

10.0 - URBAN DESIGN GOALS AND VISION

A FRAMEWORK FOR BUILDING

Ventura Village recognizes the many assets that our community enjoys. Among these are a number of architecturally significant structures and an urban development pattern that makes possible much of our community's vitality. Preserving and improving these assets is a priority for our neighborhood. Our urban design framework will provide guidance for our future development and help insure its harmony with the nature of our neighborhood and with the vision that our residents have for its future. We view this urban design framework as a critical component of our strategy to maintain the character of our neighborhood as we improve and revitalize its condition.

10.1 - GUIDING PRINCIPLES

We seek to improve the quality of the Ventura Village urban environment. As such, we will endeavor to protect and enhance the quality of existing structures and settings, and promote the development of built environments that are

- safe and secure,
- human-scaled,
- pedestrian-friendly,
- transit-oriented,
- medium to high density, and
- contain mixed uses, including commercial, office and residential uses.

ELEMENTS OF OUR URBAN DESIGN FRAMEWORK

Our design guidelines are informed by the following elements:

- existing structures (culturally, architecturally, and historically relevant)
- pedestrian and bicycle circulation
- transit service
- plantings and vegetation
- parks and open spaces
- CPTED (Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design) principles

THE DESIGN CHARACTER OF VENTURA VILLAGE

Ventura Village is made up of two main identities and districts: the commercial corridor along Franklin Avenue, the mostly residential areas to the north and south of it, and the Light-Rail Transit Oriented Development area. There are, of course, no rigid lines of demarcation between these two areas, and there is no uniform style of construction in each - in fact, that very diversity makes our neighborhood interesting to be in and walk around in. But it is useful to think of these two districts because this helps to understand the motivation of the urban design strategies that

Ventura Village advocates.

THE FRANKLIN AVENUE COMMERCIAL CORRIDOR:

Franklin Avenue is the main east-west artery through Ventura village. It is also the site for many of our neighborhood's businesses. As the neighborhood itself is oriented east-west, Franklin Avenue is the most important thoroughfare within Ventura Village, and the one which holds the greatest relevance for commercial and business revitalization efforts. We advocate the protection and development of mixed-use (commercial/residential) properties in this area, as they will help sustain a lively, 24-hour Franklin Avenue. Increased vitality of this commercial strip will in turn aid our neighborhood's ongoing revitalization and success.

THE RESIDENTIAL AREA

Most of the Ventura Village residential area is dedicated to typical residential structures. Most of these are typical houses, many of which function as multi-unit dwellings (duplexes and triplexes). Our neighborhood also has some high-rise structures and several low rise apartment buildings. Some commercial and institutional nodes are located within our residential areas. Parks and other recreation assets are easily accessible to residents of Ventura Village.

THE LIGHT RAIL TRANSIT-ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT AREA

10.2 - CPTED PRINCIPLES IN THE VENTURA VILLAGE MASTER PLAN

CPTED (Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design) is a crime prevention strategy formulated on the premise that the proper design and effective use of the physical environment can lead to a reduction in crime, and to the creation of safer, better neighborhoods.

We believe that architects, planners, engineers and landscape designers can help create a climate of safety in a community right from the start by designing a physical environment that positively influences human behavior. Incorporating CPTED principles into comprehensive approaches can lead to a significant reduction in crime and help use law enforcement resources more efficiently.

CPTED strategies can be used to influence design decisions related to

- the creation of space, its use and safety
- the locations of land uses
- the positions of buildings and other structures
- interior and exterior design details such as color, lighting, entrances and exits, and landscaping

Ventura Village seeks to incorporate CPTED principles as an integral part of our master plan and urban design strategy. We believe this makes efficient use of local resources, as it brings

together a wide range of community members - residents, design and business professionals, and government agencies - to define neighborhood problems, identify solutions, carry out plans, and evaluate results. We seek to participate in an ongoing dialogue with residents, designers and law enforcement officials to help us and our partners anticipate and resolve neighborhood safety concerns before they become a problem.

10.2.1 - CPTED BENEFITS:

Use of CPTED principles in the planning, design and development stages of our revitalization plan will bring about many benefits to our residents and municipal agencies, including:

- Less crime in our neighborhood and business areas
- Improved perception of safety and livability in public areas and neighborhoods
- Improved sense of security and quality of life through reduced fear of crime
- More revenue from safer and busier business districts
- Increased use of transit facilities, public parks and other public assets

10.2.2 - HOW CPTED WORKS - BASIC CONCEPTS

CPTED strategies begin from the following four basic concepts:

- Territoriality: People protect territory that they feel is their own, and they have a certain respect for the territory of others. Fences, pavement treatments, art, signs, good maintenance, and landscaping are some physical ways to express ownership. Identifying intruders is much easier in a well-defined space.
- Natural Surveillance: Criminals don't want to be seen. Placing physical features, activities, and people in ways that maximize the ability to see what's going on discourages crime. Barriers, such as walls, sheds, or shadows, make it difficult to observe activity. Landscaping and lighting can be planned to promote natural surveillance from inside a home or building and from the outside by neighbors or people passing by. The natural surveillance capability of resident and visitors' "eyes on the street" is a powerful deterrent against crime.
- Activity support: Encouraging activity in public spaces helps discourage crime. An active and lively commercial street, for example, is less likely to have crime activity than an inadequately lit and inactive strip mall.
- Access control: Properly located entrances, exits, fencing, landscaping, and lighting can direct both foot and automobile traffic in ways that discourage crime.

10.2.3 - USE OF CPTED PRINCIPLES IN VENTURA VILLAGE DEVELOPMENT

Use of CPTED principles shall be an integral part of any design proposed for development or construction within the borders of Ventura Village. We advocate for the use of CPTED principles as key elements of any local comprehensive crime prevention and control strategy. We

recognize that the decisions made by planners, designers, and law enforcement officials can help or hinder a neighborhood for decades, as these decisions influence resident and business conditions and perceptions. The concept of preventing crime through better practices for environmental design provides us with a framework with which to remedy existing conditions and prevent future opportunities for crime in our community.

10.3 - TRANSIT ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT (TOD) PRINCIPLES

10.4 - GUIDELINES FOR FRANKLIN AVENUE AND OTHER COMMERCIAL AREAS

In general, buildings in commercial areas should be pedestrian scaled, should adhere to transit oriented development principles, should promote pedestrian accessibility and in addition adhere to the following guidelines:

Building setback / placement -

- Buildings shall front along Franklin Avenue, and be set back no more than 10 ft from it.

Building Uses / Configuration -

- Buildings fronting on Franklin Avenue shall include pedestrian-oriented uses in the first floor.
- Effort shall be made to provide living space above commercial uses along Franklin Avenue.

Parking -

- A limited amount of parking is available along Franklin Avenue. Additional off-street (on-parcel) parking is allowed so long as it does not take more than 50% of the parcel's frontage along Franklin, and that it does not result in parking placed at the corner of a lot.
- Parking lots shall not be placed in front of buildings.
- Parking lot edges shall be buffered by plantings, railings, or low walls.
- Access to parking shall be provided through the block's alley and shall not require curb cuts along Franklin Avenue.

Building height -

- Building heights shall be a minimum of two stories and a maximum of four stories along Franklin Avenue. The exception occurs within the light rail transit-oriented development area, where building height is allowed to reach 8 stories.
- In the residential districts, building height shall be limited to three stories.

Building mass -

- Building mass shall be broken up in order to liven up the experience of pedestrians and

visitors along Franklin, and to avoid the construction of monotonous spaces on this important public thoroughfare. Use of reliefs, setbacks, and cantilevered roofs and structures is encouraged.

Facade treatment -

- Buildings along Franklin should provide ample fenestration in order to bring the life of the interiors outdoors, and to invite transit riders, drivers, and pedestrians into Franklin Avenue establishments. Ground-floor commercial uses should have glazed areas equal to at least 65% of the ground-level facade.
- Blank walls facing Franklin shall be avoided. Windows should be provided both in lower and upper floors of buildings along Franklin.
- Use of over-the-sidewalk overhead signs is encouraged. They add visual interest to the neighborhood and increase the visibility of businesses.

Materials -

- Exterior finishes shall be durable, weather and moisture proof, and require low maintenance. Brick, stone, concrete and metal and glass are acceptable exterior materials. Use of wood and non rustproof metals is discouraged.

Scale and location of development -

- Redevelopment of whole with monolithic structures is discouraged. Development is to take place where space is available, serving as infill that improves the existing streetscape without removing what is already there.
- If a whole block is available for redevelopment, effort should be made to provide distinct facades, with a maximum length of 120 ft each, along the width of the block. This will increase visual interest and reinforce existing and desired patterns, scale, and character of development.

10.5 - GUIDELINES FOR VENTURA VILLAGE RESIDENTIAL AREAS

The houses, apartment buildings and carriage units of our neighborhood are the places where our members live. The care and effort we put forward to improve our neighborhood improves the environment they experience, and makes our neighborhood a better, more desirable place to live.

Housing unit setback / placement -

- Housing units setback and placement should be compatible with neighboring housing.
- Garages fronting the street are not allowed. These shall instead be located in alleyways.

Housing unit uses -

- Residential uses also include live/work uses. Any residential unit in Ventura Village can be used as a live/work unit.
- Live/work units can be built anywhere in Ventura Village.

Parking -

- Parking in the residential areas is provided on-street and in alleyway garages.
- Garages fronting the street are not allowed. These shall instead be located in alleyways.

Housing unit building height -

- Building heights in residential districts is limited to three stories.

Building mass -

- We recognize the importance of gardens and green areas in our neighborhood. Housing units cannot cover more than 65% of a buildable lot's surface area.

Rehabilitation -

- Rehabilitation of existing housing is encouraged. Ventura Village is continuously working to obtain rehabilitation grants for residents. Major portions of Neighborhood Revitalization Program (NRP) funds are presently committed to this purpose and similar commitments have been made for use of NRP Phase II funding. Please consult with neighborhood leadership for more information.

Scale and location of development -

- Development of whole, block long residential structures is discouraged. Development is to take place where space is available, to serve as infill that improves the existing streetscape without requiring removal of what is already there.
- There shall be no demolition of existing housing without construction of the same number of housing units within the borders of Ventura Village.
- There shall be no displacement of residents without a neighborhood-approved plan to relocate these same individuals (the paying of relocation fees by and of itself does not constitute an adequate plan).

10.6 - GUIDELINES FOR ACCESSORY (CARRIAGE) HOUSING

We propose building accessory housing in Ventura Village as a way of increasing affordable housing opportunities, of improving the quality of our urban environment, and of making more efficient use of existing transit and other infrastructure. Construction of carriage houses is

governed by our guidelines for residential construction and by the following additional guidelines:

Exterior design -

- Where there is an existing house on the property, the exterior design and treatment of the carriage house should complement the architectural design and materials of the existing house. Acceptable exterior siding materials include narrow lap siding, stucco, or brick. Exceptions to this exterior treatment guideline may be made where the exterior treatment of the carriage house will be of superior quality to that of the main building.
- Where there is an existing house on the property, the color scheme of the carriage house shall match or complement that of the main building.
- Where there is an existing house on the property, window styles on the carriage house shall complement those of the main building.
- Where the carriage house is the only building or the main building on the property, the exterior treatment shall be either narrow lap siding, stucco, or brick. The design of the carriage house shall fit the historical period in which the majority of residential structures in the neighborhood were built (approximately 1880 to 1930). Architectural styles are diverse but do not include styles developed after the 1940's.
- The height of the carriage house shall not exceed three stories including the garage level and two habitable floors above the garage.
- The primary stair(s) accessing unit(s) above the garage area shall be in the interior of the building.
- In situations where the carriage house is built on the property line, no windows shall be permitted on the side of the carriage house that is on the property line except in instances where the property line adjoins a street or an alley.

Placement and siting -

- Automobile access to the carriage house must be on the owner's property or via a permanent easement. Where the property has alley access, automobile access to the carriage house shall be off the alley. An exception may be made for corner properties, provided it is approved by the city.
- In placing the carriage house on the property, efforts shall be made to maximize remaining green space and to make that green space usable.
- In placing of the carriage house on the property, efforts shall be made to minimize negative impact on the sunlight rights of adjoining properties.
- Adequate maneuvering room shall be provided for cars to access parking.
- Adequate space shall be provided for storage or placement of garbage and recycling containers and for their pick up.

- In situations where automobile access to the carriage house is not off the street via a driveway, a three-foot wide walk shall be provided from the street to the carriage house.

Parking -

- The construction of the carriage house shall not reduce the number of existing off street parking.

Interior -

- The size of the garage shall be adequate to accommodate a full size vehicle.
- A separate exterior door must be provided to access the living unit. The primary access door to the living unit may not pass through the garage space.

General -

- All code requirements for new construction must be met.