

WHITTIER NEIGHBORHOOD



COMMERCIAL AREA DESIGN STANDARDS

WHITTIER NEIGHBORHOOD COMMERCIAL AREA DESIGN STANDARDS



sponsored by the
WHITTIER ALLIANCE
MARIAN BIEHN • EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Summer 2010

LETTER FROM THE WHITTIER ALLIANCE

Inspiration:

In the mid 1990s the Whittier neighborhood took a look at the strength of its commercial corridors. This self evaluation revealed a pattern of small independently owned ethnic shops, grocers and restaurants. With the benefit of this knowledge, the “Eat Street” branding concept and the International Neighborhood slogan evolved. Energy and investment were put into streetscape improvements capitalizing on the micro-economics of family owned businesses and ethnicities.

Fast forward 15 years and the success of that initial commercial rejuvenation has settled well. But it is time to take the next step forward. A new economic era with new building concepts and investors is emerging. Knowing that change is both inevitable and good but also valuing the character and eccentricities of our neighborhood, the Whittier Alliance took strategic steps to put into place controls that would both foster and preserve the unique character of the Whittier commercial corridors.

Our first step was to develop the Nicollet Franklin Pedestrian Overlay which was adopted by the City in Aug. 2007. It became clear during the PO discussions that most of the qualitative characteristics of development could not be articulated in the zoning dominated document. To outline the more personality driven pedestrian and architectural assets preferred by the neighborhood, the next step of developing design guidelines/standards was undertaken.

Purpose:

The goal of this document is to give developers a sense of the neighborhood and to reinforce to current commercial property owners the value of thoughtful façade and building improvements. The challenge was to convey the soul of the neighborhood in a way that is not overly prescriptive, opens avenues of creativity and lays out the positive preferences of the neighborhood. While other neighborhoods might be reluctant to embrace design proposals that are out of the ordinary, the Whittier neighborhood welcomes unconventional architectural applications for unique commercial spaces, businesses, and architecture that blend with the conventional.

Another expected outcome is that the design standards pave the way for a friendlier initial reception of a development proposal in neighborhood review. We expect that the developer will draw on the neighborhood vision outlined in the Design Standards and incorporate elements into their architectural articulation.

We envision the gradual evolution of the commercial corridors into eclectic storefronts with threads of symmetry for cohesive neighborhood identity; animated in their use and design and expressive of the culture and cultural aspects of the Whittier neighborhood.

Please take time to review these design standards, let them percolate, ask questions, visit the neighborhood, then visit it again and give us your best work. We are aiming to create pedestrian engaging commercial corridors that serve the residents, keep visitors coming back, and are unique in the city.

WHO AND HOW TO USE THE DESIGN STANDARDS

The design standards are intended to build upon successes of the neighborhood's commercial corridors and to convey the values and esthetics of the residents and business owners.

The topic areas in the standards are to be taken as an ensemble, not distinct initiatives. However, art and "greening" (pots, landscaping, vines, etc.) should be a primary and substantial component of every project

Existing Businesses and Property Owners

- Look for opportunities to improve the image and welcoming aspects of your storefront
- Look for opportunities to enhance your property and increase landscape and plantings
- Look for opportunities to improve water and energy efficiency

For Redevelopment Projects

- Look for opportunities to improve the architectural integrity of the property that will add character to the commercial area
- Look for opportunities to improve the public realm
- Look for opportunities to increase safety and security, and protect water quality

For New Development Proposals

- Look for opportunities to support innovative, imaginative and eclectic high quality new development
- Look for opportunities to incorporate a highly interactive public realm
- Look for opportunities for responsive and contextual site development



TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION TO STANDARDS

Introduction
Application Area

PEDESTRIAN AND BUILDING

Entries
Signs
Color and Contrast
Details
Materials
Preservation
Lighting

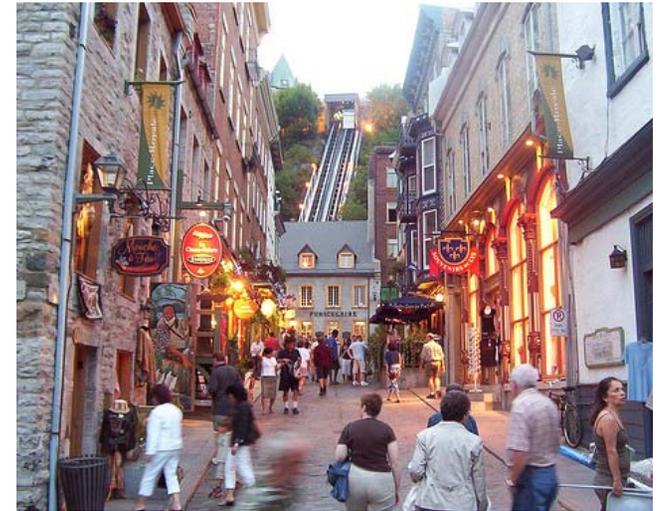
PEDESTRIAN AND STREET

Furniture
Urban Landscape
Open Spaces
Street Wall
Storefronts
Public Art
Opening to the Street

LOT AND BUILDING

Development Impacts
Context
Site Development
Safety and Security
Height and Massing
Depth and Layers
Parking
Transit
Solar Access
Water Resources
Energy Efficiency

OTHER THOUGHTS



INTRODUCTION

The buildings of Whittier's commercial streets are a collection of period pieces rooted in or to their times yet put to new uses with lively, urban, and international flavors. They are a mix of styles, shapes, materials, and rhythms. Maybe it is the exuberance of their individual expressions that make them hang together as an ensemble. There is a kind of improvisational, jazzy quality to this linear place.

Segments of the streets are vibrant, inviting places. Other sections are passive and inert. One could choreograph the experience and, as a designer or entrepreneur adding an element to the street, one must be aware of where their particular piece is in the mix so that it adds to rather than diminishes the experience.

The streets' economic viability is founded on the small, affordable spaces lining them and the local, start-up businesses they shelter. This is a place where ideas start and, oftentimes, stay.

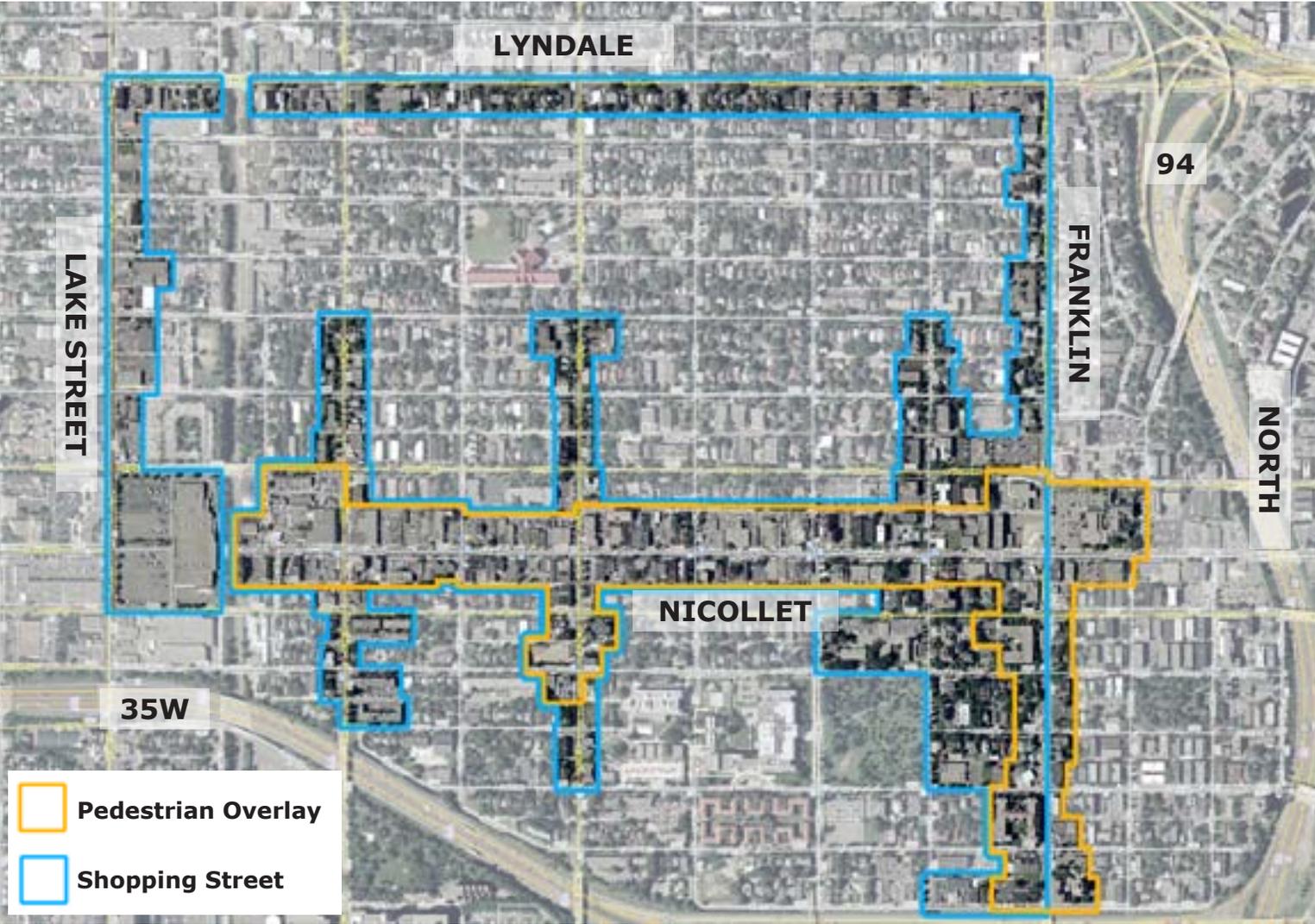
The neighborhood values what the streets have become, recognizes the fragility of their complex character, and strives to nurture their continued evolution without prescribing a specific future. Developing these guidelines is about encouraging the physical elements that give the commercial streets their gravitational pull, causing a diverse collection of residents and visitors to perambulate, to congregate, to coalesce. The guidelines are not about creating the perfect place, they celebrate places that perfect creating.

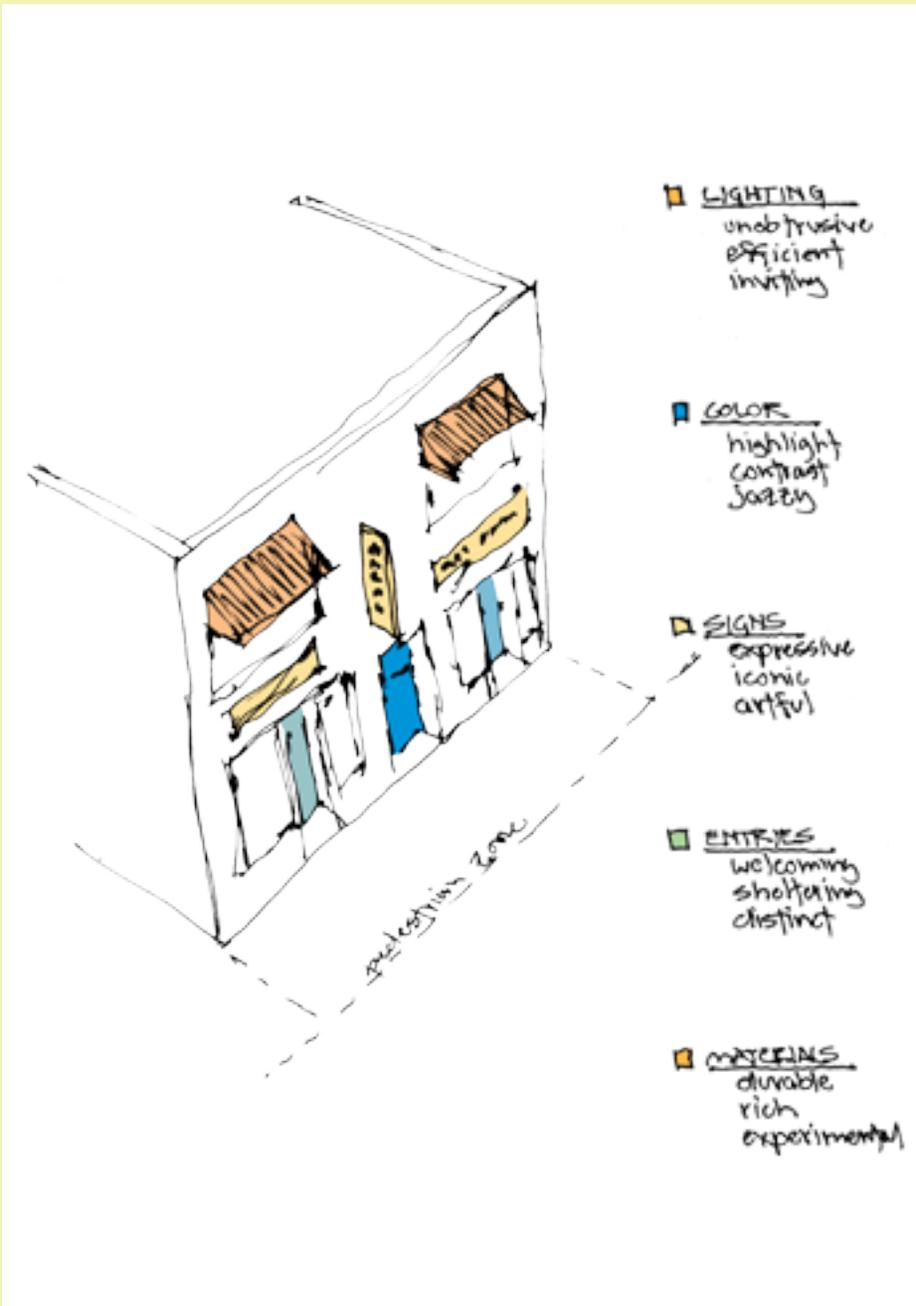
These design guidelines should inspire unique, intentional environmental design that adds to the eclectic mix of the streets. The guidelines should encourage new and rehabilitated properties with variety, intensity, and activity fronting on a contiguous streetscape. They should have a light yet intentional touch.

While the guidelines speak of physical attributes, there is a desire underlying them to celebrate social interactions and personal dynamics that are difficult to articulate but feel right.



APPLICATION AREA





PEDESTRIAN AND BUILDING

To the building and business owner; the scale, feel and fit of a commercial storefront is about attracting new business.

Entries Giving Rhythm
Signs Expressing and Communicating
Color and Contrast Drawing Attention
Details That Engage
Richness of Materials
Preservation
Lighting

ENTRIES GIVING RHYTHM

Description & Intent

A street façade with many entry points at regular intervals encourages exploration and anticipation on the part of pedestrians.

- Entries as focal points of façades
- Openings related to human proportions
- Details and materials that attract attention
- Elements adding rhythm to the streetscape

Elements

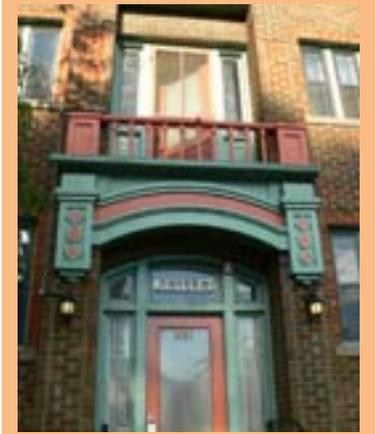
Recesses, doors with transparency, porches, roofs and cover, lighting, surface treatments

The Feel

Welcoming, sheltering, distinct, inviting, cozy, homey and surprising, chic

We Encourage

- Create inviting entries
- Introducing color and lighting
- Seasonal treatments
- Illuminated and landscaped
- Rehab that reveals the original entry



SIGNS EXPRESSING AND COMMUNICATING

Description & Intent

Signage creates an expectation of a business. The character of the commercial area is evident on the street in the form of its signage.

- Identification of business
- Advertising and art combined
- Signifies the character of a place and business
- Provides wayfinding landmarks

Elements

Projecting signs, hanging signs, wall signs, window signs, street signs, logos, business theme carried out in architectural detail

The Feel

Expressive, iconic, memorable, artful, hip, exotic, poetic, theatrical, inviting, quirky

We Encourage

- Collaboration with artists to design a unique sign that represents the business
- Solid, brightly colored and contrasting signs
- Type fonts and colors that are legible at a distance
- Graphic or three-dimensional, fixed signs that include an icon of the business
- Contrasting letter and background colors to increase legibility
- Frontal lighting of signage, neon and LED
- Use of non traditional materials and placement applications (mosaics, wrought iron, etc.)



COLOR AND CONTRAST DRAWING ATTENTION

Description & Intent

Color and contrast direct the eye, providing cultural, historical and advertising visuals to add to neighborhood texture.

- Dark elements recede
- Bright, contrasting elements stand out
- Color relates to adjacent buildings
- Avoid overpowering and indiscriminate color schemes
- Diversity of patterns for visual impact

Elements

Entry color, window trim, architectural materials, signage, textures

The Feel

Highlights and contrast, saturated, sophisticated, subtle, provocative, ethnic, vibrant, jazzy and spicy

We Encourage

- Bright accent color for doors and trim
- Accents on architectural elements (window trim, texture, relief, lighting, etc.)
- Simple color scheme
- Historical relevance for historical buildings
- Natural color of building materials
- Limited and focal use of primary colors
- Color through art and architectural materials



DETAILS THAT ENGAGE

Description & Intent

Regardless of a citizen's knowledge of any given craft, a well designed and executed architectural feature gets respect, shows quality and status.

- Details express a fine grain of the building's character
- Details express personality and presence
- Details can support rhythm
- Draw people to an entry or focal point
- Support a culture of craftsmanship and quality
- Add playful or elegant design elements and interest

We Encourage

- Details attractive to a pedestrian
- Expression of the quality of the building
- Expression of the cultural or regional character of the business or neighborhood
- Revealing existing historical façades
- Designing adjacent buildings to take cues from each other
- Relief or dimensional architectural or artistic feature
- Texture, bas-relief, unconventional materials

Elements

Cornices, lintels, brick arches, ironwork, entrances, shadow lines, corbels, façade patterns, paving, benches, brick design

The Feel

Exhibit craftsmanship, quality, honesty, fanciful subtle, elegant, solid, eye catching, pushing the edge



RICHNESS OF MATERIALS



Description & Intent

Quality construction not only enables the longevity of a building, but also shows an investment in the success of the neighborhood.

- Durable materials communicate permanence and quality
- Use materials that are suitable for a commercial storefront building
- Consideration needs to be given to life cycle costs of materials rather than initial costs
- Detailing enhances the whole

We Encourage

- Rehabs that restore the original storefronts and original materials
- Solid natural material rather than fascia
- Inventive use of durable materials
- Use of salvaged materials
- Sustainably produced materials

Elements

Brick, stucco, stone, architectural metals, art glass, salvage materials

The Feel

Durable, experimental, rich, sensory, contemporary, historic, sleek, lasting, contrasting, textural, raw, fancy



PRESERVATION

Description & Intent

There is substantial value to the existing craft and construction of older buildings. Many have been used as evidence of patterns throughout the guidelines. Such examples need to be preserved.

- Adaptive reuse of buildings that are sound and meet guidelines
- Timely upkeep of buildings
- Preserve original materials
- Preservation of architectural integrity
- Extension of and nod to the historic district of Whittier
- Respect for and retention of the design, durability and functionality of older buildings

We Encourage

- Exposing the original façade
- Updating energy efficiency
- Use of era appropriate materials
- Maintenance and restoration of original features and details
- Restoration that gracefully renews an old building to look comfortably adapted to modern use
- Reuse and repurposing of materials
- Respect for retention of original craftsmanship
- Capitalizing on the unique historic features

Elements

Reuse, historic materials, façade, transoms, windows, restoration

The Feel

True, adapted, in scale, aging gracefully, evocative, appropriate, accommodating, respected



LIGHTING

Description & Intent

Lighting extends the activity of the city at night. It is both our protector and our beacon for enticing nightlife.

- Lighting should be strategically placed to highlight a sign, space or landmark
- Increase safety and security of an area
- Give the streetscape interest and texture at night
- Provide 'cut off' light fixtures to reduce light pollution.
- Be an artistic or architectural feature
- Provide "mood" or highlights in plantings or along pathway edges

Elements

Streetlights, signage, windows, trees, lanterns, strung lights

The Feel

Unobtrusive, efficient, human-scale, inviting, eye-catching, expressive, seasonal

We Encourage

- Preferred LED and neon lights
- Original eye-catching signs
- Decorative streetlights
- Lights that make the building interior visible at night
- Lights that accent buildings
- Artistic application of lighting and lights





■ OPEN SPACES
 active
 supervised
 multi-generational

■ BUILDING WALLS
 transparent
 framing
 urban

■ STOREFRONTS
 informative
 welcoming
 compelling

■ FURNITURE
 inviting
 casual
 comfortable

■ ECOLOGICAL LANDSCAPES
 connection to nature
 provide habitat
 color and texture

■ PUBLIC ART
 eclectic
 humorous
 interactive

PEDESTRIAN AND STREET

To the pedestrian; a highly interactive public realm encourages discovery and exploration.

- Furniture Bringing People to the Street
- Urban Landscape
- Open Spaces of Tranquility and Security
- Building Walls Defining the Street
- Storefronts-Pedestrian Oriented Design
- Public Art
- Windows Opening to the Street

FURNITURE BRINGING PEOPLE TO THE STREET



Description & Intent

Furniture provides a human scale and draws a visible human presence and helps to imagine one even when empty.

- Enlivens the street scene
- Encourages pedestrian activity
- Provides temporary seasonal socializing spaces
- Adds scale and texture to the street
- Provides additional visibility and 'draw' to a business
- Provides sense of order or defines boundaries
- Provides a central location for information and exchange

Elements

Bus stops, bus benches, newspaper racks, seating, umbrellas, bike racks, fountains, functional art, kiosks

We Encourage

- Unique transit stop improvements
- Bike racks as art and to enforce the theme of Eat Street
- Bring retail businesses out onto the street
- Restaurants to provide additional outdoor seating
- Utilitarian or multi-purpose public art
- Artfully designed newspaper containments

The Feel

Inviting activity, relax and linger, casual, comfortable, artful and of character



URBAN LANDSCAPE

Description & Intent

Greenspace and landscaping helps mitigate the loss of our native plant communities in the hardscape of urban settings. Landscaping provides a connection to outdoors and nature. Well maintained landscaping says a lot about the maintenance of a place and its inhabitants.

- Adds vitality to the street
- Enjoyment for the pedestrian
- Provides a natural continuity to the street
- Provide visual interest
- Fill in gaps
- Provide color and texture
- Provide seasonal change
- Provide shade
- Can provide habitat for birds
- Aids in controlling storm water runoff

We Encourage

- Using ecological design: low maintenance plants, conserves native plants, improves water, soil, air and habitat, connects greenspaces to the river, and appeals to the senses
- Bring added definition to store entries
- Frame display windows
- Create spaces for social interaction
- Frame and add texture and relief to parking lots
- Define boundaries
- Enliven larger unfriendly spaces

Elements

Street trees, boulevard strips, green roofs, large planters, planting beds, urban gardens, hanging baskets, window boxes, hedges, green walls, fountains, water feature, bird baths, rain gardens bioswales, storm water, management.

The Feel

Seasonal, shading, tranquil, intimate, peaceful, color and texture, defining, unexpected, scented, lush, regional, surprising, maintained, aromatic



OPEN SPACES OF TRANQUILITY AND SECURITY

Description & Intent

Active public or private outdoor spaces that are tended by the surrounding businesses are inviting places to see and be seen.

- Encourages pedestrian activity and social spaces independent from a particular business or destination
- Activity in the space is observable from adjacent businesses
- Include places to sit and observe
- Resting and contemplative place for pedestrians
- Break from commercial bustle and noise

We Encourage

- Develop under-utilized exterior spaces for employees and the public
- Range of sizes from intimate to small gatherings
- Outdoor spaces as extension of businesses
- Stopping places for observation, conversation or relaxation

Elements

Courtyards, recesses from the street, playgrounds, “vest pocket” plazas, squares, alleys

The Feel

Observable, social, active, alluring, restful, safe, inter-generational, planted, community oriented, clean



BUILDING WALLS DEFINING THE STREET

Description & Intent

The sense of enclosure that building walls provide focuses energy and attention on the street.

- Build the edge of the public realm
- Design buildings of sufficient height to define the street's space
- Bring activity in the building in direct contact with the people on the street
- Enhance the experience and draw pedestrians along the street

Elements

Horizontal continuity, Vertical variety, lighting, awnings, massing tuned to street width, façade detail and shadow, datum line

The Feel

Framing inside/outside, transparent, enclosing the street, continuous, urban and dense, playful rhythm

We Encourage

- Natural light to penetrate into store interiors
- Views into stores from the street
- Building and store lighting to provide evening lighting to the sidewalk
- Design definition on walls or repetitive patterns



STOREFRONTS - PEDESTRIAN ORIENTED DESIGN

Description & Intent

Storefronts define the image and character of a commercial area, while the design of the storefront contributes to the advertising and merchandising of businesses.

- Design inviting entries from the public sidewalk
- Provide display windows with views between inside and outside
- Add depth to the storefronts using recessed entries, canopies, signs, planters, etc.

Elements

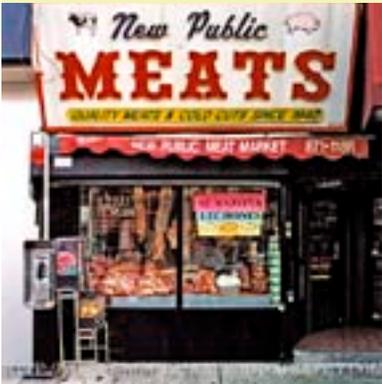
Awnings, lighting, transparency, materials, merchandise displays, window stenciling, flower boxes

The Feel

Informative, welcoming, compelling, curious, engaging, playful, has personality, sophisticated, European, non-traditional

We Encourage

- Natural light penetrating into the store interior
- Unobstructed views into and out of the businesses
- Defined entry
- Visually appealing signage
- Expression of cultural, ethnic or retail theme



PUBLIC ART

Description & Intent

Public art contributes diverse perspectives to the 'dialogue' of the street.

- Gives a unique character to a place
- Adds local flavor
- Serves to add interest and texture
- Adds a human story to a place
- Reveal soul/humor/attitude of the neighborhood

Elements

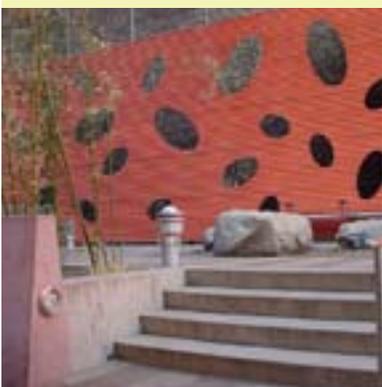
Murals, sculpture, designed benches, fences or paving, mosaics, moving parts, kiosk, historic markers

The Feel

Eclectic, folk art, kitsch, cultural, humorous, personal, interactive, thought provoking, musical, whimsical, sensory, temporal, educational

We Encourage

- Local artists
- Local depiction
- Community involvement
- Selection of sites that are derelict
- Art as a feature of new development
- Art at different scales and mediums
- Permanent and temporary installations
- Art incorporated into structure



WINDOWS OPENING TO THE STREET



Description & Intent

Operable windows and convertible walls in storefronts celebrate our changing seasons and merge interior spaces with the out-of-doors

- Experience for the pedestrian
- Increases seasonal connection with the pedestrian
- Provides for a more open indoor / outdoor connection
- Natural ventilation to reduce dependence on air conditioning
- Sensual exchange from interior to exterior

We Encourage

- Convertible wall opening onto the sidewalk
- Operable windows for natural ventilation
- Artistic signage on windows
- Movable awnings

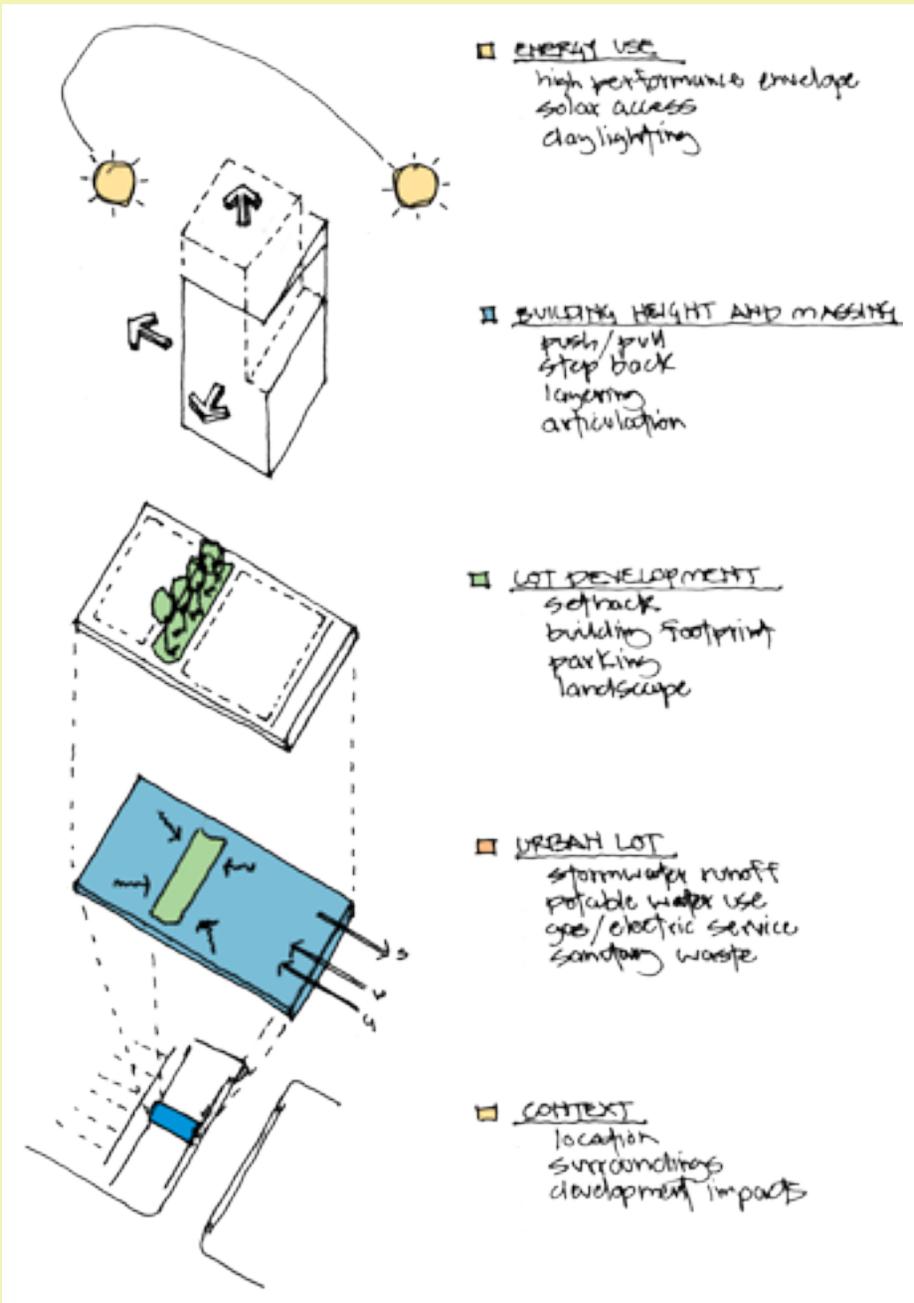
Elements

Indoor / outdoor connections, opening storefront, garage doors, street vending/services

The Feel

Connected, protected, flowing, arcade, open market, energy, activity, European, vibrancy





LOT AND BUILDING

To the community; each new development should reflect the organic growth of the neighborhood.

Development Impacts

Context

Site Development

Safety and Security

Height and Massing

Depth and Layers

Parking

Transit

Solar Access

Protecting Water Resources

Increasing Energy Efficiency

DEVELOPMENT IMPACTS

Description & Intent

The neighborhood needs to clearly understand the range of potential impacts to be generated by any proposed new development.

- Density in terms of units per acre; Density of the proposed development, existing density of surrounding buildings, required unit density to support transit
- Implication to parking requirements; number of parking stalls for residential use, number of parking stalls for commercial or office use, parking area and location
- Impact on solar access; Demonstrate through three-dimensional modeling the seasonal impacts of the proposed development mass and height on the surrounding structures
- Traffic increase; conduct a traffic demand study

We Encourage

- Informal conversations with neighborhood stakeholders
- Aging of buildings
- Assess neighborhood services/needs
- Raising the bar
- Studies
- Precedent
- Assess many variables
- Quality over mass, density or quantity
- Repurposing of materials or building

Elements

Density impacts, parking requirements, solar access, traffic increase, case studies and comparables

The Feel

Close knit, responsive, delicate, harmonious



RESPOND TO THE SITE CONTEXT

Description & Intent

Taking the time to understand the site forces affecting a new development site can provide a wealth of information to influence the new building.

- Look and understand what is adjacent to the development site
- Identify external forces that will shape the building
- Identify internal site conditions that will influence site development
- Recognize heights, colors, materials, density, building setbacks all contribute to the design response
- Identify opportunities for solar access, water management, energy conservation and transit mitigations
- Consider how greenspace and landscaping can contribute a piece of the green infrastructure quilt of the street, neighborhood and city

We Encourage

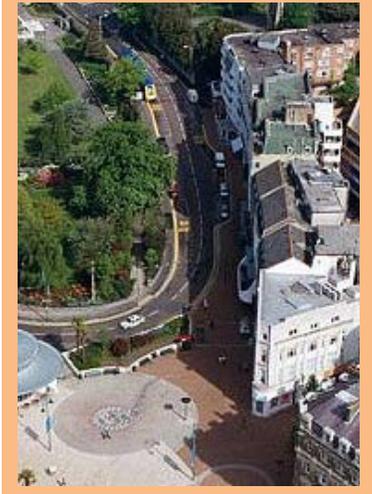
- Creative interpretation and experimentation
- Thoughtful consideration as to what the new development means to the neighborhood
- Knowledge and incorporation of neighborhood development goals
- Sensitivity to neighboring businesses, the street and the neighborhood
- Thoughtful consideration of the placement of entrances
- Design and build within the context of neighborhood small business development

Elements

Site width, adjacent building heights, building heights across the alley, corner lot or mid-block location, solar access, water and energy use, pedestrian and traffic flow

The Feel

Local, harmonious, sensitive, connected, interactive, thoughtful



SITE DEVELOPMENT

Description & Intent

- Size and proportion of windows & door openings of an infill building should be similar to those on the adjacent façades
- New buildings should strengthen the rhythms of the street by emphasizing increased activity
- Small concealed parking lots only, maximize on-street parking. Take advantage of pedestrian overlay opportunities
- Handle storm water runoff on site.
- Respect height and massing and solar access to adjacent structures
- Incorporate sustainable and green strategies into redevelopment and new development
- Balance building footprint and green or public space
- Strive for a minimum of 25% of lot to be green or public
- Assess and accommodate surrounding influences

We Encourage

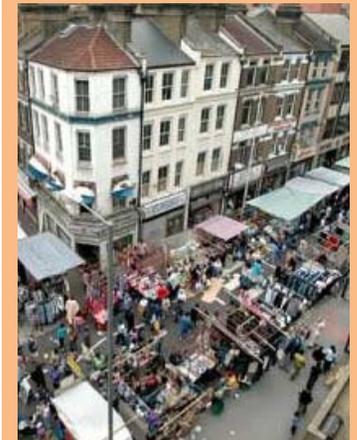
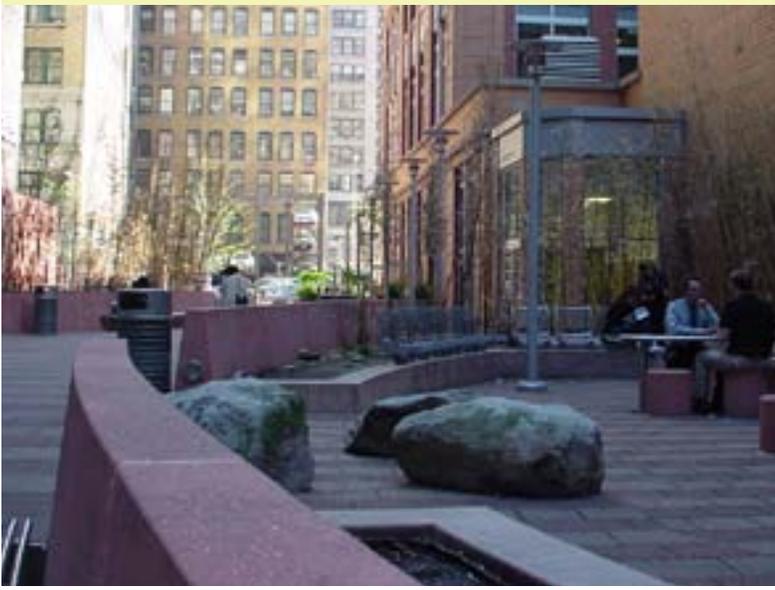
- Development aimed at small business ownership
- Incorporation of public and interactive art
- Mixed-use development
- Incorporation of transit amenities or transit shelters incorporated into the design of the building
- Thoughtful and well balanced design
- Experimentation
- Using storm water as a resource
- Incorporation of development goals of the neighborhood

Elements

Site design, building design, parking lots, landscape design, response to nature, public art

The Feel

'The Stage', inviting vibrant, always active, balanced but surprising



SAFETY AND SECURITY



Description & Intent

This responds to both the perception and reality of 'safety', the intuitive feeling and need for human comfort, fit and belonging. Safety and security must be addressed on several levels including physical design, community 'eyes on the street' and standard policing procedures.

- Keep a clean neighborhood
- Encourage activity that will in turn watch the streets and neighborhood
- Sustained pride in the area

Elements

Lighting, upkeep, sidewalk access and patios, open viewing, connected, open

The Feel

Clean, well-kept, safe, comfortable, visible, active, vital, positive energy

We Encourage

- Maintain clear sight lines to building entries, parking areas, the sidewalk and other buildings.
- Sidewalk seating and patios with views of the street
- Adequate but not excessive lighting levels throughout sites.
- Consistent high maintenance levels, trash pick-up, graffiti cleaning etc.
- Business that attract people throughout the day and night



BUILDING HEIGHT AND MASSING



Description & Intent

Height and massing need to be considered together due to the geometric complexity shaping the three dimensional structure.

- Height can be somewhat mitigated by ‘stepping’ the building back at the three or four story height
- Massing needs to respond to the building program, heights that reinforce the street wall, daylighting opportunities and solar access to neighboring sites and streets
- Floor to floor heights and the delineation of stories impact the perceived height of a structure
- Creative use of solids, voids and perforation impact the perceived mass of a structure

Elements

Number of stories, proportion of width, depth and height, upper level floor setbacks, definition of floors, fenestration, architectural detailing



We Encourage

- Building shapes that add variety while also relating well to their surroundings
- Experimentation of form
- Contemporary imagery
- Upper floors that step back to give solar access or give the impression of lower street façade
- Definition of the street wall
- Buildings that are 3-5 stories tall
- Architectural design elements that break the expanse and create design detail
- Restoration or mirroring of original features

The Feel

Timeless, the perfect new project, united purpose, responsive, defined, approachable, balanced



DEPTH AND LAYERS EXPRESSING LIFE WITHIN

Description & Intent

While being true to a commercial setback and the street wall, buildings can provide depth and texture that create interaction and interest at the pedestrian edge.

- Allow people to “preview” a space before entering
- Provide places for pedestrians to inhabit the edge between building and street

Elements

Building recesses, alcoves, upper story setbacks, seating areas, sidewalk tables and seating, balconies, colonnades, overhangs

The Feel

Observable, sheltering, protective, visually interesting, welcoming, intimate

We Encourage

- A variety of opportunities for leisure, socializing, play and solitude
- Recesses off the street
- Balconies
- Colonnades
- Inventive spatial creations



PARKING

Description & Intent

Keeping with traditional urban design principles, the street is designed to accommodate the car while not allowing it to dominate.

- Minimize the need for parking
- Maximize street parking.
- Provide small alley parking lots to supplement street parking.
- When fitting parking lots into the urban fabric, reduce the effect on the street edge with a minimal lot and liberal landscaping.
- Provide 'cut off' light fixtures to reduce light pollution.
- Avoid the parking lot where possible, place behind buildings when it cannot be omitted.

We Encourage

- Repurposing, improvement and minimization of existing parking lots
- Landscaping that adds color, texture and interest
- Hidden, architecturally attractive parking structures
- Shared parking agreements
- Rain gardens, bioswales and porous paving materials to treat storm water runoff
- Underground or internal parking lots
- Stacking
- Bicycle parking
- Minimal curb cuts

Elements

Size, paving materials, lighting, landscape, tree cover, pedestrian connection to the street

The Feel

Safe, minimized, connected, eclectic, protected, maximized efficiency



TRANSIT

Description & Intent

Promote alternate means of travel to connect the neighborhood outside of its borders. The transportation we use can reveal values and vibrancy of a community.

- Reduce pollution and congestion through easy transit options
- Cleaner cars and buses, hybrids, smaller cars
- Lessen the need for parking as a land use
- Put people in closer proximity to each other
- Fewer and quieter cars reduce noise pollution
- Provide or incorporate transit shelter into design of development

We Encourage

- Walking
- Bicycles, connection to the Midtown Greenway
- Programs that allow for sharing bicycles or cars
- Bike taxis
- Carpooling and sharing
- Mass Transit
- Transit programs and amenities for employees and building users

Elements

Car share, buses, bicycles (bike lanes, bike paths), bicycle parking, streetcars, transit shelters and less so the automobile

The Feel

Convenient, clean, safe, accessible.



SOLAR ACCESS



Description & Intent

Solar access defines the capacity of a site or building to receive unobstructed sunlight.

- Access for passive heating
- Opportunities for collecting solar energy
- Taking advantage of a site’s solar access without depriving adjacent buildings or the street of solar access

Elements

Height, step building back, balconies, solar panels, passive solar design, awnings



The Feel

Open, bright, warm, expanding

We Encourage

- Buildings that step back
- Using passive or active solar to reduce an energy footprint
- Buildings with inset or protruding balconies



PROTECTING WATER RESOURCES

Description & Intent

Conservation, treatment and reuse of water resources are important components of sustainable development.

- Reduce non-porous paving surfaces by both replacement and future development
- Collect rainfall to irrigate gardens, flowers and trees.
- Restore the urban forest as an effective measure to collect and store storm water.
- Be innovative by creating art through water management

We Encourage

- Green roofs
- Porous paving: brick, cobbles, etc.
- Boulevard trees
- Rain gardens
- Planting boxes
- Bioswales
- Green alleys
- Gray water reuse
- Elimination, reduction or intense landscape of flat parking lots or areas of pavement

Elements

Porous paving, vegetative roofs, landscape, urban forest, planters, wall vines

The Feel

Living, stewardship, lush, cool, verdant



INCREASING ENERGY EFFICIENCY



Description & Intent

Efficiency has the ability to reduce the footprints that our buildings take to operate and the resources that they require.

- Decrease the heat island effect with plants
- Reduce waste in construction and operation
- Provide good solar access and use that access to advantage
- Design buildings that are passive and require less energy to operate.
- Durable and energy efficient buildings. Reduce the cost to operate and the life cycle cost of replacement

Elements

Insulation, plants, building orientation, building materials, repurpose



We Encourage

- Daylighting
- Green roofs
- Local energy generation
- Setting goals, meeting energy usage standards (LEED, etc..)
- Creative methods to save energy
- Solar panels
- Green/Vine walls
- Operable windows
- Cross ventilation
- Adaptive reuse

The Feel

Responsible, thrifty, warm, bright



OTHER THOUGHTS

NEIGHBORHOOD IMPERATIVES:

- Engage the Pedestrian. The street should be a social focal & usage point
- Design with a sensitivity to the surroundings; the adjacent buildings, and neighborhood character
- Expressive storefronts and street use
- Mass, density and fenestration proportional to residential commercial corridor
- Incorporate art and green over and above the minimum requirement
- Avoid flat lots—or at minimum put at rear of building and camouflage to invisibility.

NEIGHBORHOOD RECOMMENDATIONS

Before the first line is drawn:

Take time to walk, experience and understand the neighborhood – we are not only diverse culturally, but aesthetically, economically, age-wise and in lifestyle

Historic preservation and restoration are important – but keep in mind that Whittier is more than late 19th century structures; we have important historic buildings from a range of eras

Equally important is innovative new design – as above, we want interesting, even unusual structures because we do not want to look like Uptown or Downtown or the suburbs

Do not underestimate the neighborhood – there is incredible depth of knowledge, in history, architecture, business, ecology and much more. Come to one of our meetings and see for yourself.

Do not cost cut on design or quality materials – we have to live with these buildings and we want to love them.

Recycle-reuse – we have a committed and vocal environmentally conscious population and we want to be leaders in that regard, not followers.



OTHER THOUGHTS (continued)

NEIGHBORHOOD “pet peeves”

- Height and density usually brings lively debate
- Dumbing down a building,
- Designing for franchise or big box retail
- Cheap materials
- Bad signage
- Condescending presentations
- Flat lots
- Short sighted development or rehab

INFLUENCING DOCUMENTS

- Nicollet Franklin Pedestrian Overlay adopted by the City of Minneapolis in Aug. 2007
- Minneapolis Great Street Façade Improvement Program
- Whittier Neighborhood Historic Preservation Context Study and Preservation Guidelines (Available late 2010)

