

5 . G e n e r a l D e s i g n G u i d e l i n e s

A . S i t e D e s i g n a n d O r g a n i z a t i o n

- A.1. Maintain the existing downtown street grid and, to the extent feasible, reconstruct the grid where interrupted by Town Center Mall.
- A.2. Locate private on-site parking below grade or behind active uses. Public parking such as surface lots and on-street parking may be permitted with applicable streetscape design.
- A.3. Use water elements and fountains for interest and sound at key pedestrian locations such as courtyards and exterior gathering spaces.
- A.4. Use quality exterior paving materials such as natural stone and architecturally enhanced concrete at key pedestrian crossings or to delineate boundaries between public and private development.
- A.5. Locate retail entrances, displays and special design features at building corners. Locate less active uses, such as lobby entrances to upper level spaces, at mid-block.
- A.6. Provide direct entrances or stoops to street-level residential units such as a porch, platform or staircase, to create an intimate streetscape.
- A.7. Subdivide larger parcels into smaller properties when possible to provide individual ownership opportunities.

B . A r c h i t e c t u r e a n d D e s i g n D e t a i l s

- B.1. Use variable heights and roof forms to break up the building mass. Do not present a uniform block of building built to the maximum height limit.
- B.2. Interrupt ground floor facades about every 30 ft. with various architectural elements such as trellises, balconies, steps, openings etc.
- B.3. New commercial development should have a variety of styles and appear to be constructed over a long period of time. "Cookie cutter" development is discouraged.
- B.4. Establish an architectural character that respects Sunnyvale's historic downtown assets. Commercial buildings in the Murphy Avenue Heritage Landmark District, homes in the Taaffe-Frances Heritage Housing District and individual structures on the Sunnyvale Cultural Resources Inventory offer a vocabulary of design details.
- B.5. Buildings within Sunnyvale's downtown may be contemporary in their form if architectural detailing is compatible with the surrounding architectural styles.

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- B.6. "Corporate architecture" and generic designs are strongly discouraged unless compatible with the architecture. Design each project specifically with respect to its own surrounding environment.

Setbacks

- B.7. Try to maintain a well-defined street edge. Recesses for entries and to create an interesting pedestrian environment are acceptable.
- B.8. Place building frontages parallel to the street, recognizing street corners with corner tower elements, and recessed or chamfered entry elements.

Building Facades

- B.9. Define buildings with three distinct components: base, middle and top. Each component shall have horizontal and vertical articulation.
- B.10. Use strongly defined bases for buildings. Delineate the building base with architectural features such as a string course or cornice element or quality exterior materials such as stone, precast concrete, decorative terra cotta, brick masonry, and limited applications of metals such as painted ornamental steel, stainless steel, chrome, or bronze.
- B.11. Provide awnings, canopies, and shade structures along the street level to create intimate enclosures at the sidewalk and accommodate signs, graphics, and lighting.
- B.12. Emphasize the street level with the highest quality materials and detailing.
- B.13. For upper floors, articulation is the most important quality. Continuous flat facades should be avoided through recessed windows, awnings, French balconies, bay windows and vertical elements.
- B.14. Articulate entrances as special design elements. Give corner entries special design treatments using recesses or chamfers.
- B.15. Use variable heights and roof forms to break up the building mass. Do not present a uniform block of building built to the maximum height limit.
- B.16. Create architectural relief, definition and shadow by recessing storefronts, windows, and entry doors at least 6 inches.
- B.17. Provide window displays and views into active retail, entertainment, and commercial uses.
- B.18. Accentuate special locations such as street intersections and major building entrances with building treatments such as tower elements.
- B.19. Avoid blank facades.
- B.20. Avoid oversized detailing, particularly at the pedestrian levels.

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R o o f s

- B.21. Roof treatments, such as cornices and overhangs, are encouraged to clearly delineate and terminate individual building tops. Unarticulated parapets are not allowed.
- B.22. Roof overhangs are encouraged to feature rafter or outrigger treatments.
- B.23. Use mansard roofs that emulate gabled or hipped roofs only when fully gabled or hipped roofs are impractical due to building size limitations.
- B.24. Minimize the appearance of exterior roof drains.

W i n d o w s

- B.25. Windows and mullions are encouraged to form composed patterns of fenestration to complement a building's massing and to provide scale and rhythm. Mullionless glazing systems are discouraged except at street level retail uses or as a limited, special building feature.
- B.26. Use quality window systems such as painted, front-loaded aluminum or steel systems, casement systems or double-hung systems. Limit curtainwall or horizontal strip windows. Avoid surface mounted fin systems.
- B.27. The use of clear glass is required for the ground floor. Green tinted glass; fritted glass; and decorative glass may be considered as decorative elements or for upper floors.
- B.28. Glass tints such as solex light or solex medium green are preferred to darker tints such as bronze or dark gray. Additional protection from solar gain shall be enhanced by building design utilizing recesses and shading devices. Mullionless, monolithic glazing may be used in special applications (such as retail shop fronts or office lobbies) as an accent to the overall design, but shall not be used as an overall design theme. Acceptable frit patterns include dot patterns or custom patterns.
- B.29. Reflective glass is not permitted except in minor, decorative applications.
- B.30. Continuous strip windows are discouraged.

E n c o u r a g e d B u i l d i n g M a t e r i a l s

- Building quality is reflected in material quality. The use of durable, high quality materials is required.
- Precast concrete (architectural quality, utilizing subtle colors and fine-grained aggregates to create a "cast stone" appearance.)
- Architectural quality cast-in-place concrete

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- Glass fiber reinforced concrete (GFRC)
- Modular brick masonry (Modular brick is encouraged to be unglazed, utilizing traditional textures and colors)
- Stone (particularly to be used at the pedestrian level at column bases, window sills, window surrounds, string courses, and cornices)
- Decorative terra cotta
- Stucco and cement plaster (Stucco and cement plaster are encouraged to have controlled surface textures and composed patterns of reveals and control joints to create interest. Do not use stucco finish to simulate the use of another material, i.e. wood trim window sills).
- Standing seam metal roofing
- Barrel roofing tile
- Slate or concrete roofing tile

D i s c o u r a g e d M a t e r i a l s

- Painted metal
- Plain concrete block
- Metal siding
- Specular surfaces
- Glazed tile except as accents
- Shiny reflective metal panels
- "S" roofing tile
- Composition roofing
- Mirrored glass
- Faux materials such as faux stone, faux brick, or EIFS.
- Chain link fencing.

C o l o r

A variety of colors are encouraged, selected to enhance natural material choices such as stone, wood, and natural metals, and quality architectural materials such as precast concrete, brick masonry, and barrel tile. Use colors to differentiate residential units. Use colors with a very high degree of light reflectance sparingly to control glare. Use darker and more intense colors at the building base. Color changes should be used to highlight changes in building articulation (such as base, middle, top), changes in materials, or individual architectural details (such as door surrounds, windowsills, window surrounds, cornices, etc). Reserve bold colors as accents for building details, ornamentation or special features.

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C. L a n d s c a p i n g a n d O p e n S p a c e

S i t e L a n d s c a p i n g

- C.1. Demonstrate a landscape design concept and link various site components. Placement and type of plan materials shall relate to the site and buildings.
- C.2. Preserve and incorporate existing natural features, particularly trees, into the landscape design of projects.
- C.3. Use live plant material in landscaped areas. Use of colored rock, wood bark and gravel in place of landscaping is not acceptable.
- C.4. Choose a variety of plant material with different textures and colors. Use water-wise plant material, as specified in the Landscape regulations.
- C.5. Use appropriate native vegetation. Use water conserving plant material in 70% of all landscaped areas.
- C.6. Use special landscape treatments at focal points and highly visible areas of the site.

P a r k i n g L o t L a n d s c a p i n g

- C.7. Landscape at least 20% of the parking lot area.
- C.8. Provide landscape islands all through parking lots. Islands shall be a minimum of 6 ft. wide and shall be continuous between double rows of parking spaces.
- C.9. Use landscape islands instead of tree wells where possible. Where tree wells are provided, they shall be a minimum of 5 ft. by 5 ft.

O p e n S p a c e

- C.10. Provide private outdoor space for each residential unit as an outward projecting balcony or an inward projecting terrace when possible.
- C.11. Provide private landscaped gardens for street level units. Install garden walls, fences or other markers of 3 ft. or less in height to separate private space from the public sidewalk.
- C.12. Semi-private exterior courtyards shall include both landscaped and paved areas, and shall be lighted for nighttime use and security.
- C.13. Plazas shall be developed with special paving, landscaping, fountains, seating areas, quality lighting, and other pedestrian amenities.

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D . S i g n a g e

- D.1. Private development projects are encouraged to incorporate appropriately designed signage as an integral part of building design. Downtown Sunnyvale is intended to be active and vibrant in its commercial districts, and passive and quiet in its residential districts. Signage character should be expressive of the predominant uses and character found in the district.
- D.2. Signs shall consist of business name and address only.
- D.3. Stacked lettering is discouraged.
- D.4. Projecting signs are allowed for all commercial uses in the Specific Plan. A projecting sign may indicate a business name or an icon only and are subject to the same guidelines for materials and colors as other wall or ground signs.
- D.5. Commercial retail signs shall generally consist of externally or internally-lit individual lettering. Signage on awnings encouraged. Internally-lit cabinet signs are generally prohibited, unless of exceptional design quality. Digital signs and roof-mounted signs are prohibited.
- D.6. Multi-family residential signs shall be smaller and less vibrant than traditional commercial signs. Signs shall consist of materials such as metal, stone, and wood. Signs shall be externally lit.
- D.7. Stand-alone office and banks signage shall consist of individual lettering with spot lighting. Internal illumination is discouraged. Signs shall consist of materials such as metal, stone, and wood.
- D.8. Street-facing commercial uses that back up to rear area surface parking are encouraged to provide identity signage facing the parking area, particularly if there are secondary entrances to the parking.
- D.9. Encouraged lighting approaches include incandescent spot lighting, halo lighting, or concealed neon. Exposed neon may be considered if of exceptionally high design quality or inventiveness.
- D.10. The extension of Murphy Avenue shall be subject to the same sign criteria as listed in the Murphy Avenue Design Guidelines.

E . P a r k i n g S t r u c t u r e s

- E.1. Horizontal parking decks shall occur at perimeter bays, visually shielding sloping ramps at interior bays, giving structures a simple expression of vertical columns and horizontal beams and spandrels.
- E.2. Facades shall be given the same thoughtful design consideration as active use buildings.
- E.3. Facade organization shall recognize the base and the top as important design elements. The base shall be enriched with finer