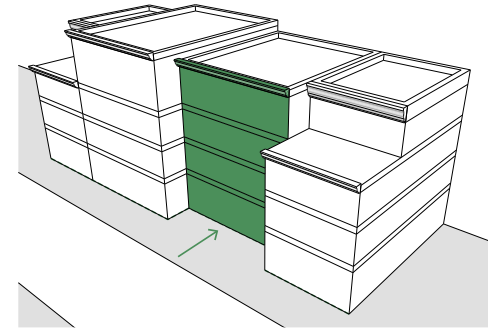
Vertical Expression Lines



Vertical Expression Line

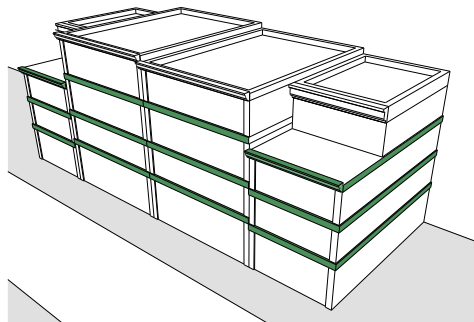


Wall Notch

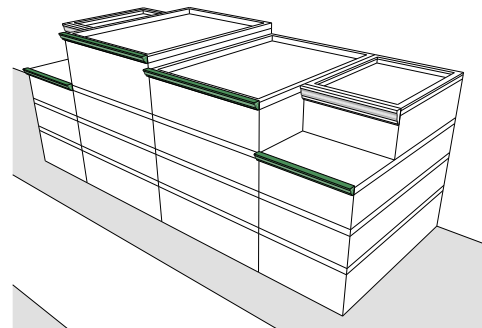


Wall Offset

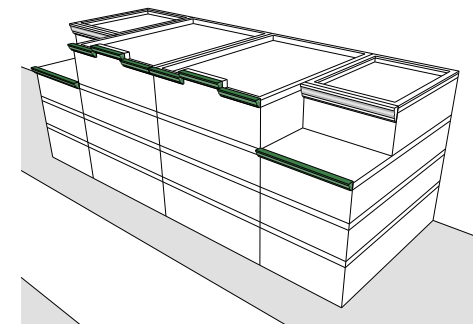
Horizontal Expression Lines



Horizontal Expression Line

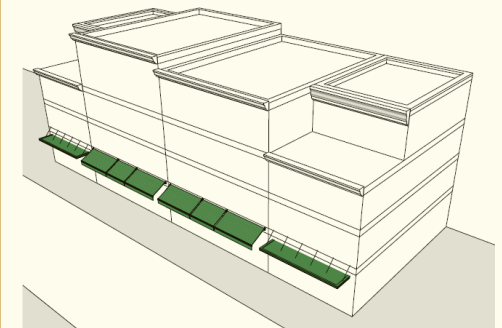


Cornice



Varied Parapet Height

**Planning
Commission
Amendment**



Awning / Canopy

Table 4.14 Building Elements: Forecourt

Code Context: Building Elements, such as a forecourt, are used to satisfy the blank wall area requirements.

Recommended Changes

- Updated definition for this Building Element
- Updated standard based on historic precedent – forecourt can be no more than one-third building length or no more than 50' long
- New model for this Building Element that corresponds with the updated standard
- References to Design Manual models illustrating how to maintain the street wall along a forecourt

✓ **PZ/CC Workshop: Thumbs Up Vote**

MODEL FOR A FORECOURT

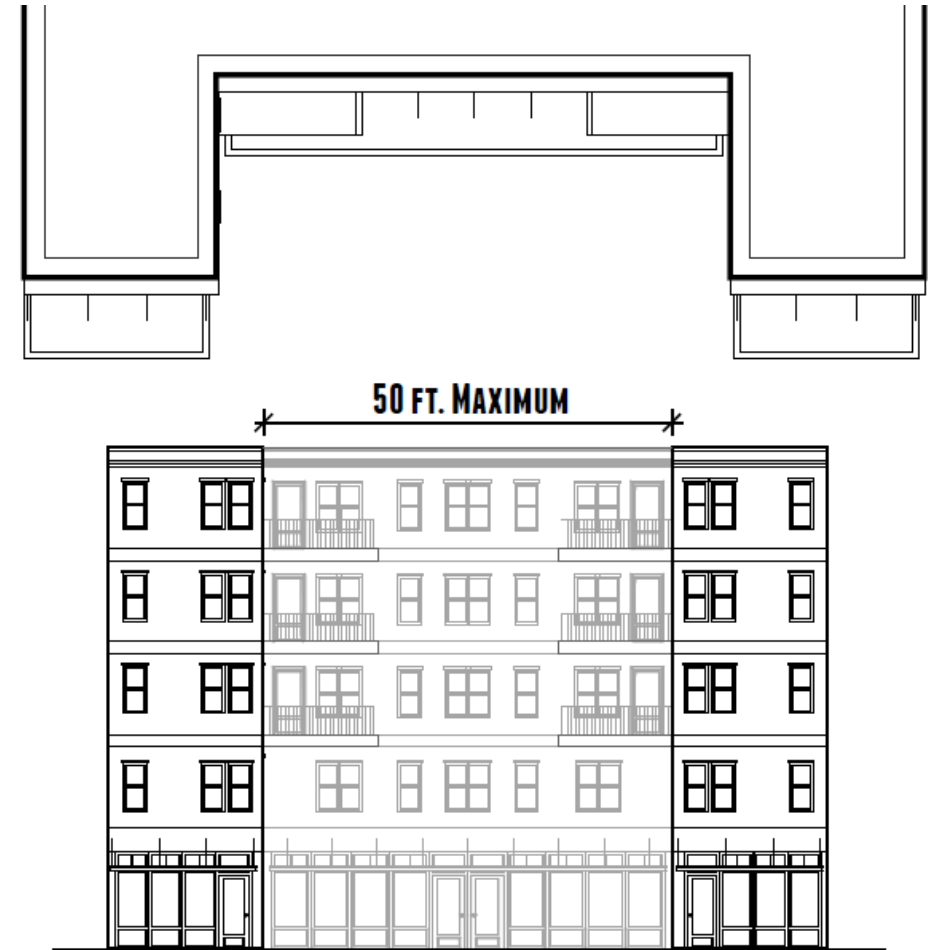


Table 4.14 Building Elements: Rooftop Amenity/Deck

Recommended Changes

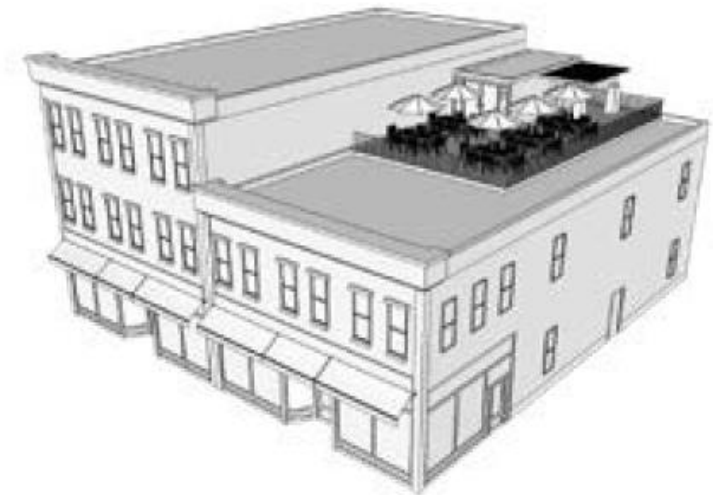
- Definition and model added to the Building Elements Table
- Building Code standards also apply

Changes in Final Draft:

- Added standards regarding:
 - Setbacks for different frontages
 - Railings and their transparency
 - Referenced review by the Historic Preservation Commission where needed

City Council / PZ Workshop Discussion:

- Discussed rooftop gardens / green roofs
- Ensure visual includes “setback”
- Additional requirements for a “setback”
- Allowed for both residential and commercial uses



❖ **PZ/CC Workshop: Direction provided**

Section 4.3.5.6 Durable Building Material Area

Code Context: The city can regulate building materials only in certain instances / geographic locations based on the Texas Legislature updates.

Recommended Changes

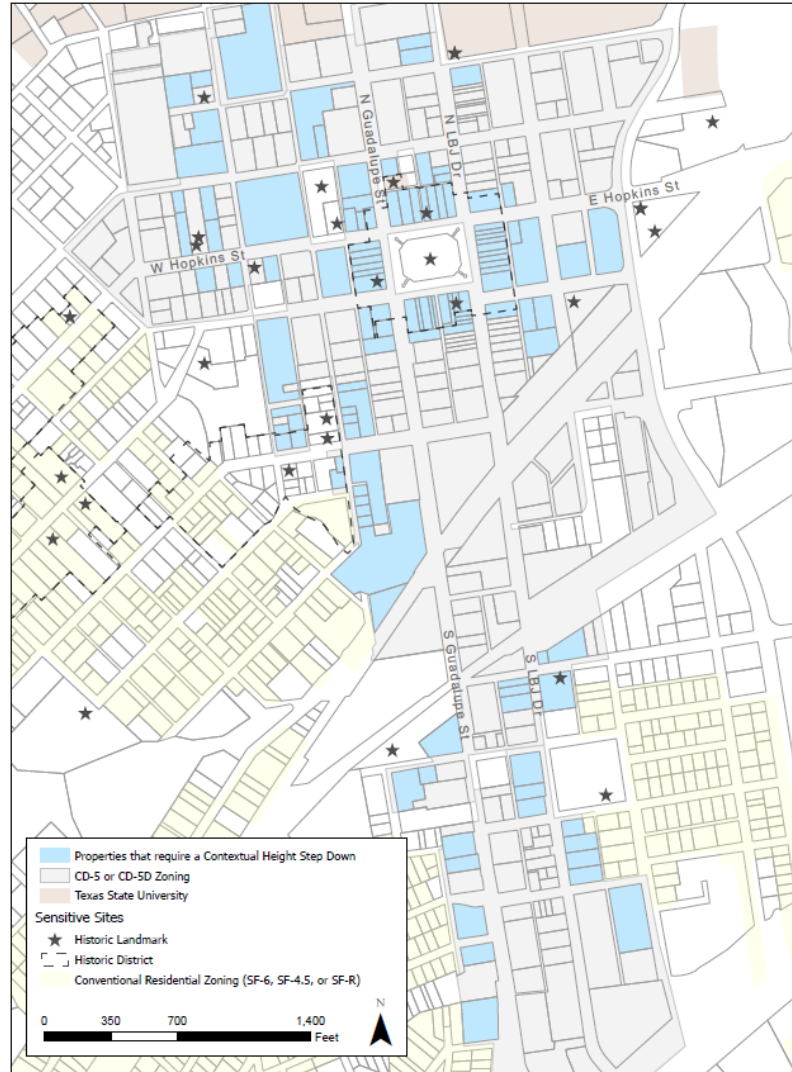
- Update Alternative Compliance language
- **Changes in Final Draft:**
 - Moved “a combination of glass and steel framework” from Primary to Secondary building material

City Council / PZ Workshop Discussion:

Review glass and steel materials

❖ **PZ/CC Workshop: Direction provided**

Section 4.3.6.1.C Neighborhood Transitions Standards: Contextual Height Stepdown



4:42 – 4:49

The “Contextual Height Stepdown Map in and around Downtown San Marcos” was expanded.

Section 4.3.6.1.C Neighborhood Transitions Standards: Contextual Height Stepdown

Code Context: Various “transition” standards are required between higher density new development and existing “sensitive” and/or residential sites.

Notes

- This section will move to be right after the “Durable Material Area” section to keep the standards together
- Focus for these recommendations is on the Contextual Height Stepdown standards

❖ **PZ/CC Workshop: Direction provided**

Planning Commission Amendment

City Council / PZ Workshop Discussion:

- Combine options to provide stronger standards
- Ensure there are still multiple options
- Consensus to increase setback (12’ to 25’)

Adjacent to a Sensitive Site

Changes in Final Draft:

- *Slightly changed options*
- *Annotated models correspond to a new table (Development Code, page 4:44)*



**Planning Commission
Amendment**

Add a condensed version of 4.15 under each Option image to enhance readability

Adjacent to a Sensitive Site

Changes in Final Draft:

- Slightly changed options
- Annotated models correspond to a new table (Development Code, page 4:44)



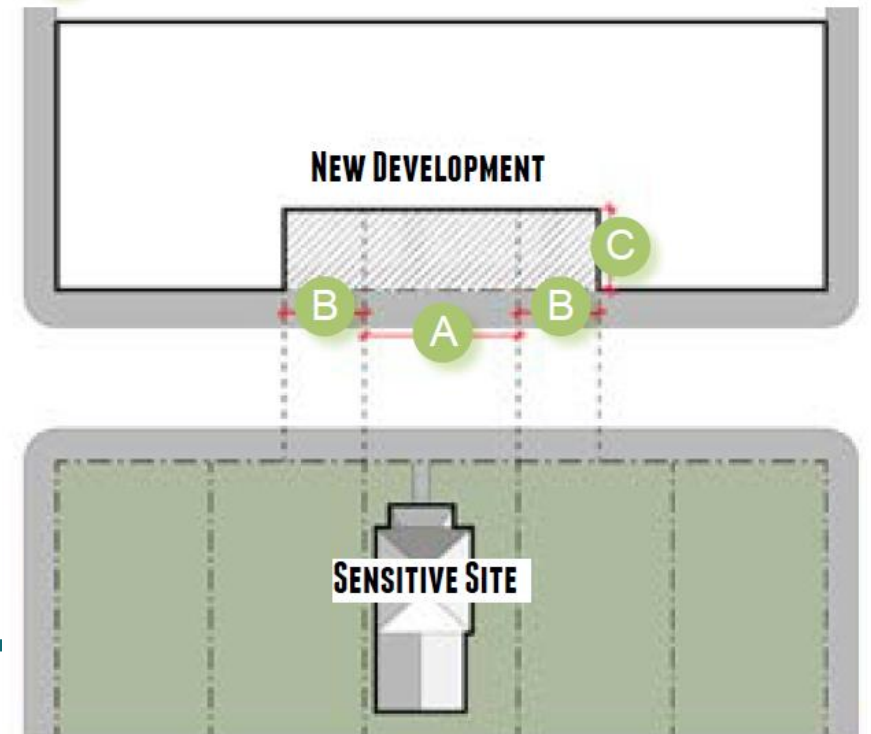
Across the street or alley from a Sensitive Site

Changes in Final Draft:

- *New diagram indicating the area of a new development subject to a sensitive site*
- *Slightly changed options*

Area of a New Development Subject to a Sensitive Site

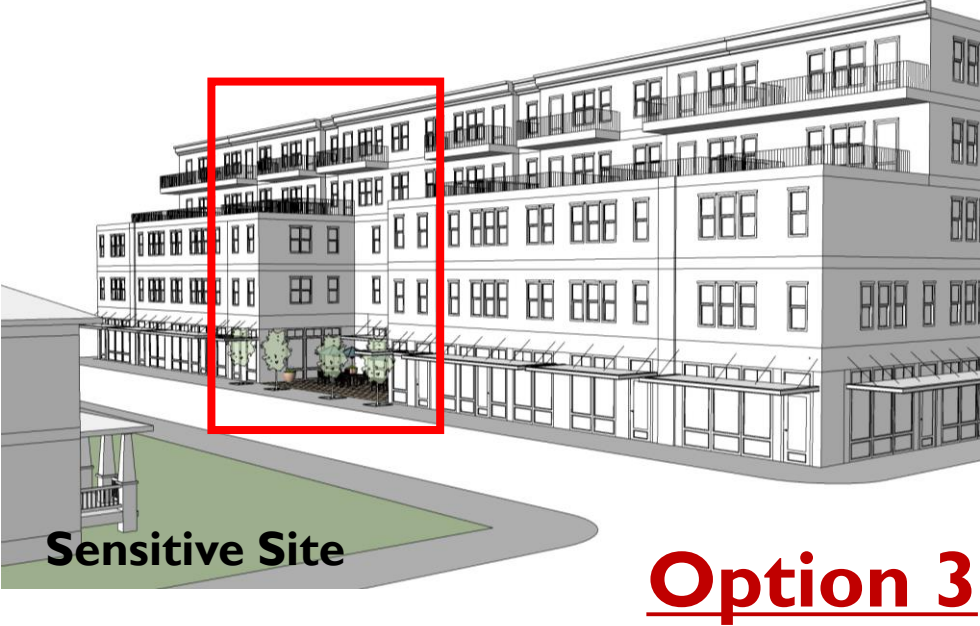
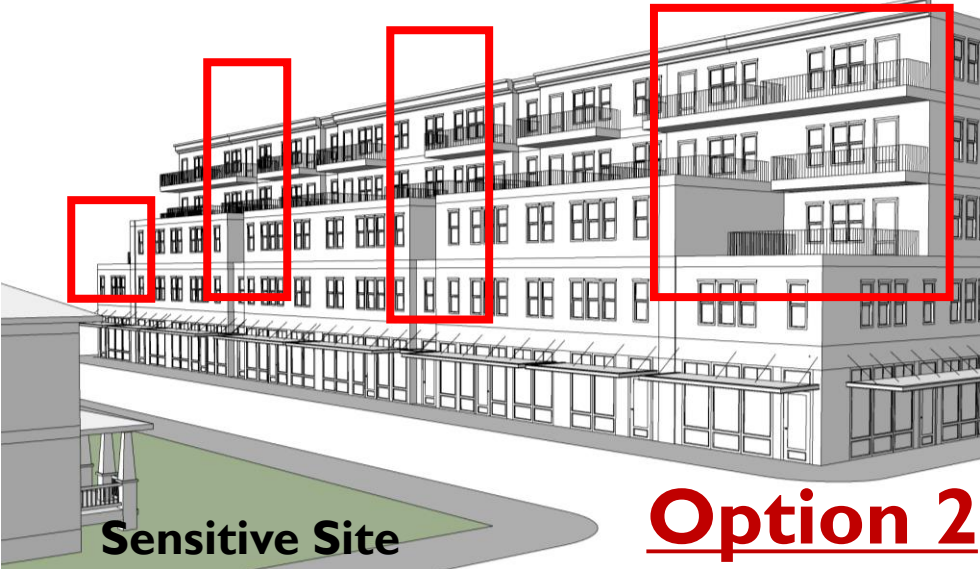
- A** Width of a Sensitive Site
- B** Width of additional area to a sensitive site requirements
- C** Depth of area subject to a sensitive site requirements



Across the street or alley from a Sensitive Site

Changes in Final Draft:

- *New diagram indicating the area of a new development subject to a sensitive site*
- *Slightly changed options*



Recommendations to Guidelines (Design Manual)

Introduction to Recommendations

- Design Manual is used as supplement to the Development Code:
 - Advisory information
 - Part of design / permit review by staff
 - Part of design review for an alternative compliance process by Planning Commission or City Council, as applicable

ARTICLE 1: CD-5D & CD-5 DESIGN GUIDELINES

DIVISION 1: INTRODUCTION

Section A.1.1.1 Purpose

- A. The regulations in CD-5 and CD-5D establish the basic requirements for building mass and scale. [\(see Figure 1-1: Design-Context-Map\)](#); These design guidelines supplement the Character District standards in the following ways:
1. As advisory information for those who wish to better understand the intent of the design standards in CD-5 and CD-5D.
 2. As part of design review for the administrative approval process.
 3. As part of design review for the alternative compliance process when alternatives are applied for.
- B. The guidelines within this document focus on allowing for flexibility in design while also protecting the character of the district and enhancing its pedestrian-friendly atmosphere. The guidelines and the review process through which they are administered seek to maintain a cohesive, livable place. Maintaining an attractive pedestrian-oriented environment is a fundamental concept. In addition, the guidelines serve as educational and planning tools for property owners and their design professionals who seek to make improvements.
- C. The design guidelines also provide a basis for making consistent decisions about the appropriateness of improvement projects requesting alternative strategies through the City's design review process. This includes both administrative review as well as Planning and Zoning Commission and City Council review through the alternative compliance process. The design standards in the Land Development Code and the City's adopted building codes have been codified to meet the intent of the design guidelines. Projects that meet those standards and are not requesting exceptions shall be judged to have met the design guidelines.

DIVISION 2: DESIGN PRINCIPLES

Section A.1.2.1 General Principles applicable to CD-5 and CD-5D

- A. **Purpose.** This section sets forth fundamental principles for improvements in the districts. These principles are broad in nature, focusing on qualitative aspects of design. Each improvement project in the districts should help forward the goals outlined in the Introduction and should also comply with these fundamental design principles:
1. **Design for sustainability.** Aspects of cultural, economic and environmental sustainability that relate to urban design and compatibility should be woven into new developments and improvements.
 2. **Enhance the public realm.** At the heart of the districts is an enhanced public realm, including streets, sidewalks and open spaces. Sidewalks and other pedestrian ways should be designed to invite their use through thoughtful planning and design. Improvement on private property also should enhance the public realm.
 3. **Enhance the pedestrian experience.** Each improvement project should contribute to a pedestrian-friendly environment. This includes defining street edges with buildings and spaces that are visually interesting and attract pedestrian activity. Buildings that convey a sense of human scale and streetscapes that invite walking are keys to successful design in the districts. Providing sidewalks of sufficient width for circulation and outdoor activities, and installing appropriate landscape and streetscape elements are also important.
 4. **Design Excellence.** [Each new development should express excellence in design. This includes the use of high quality, sustainable materials; utilizing high quality construction methods; and paying attention to the details of the project and its design. Thoughtful designs should enhance the character of San Marcos, be sensitive to its surrounding context and create an enjoyable pedestrian experience.](#)

Section A.1.2.2 Principles Specific to Downtown CD-5D

1. **Honor the heritage of the City.** Buildings, sites and components of urban infrastructure that have historic

Sections A.1.2.1 & A.1.2.2 – Design Principles

Section Background: This section outlines fundamental principles for changes/improvements in CD-5 and CD-5D.

Recommended Changes

- Existing design principles are kept
- New principles added, which are taken from the key themes heard during the first round of outreach
 - Design Excellence
 - Contribute to a sense of place
 - Establish a sense of visual continuity
 - Implement appropriate transitions and transition areas



✓ **PZ/CC Workshop: Thumbs Up Vote**

Section A.1.3.1 Description of Context Areas

Section Background: outlines characteristics of the 5 “contexts” in downtown.

Recommended Changes

- Edits to the purpose statement
- New design context descriptions
- Renamed Design Contexts

Changes in Final Draft:

- *Went back to original Design Context names*
- *Slight boundary changes*

Planning Commission Amendment

❖ **PZ/CC Workshop: Direction provided**

City Council / PZ Workshop Discussion:

- Concern with “West Downtown” and “South Downtown”

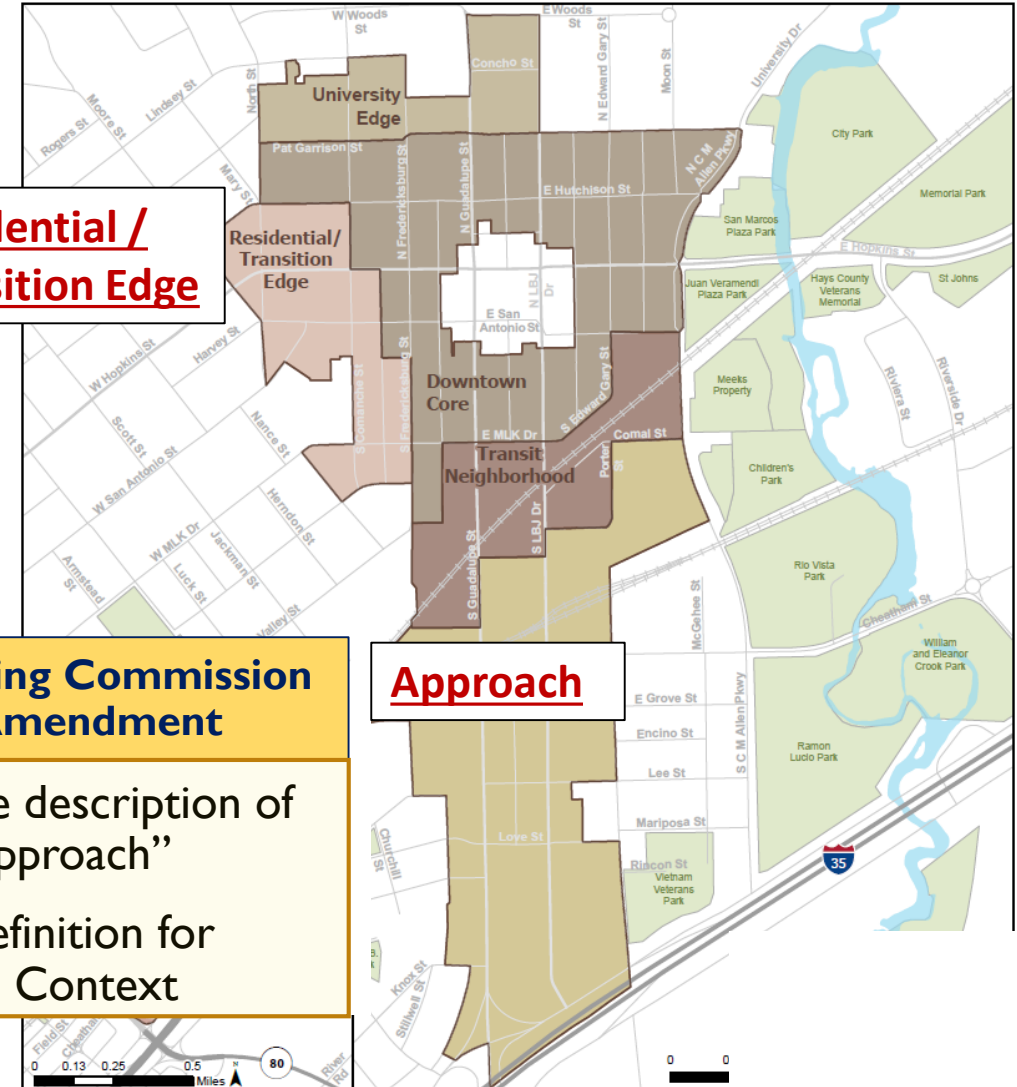
Residential / Transition Edge

Planning Commission Amendment

Update description of the “Approach”

Add definition for Design Context

Approach



Section A.1.3.2 Design Traditions

Recommended Changes

- Description added, along with annotated diagrams and images
- Emphasize and provide guidance for new buildings on historical building design downtown



✓ PZ/CC Workshop: Thumbs Up Vote

Table I.1 “Height Strategy by Context” (Section A.1.4.1)

Section Background: This table should be used when analyzing requests for additional height through an Alternative Compliance.

Recommended Changes:

- Updates design context names and language in some contexts
- Edits to ensure compatibility with historic buildings

Changes in Final Draft:

- *Went back to original Design Context names*

Summary:

University Edge – Ensure a transition in height to the Downtown Historic District.

Downtown Core – Height should be compatible with Downtown Historic buildings.

Residential / Transition Edge – Buildings height should be in scale with adjacent residential uses.

Transit Neighborhood: Allow for variety and creativity in design.

Approach: Buildings here should celebrate community heritage.

✓ **PZ/CC Workshop: Thumbs Up Vote**

Section 4.1.4.2 Varied Massing Requirement

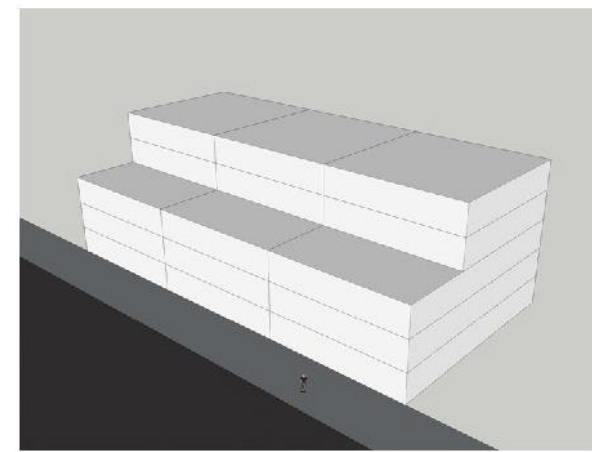
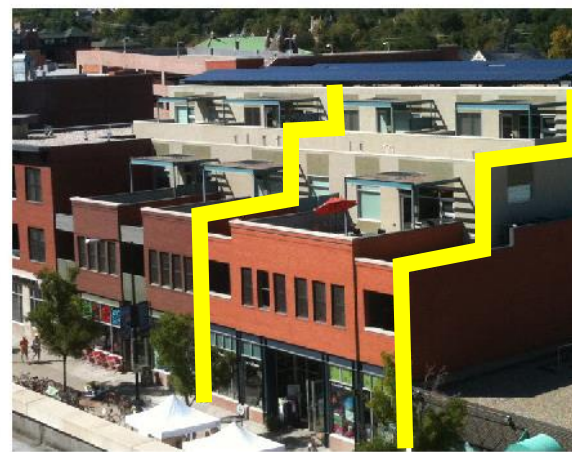
Section Background: This section supplements the Development Code Varied Massing requirements.

Recommended Changes

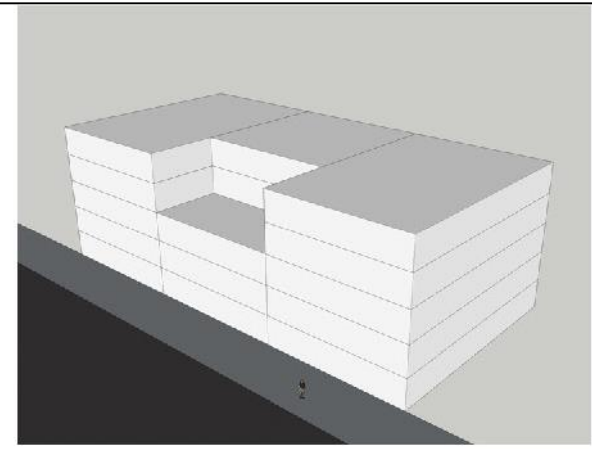
- Title changed from “Varied Upper Floor Massing Requirement” to expand the area this addresses
- Provides new illustrations for Varied Massing requirement as well as additional guidelines

✓ **PZ/CC Workshop: Thumbs Up Vote**

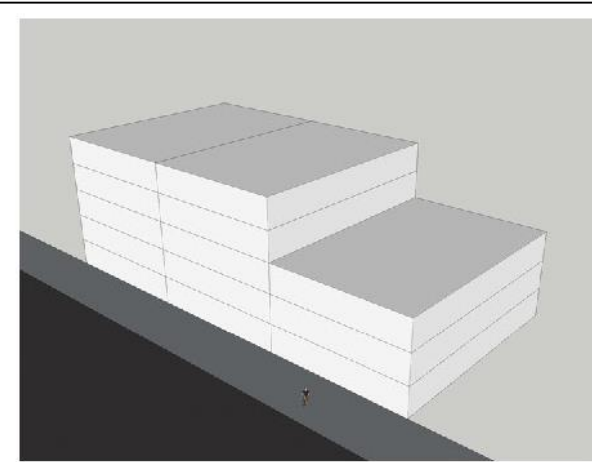
FRONT STEPBACK



MIDDLE STEPBACK



SIDE STEPDOWN



Section A.1.4.3 Expression Elements

Section Background: This section supplements the Development Code Expression Elements

Recommended Changes:

- Additional illustrations
- Alternative compliance options (Secondary Expression Elements)

Changes in Final Draft:

- *Split Vertical & Horizontal elements to reflect changes to Development Code*

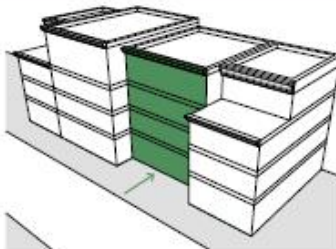
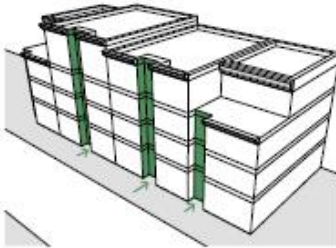
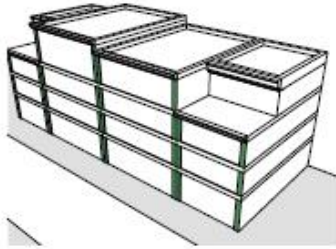
City Council / PZ Workshop Discussion:

- Require more expression elements to be used

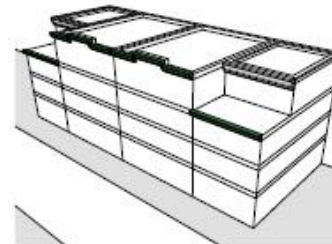
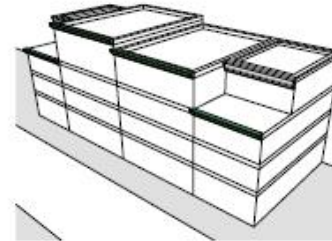
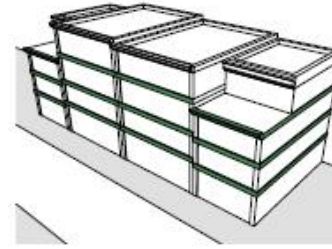
❖ **PZ/CC Workshop: Direction provided**

Section A.1.4.3 Expression Elements

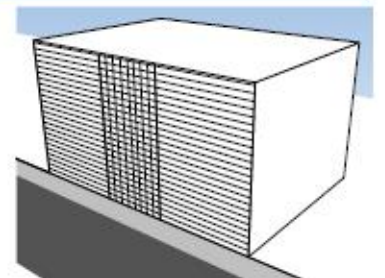
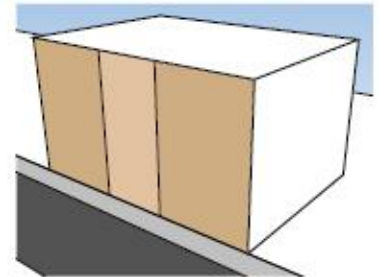
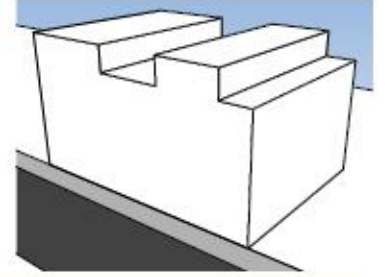
Primary (Vertical) Elements



Primary (Horizontal) Elements



Secondary Elements



Section A.1.4.4 Expression – Four Sided Design

Provides additional detail about how the varied massing and expression requirements can be applied on each side of a building



High Priority Walls should:

- Convey a sense of human scale in massing and detailing
- Have a high level of visual interest
- Invite pedestrian activity
- Provide views into interior functions

Pedestrian-Friendly Walls should:

- Convey a sense of human scale in massing and detailing
- Have a high level of visual interest
- Be compatible with pedestrian activity in the area

✓ PZ/CC Workshop: Thumbs Up Vote

Section A.1.4.5 Views

- Supplement to the varied massing requirements
- Illustrates how to design a building to preserve views to important buildings

Changes in Final Draft:

- *New overarching view guideline that addresses diversity in types of views and view targets*
- *Checkmarks and X's added to existing views table for clarity*
- *Accompanying views memo to address the need for further study*

City Council / PZ Workshop Discussion:

- Interest in a variety of view-related topics
- More in-depth study and guidance needed

❖ **PZ/CC Workshop: Direction provided**

NEW TABLE ADDED:



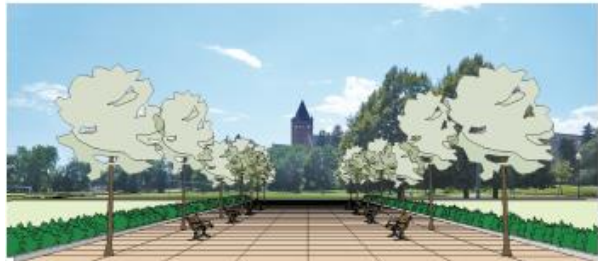
Panoramic View



Framed View with Buildings



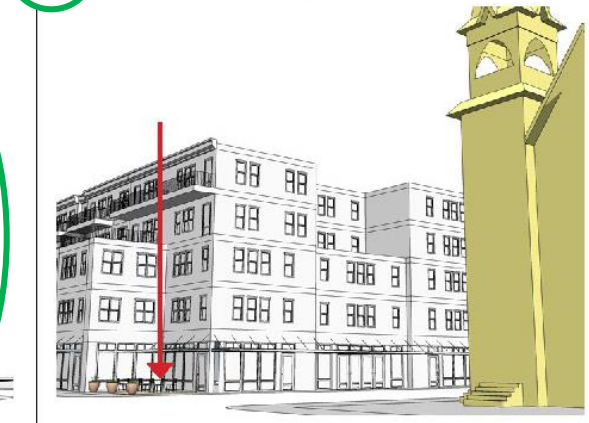
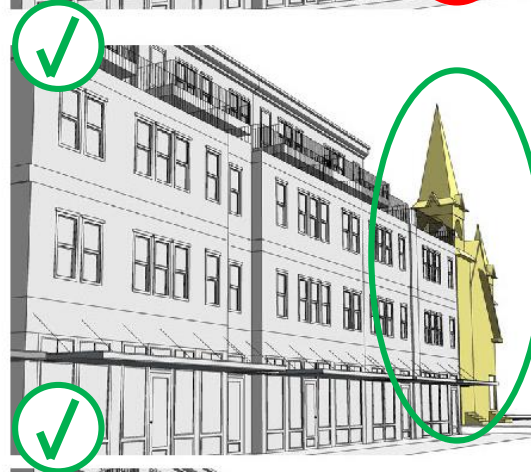
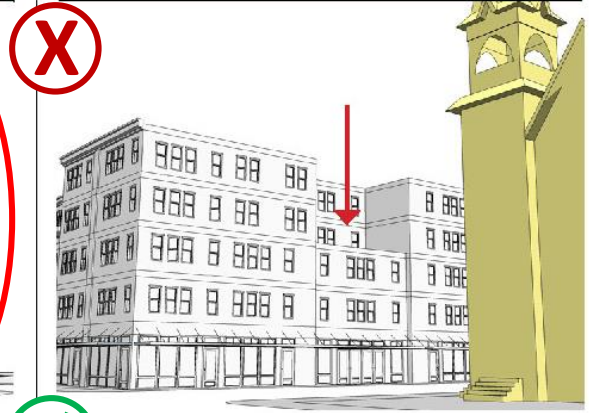
Atrium View



Framed View with Landscaping

View Towards Important Building

View From Important Building

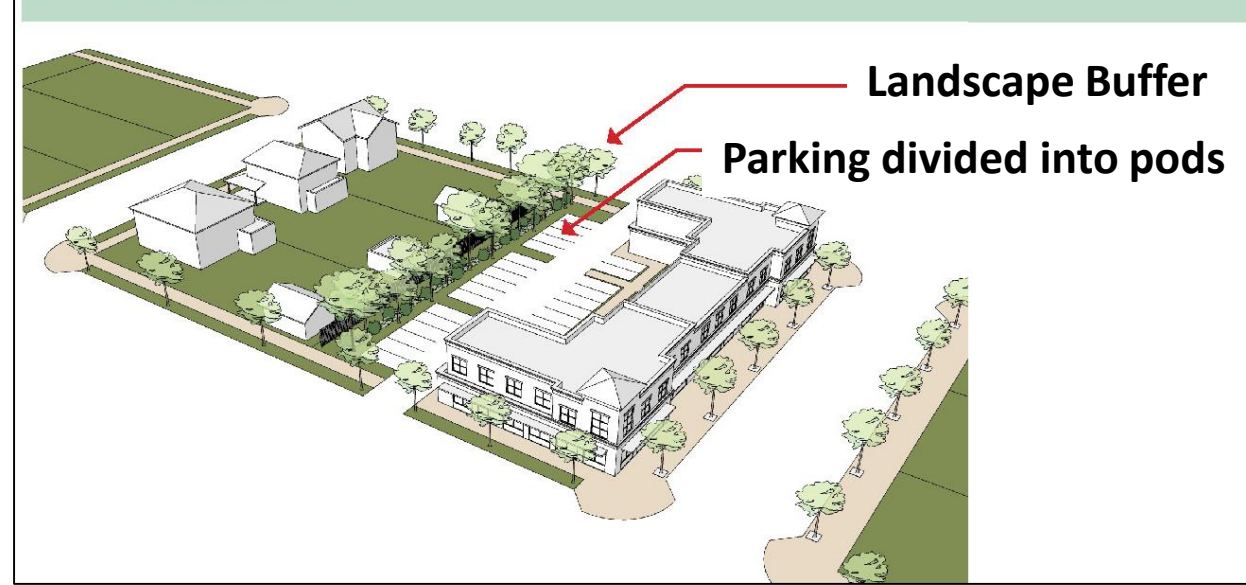


Section A.1.4.5 Neighborhood Transitions

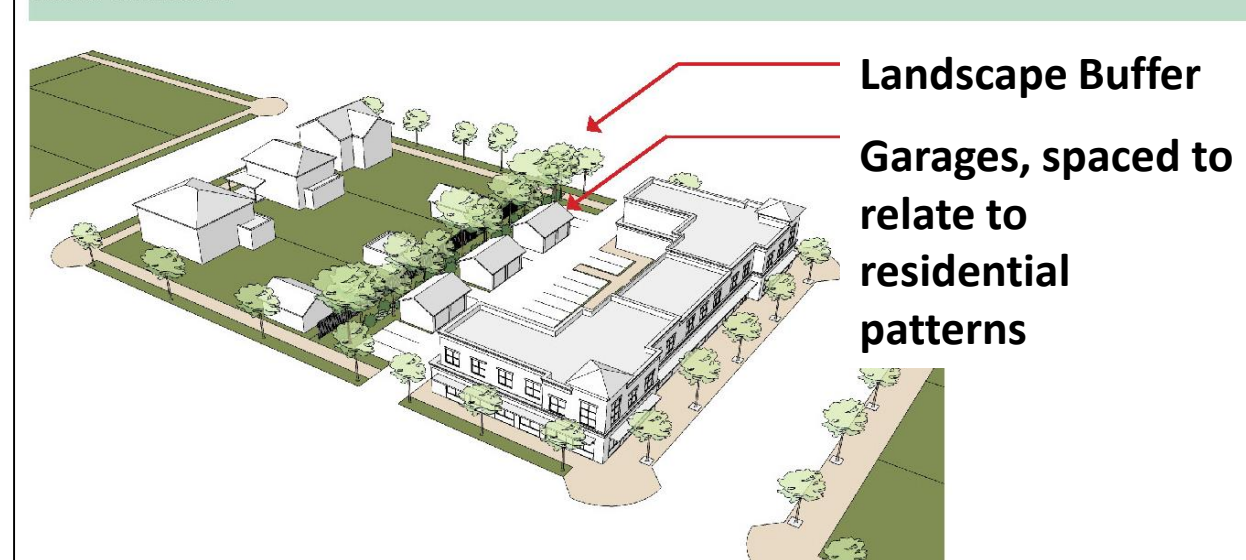
- Provides considerations (in text and illustrations) for designing a transition from higher density to residential
- Additional information for Neighborhood Transitions section can be found in the Development Code

✓ PZ/CC Workshop: Thumbs Up Vote

PARKING WITH LANDSCAPED BUFFER



PARKING WITH GARAGES



Section A.1.4.7 Building Materials

- Guidelines to provide considerations on how to apply building materials, *NOT* what materials are permitted
- Table provides visual examples of materials that could be used downtown, with suggestions on where they're most appropriate
- *Graphics on next slide*

TABLE 1.7 BUILDING MATERIALS

BRICK

Appropriate in all contexts as primary and secondary material.



Glazed Brick

✓ **PZ/CC Workshop: Thumbs Up Vote**

Section A.1.4.7 Building Materials

Excerpt of materials from Design Manual Table 1.7:

- Brick
- Concrete
- Stone

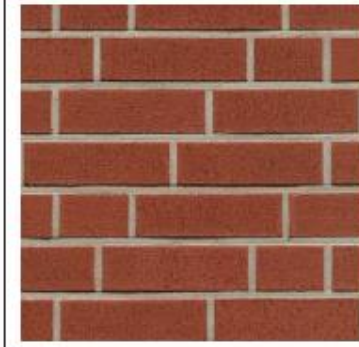
✓ PZ/CC Workshop: Thumbs Up Vote

BRICK

Appropriate in all contexts as primary and secondary material.



Glazed Brick



Red Brick



Yellow Brick

CONCRETE

Appropriate as primary material in the University Edge & Transit Neighborhood.
Appropriate as secondary material in all contexts



Detailed Concrete



Detailed Concrete



Detailed Concrete

STONE

Appropriate in all contexts as primary and secondary material.



Rusticated Stone Veneer



Buff Limestone



Finished Ashlar Stone

Section A.1.4.7 Building Materials

City Council / PZ Workshop Discussion:

- Differentiating between types of siding
- Concern about too much glass and metal

Changes in Final Draft:

- *Added some new language to the “Siding” category to further clarify*

❖ PZ/CC Workshop: Direction provided

STUCCO

Appropriate as a secondary material in all contexts



Detailed Stucco



Detailed Stucco



Detailed Synthetic Stucco

SPECIAL MASONRY

Appropriate as a secondary material in all contexts



Architectural Block



Architectural Block



Terra Cotta

SIDING

Appropriate as a primary material and secondary material in the Residential / Transition Edge and along sensitive edges in the Approach



Shingle Siding



Lap Siding



Modular Panels

Section A.1.4.7 Building Materials

Excerpt of materials from Design Manual Table 1.7:

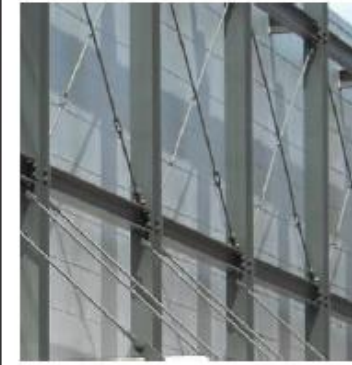
- Glass
- Metal

GLASS

Appropriate as a secondary material in all contexts



[Architectural Glass Blocks](#)



[Glass Paneling](#)



[Glass Curtain Wall](#)

METAL

Appropriate as a secondary material in all contexts



[Metal Framework](#)



[Metal Cladding](#)



[Metal Framework](#)

✓ PZ/CC Workshop: Thumbs Up Vote

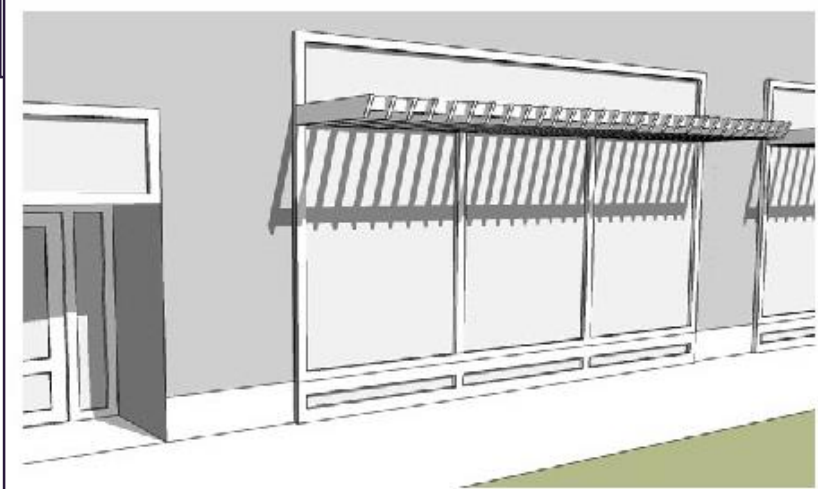
Section A.1.4.8 Design Options for a Pedestrian-Friendly Ground Floor

- Guidelines and illustrations to show how a ground floor should be designed downtown
- To be applied in conjunction with Blank Wall standards in the Development Code
- Design Manual includes 5 Options:
 - Windows
 - Display Areas
 - Canopy/awning
 - Wall Art
 - Planters/landscaping

—————→
Example of a Canopy/Awning Design option to create a pedestrian friendly ground floor

CANOPIES AND AWNINGS

Canopies and awnings help define the street-level pedestrian area and may provide shade or highlight entries and storefront windows.



✓ **PZ/CC Workshop: Thumbs Up Vote**

Section A.1.4.9 Strategies to Define the Street Wall of a Forecourt

- Guidelines and illustrations to show 3 design options for a forecourt edge
- To be applied in conjunction with Forecourt Building Element standards in the Development Code
- **Changes in Final Draft:**
 - *Edits to models*

City Council / PZ Workshop Discussion:

- Models don't reflect San Marcos context



Colonnade / Arcade



Planters



Site Wall

Planning Commission Amendment

Add a definition for "Street Wall"

❖ **PZ/CC Workshop: Direction provided**

Section A.1.4.10 Improving an Existing Front Setback

- Text and models added
- Guidance for additions to existing buildings
- **Changes in Final Draft:**
 - *Edits to models*

City Council / PZ Workshop Discussion:

- Models don't reflect San Marcos context

❖ **PZ/CC Workshop: Direction provided**



*Hardscaped frontage +
outdoor dining*



Landscape and pedestrian access



*Design elements +
outdoor product display*



Conditioned transparent enclosure



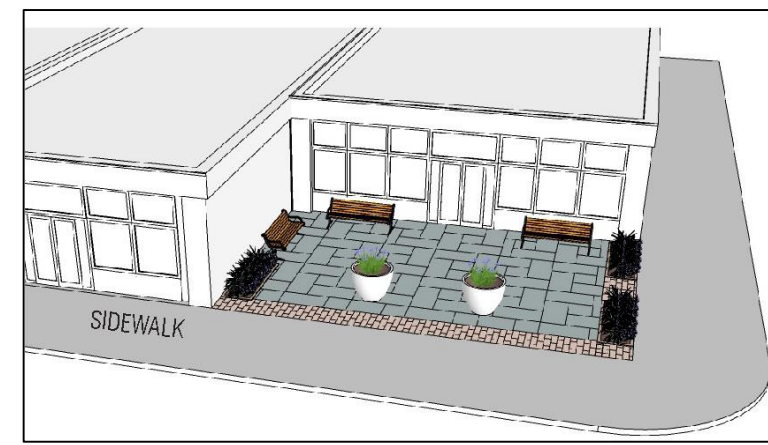
Building Expansion

Section A.1.4.11 Ways to Create and Activate Outdoor Space

- Models to show where outdoor space can be located on a site
- Models to illustrate how existing setbacks and outdoor space can be activated
- Provides guidance for incremental development or additions to existing buildings downtown outlined in the “Nonconforming Build-To” Requirements of the Development Code.



Alley accessed parking and landscape treatments



Corner Forecourt / Plaza Treatments



Pedestrian Pass-Through and Forecourt



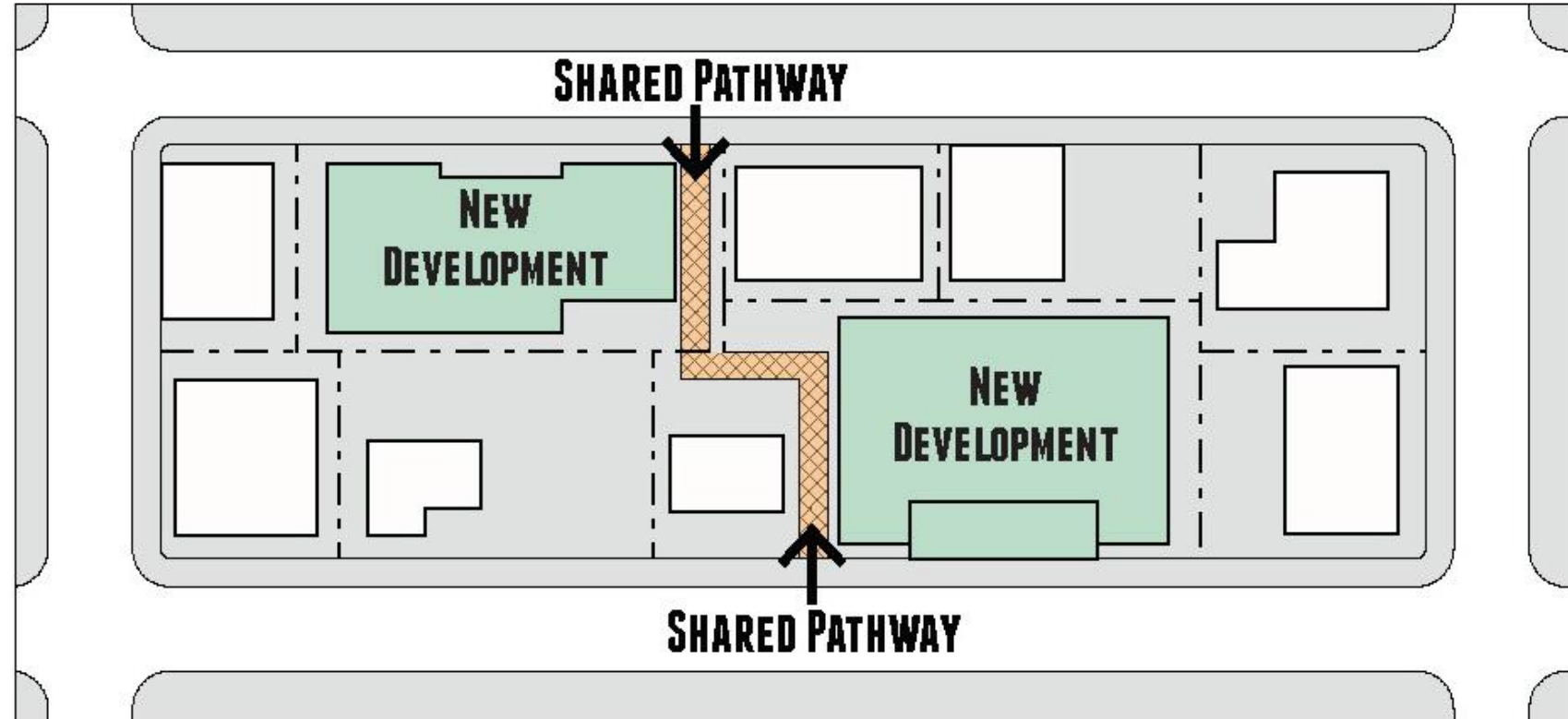
Shared Plaza

✓ **PZ/CC Workshop: Thumbs Up Vote**

Section A.1.4.12 Connectivity

Guidelines (text and model) to provide additional information about providing pedestrian pathways through sites, especially for large new developments

THROUGH-BLOCK CONNECTIVITY



✓ PZ/CC Workshop: Thumbs Up Vote

Section A.1.4.13 Working with Topography

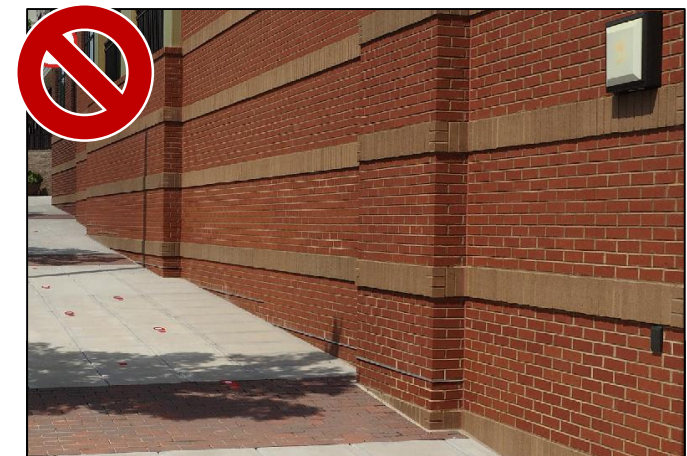
Guidelines (text and images) to explain how to design a building to consider the topography and minimize large foundation walls and difficult to navigate building entrances

✓ PZ/CC Workshop: Thumbs Up Vote

This image is inappropriate because a pedestrian scale is not maintained

Design a building to step with the existing topography of a site

Integrate the elements of a building facade to respond to the changes in topography



Section A.1.4.14 Strategies for Activating Street Frontages

Provides visual suggestions for how buildings (existing or new) set back from the property line can activate their frontage

Arcade



Landscaping



Outdoor Dining



✓ PZ/CC Workshop: Thumbs Up Vote

Planning and Zoning Commission Direction

At the February 9, 2021 meeting, the Planning and Zoning Commission recommended **approval** of the Downtown Design standards and guidelines, with an 8-0 vote, with the following amendments:

1. Update the description of the “The Approach” so that it is defined correctly.
2. In Table 4.13, add in a fourth horizontal element of awnings/canopies.
3. Add a formal definition for “Design Context” to Chapter 8, Definitions.
4. Condense Table 4.15 and place it underneath Options 1, 2, and 3 models.
5. Add a formal definition for “Street Wall” to Chapter 8, Definitions.

Staff Recommendation

Staff recommends **approval** of the Development Code and Design Manual with the Planning and Zoning Commission recommended amendments.