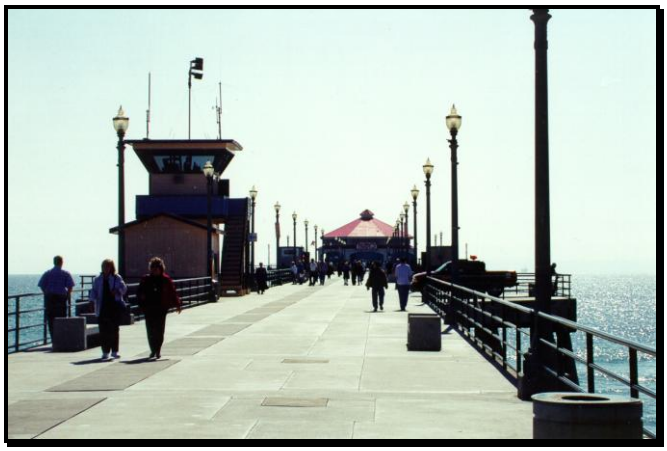
Chapter 5

Downtown/Main Street Commercial



Huntington Beach Pier

A. Introduction

The guidelines in this chapter provide design direction and concepts applicable to new development and rehabilitation of existing structures within downtown Huntington Beach. The design guidelines reflect the Mediterranean design theme and pedestrian-oriented character of the area and are intended to promote high standards in site planning, architectural design and landscaping.

These guidelines address design of private and public improvements and are intended to supercede the existing Downtown Design Guidelines. The Downtown/Main Street Commercial guidelines should be utilized in conjunction with the General Commercial design guidelines.

Downtown Huntington Beach

B. General Design Objectives

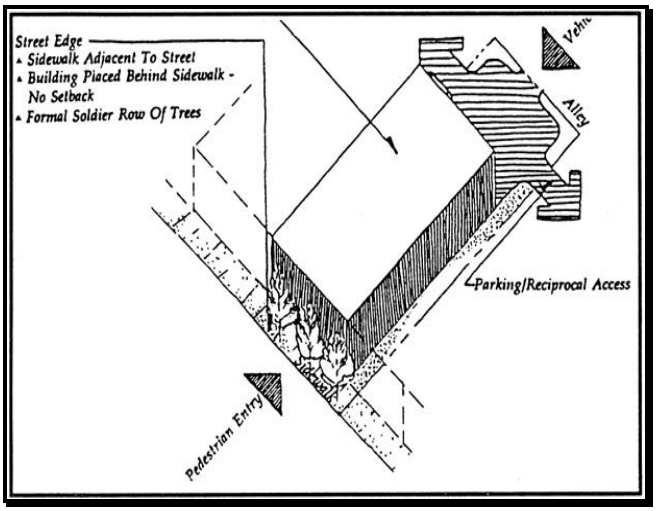
The design of new development projects, additions and rehabilitation of existing structures within the Downtown should:

- Enhance the City's downtown as a principal focal point of the community. Developments should contribute to the a pedestrian-oriented "village-like" environment and should physically and visually relate to the adjacent shoreline
- Emphasize design elements that maintain viewsheds of the shoreline and Pier
- Consider the scale, proportion and character of development in the surrounding area
- Establish pedestrian-oriented, attractive, inviting, imaginative and functional site arrangement of buildings and parking areas, and a high quality architectural and landscape design which provides proper access, visibility and identity
- Facilitate and encourage pedestrian activity and mitigate existing adverse automobile oriented planning patterns
- Preserve and incorporate natural amenities unique to the site into the project development proposal
- Preserve and incorporate structures which are distinctive due to their age, cultural significance, or unique architectural style into the project

PART I - Private Improvements

C. Site Planning

a. Street adjacent building siting is encouraged.



Street adjacent building siting.

b. Provide corner "cut-offs" for buildings on prominent intersections.

c. Place ground-level front elevations of the building on the front property line to maintain the continuity of the "street wall."

d. Provide additional setbacks from the front setback line at public plaza areas.

e. Create continuous pedestrian activity in an uninterrupted sequence by minimizing gaps between buildings.

f. Avoid placing parking lots that interrupt commercial space along street frontages.

Pedestrian paseos are encouraged

g. Avoid blank walls and other "dead" spaces at the ground level.

h. Create pedestrian paseos to parking lots at the rear of buildings.

i. Use building indentations to create small pedestrian plazas along the street wall.

j. The first floor of any commercial building within Downtown should be built on the front “build-to” line.

k. Storefronts and major building entries should be oriented towards major streets, courtyards or plazas.

l. Buildings on corners should include storefront design features on at least 50% of the side street elevation wall area.

D. Architectural Guidelines

1. Architectural Imagery

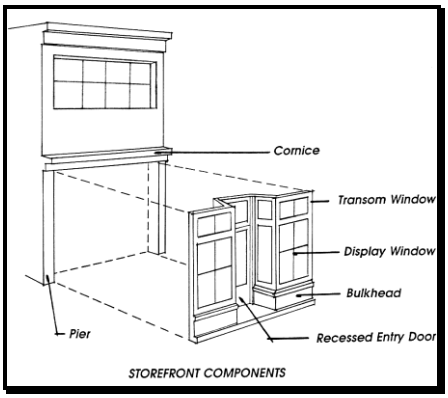
- Architectural Style

If an overall positive ambiance is to be created and if historic integrity is to be preserved, new infill development and renovation to existing structures must be respectful of its surroundings. In the downtown area, "Mediterranean" style design solutions and elements characteristic to that style are strongly encouraged.

Architectural styles that attempt to copy other historically significant styles found in the downtown area may also be acceptable. Designs that are compatible, but distinguishable from their historic neighbors are encouraged. Design solutions may use historic ornament in new "revival" interpretations of older styles. These may be appropriate as long as the result is visually compatible with its surroundings and the design is distinguishable as new.

- Use of Traditional Facade Components

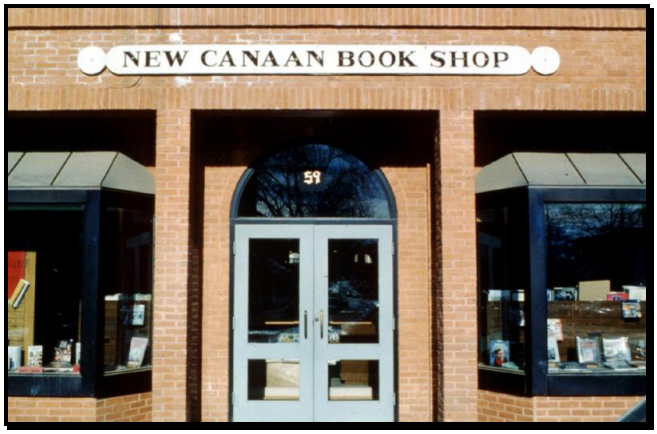
Repetition of traditional facade components creates patterns and alignments that visually link buildings within a block, while allowing individual identity of each building. These elements are familiar to the pedestrian and help establish a sense of scale. The use of traditional facade components is encouraged. Some traditional facade components include bulkheads, arches, arcades, plazas, and balconies. These elements may be reinterpreted in a variety of ways.



Traditional storefront components

- Façade Rhythm

The typical commercial lot design has resulted in buildings of relatively uniform width that create a familiar rhythm. This pattern helps to visually tie the streetscape together. Reinforcement of this facade rhythm is encouraged.



Desired storefront composition

- Perceived Scale of Structures

Buildings with "human-scale" proportions are most suitable to the atmosphere of downtown Huntington Beach. "Human-scaled" buildings respect the existing architectural character of the district while enhancing its marketability as a unique commercial and residential area.

Desirable distinction between upper and lower floors

- Distinction between Upper and Lower Floors

The first floor of commercial buildings should be predominantly comprised of transparent surfaces (windows), with a high ratio of void (windows) to solid (wall) areas.

- Building Heights

In the downtown area, new development infill should be compatible with the height and scale of surroundings buildings.

- The Pedestrian Experience

Buildings facing pedestrian streets and plazas should incorporate design features that provide visual interest at the street level. Building elements should be designed in a way that enhances the visibility of merchandise and store related activities by pedestrians.

- Predominantly Transparent Ground Floor Facades in Commercial/Retail Areas

Storefronts with blank or solid opaque walls degrade the quality of the pedestrian experience. To enhance the pedestrian atmosphere, it is important to provide transparent storefronts to maintain visual interest.

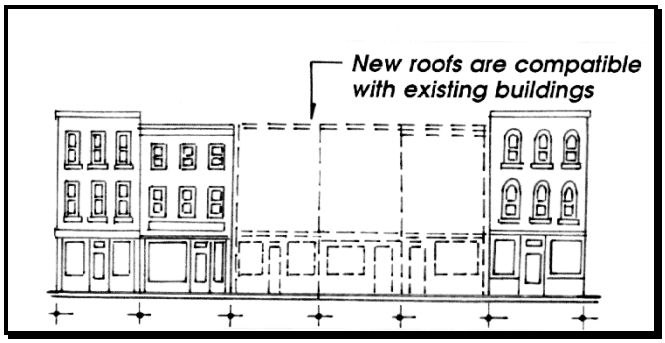
2. Building Form and Mass

a. Tall buildings should be made less imposing by "stepping back" from the street level.

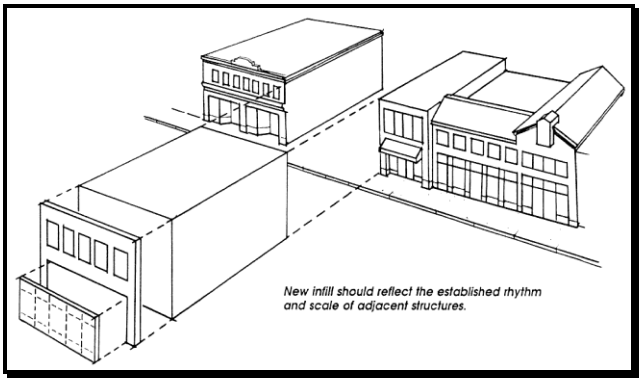
b. The characteristic proportion (relationship of height to width) of existing facades should be reflected in new infill development.

c. Building facades should be detailed in such a way as to make them appear smaller in scale. This can be achieved by articulating the separate floor levels with horizontal bands or by increasing the level of detail on the building at the street level.

d. New buildings should be designed to create pleasing transitions to surrounding development. The bulk of infill buildings should relate to the prevailing scale of adjacent development.



Divide large infill into a series of equal structural bays



Appropriate infill proportion

e. The predominant difference between upper story openings and street level storefront openings (windows and doors) should be maintained.

f. Whenever a proposed infill building is wider than the existing facades on the street, the infill facade should be broken down into a series of appropriately proportioned "structural bays" or components such as a series of columns or masonry piers.

g. Long, blank, unarticulated street wall facades are strongly discouraged.

h. If maintaining a horizontal rhythm or alignment in an infill building is very difficult or otherwise impossible, the use of fabric canopies or awnings is encouraged to establish a shared horizontal storefront rhythm.

i. Monolithic street wall facades should be "broken" by vertical and horizontal articulation.

- breaks (reveals, recesses) in the surface of the wall

itself

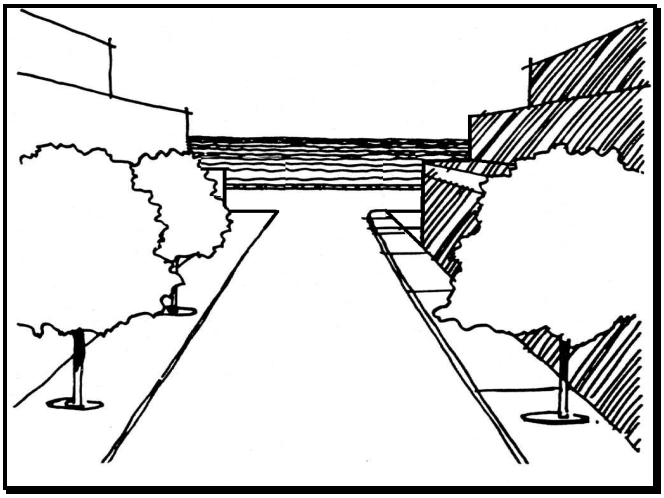
- placement of window and door openings
- the placement of balconies, awnings and canopies

3. Views

a. Buildings should be designed to take advantage of ocean views by providing windows, balconies, stairway landings and other design features.

b. Infill buildings should be designed to respect the views of existing buildings, where possible. View corridors should be designed through large developments.

c. Rooftops should be designed to be visually attractive when viewed from adjacent buildings.



Preserve Ocean Views

4. Environment

a. Design of buildings and open spaces along the first block inland from Pacific Coast Highway should take into account the strong prevailing westerly winds.

b. The shadowing effect a new building will have upon adjacent development should be addressed.

Open courtyards provide additional sunlight to adjacent buildings

c. The effects of shadows cast by buildings into open areas such as courtyard and plazas should be analyzed.

d. Additional sunlight should be brought into large developments through the use of courtyards, atriums and skylights.

5. Building Materials and Colors

a. Exterior building materials should compliment the materials used on adjacent buildings. The following materials are considered appropriate for buildings within Downtown Huntington Beach:

- *stucco (smooth or textured)*
- *smooth block*
- *granite*
- *marble*

b. Accent materials should be used to highlight building features and provide visual interest. Accent materials may include any of the following:

- *Wood*
- *Glass*
- *Glass block (storefront only)*
- *Glass block (transom)new or used face-brick*
- *Tile, (bulkhead)*
- *Brick*
- *Concrete*
- *Stone*

- *Copper*
- *Cloth Awnings*
- *Plaster (smooth or textured)*
- *Painted Metal*
- *Wrought Iron*

c. The appropriateness of any given color for a particular building depends on a number of factors, including, architectural style, building material, building features and details, building size, building orientation, building context, and climatic considerations.

- Use subtle/muted colors on larger and simpler buildings
- Use multiple and more intense colors on small buildings or those with elaborate detailing
- Encourage contrasting colors which accent architectural details
- Encourage colors which accent entrances
- No more than three colors should be used on any given facade, including "natural" colors such as unpainted brick or stone
- Avoid using colors that are not harmonious with colors found on adjacent buildings

d. Light building colors are encouraged. Soft tones ranging from white to very light pastels are preferred. Neutral colors such as off-white, beige and sand are also acceptable.

e. Finish material with "natural" colors such as brick, stone, copper, etc., should be used where practicable.

f. The orientation of a building should be taken into consideration when selecting colors, because it affects color appearance. Colors on south and west facades appear warmer than if placed on north or east sides.

6. Roofs and Upper Story Details

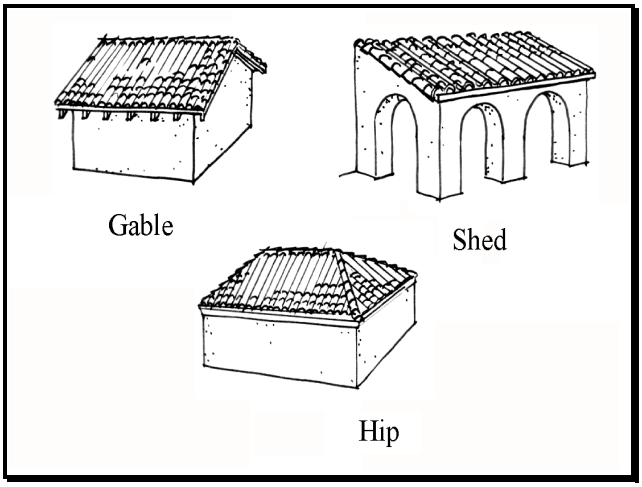
a. Roof materials most indicative of Mediterranean architecture such as clay shingle tile, concrete shingle tile, Mission tile and other tile-like designs are encouraged. Other acceptable roof materials include copper and painted metal.

b. Flat roofs are strongly discouraged unless an ornamental roof cornice is included. Mansard-style roofs have no historical context in Downtown Huntington Beach and should be avoided.

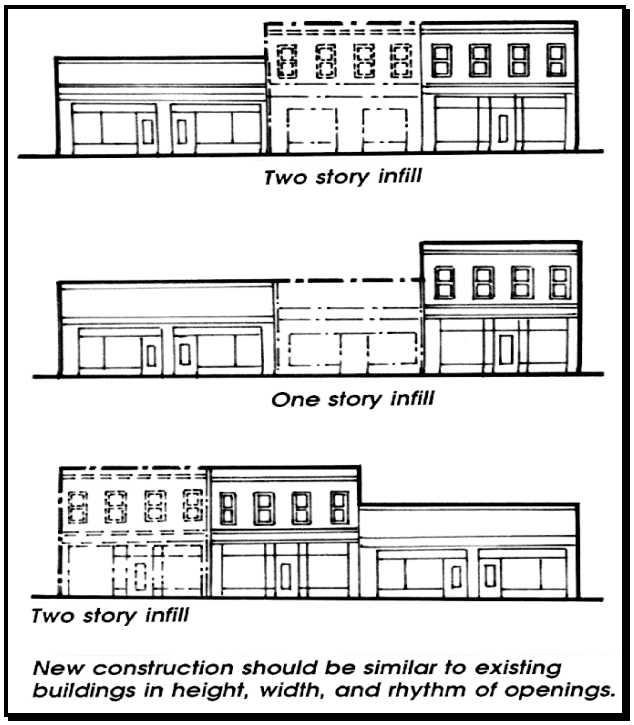
c. The visible portion of sloped roofs should be sheathed with a roofing material complementary to the architectural style of the building and other surrounding buildings.

d. Roof-mounted mechanical or utility equipment should be screened. The method of screening should be architecturally integrated with the structure in terms of materials, color, shape and size. Mechanical equipment should not be visible from any angle or any height outside of the building.

e. Chimneys, roof flashing, rain gutters, downspouts, vents and other roof protrusions should be finished to complement or accent the adjacent materials and colors.



Example of appropriate roofs



7. Windows

a. Multi-paned windows are encouraged. Simple shape window forms are preferred.

b. Windows, which let more light in, such as clerestory windows, skylights or greenhouse windows and wells are strongly encouraged.

c. When windows are added or changed, the established facade theme and window rhythm along the whole block should be taken into consideration.

d. Use of clear glass (at least 88% light transmission) on the first floor is recommended.

e. Storefront windows should be as large as possible with a minimum 18 inch bulkhead. By limiting the bulkhead height, the visibility to the storefront displays and retail interior is maximized. Maximum bulkhead heights for new construction should be approximately 36 inches.

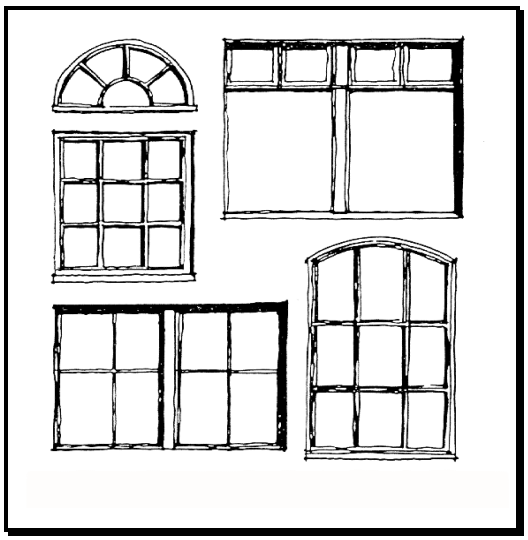
f. Introducing or changing the location or size of windows or other openings that alter the architectural rhythm or character of the original building is strongly discouraged.

g. Windows should provide variety along street frontage. The following is a list of appropriate window treatments:

- Tile borders
- Colored window framing
- Shutters
- Plant-on relief features
- Iron or wooden grills
- Dormers
- Projecting bay windows
- Window boxes
- Window pop-outs

h. Window security grates or grilles along street frontages are discouraged unless integrated with the overall architectural theme.

i. Brightly colored cloth or painted metal awnings can enhance the visual appearance of buildings. Awnings should be of a solid color or two-color stripes and designed to coordinate with the architectural divisions of the building.



A variety of window shapes

8. Doorways and Entrances

a. Building entries should be protected from the elements and provide a “sense of shelter” by incorporating overhangs and simple recesses.

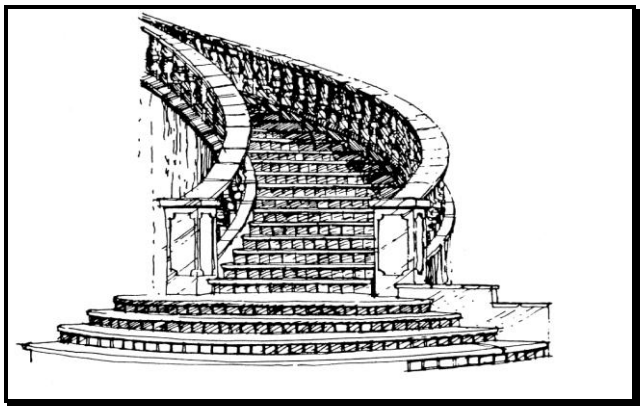
b. Building entries should afford a “sense of entry” to the building.

c. Appropriate design treatments include:

- Traditional wooden door
- Contemporary wood and glass paned door
- Stucco arch surrounding the door
- Brightly colored awning over the door
- Brightly pained door or framing
- The use of a wall or eave to emphasize the door
- Tile lead-in path to door

d. Doors to retail shops should include a high percentage of glass area.

9. Exterior Stairways

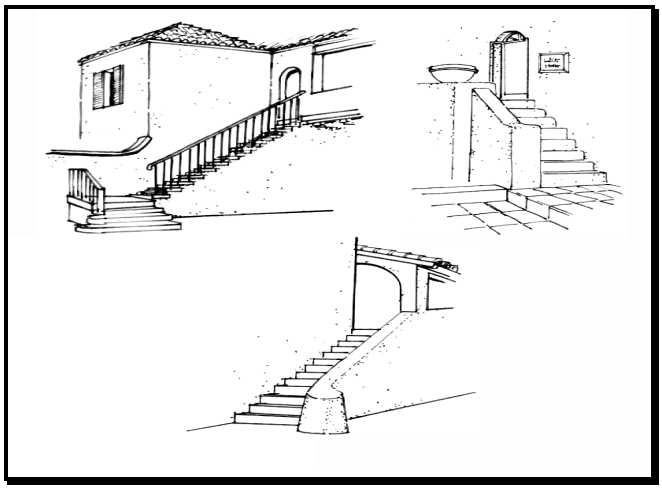


Decorative features add visual interest.

a. Simple, clean, bold stairway projections which complement the architectural massing and form of the building are encouraged.

b. Stairways should be designed with decorative features such as tile risers and rails to create visual interest while meeting functional needs.

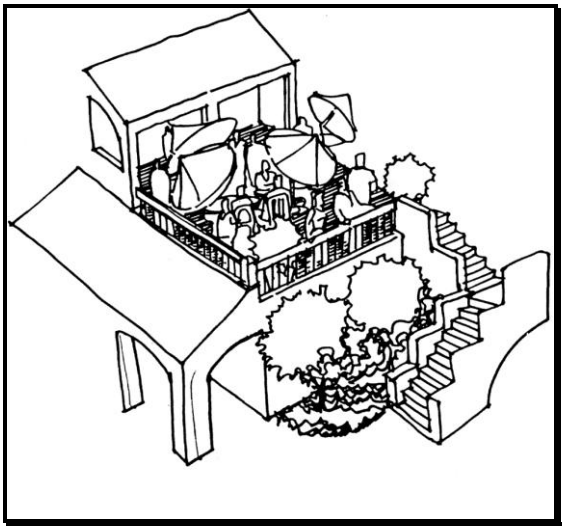
c. Stairways should be of smooth stucco or plaster.



Example of exterior stairways

10. Balconies and Rooftops

a. Inclusion of balconies and rooftop outdoor areas in building design is encouraged. Balconies can be designed as deep insets on the building form or projections from the building. Rooftops can provide usable outdoor space in both residential and commercial developments.



Rooftops can provide exciting outdoor spaces. The incorporation of balconies and usable rooftops onto or within the building form is encouraged

Balconies in Huntington Beach

11. Arches and Arcades

a. Arches should be semi-circular or slightly flat. Parabolic arches are strongly discouraged.

b. Care must be taken that arches appear authentic. The integrity of an arch is lost when its mass is not proportional to its size. Columns must relate in scale to the building.

c. Columns may be square, rectangular or round. The column height should be 4-5 times the width of the column.

d. A base should be incorporated at the bottom of the column. The use of capitals and column bands is strongly encouraged.

12. Plazas/ Courtyards

a. Plazas/courtyards are encouraged within downtown Huntington Beach.

b. Ample seating should be provided in the plaza areas.

Seating provided in a shaded area

c. A visual focal point such as a fountain or public art should be provided within plaza/courtyard areas.

Plaza fountain

Provide focal points in plazas/courtyard areas

13. Walls and Fences

a. Walls should be integrated with the overall building design.

b. Care must be taken to maintain scenic views available to the community. Wall design should preserve views to the greatest extend possible.

c. Walls may be constructed of stucco or brick and enhanced with decorative inset tiles, wrought iron fencing, high ornate iron entry gates, or low planters incorporated into the base of a wall.

14. Other Building Elements/Details

a. Building and site details should be integrated into the overall design of the building or development.

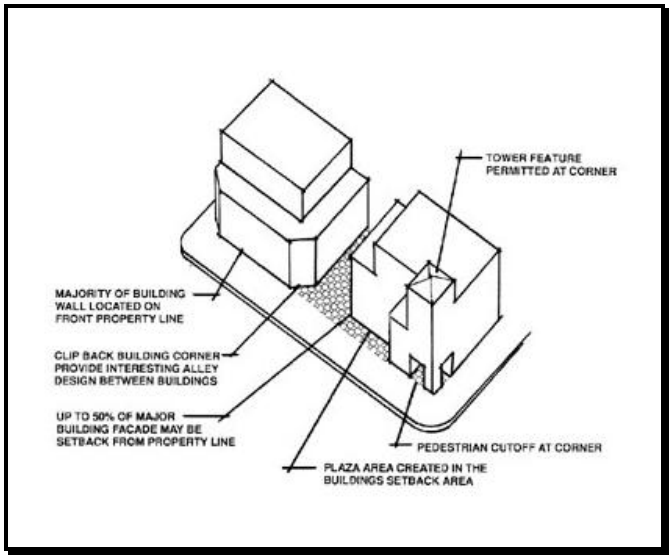
b. Gutters and downspouts should be properly screened where necessary, unless designed as a continuous architectural feature. Exposed gutters and downspouts should be colored to match the fascia or wall material to which they are attached.

c. Accessory elements such as mailboxes, trash enclosures, newspaper racks, and security gates should be compatible with the architectural style of the project.

The clock tower is a focal point for the plaza

15. Focal Elements

Vertical building focal elements are encouraged. Towers, spires, or domes become landmarks and serve as focal/orientation points for the community.



Use of towers are encouraged

A focal point in Downtown Huntington Beach

16. Parking Structures

a. Where possible, elevators and stairs should be located on the perimeter of parking structures.

b. Shops, offices or other commercial spaces should be incorporated on the ground level of parking structures along street frontages. Landscaping should be provided adjacent to wall surfaces.

E. Storefront Design Guidelines

Although the storefront is only one of the architectural features of the facade, it is the most important visual element for Downtown buildings. Storefronts are the most frequently altered building elements and their modification can affect the character of the building and the streetscape.

Traditional storefronts are comprised of few decorative elements that repeat across the face of the building (e.g., structural bays containing window and door openings, continuous cornice line, transoms, bulkheads), and integrate the storefront into the entire building facade.

Main Street storefronts

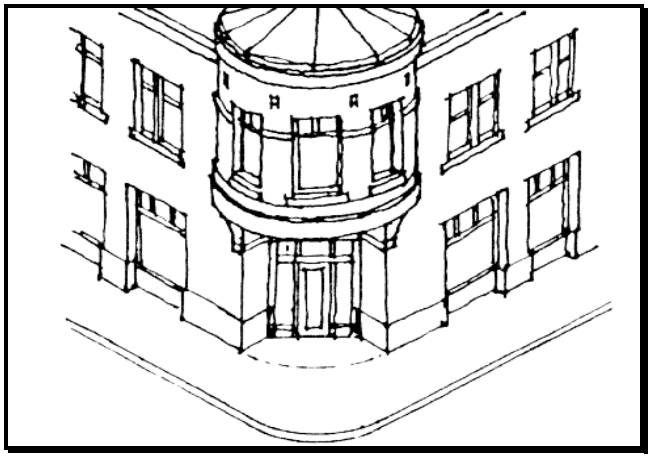
1. Storefront Details

Entries/Doorways

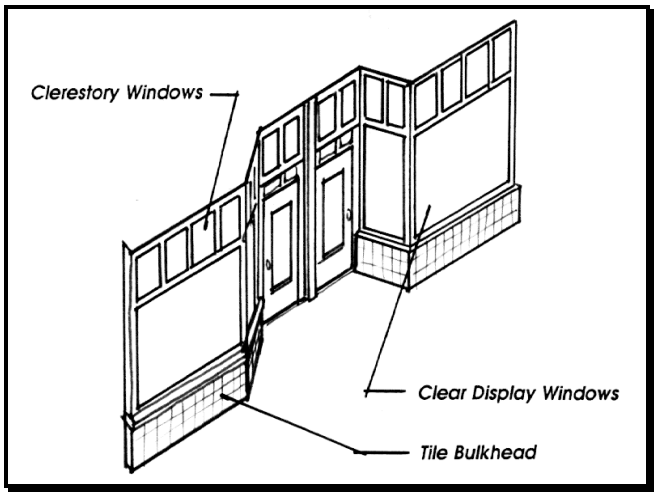
a. The main entry to Downtown buildings should be emphasized by utilizing one or more of the following design elements or concepts:

- Flanked columns, decorative fixtures or other details
- Recessing the entry door within a decorative opening
- Incorporating a portico (formal porch) projection or inset into the building
- Providing a change in roofline, a tower, or a break in the surface of the subject wall.

b. Buildings situated at the corner of a public street should provide a prominent corner entrance to street level shops or lobby space.



Corner building facade



Storefront details

Awnings and Canopies

a. Use of awning with a single color or two-color stripes is encouraged. Lettering and trim utilizing other colors is permitted.

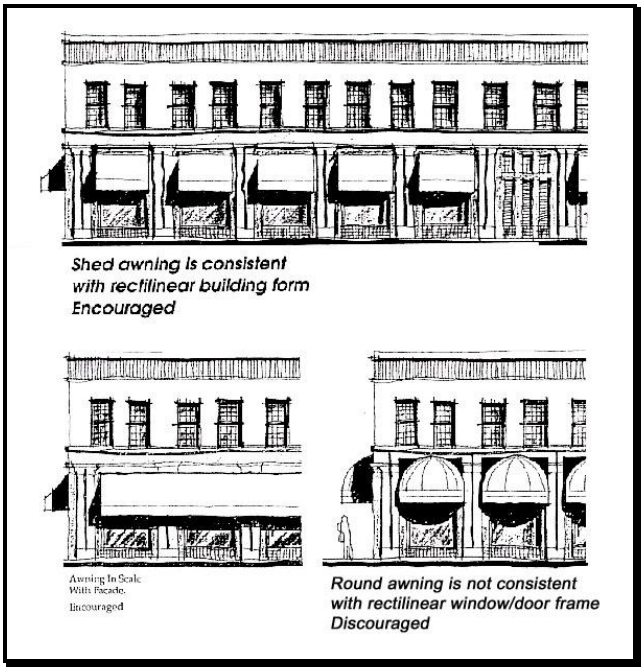
b. Where the facade is divided into distinct structural bays, awnings should be placed between the vertical elements. The awning design should respond to the scale, proportion and rhythm created by these structural bay elements and

"nestle" into the space created by the structural bay.

c. Aluminum awnings or canopies are strongly discouraged.

d. Awnings should be of a durable, commercial grade fabric, canvas or similar material. Awning frames and supports should be painted or coated to prevent corrosion.

e. Glossy, shiny plastic, or similar awning material are not recommended.



Awnings should not overlap vertical building elements

Grille Work/Metalwork and Other Details

a. A number of details may be incorporated into the building design to add visual richness and interest while serving functional needs. Such details include the following items:

- Light fixtures, wall mounted or hung with decorative metal brackets
- Metal grille work, at vent openings or as decorative features at windows, doorways or gates
- Decorative scuppers, catches and downspouts.
- Balconies, rails, finials, corbels, plaques, etc.
- Flag or banner pole brackets
- Fire sprinkler stand pipe enclosures and hose bib covers, preferably of brass
- Security devices

Rear Entrances

a. Signs should be modestly scaled to fit the casual visual character of the alley or rear parking area.

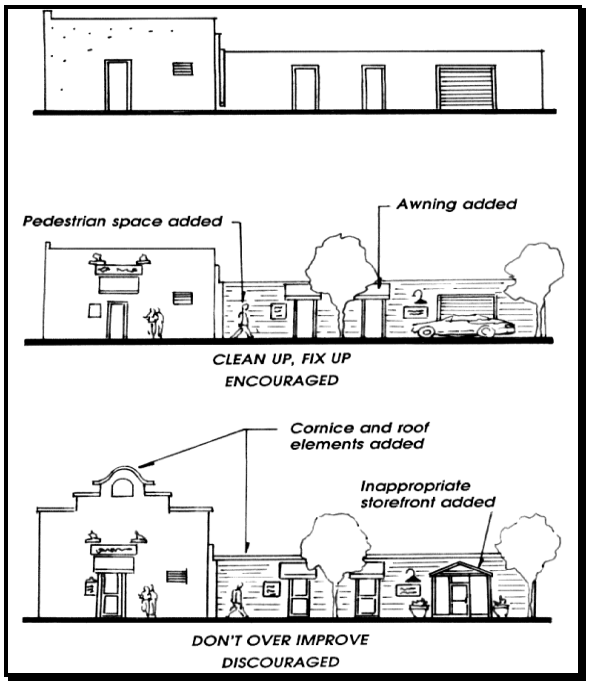
b. An awning can soften rear facades and provide a pleasant protected space.

c. The rear entry door design should be compatible with the front door. Special security glass (i.e. wire imbedded) is allowed.

d. Security lighting should be modest and should focus on the rear entry door.

e. Selective use of tree planting, potted plants and other landscaping should be used to improve a rear facade.

f. Refuse containers and service facilities should be screened from view by solid masonry walls with metal doors. Use landscaping (shrubs and vines) to screen walls and help deter graffiti.



Rear entrances

F. Building Additions and Renovation Guidelines

The renovation/restoration of structures provides an excellent means of maintaining and reinforcing historic character of a city. Renovation and expansion not only increases property values in the area but also serves as an inspiration to other property owners and designers to undertake similar efforts.
When an existing structure is proposed to be renovated or expanded, the work should respect the original design character of the structure and should comply with the design guidelines in this section. In addition, renovation of all structures of historic significance should follow *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties and associated Guidelines for Preserving, Rehabilitating, Restoring and Reconstructing Historic Buildings*, published by the U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service.

1. Preserve Traditional Features and Decoration

a. Existing materials, details, proportions, as well as patterns of materials and openings should be considered when any additions or building renovations would affect the appearance of an existing building's exterior.

b. Frequently, original storefront decorative details are intact as visual "leftovers" or simply covered up by previous construction. When a building is proposed to be refurbished, these forgotten details should not be wasted. If enough of them remain, they should be restored, based on the original design. If only a few remain, they should be incorporated as design features in a new storefront. In either case, the design of any improvements should evolve from the remaining building details and should create a harmonious background which emphasizes them.

c. All existing historic building detailing should be preserved.

2. Removal of Elements Inconsistent with Original Facade

a. Buildings are often altered by owners or shopkeepers in an effort to “keep up with changing times” or to “update a tired image.” Unfortunately, such changes often result in gradual but severe erosion of the original character of the building and architectural cohesion of the Downtown core area. Restoration of buildings which have been substantially or carelessly altered back to their original state is strongly encouraged.

b. Building elements which are incompatible with the original facade design of the building should be removed. These include excessive use of exterior embellishments and "modernized" elements such as metal grilles or rusticated materials.

c. Metal aluminum canopies have a thin, unsubstantial and "tacked on" appearance and are inconsistent with the desirable design concept for Downtown Huntington Beach. Existing metal canopies should be removed and, if appropriate, replaced with fabric awnings, consistent with the architectural style of the building.

3. Storefront Renovation

a. Where the original storefront remains (little or no remodeling has occurred), it should be preserved and repaired with as little alteration as possible.

b. Where only part of the original storefront remains (limited remodeling has occurred), the storefront should be repaired. Historic details/materials should be maintained where possible. Extensively deteriorated or missing details/parts should be replaced with new reproductions of the original ones.

c. Where the original storefront is completely missing (extensive remodeling has occurred), the storefront should be reconstructed based upon historical, pictorial and other physical documentation. If that is not practical, the design of the new storefront should be designed to be compatible with the size, scale, proportion, material and color of the existing structure.

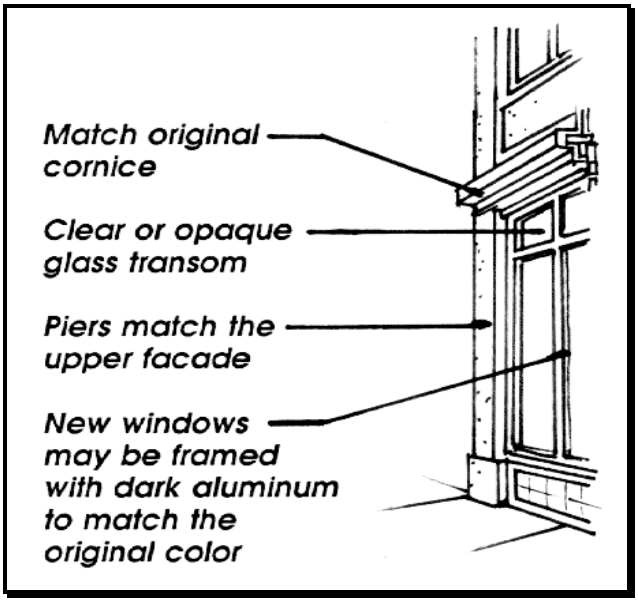
4. Window Replacement

a. Wherever possible, the original window openings should be retained. If the existing ceiling has been lowered, the dropped ceiling should be pulled back from the original window.

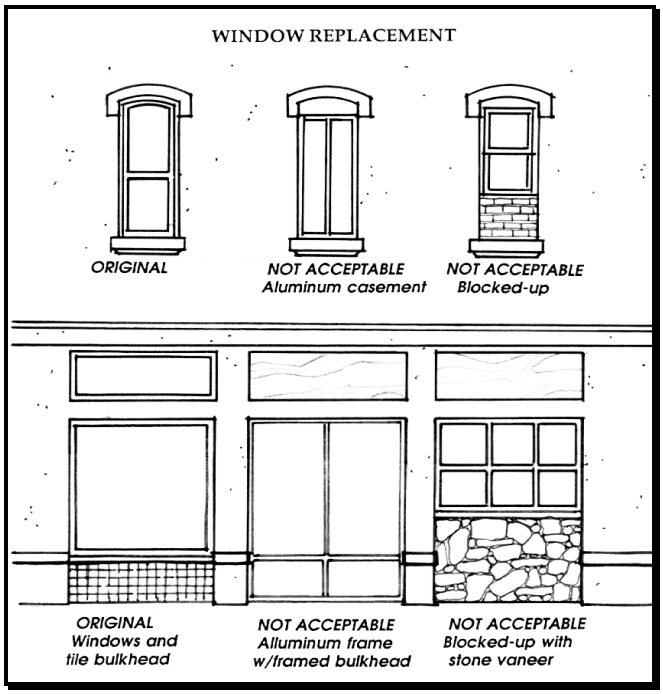
b. If possible, the original windows and frames should be saved and restored. Missing, rotting or broken sash, frames, mullions and muntins with similar material should be replaced.

c. If the original window openings have been altered, the openings to their original configuration and detail should be restored. Blocking or filling window openings that contribute to the overall facade design should be avoided.

d. When replacing windows, consideration should be given to the original size and shape detailing and framing materials. Replacement windows should be the same operating type as the original window.



Window renovation



Acceptable and not acceptable window replacement

5. Door Replacement

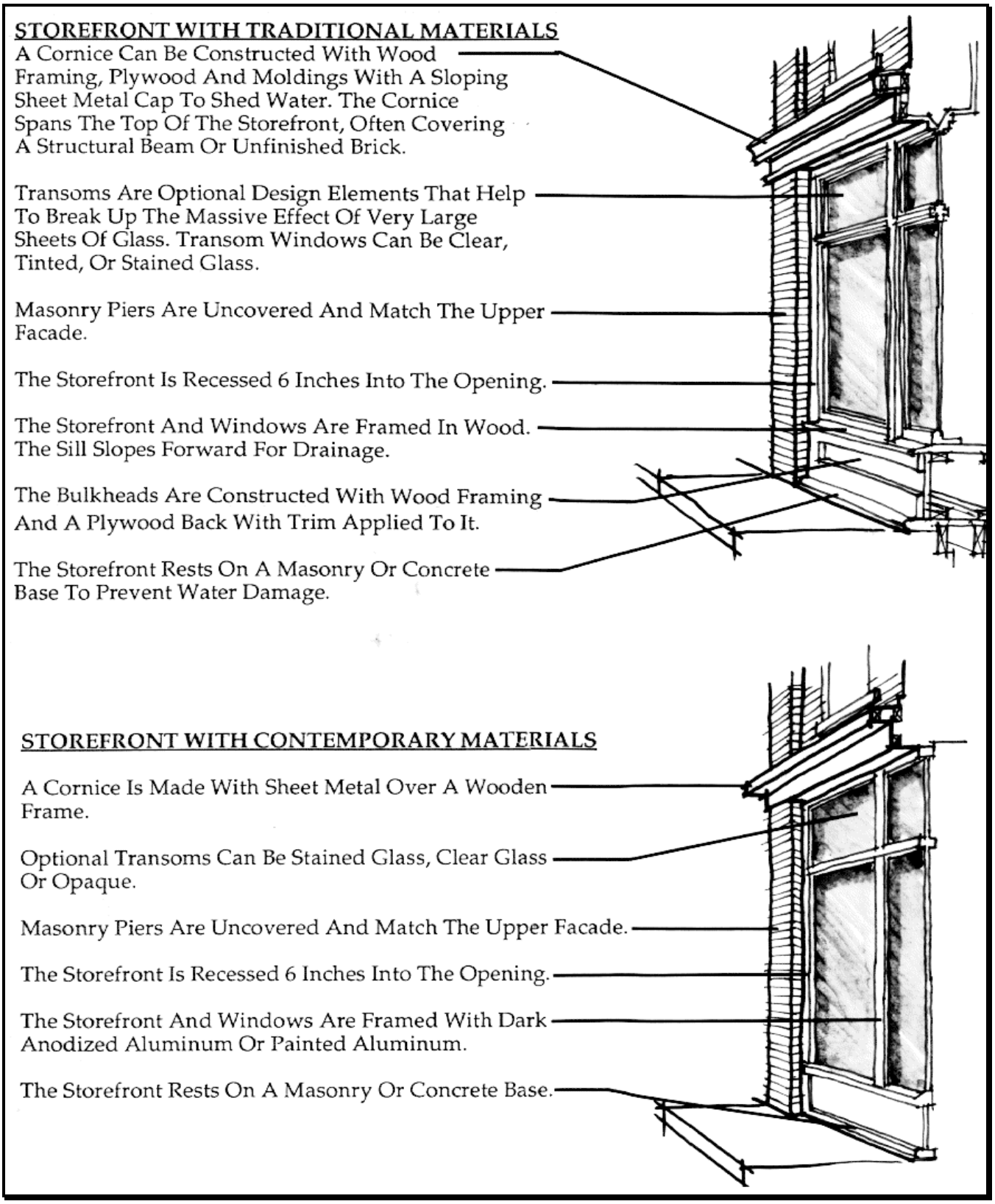
a. Original doors and door hardware should be retained, repaired and refinished.

b. If new replacement doors are necessary, they should be compatible with the historical character and design of the structure.

6. Awnings

a. Original awning hardware should be used if they are in working order or repairable.

b. Use of slanted canvas awnings is most appropriate for older storefronts and is preferred over contemporary hooped or box styles.



Contemporary material storefront

7. Repair and Cleaning

a. Surface cleaning should be undertaken by the gentlest means possible. Sandblasting and other harsh cleaning methods that may damage historic building materials should be avoided.

b. Waterproofing and graffiti proofing sealers should be used after cleaning and repair.

8. Replacement of Unavailable Components

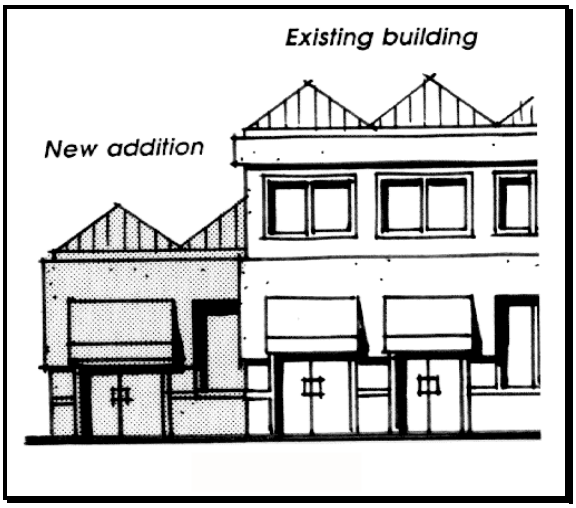
a. When original construction materials are not available, care should be taken to match the original thickness, color and texture as closely as possible with available materials. In general, simulated replacement materials (artificial stone, simulated "aged" brick) are discouraged.

9. Additions to Existing Structures

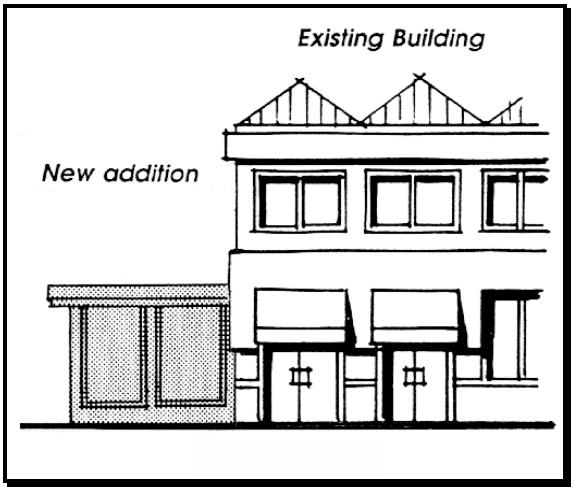
a. The design of a proposed addition should follow the general scale, proportion, massing and detailing of the original structure.

b. New additions should be interpretations of the existing buildings wherein the main characteristics of the existing structure are incorporated using modern construction methods. This may include: the extension of architectural lines from the existing structure to the addition; repetition of window and entrance spacing; use of harmonizing colors and materials; and the inclusion of similar architectural details (i.e., window/door trim, lighting fixtures, tile/brick decoration).

c. New additions should be designed so that if the addition were to be removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the original structure would be unimpaired.



Encouraged addition



Discouraged addition

10. Seismic Retrofitting

a. Exterior structural improvements for seismic retrofitting should be undertaken with care and consideration to minimize negative impacts on the appearance of the building. Where possible, such work should be concealed. Where this is not possible, the improvements should be carefully integrated into the existing building design.

b. Seismic improvements should receive the same care and forethought as any other building modification.

G. Landscaping

a. Emphasis should be placed on California and Mediterranean landscapes and gardens. Native planting, vines, flowering plants, arbors, trellises and container planting are encouraged.

b. Courtyards, gardens, and fountains are encouraged. Landscaping within courtyards should include a balance of hardscape and landscape materials.

c. Boxed and container plants in decorative ceramic, terra cotta, wood, or stucco planters should be used to enhance street frontages, plazas and courtyards.

d. Large planters may be incorporated into seating areas. Such planters should be open to the earth below and should incorporate permanent irrigation systems.

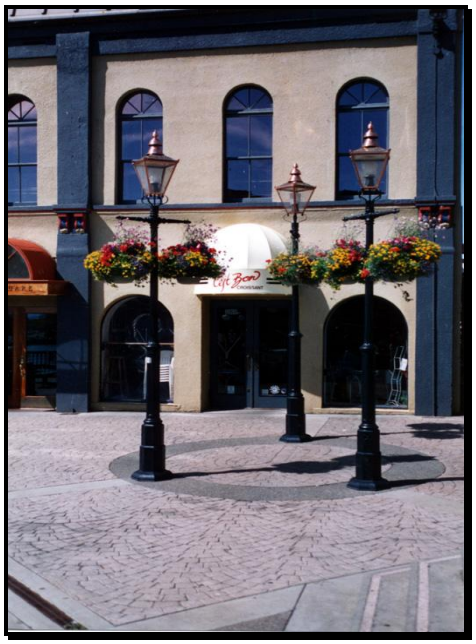
e. All trees in paved areas should be provided with "Deep Root" barriers automatic irrigation and metal grates.

Container planting is encouraged

H. Lighting

a. Lighting should create a festive atmosphere and encourage nighttime use by pedestrians.

b. Lighting fixtures should be attractively designed to complement the architecture of the project and improve visual identification of residences and businesses.



Lighting should be aesthetically pleasing

c. Wall mounted lights should be utilized to the greatest extent possible to minimize the total number of freestanding light standards.

I. Signs

Signage in downtown Huntington Beach should advertise a place of business or provide directions or information. It should also contribute to the contemporary Mediterranean theme. Design, color, materials and placement are all important in creating signs that are architecturally attractive and integrated into the overall site design. The City's goal is to promote a quality visual environment by allowing only signs that are compatible with their surroundings and which effectively communicate their message.

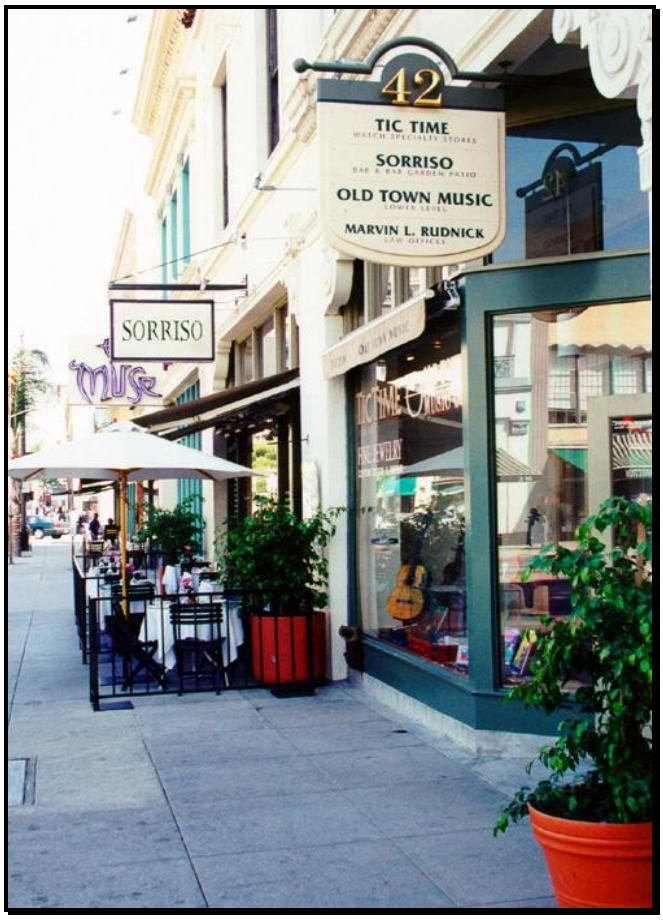
Due to the unique nature of the downtown area there are some special provisions and restrictions with respect to permitted signs. The purpose of this section of the Design Guidelines is to set forth design standards, which may be more restrictive than those outlined in the Huntington Beach Sign Code, Included in this section is a chart, which sets for the size, number and siting criteria for signage within the Downtown Specific Plan area. Unless specifically restricted within this section, all signs are subject to the Huntington Beach Sign Code.

"Wall sign"

1. Sign Design

a. Sign color should be compatible with building colors. A light background matching the building with dark lettering is best visually. No more than two primary colors should be used on a sign with a third secondary color used for accent or shadow detail.

b. Fewer words make a more effective message. Use symbols only if they are easily recognizable.



"Projecting signs"

c. Keep the overall shape simple so as not to detract from the message.

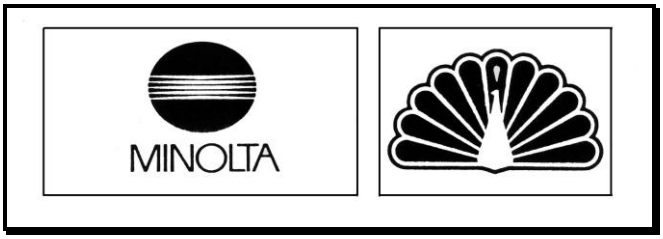
d. As a general rule, letters should not appear to occupy more than 75% of the sign area.

e. Avoid hard-to-read and overly intricate typefaces. The letter style chosen should be appropriate to the business and the building.

Souvenir Medium	[illegible]
Folio Extrabold	Alfereta
Franklin Gothic	BABY TEETH
Eurostile Bold	Murray Hill Bold
Gill Sans Bold	**Round Black**

Appropriate fonts *Inappropriate fonts*

Intricate logos, inappropriate for signage.



Simple and appropriate logos for signage

f. Signs should be consistent with the proportion and scale of building elements within the façade. The placement of signs provides visual clues to business location and affects the design integrity of the entire building.

g. Ground level signs should be smaller than those on higher levels. Pedestrian-oriented signs should be smaller than automobile oriented signs.

h. Signs should establish rhythm, scale and proportion in facades and arcades.

i. Sign placement on a façade should complement building elements rather than block them.

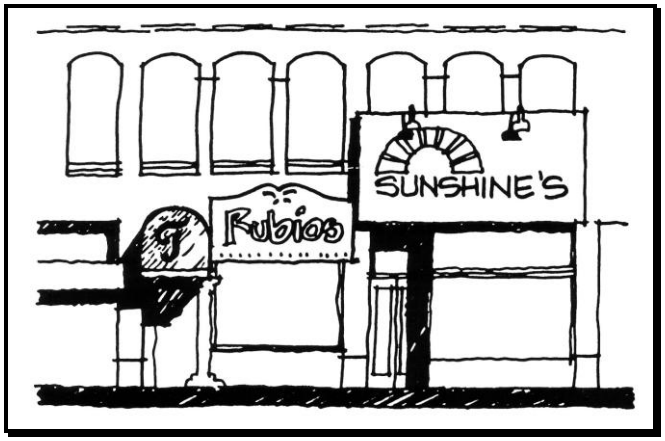
j. There are two methods of illuminating signs: internal with the light source inside the sign and external with an outside light directed at the sign.

k. Internal illumination is permitted on channel letters only.

l. Signs without channel letters must be illuminated externally.

m. Signs must be lighted with continuous light sources.

n. Following are definitions and examples of the different types of allowable signs. Illustrations are provided to stimulate ideas.



These signs block building elements and create a chaotic image

These signs complement the building form creating a more orderly appearance

SIGN STANDARDS FOR COMMERCIAL USES					
USE OF SIGN	**TYPE**	**MAXIMUM NUMBER**	**MAXIMUM SIGN AREA**	**MAXIMUM HEIGHT**	**OTHER STANDSARDS**
Business Id	F/s	One per site provided the structure on the site is setback a minimum of twenty (20) ft. and that the site has a minimum of 100 ft. of frontage.	15 sq. ft. or 40 sq. ft. for wooden sand-blasted signs.	6 ft.	1. All freestanding signs shall be located in a landscaped planter with no portion of the sign extending beyond the perimeter of the planter. 2. All freestanding signs must be of the monument type. 3. Copy shall be limited to center identification and/or major tenant identification. 4. Internal illumination is permitted for channel letters only.
	Wall or Awning	One per street or parking lot frontage for each separate business.	1.0 sq. ft. per linear foot of building frontage	8 ft.	1. Signs shall be channel letters for wall signs. 2. Internal illumination is permitted for channel letters only. 3. No painted signs permitted. 4. Maximum letter height is 18 inches.
	Under canopy or projecting	One per business	4 sq. ft.	Minimum ground clearance 8 ft.	1. No internal illumination permitted.
	Window	One per business	15% of total window area	6 ft.	1. Copy shall be limited to business name, address, phone number. 2. Letters may be vinyl or painted.
Tenant Directory	Wall	One per site	12 sq. ft.	8 ft.	1. Sign shall be non-illuminated. 2. Sign Shall be located and oriented to the pedestrian rather than to the street. 3. All freestanding signs shall be located in a landscaped planter with no portion extending beyond the perimeter of the planter.
Special	Flags Banners Pennants	Unspecified	Unspecified	Unspecified	Flags, banners, and pennants are permitted as temporary signs pursuant to the sign code

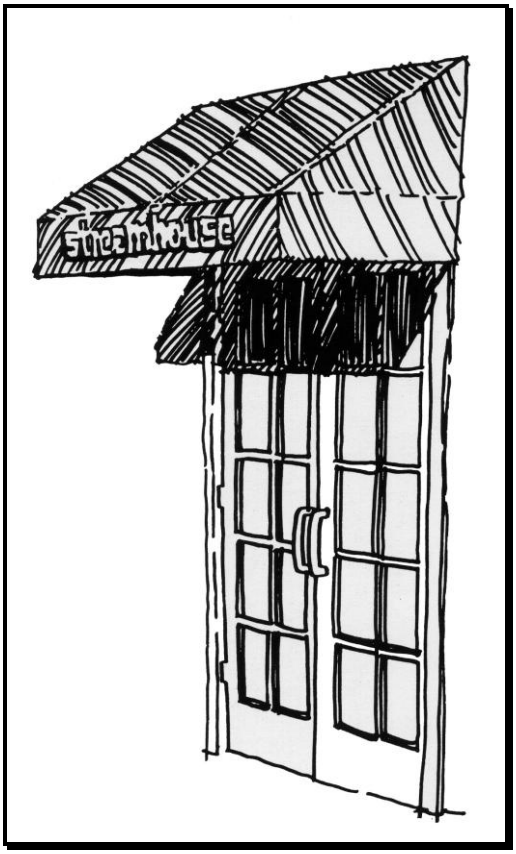
This chart summarizes sign criteria for commercial signs within the downtown area. Signs for residential uses shall follow the Huntington Beach Sign Code. For mixed uses, commercial signs shall follow the above chart and signs for the residential uses shall follow the sign code as stated above.

2. Awning Signs

Definition: An awning sign is a sign on or attached to a temporary retractable shelter that is supported from the exterior wall of a building. These signs are permitted in the downtown area pursuant to the Sign Standards chart.

a. Sign copy shall be centered on the awning to achieve symmetry.

b. Message shall be limited to the business name and logo and sized to be proportional with the awning.



An awning sign accents a doorway

3. Banners

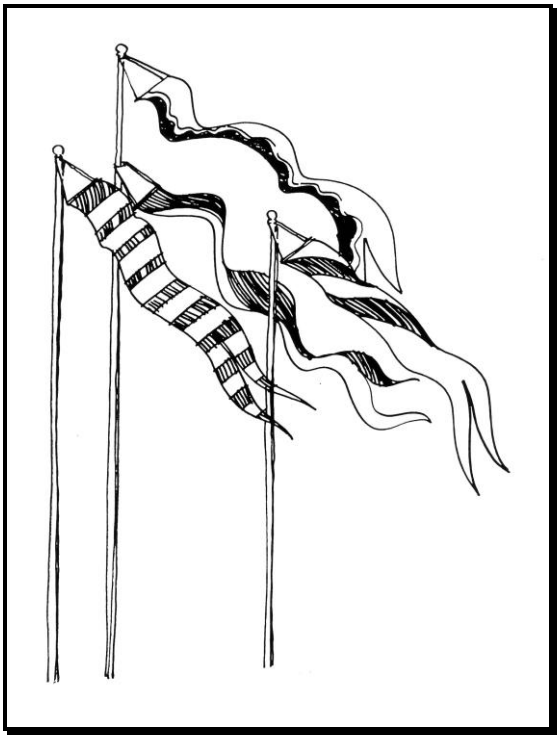
Definition: Banners and flags include cloth, plastic, or other materials which have been tested and shown to have long life expectancy and resistance to the elements attached to or suspended from any structure, staff, pole, line framing, or vehicle. These are permitted subject to the discretion of the Design Review Board. A flag of the nation or state of California shall be exempt from these regulations.

Banners and flags will create a festive atmosphere downtown, and promote pedestrian activity in the area.

a. Bright colors are appropriate because they stand out against light-colored backgrounds.

b. Banners must be kept in good repair and be replaced when fading or deterioration occurs.

c. Banners shall not be used for advertising.



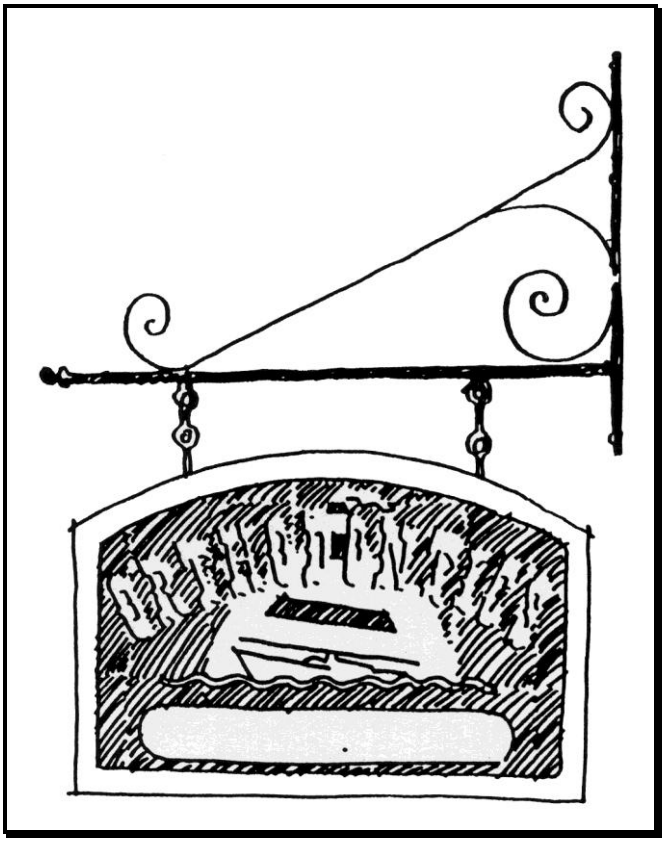
Banners add color and festivity to the area

4. Canopy Signs

Definition: A canopy sign is any sign attached to the underside of a projecting canopy or protruding over a sidewalk or right-of-way

a. Canopy signs provide pedestrian scale and can enhance building fronts.

b. Projecting signs are permitted as a special type of canopy sign pursuant to the Sign Standards chart.



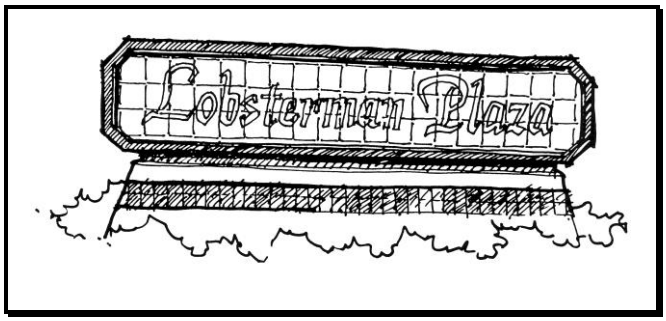
Projecting signs are permitted in the downtown area

5. Freestanding Signs

Definition: A freestanding sign is any sign permanently attached to the ground and which does not have a building as its primary structural support.

a. The Mediterranean theme can be suggested through the use of materials such as stucco and tile.

b. Pole signs are not permitted in the downtown area.



Tile and stucco accent a freestanding sign

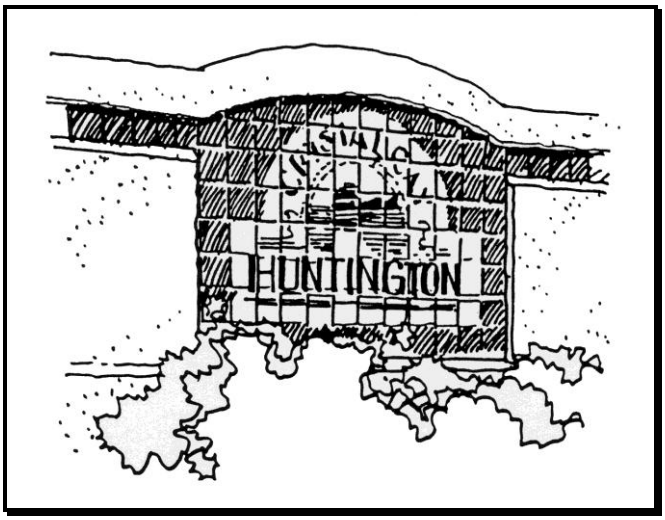
6. Wall Signs

Definition: A wall sign is any sign which is attached or erected on the exterior wall of a building including the parapet, with the display surface of the sign parallel to the building wall, and which does not project more than eighteen (18) inches from the building or project above the height of the wall or parapet.

a. Brightly colored channel letters add to the festive atmosphere and may be illuminated internally.

b. Wall murals can brighten and add interest to the downtown area. Wall murals should be done to enhance the area rather than for advertising. Wall murals shall be permitted subject to the discretion of the Design Review Board.

Bright channel letters complement a stucco surface

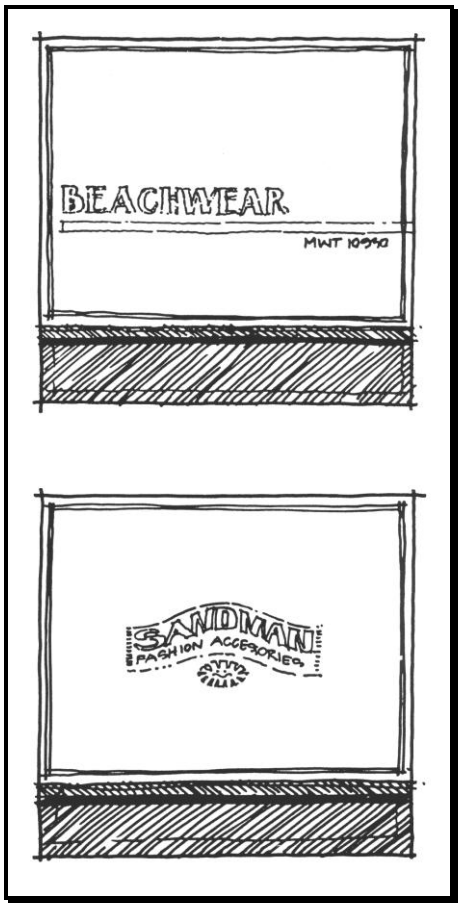


Colored tile and stucco label an entrance

7. Window Signs

Definition: A window sign is any sign in which the name, logo, address, phone number or hours of operation are applied directly to the window of a business or placed on a sign hung inside the window. Letters applied to the glass may be vinyl or painted.

- Interior signs shall be within 36" of the window so as to be readable from the exterior.
- Sign area shall be less than 15% of the total window area.
- Window signs shall be geared to the pedestrian and be at eye level.
- Window signs shall be designed to be pleasing and to aesthetically enhance storefronts.



Appropriate window signs

PART II - Public Improvements

A. Lighting

a. The existing 6.6 kv lighting system should be replaced with a modern and efficient "multiple" or parallel systems with underground wiring.

b. All lighting fixtures shall be finished in such a manner as to withstand the effects of salt-laden air.

c. Three lighting districts have been established within the boundaries of the Downtown Specific Plan. These three areas are illustrated in Figure 1.

- Area 1, which includes all residential areas, shall be illuminated with the standard roadway lighting poles and luminaries. Height of poles shall be 30 ft. for streets shown on the Master Plan of Arterial Highways and 22 ft. elsewhere. New lighting system**s** shall be owned and maintained by the Southern California Edison Company. (LS1). Existing City owned systems in Area 1 should be replaced by Edison-owned systems when practical, on a system-by-system basis.

- Area 2, Main Street, shall be illuminated with decorative, pedestrian-scaled lighting fixtures. The lighting system shall be owned and maintained by the City of Huntington Beach (LS2). The theme lighting in Area 2 shall complement the contemporary Mediterranean design theme. The fixtures shall have multiple luminaries, and have a festive appearance during both the day and the night.

- Area 3, which includes all mixed-use areas, shall be illuminated with standard roadway lighting poles and luminaires. The height of the poles shall be 30 ft. for streets shown on the Master Plan of Arterial Highways and 22 ft. elsewhere. The lighting system shall be owned and maintained by the City of Huntington Beach (LS2).

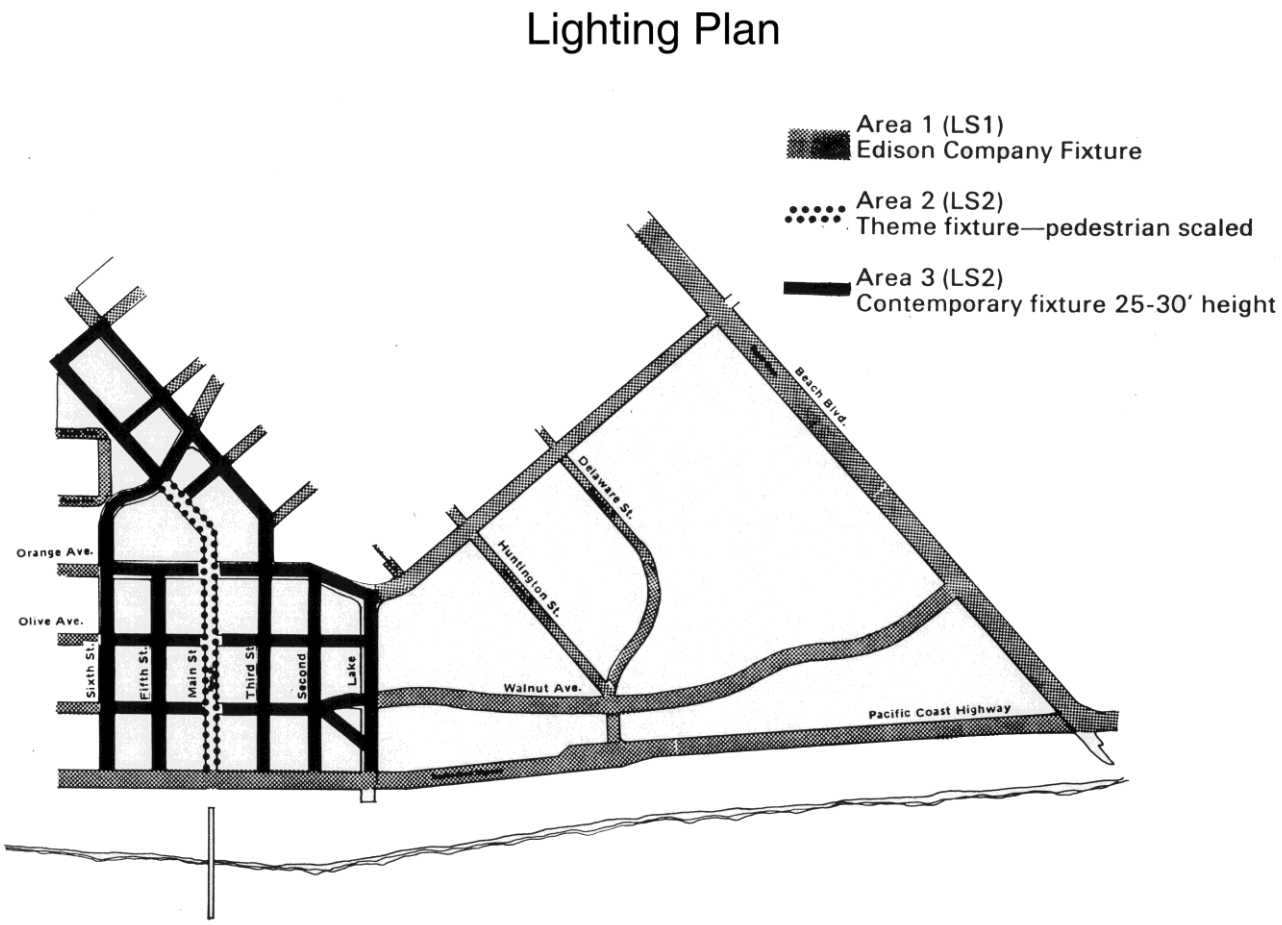

Lighting Plan
Area 1 (LS1)
Edison Company Fixture
Area 2 (LS2)
Theme fixture—pedestrian scaled
Area 3 (LS2)
Contemporary fixture 25-30′ height
Orange Ave.
Olive Ave.
Sixth St.
Fifth St.
Main St.
Third St.
Second
Lake
Walnut Ave.
Huntington St.
Delaware St.
Beach Blvd.
Pacific Coast Highway

Figure 1

B. Signage and Gateways

The type and purpose of signage varies throughout the Downtown area. Traffic signage is generally regulated by the traffic manual of the State Department of Transportation (Cal-Trans). Size, color, and format are standardized for warning and regulatory signs. No variation for these signs is permitted although they shall be consolidated wherever possible to minimize clutter.

Flexibility can be exercised by the City in the design of entry and guide signs since these are not regulated by Cal-Trans. Entry signs shall be integrated into the design of each gateway announcing arrival to the Downtown area. Guide signs include those that announce major attractions such as a conference center, the municipal pier, hotels, or public parking.

a. The design of entry and guide signs shall be unique to the Downtown area.

b. Entry signs shall be designed in such a way as to announce entrance into the Downtown area.

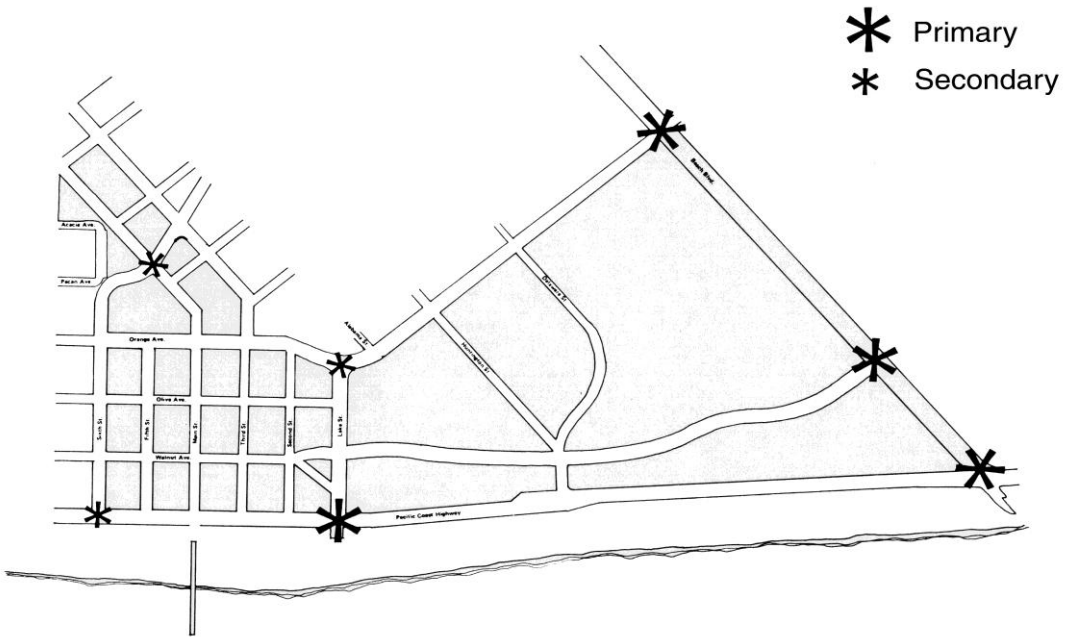
c. Entry signs shall be designed as an integral part of the gateway design with landscaping and paving.

d. Entry signs shall be of sufficient size to be seen by motorists traveling at average speeds along the street.

e. Guide signs located within the Downtown Core shall be of sufficient size to be seen by motorists passing by at average speeds of 25 miles per hour.

C. Figure 2

Gateway Plan



C. Medians

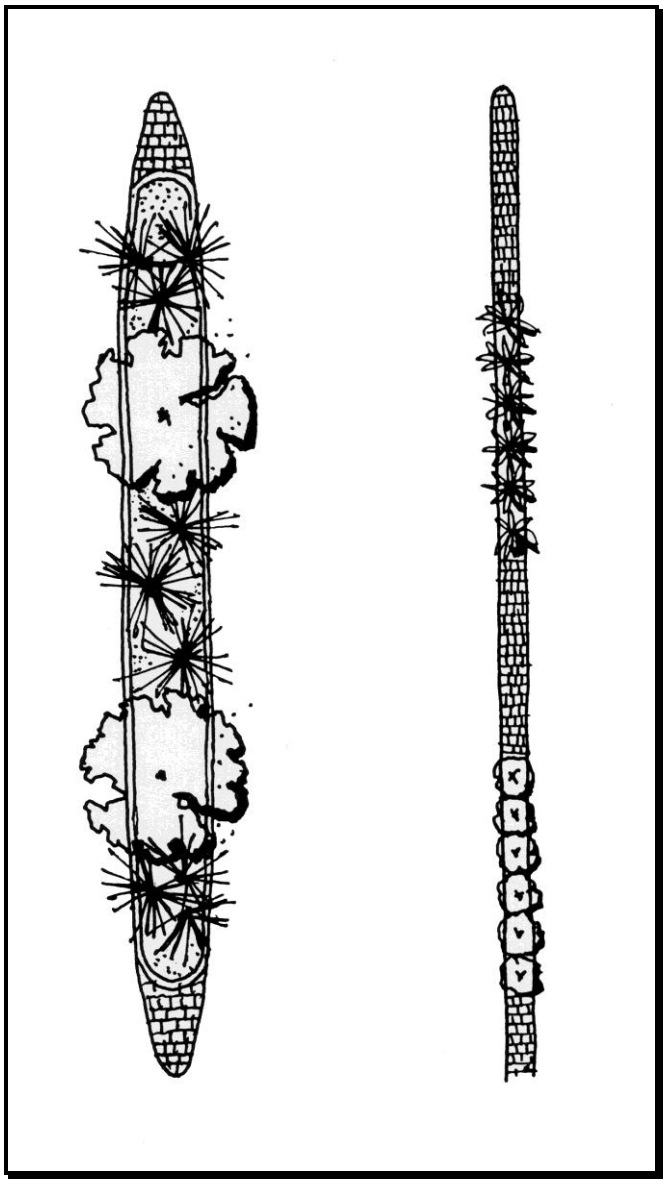
The location of medians (see Figure 3) has been chosen to better define the core area of the Downtown. Medians within this area shall be designed to contribute to the unique design theme through the use of paving and plant materials. Although these medians will be treated with a unique design, they should meet the City Arboricultural and Landscape Standards and Specifications.

a. Medians in Pacific Coast Highway shall be coordinated with Cal-Trans. Landscaping shall consist of scattered groupings of palms, low shrubs, and ground cover so as not to interfere with views of the ocean.

b. Decorative paving should be used in medians on Pacific Coast Highway.

c. Plant materials for medians shall be chosen from the list in Chapter 9 of the Design Guidelines.

d. Median widths may vary from 4 feet to 14 feet based upon the necessity for left turn pockets and right-of-way requirements.



Median Plan

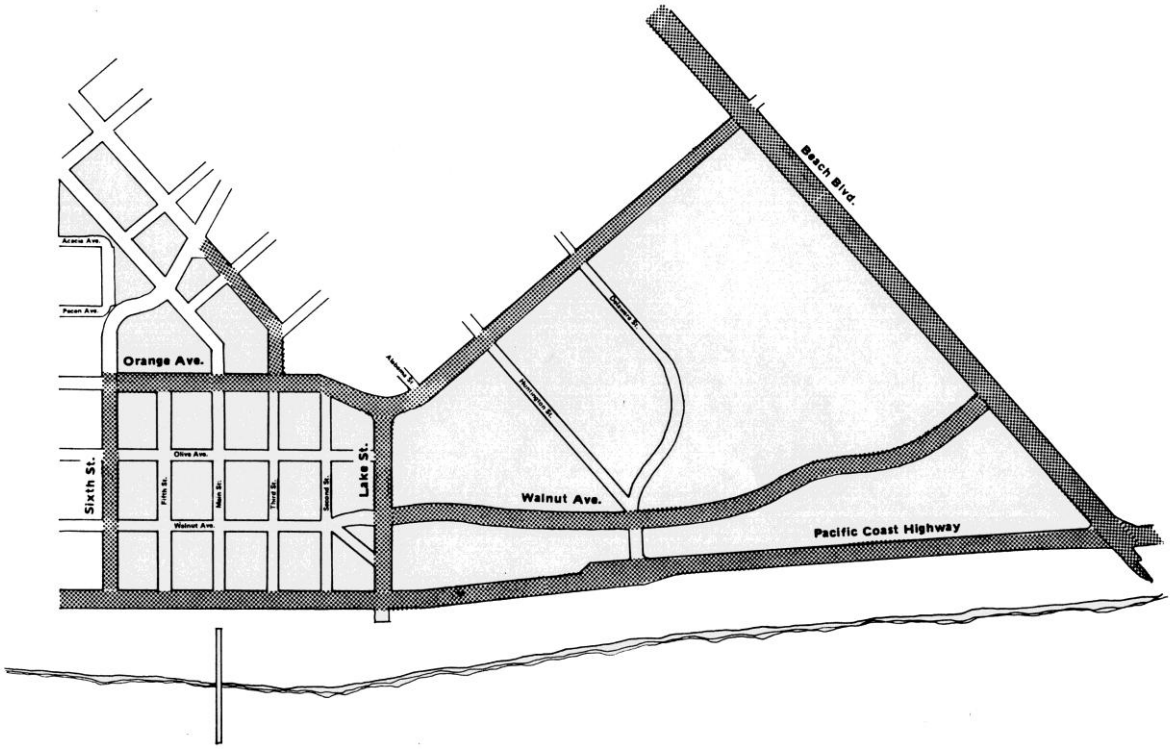


Figure 3

D. Intersection Enhancement

Selected intersections within the Downtown project area, as shown on Figure 4, have been identified as "enhanced intersections." Although the designs of intersection types 1 through 4 may vary, they should be made similar by the use of common materials.

All such intersections identified shall be enhanced through the use of decorative block pavers (see section on paving) and concrete bands.

INTERSECTION TYPE 1

This should be a showcase intersection, setting the tone for active pedestrian use up Main Street and throughout the downtown.

- Main Street and Pacific Coast Highway

As required by the Downtown Specific Plan, full block developments in this location must include a public plaza of at least 1,000 square feet in size at the corner of Main Street and Pacific Coast Highway.

INTERSECTION TYPE 2

These intersections along Main Street are important components of the pedestrian-scaled link between the development at the pier area and Town Square.

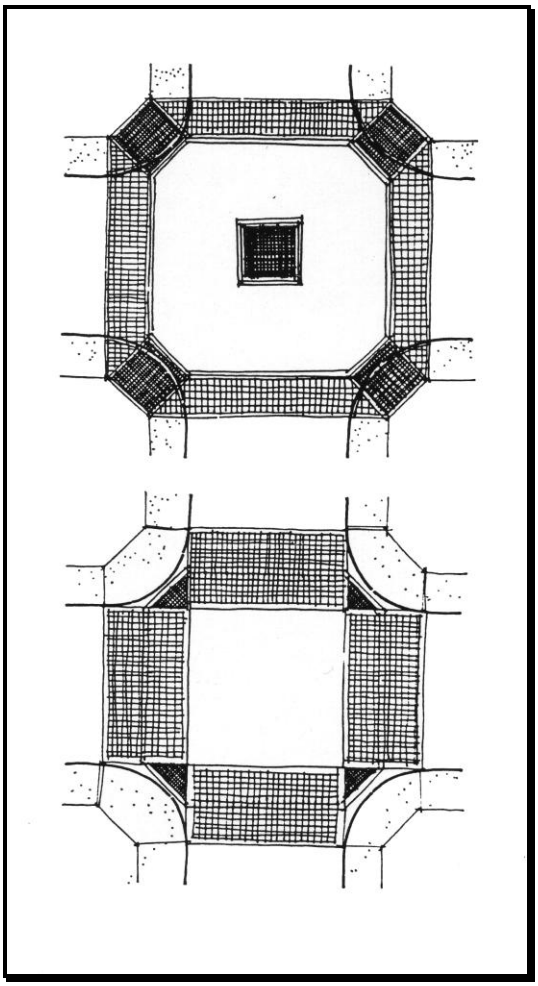
- Main Street and Walnut Street
- Main Street and Orange Street
- Main Street and Olive Street

Design treatment of these three intersections shall be identical.

Additional building setbacks shall be required at these intersections to create plaza-like areas where street furniture and other pedestrian amenities may be located.

Buildings at these intersections shall be set back 25 feet from the curb face. (See diagram.)

Setback areas shall include landscaping.



Special paving and concrete bands enhance an intersection.

INTERSECTION TYPE 3

These important intersections serve as the entries to the Downtown core area.

- Pacific Coast Highway and Lake Street
- Pacific Coast Highway and Sixth Street
- Main Street and Fifth Street

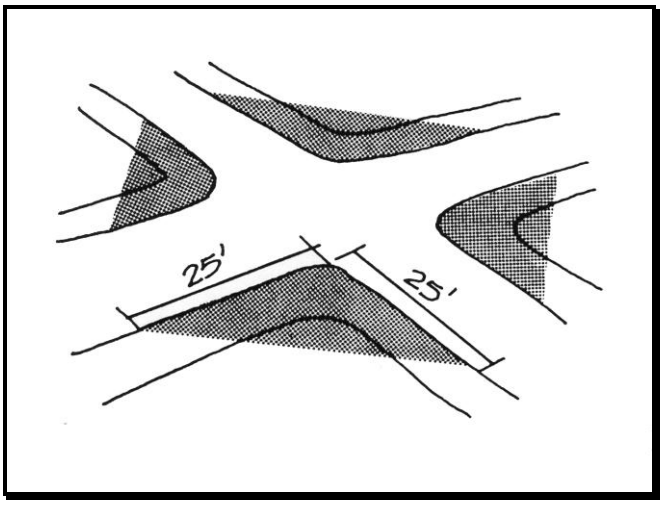
Design treatment of these three intersections shall be identical.

INTERSECTION TYPE 4

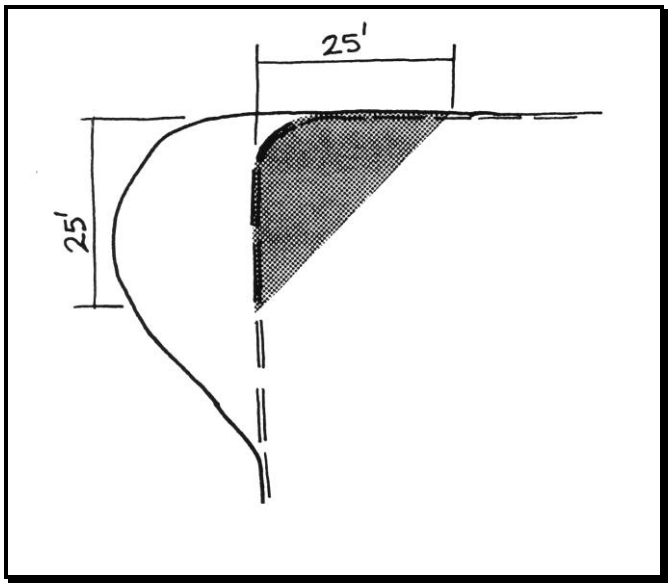
This intersection will require special design treatment in order to discourage traffic from the downtown core area from entering the adjacent residential neighborhood.

- Sixth Street and Orange Street

Design treatment for this intersection may include the use of decorative block pavers, concrete bands and traffic diverting devices placed within the street right-of-way.



Setbacks for Intersection Type 2



Along the Main Street where curbfaces are irregular, setbacks shall be measured as shown.

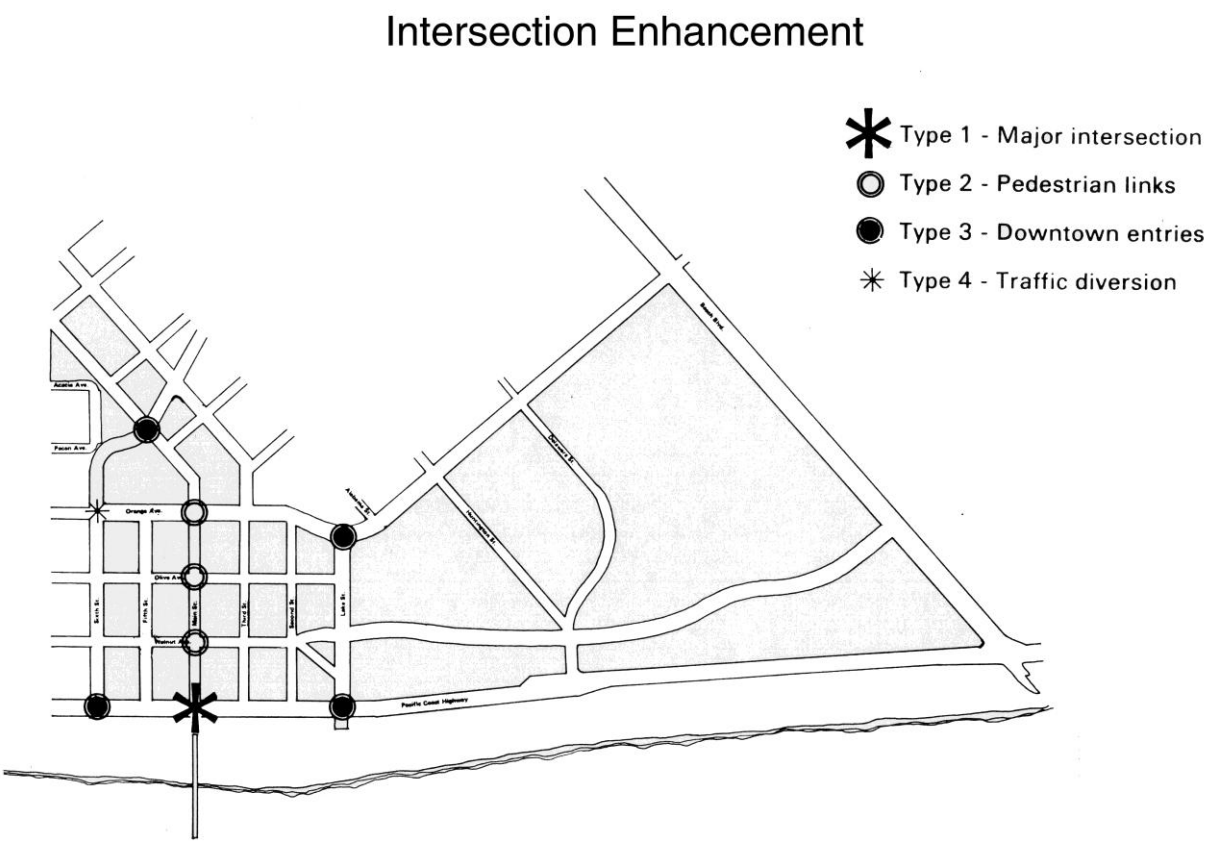

Intersection Enhancement
Type 1 - Major intersection
Type 2 - Pedestrian links
Type 3 - Downtown entries
Type 4 - Traffic diversion
Acacia Ave
Pecan Ave
Orange Ave
Olive Ave
Walnut Ave
Main St
Pacific Coast Highway

Figure 4

E. Paving

The texture and color of the ground level areas is an essential visual element of the urban streetscape scene.

a. Special paving treatment shall be used along Main Street, in the street intersections shown on Figure 4 and within the street medians shown on Figures 3 to unify the Downtown project area.

b. The enhanced paving used in these areas shall be a removable modular type "Block paver."

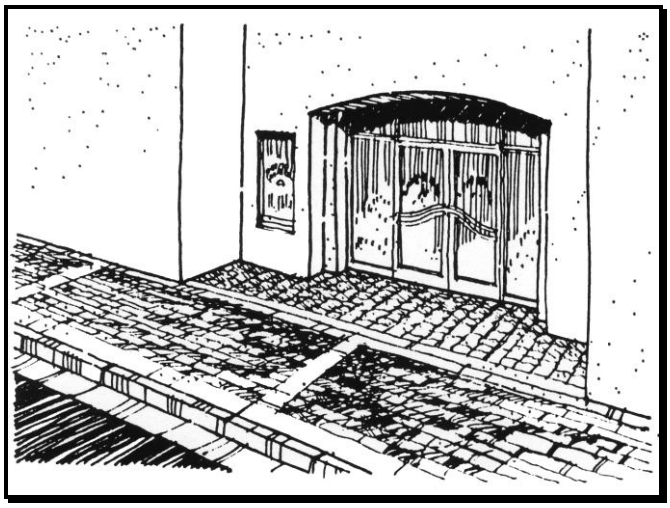
c. Block pavers shall be laid in a random color pattern varying from warm earth tone hues to shades of gray. This random color pattern shall be used in all paving applications. This will eliminate the problem of matching colors should the need for street repairs arise in the future.

d. The paving patterns should be kept simple, not complex and confusing.

e. A concrete band shall be used as a line of demarcation between the public right-of-way and private property. A concrete band can also be used as a transition between block pavers and asphalt within the designated street intersections.

f. In those areas where decorative block pavers are not appropriate, concrete surfaces may be enhanced by aggregate, scoring, broom finish or salt finish.

g. Concrete within the public right-of-way shall not be colored.



A concrete band delineates the public right-of-way from the private improvements

F. Street Furniture

Street furnishings can enliven and provide variety to outdoor spaces used by the public. Street furnishings serve an aesthetic as well as utilitarian function. Proper design and placement of such amenities will reinforce the contemporary Mediterranean design theme and create a lively and festive atmosphere throughout the year in the Downtown.

Street furniture includes all items placed within the public right-of-way such as benches, bus shelters, trash receptacles, plant containers, tree grates and guards, bicycle racks, bollards, kiosks and fountains.

a. The design and selection of street furniture shall include considerations for the security, safety, comfort and convenience of the user, including the handicapped.

b. Wherever possible, street furniture shall consist of specially designed units, which incorporate several items such as benches, planters, newspaper racks, and trash receptacles.

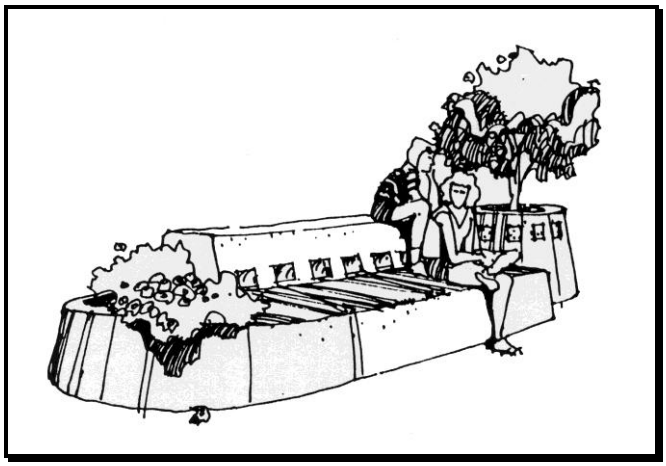
c. Street furniture shall be conservative in use of sidewalk space, and maintain a clear width sufficient to accommodate pedestrian flows.

d. All street furniture shall be constructed of long wearing, vandal resistant materials, capable of withstanding the coastal climatic conditions.

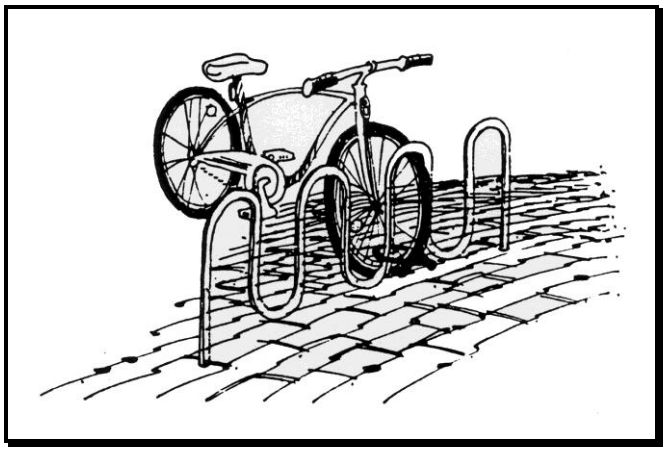
e. The selection, siting and layout of the different elements of street furniture shall insure that each article or structure is designed and situated to be in harmony with both the surrounding furnishings and the area as a whole. All street furniture to be installed by private parties as part of a development shall be subject to approval by the City.

f. Appropriate materials for street furniture may include stucco, concrete, painted metal or anodized aluminum. Decorative tiles may be used as an accent.

g. If concrete is used for benches, the surface shall be lightly textured as a deterrent to vandalism.



This integrated bench and planter is attractively decorated with accent tile



A simple bike rack reduces street clutter

h. Freestanding trash receptacles shall be bolted into the ground, have a plastic liner and rounded cover.

i. Large plant containers and planters shall be open to the ground below. A permanent irrigation system shall be installed.

j. Tree grates and tree guards shall be made of cast iron.

k. Tree grates shall be expandable, so that the inner rings can be broken out as the tree grows.

l. Bus shelters shall be kept simple in form. No advertisements shall be allowed on the sides or inside of the shelter.

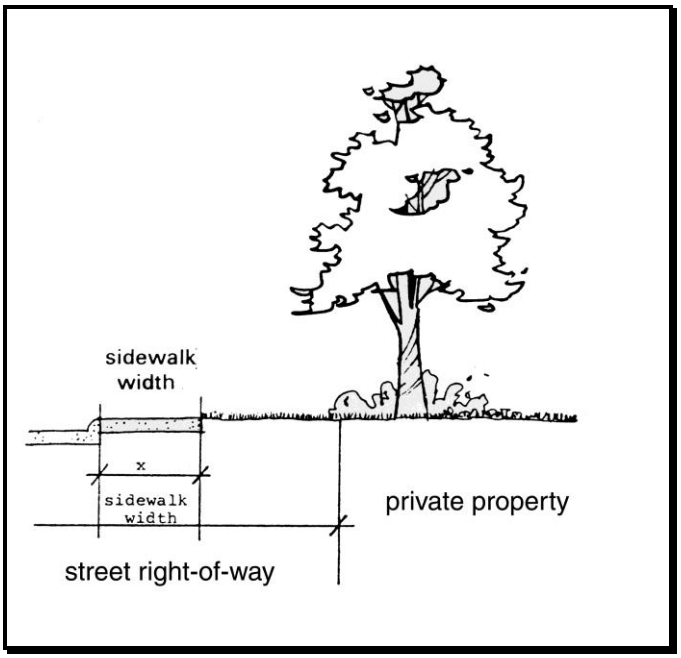
G. Street Trees

a. Street trees should be planted in accordance with Figure 5.

b. Street trees along Main Street should be planted in the public right-of-way. In all other locations street trees shall be planted on private property.

c. Landscaping in the setback areas along the inland side of Pacific Coast Highway should mirror the design of the Bluff Top Park.

d. Street trees should be planted on private property, except along Main Street. The sidewalk should be located adjacent to the curb as shown in the diagram.



Right-of-way	Sidewalk width	Street classification
100-105’	11’ (8’sidewalk and 3’ landscaping)	Major – Pacific Coast Highway
100’	8’	Arterial – Lake, Atlanta, Orange, 6th
0-75’	4’ clear	Local

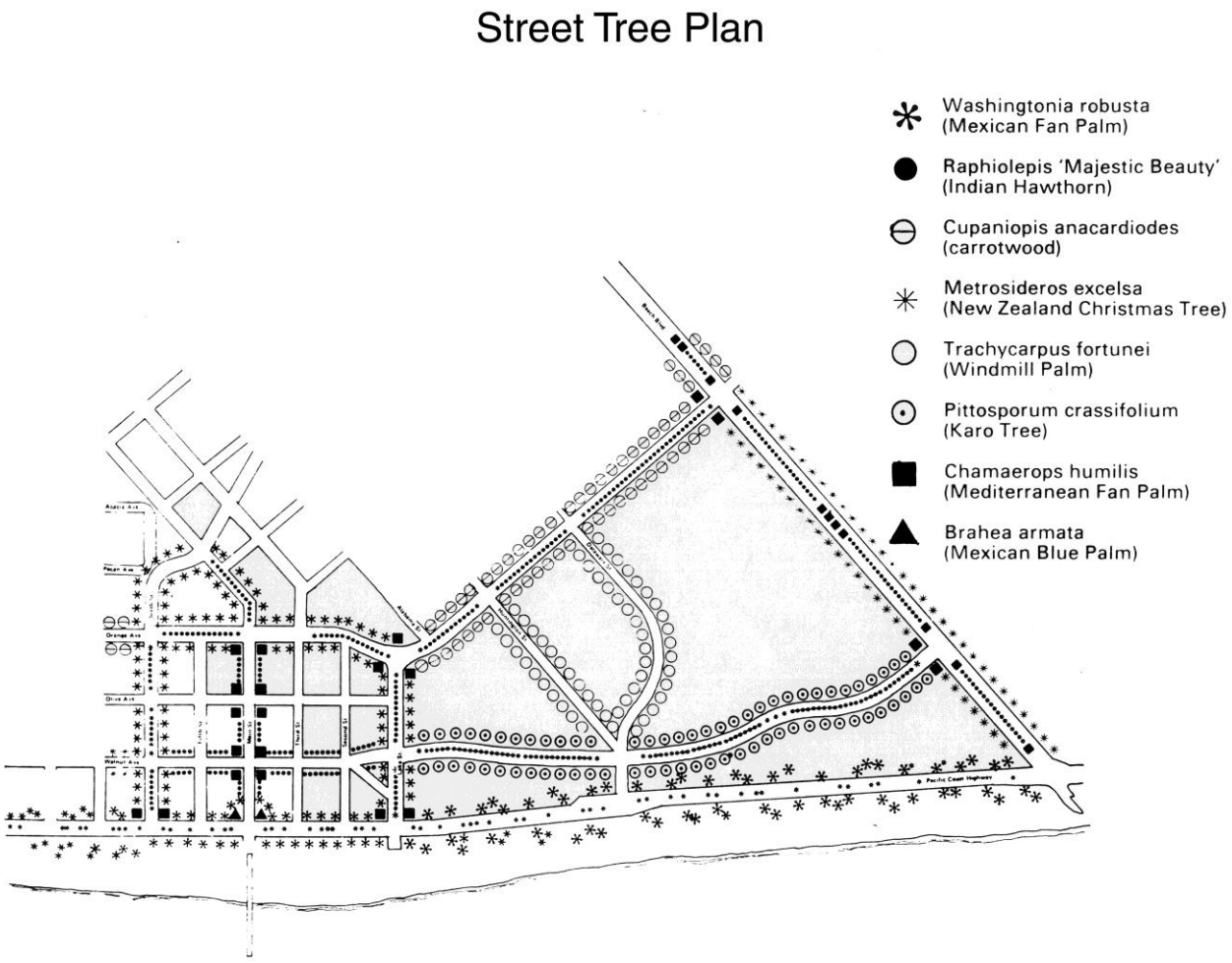

Street Tree Plan
Washingtonia robusta
(Mexican Fan Palm)
Raphiolepis 'Majestic Beauty'
(Indian Hawthorn)
Cupaniopis anacardiodes
(carrotwood)
Metrosideros excelsa
(New Zealand Christmas Tree)
Trachycarpus fortunei
(Windmill Palm)
Pittosporum crassifolium
(Karo Tree)
Chamaerops humilis
(Mediterranean Fan Palm)
Brahea armata
(Mexican Blue Palm)

Figure 5