DENVER DESIGN DISTRICT GDP

Urban Design Standards and Guidelines

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CITY AND COUNTY OF DENVER

CF Property Management, Inc.
C/O Denver Design District

Prepared by:

TRYBA ARCHITECTS
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Submitted by:

CF Property Management, Inc.
C/O Denver Design District

Prepared by:

Tryba Architects

City and County of Denver:

Department of Community Planning and Development
Department of Public Works
Department of Parks and Recreation
Department of Law

Consultants:

Starboard Realty, LLC
Parsons Brinckerhoff
Fehr & Peers
The London Group Realty Advisors
CRL Associates

City Council:

Chris Nevitt, District 7
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INTRODUCTION
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Preamble

These Denver Design District Urban Design Standards and Guidelines (UDSG) are Rules and Regulations adopted by the Planning Board pursuant to Section 59-313(b) and Chapter 12 of the Revised Municipal Code of the City and County of Denver. Amendments to the UDSG are subject to the approval of the Manager of Community Planning and Development (CPD) in accordance with the Revised Denver Municipal Code Section 59-313(b) and Chapter 12. All amendments shall be filed and/or recorded in the same manner as the original Urban Design Standards and Guidelines. However, only the changed pages together with a statement from CPD, certifying that the amendments have been approved, need to be filed and recorded.

Overview

The Denver Design District is located on an approximately 80-acre infill site (the GDP Area) containing property owned by CF Property Management Inc. C/O Denver Design District as well as property of mixed ownership, including RTD, Xcel Energy, and others. The GDP Area is generally located between the intersection of Interstate 25 (I-25) and Broadway and Alameda in Denver, Colorado. A property description of the GDP Area can be found in Appendix A. The Denver Design District GDP establishes the framework for development of the GDP Area. For the purposes of the UDSG, any reference to the GDP Area shall also include additional applicable properties in Sub-Area 5 as shown in Figure C.

Purpose of Document

The UDSG for the Denver Design District are presented in recognition of the special opportunity offered on this site for the creation of a high quality transit-oriented development that integrates with the surrounding community, restores the urban fabric to an area that has historically been commercial, and auto-oriented in nature.

The purpose of this document is to elaborate on the concepts and requirements established by the Denver Design District GDP. It is intended to provide additional guidance to designers, developers, planners, and reviewing agencies for the realization of a coherent, high-quality urban community.

Design criteria within this document related to elements of the public ROW are intended to communicate desired intent and are for illustrative purposes only. The Department of Public Works must approve all elements within the public ROW.

Guiding Principles

The Denver Design District GDP was established to transform a previously industrial and commercial auto-oriented site that is located within a Blueprint Denver Area of Change. The guiding principles of the Denver Design District GDP and the associated UDSG reflect goals and strategies outlined in Blueprint Denver for encouraging quality urban environments. These goals and strategies include:

- Creating quality streetscapes and open spaces.
- Integrating higher density in a way that respects the character of adjacent Areas of Stability.
- Balancing automobile uses with the needs of pedestrians and other modes of transit.
- Combining mixed uses to create a safe, vital community.

The guiding principles of the GDP and UDSG also reflect the transit-oriented development (TOD) principles outlined in the Denver Transit-Oriented Development Strategic Plan (August 2006), including these goals of successful TOD:

- Location efficiency: the conscious placement of homes, jobs, shopping, entertainment, open space, and other amenities close to transit stations.
- Rich mix of choices: providing a mix of land-uses that yield a range of choices.
- Place-making: creating unique, attractive, pedestrian and bicycle-friendly places.
- Portal to the region: creating transit stations that are “portals,” or entry points, to the regional transit network.

Proposed land use and site design concepts elaborated in the Denver Design District GDP will realize the above principles and goals in a variety of ways, focusing on the Alameda Station’s Urban Center TOD typology:

- Combine a mix of residential and commercial uses that will create a variety of activity patterns while responding to market conditions.
Figure B: Existing Zoning
• Establish Sub-areas and development parcels that respond to the historic block pattern of the surrounding neighborhoods.

• Concentrate active uses near transit and along existing major streets while providing a safe, logical, and attractive pedestrian streetscape.

• Create appropriately-located “gateways” that reinforce a sense of entry into the site.

• Orient proposed structures in a way that capitalizes on the location of transit stops and reinforces pedestrian circulation opportunities.

The Site (GDP Area)

The Denver Design District GDP Area generally encompasses the Denver Design District, The Collection, and Broadway Marketplace developments and also include additional properties owned by Xcel Energy, RTD, and others.

The GDP Area includes and is surrounded by districts of different character and scale that should be considered when determining the compatibility of any new development.

Broadway Marketplace:
This portion of the GDP Area is a low-density, auto-oriented shopping area that includes surface parking and over 350,000 SF of retail development. This area is bounded by Alameda Avenue to the north, Broadway to the east, and the Alameda light rail station/industrial uses to the west. The existing layout of parking lots and development parcels provides a great opportunity to enhance connections to existing neighborhoods and to create a pedestrian and bicycle friendly, mixed-use community adjacent to the Alameda Station. The current zoning for this portion of the GDP area is B-4.

The Denver Design District:
Located just south of Broadway Marketplace (west of Broadway between Virginia and Exposition) the Denver Design District is a regional center for interior home design, including retail and wholesale uses. The core of the Denver Design District is along Center Avenue. This area includes the School of Culinary Arts, as well as some office, medical and retail uses south of Center Avenue. Current zoning is B-4 and I-1.

The Denver Design District’s regional draw and unique design identity will serve as a catalyst for drawing a mix of new uses to the site.

Broadway:
The entire eastern edge of the GDP Area fronts South Broadway, a regional arterial that connects to Interstate I-25 just south of the site. The stretch of Broadway within the GDP Area contains a mix of primarily retail uses, as well as some surface parking lots. Currently zoned B-4, proposed mixed-use redevelopment along Broadway will create more pedestrian-friendly ground floor uses and help enhance neighborhood connections to the west.

To the West of the Site:
The western edge of the GDP Area includes existing industrial uses, as well as the Alameda light rail station. Directly west of the GDP Boundary is a major railroad ROW consisting of the Union Pacific and Burlington Northern Santa Fe Consolidated Main Lines (CML) and the Regional Transportation District (RTD) light rail line. Existing industrial uses, including RTD’s Bus Barn site, lie just west of the CML, with I-25 and Platte River further to the west. Athmar Park and other residential neighborhoods lie further to the west. These residential areas are important to consider for potential future east-west pedestrian and bicycle connections.

To the East of the Site:
East of Broadway is the residential neighborhood of West Washington Park. This existing neighborhood is characterized by a predominance of single family homes and duplexes with small-scale neighborhood retail and commercial. The heart of this community is Washington Park.

Existing through-streets that connect the site to the West Washington Park neighborhood include Dakota, Virginia, Center, and Exposition. Proposed redevelopment within the GDP Area will strive to improve these connections, particularly for pedestrians and bicyclists.

To the North of the Site:
Just north of Alameda lies the Baker neighborhood, a primarily residential neighborhood characterized by single family homes with some duplexes and multi-family apartments.

Cherokee and Bannock will serve as important links between the GDP Area and the Baker neighborhood. Focus on pedestrian and bicycle access will be particularly important. Developing connections to the northeast of the site, where denser residential blocks with some multi-family housing developments exist, is also very important.

To the South of the Site:
Interstate I-25 serves as the southern boundary of the GDP Area. Just south of the interstate is another light rail station, the Broadway Station, which will serve as the focal point for the proposed Cherokee redevelopment of the former Gates factory. This area, which will contain a new mixed-use, transit-oriented community, is zoned T-MU-30.
Figure C: Sub-Area Boundaries
Note: Streets and curbs shown within the GDP and UDSG are for illustrative purposes only.

= property included in Sub-Area 5
Sub-Areas

The Site is composed of five major Sub-areas – Sub-area 1, Sub-area 2, Sub-area 3, Sub-area 4, and Sub-area 5 (see Figure on page 6). The purpose of the Sub-area concept is to influence the character of proposed development within the GDP Area and at additional applicable property in Sub-Area 5, especially as it relates to the character of the streetscape. For the Denver Design District GDP and UDSG, each Sub-area is primarily defined by that area’s physical adjacency to existing and proposed streets, as well as streetscape design and development concepts. The urban design criteria represented in this document are influenced to a degree by the specific Sub-area in which the proposed development resides.

Sub-area boundaries are not intended to represent or reinforce hard divisions between the character of one area and the next. An appropriate blending of character and quality at the boundary between Sub-areas is expected to create thoughtful transitions between districts and neighborhoods of varying use.

Residential uses are contemplated in all Sub-areas. Sub-areas are not intended to modify or exclude any use allowed by the zoning of the GDP Area.

Sub-area 1 Community Retail – Located in the northeast portion of the GDP area, Sub-area 1 is envisioned as a high-intensity retail district. The area is intended to accommodate large-scale retailers within the context of a mixed-use, urban environment. Ideally, ground floor retail uses will be topped with structured parking and residential uses. Important components of this Sub-area include gateways at Broadway and Alameda and at Broadway and Dakota Avenue. These gateways are crucial for enhancing pedestrian and bicycle connections into the site and to the Alameda light rail station (see the Denver Design District Urban Design Standards and Guidelines for more detail on gateway areas). Sub-area 1 also includes a key piece of the proposed open space system, the Mercado, which is envisioned to serve as an active plaza and retail market adjacent to the transit station.

Sub-area 2 Station Area – This mixed-use node will capitalize on the proximity to the Alameda light rail station through high-intensity office space, residential uses, and street-level retail that will serve public transit riders. Development is intended to concentrate around the station and the nearby Mercado, activating the station area and providing retail and commercial amenities for transit riders. Sub-area 2 also contains essential pedestrian and bicycle connections – from Dakota Avenue to the Alameda Station, as well as to the proposed new bike trail that will run parallel to the light rail tracks. Enhancing these pedestrian links is critical to the success of this district.

Sub-area 3 Residential District – Located at the center of the GDP area, this district is envisioned as a vibrant mixed-use neighborhood composed of primarily residential uses, along with neighborhood-serving retail, entertainment, and other complementing uses. This district is oriented around the proposed Central Square, an urban open space that will serve as a public gathering place for all users of the site. Sub-area 3 is envisioned to provide active commercial street frontages – especially along the vital corridors of Broadway, Dakota, and Bannock – while also creating visual and physical links to the Central Square at the heart of the district.

Sub-area 4 Design District – Encompassing the existing Denver Design District, this sub-area is imagined as a mixed-use center for design and art. Other potential uses could include educational, residential, and office. Expanding upon existing design-related tenants, the intent for this district is to create a more urban, pedestrian-friendly area that integrates new uses. The core of this sub-area is the proposed Design Center Promenade, which will build off of existing Center Avenue. This vibrant street, beginning with a gateway area at Broadway, will draw pedestrians from Broadway to Bannock and the Campus Green, a proposed open space containing a link west to the bike trail.

Sub-area 5 Office District – Located in the southern portion of the site, this district is proposed as the commercial core of the project, containing high-intensity office use with the possibility for other complementing uses. The Village Green, a large open space on the northern edge of the sub-area, will create a gathering place for office workers and help link the sub-area to the Design District. Another key component of Sub-area 5 is the gateway at the southern tip of the GDP area. Anchored by the proposed Southside Plaza, this gateway area will connect the site to the Broadway Station and proposed development to the south and provide a welcoming entry point at the southern edge of the district.

The following development intents shall apply to all Sub-Areas on the site:

- Enhance connections, especially for pedestrians and bicyclists, to the Alameda light rail station.
- Create active streets by concentrating pedestrian-active uses at the ground floor.
- Celebrate the multi-modal character of streets.
- Maintain and create visual interest in the street wall through the use of quality materials, pedestrian-scaled building features, enhanced detailing, and adequate glazing.
- Encourage upgraded street amenities such as durable furnishings, quality architectural lighting, landscaping and decorative paving systems (must be approved by the Department of Public works if in the public ROW).
Organization of the Document

This document is organized into three sections: Introduction, Urban Design Standards and Guidelines, and Procedures for Design Review.

Urban design criteria in the form of Standards and Guidelines provide guidance as to how the vision for the Site may be achieved. Standards and Guidelines are intended to encourage creativity within the design framework while maintaining a consistent level of quality between individual projects. Standards and Guidelines do not mandate a particular architectural style or building material. Instead, Standards and Guidelines:

- Define a standard of design quality intended to enhance the public realm,
- Promote cohesive development patterns while allowing for diversity and variety in the design and construction of individual projects,
- Assist city staff, planners, designers, developers, and owners in making consistent choices that reinforce the vision,
- Recognize that the site will evolve over time and that development will respond to changes in the market,
- Integrate and transition new development into surrounding communities.

The three components of the urban design criteria - Intent statements, Standards, and Guidelines - are used together to achieve the vision for the Site. They balance structure and objectivity with creativity and flexibility in order to encourage the best design. This system allows more than one path to a mutually satisfactory result.

The three components are defined as follows:

**Intent:** Intent statements establish design goals which the Standards and Guidelines have been created to achieve. In circumstances where the appropriateness or applicability of a Standard or Guideline is in question or under negotiation, the Intent statement will provide additional direction.

**Design Standards:** Design Standards are objective criteria that provide specific direction for achieving the stated Intent. Standards denote issues that are considered critical. Standards use the term “shall” to indicate that compliance is required.

**Design Guidelines:** Design Guidelines provide alternative solutions for accomplishing the goals set forth by the Intent Statements. They are more flexible and harder to quantify than standards. They often amplify a related Standard. Guidelines use the term “should” or “may” to denote they are considered relevant to achieving the Intent Statement, and will be pertinent to the review process. When they amplify a Standard they are preferred, but not mandatory, criteria. Guidelines will, however, be strongly considered in circumstances when a Standard is not being met and an alternative is being sought. In such a case it must be demonstrated that the alternative meets one or more of the following criteria:

- the alternative better achieves the stated Intent,
- the Intent Statement that the Standard was created to address will not be achieved by application of the Standard in this particular circumstance,
- the application of Guidelines to achieve stated Intents will be improved by not applying the Standard in this particular case,
- unique site characteristics or market factors make the Standard impractical or cost prohibitive.

References to Intent statements, Design Standards and Design Guidelines listed throughout this document pertaining to the public ROW are used to convey intent, are for illustrative purposes only, and are not formally adopted by the Department of Public Works.

**General Compliance**

All projects in the Denver Design District GDP Area must comply with any and all applicable statutes, ordinances, rules and regulations promulgated by the City and other agencies which have jurisdiction.

All projects must comply with accessibility standards for the disabled as set forth by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the ADA Accessibility Guidelines for Buildings and Facilities (ADAAG) and to any succeeding modifications that may be issued. The regulations must be adhered to in all areas, whether or not mentioned herein.

All existing structures and parking areas on-site shall be deemed compliant with these Denver Design District UDSG. All design criteria within this document shall apply to new construction only. New construction shall include (a) all additions and (b) any remodeling where the cost of the remodel is more than 50% of the replacement cost of the building minus the land, unless 60% or more of the cost is dedicated to interior remodeling. Standards and guidelines for surface parking areas shall not apply to the repair or replacement of existing surface parking lots.
Definitions

Several terms are used consistently throughout this document to describe common aspects or elements of architecture and urban design. Where a term such as “floor area” is not specifically defined, customary use or the definition set forth in the Denver Design District GDP or the Denver Zoning Code shall apply.

Building Accessories — Items attached to or located near buildings that are intended to increase comfort or convenience, such as awnings, canopies, and accessible ramps and stairs.

Color Rendition Index — A measure of a lamp source’s ability to render true colors as compared to an “ideal” light source such as natural light. Color rendition typically ranges from 0 (poor) to 100 (excellent).

Corner Triangle — A portion of the sight triangle within 20 linear feet of adjacent curbs at an intersection of streets. (See Fig. A) Corner triangles usually have greater restrictions in regard to the height and type of planting materials and other landscape improvements. Refer to the Streetscape Design Manual for more detail.

Expanded Streetscape — An area within a Private Amenity Zone containing streetscape elements that directly adjoins and runs parallel with the unobstructed pedestrian walk.

Exposed to Public View — A portion of a building or site feature that is visible from a primary or secondary street.

Façade — Any elevation of a building facing primary or secondary street.

Gateway Area — An area of the site incorporating portions of the Streetscape and adjacent building façades that is significant because of its location and/or use. Gateways provide identifiable entrances and exits to and from the site, aid in wayfinding through the use of unique architectural and landscape treatments, and can work together to reinforce the identity of a district. As a consequence of their role, Gateways deserve additional design consideration. Design Standards and Guidelines related to Gateway Areas are distributed throughout this document.

Ground Floor Frontage — That portion of a building from grade to the second floor that adjoins the Streetscape or a significant street-level open space. Because pedestrians directly experience the ground floors of buildings, Standards and Guidelines related specifically to the ground floor are distributed throughout this document.

Heat Island Effect — The capacity of surfaces in an urban environment to absorb heat and alter the ambient air temperature of their surroundings. Large areas of asphalt, dark-colored paved areas, and dark-colored roofing can create heat island effects. Urban areas are particularly susceptible to the heat island effect, which can create fluctuations in local climate and temperature that may adversely affect nearby landscaping and increase the energy costs of buildings.

Open Space — For the purpose of this document, the term open space is used to collectively refer to any privately or publicly owned park or plaza that adjoins a street and that is predominantly open to the sky.

Open Space, Unobstructed — Refers to the minimum area of open space required by the Denver Zoning Code.

Pedestrian Active Uses — Uses which generate significant pedestrian traffic and interest at street level including consumer and service-oriented retail and retail displays, commercial and professional offices, hotel uses, and in some cases residential and residential-oriented services. Entrances and lobbies to groups of uses on higher floors are also considered pedestrian active uses.

Pedestrian Lighting — Lighting on the street intended to provide additional streetscape ambience. Pedestrian lighting is usually decorative in character and of a lower intensity and height so that the lighting effect is comfortable for the pedestrian. Pedestrian lighting will only be allowed on public streets within a maintenance district.
Pedestrian Sight Triangle — Sidewalk sight triangles are necessary for providing adequate sight distance for approaches to sidewalk crossings for alleys, driveways and exits (e.g., parking garage exits). The City requires a 10-foot by 10-foot sight triangle at all alley, driveway and exit approaches to sidewalks crossing the motor vehicle travel path.

Pedestrian Walk — The area of the Streetscape between the Public and Private Amenity Zones that is reserved for pedestrian traffic. The Pedestrian Walk is to remain clear and unobstructed for ease of travel and maintenance.

Primary Building Façade — The building façade fronting a primary street. If a building helps define an important corner, each adjacent façade can be considered primary. Primary Building Façades should generally express a more refined degree of material quality and detailing and should contain a primary building entrance.

Primary Street — A thru vehicular and pedestrian access way that connects to existing public streets of adjacent neighborhoods and is dedicated public ROW (See Fig. E)

Private Amenity Zone — A portion of the Streetscape between the unobstructed Pedestrian Walk (or street) and the building face. This area is reserved for Streetscape Elements that transition between Pedestrian Active Uses within buildings or plazas and the Pedestrian Walk.

Public Amenity Zone — A portion of the Streetscape between the curb and the unobstructed Pedestrian Walk reserved for Streetscape Elements that serve and enhance the pedestrian experience.

Right-of-Way (ROW) — The land area owned by the City and dedicated as public ROW by ordinance. Within the ROW are found typical road improvements, storm drainage, sanitary sewers, sidewalks, landscaping such as tree lawns, trees, street furniture, and lighting. Location of any private elements, including signs, fences/walls, street furniture, or lighting within the ROW requires a revocable permit. All items located within the ROW must be approved by Public Works. The public ROW shall be open to the sky.

Figure E: Elements of a primary street
Note: Elements shown within the public ROW are for illustrative purposes only. The width of the right-of-way, including public and private amenity zones, will be determined at site plan review.
Secondary Street – A potential private access road for vehicular and/or pedestrian access. Secondary streets shall have sidewalks and Private Amenity Zones and must meet the requirements in the PUD/PBG Rules and Regulations. With the exception of above-ground walkways and building connections, secondary streets shall be open to the sky. (See Fig. F)

Service Area – An area located within a property line, enclosed or open to the sky, which serves building functions for such uses as deliveries, loading and refuse pick-up.

Sight Triangle – A triangular area adjacent to a street intersection describing a cone of vision experienced by a driver at that intersection. The triangle area includes anything within the driver’s cone of vision. Planting, landscape improvements and other objects in the cone of vision are regulated by the Department of Public Works. (See Fig. D)

Signage, Building – For the purpose of this document, building signage includes window, wall, arcade, monument and projecting signs whose design and content are related to the various Pedestrian Active Uses within the building. Unlike district, regulatory, and way-finding signage, building signs may change more frequently over time. All tenant signage should be contained on private property. Building signage will not be allowed in the public ROW unless approved by the Department of Public Works. All signs in a T-MU-30 Zone District, both district and building, require a Common Sign Plan. Other mixed use zone districts that provide a Common Sign Plan may be allowed a 25% increase in the maximum total sign area allowed. See Denver Zoning ordinance Section 59-315 (3).

Signage, District – For the purpose of this document, district signage includes monument, pedestal, and pole signs whose design and content are intended to create an identity for a gateway, street, or district. Within a given area, district signage helps to maintain a consistent character. All tenant signage should be contained on private property. Any signage in the public ROW must be approved by the Department of Public Works and should be part of a Comprehensive Sign Plan to be approved by CPD. All signs in a T-MU-30 Zone District, both district and building, require a Common Sign Plan. Other mixed use zone districts that provide a Common Sign Plan may be allowed a 25% increase in the maximum total sign area allowed. See Denver Zoning ordinance Section 59-315 (3).

Figure F: Elements of a secondary street
Note: Elements shown are for illustrative purposes only. The width of all streets, including public and private amenity zones, will be determined at site plan review.
INTRODUCTION

Street Lighting – General illumination of the vehicular street typically provided from poles located within the Public Amenity Zone. Street lighting must conform to the regulations established by the Department of Public Works.

Streetscape – The general area between the curb and building face where pedestrian activity is concentrated and enhanced.

Streetscape Elements – Elements placed within Public or Private Amenity Zones that help define street character. Elements may include street trees, tree lawns, street lights, pedestrian lights, traffic signage, benches and other seating, trash receptacles, bike racks, newspaper corrals and condos, kiosks, enhanced paving, public art, planter pots, bollards, bus shelters, awnings, canopies, and umbrellas or other shading devices.

Street Wall – The cumulative effect of adjacent buildings facing onto and providing a consistent edge to a street.

Tree Lawn – A portion of a primary or secondary street, typically between the curb and the unobstructed Pedestrian Walk, that is landscaped with trees and ground cover, usually sod.
1.0 Site Circulation

General Intent: To establish a logical and interconnected system of streets, sidewalks, and pathways that balance mobility with the making of significant urban places. Site circulation should provide adequate and safe access for automobiles, cyclists, and pedestrians by incorporating the best characteristics of Denver’s multi-modal urban street system.

Circulation to and through the site is indicated in the Denver Design District GDP (see Figures 1.1a, 1.2a, and 2.1a) Design Standards and Guidelines pertaining to the public ROW are for illustrative purposes only. ROW improvements must meet the separate standards and approval of the Department of Public Works.

1.1 Vehicular Circulation and Access

Intent

• To reinforce the historic pattern, orientation, hierarchy, and logic of Denver’s street grid system.

• To locate vehicular access in a way that:
  • minimizes conflict with other modes of transportation, especially pedestrian traffic.
  • protects residential streets from the effects of undue congestion and noise.
  • encourages multimodal transportation.
  • provides for the safe and efficient movement of pedestrians, bicycles, and vehicles.

Design Standards

• All vehicular access points in the public ROW, including curb cuts and driveways, shall be approved by the Department of Public Works.

• Curb cuts and driveways shall be perpendicular to the street that they serve.

• All new blocks shall have a maximum perimeter of 1950 ft. In Sub-Areas 2 and 3, at least 60 percent of the blocks must have a perimeter of 1200 ft. or less.

Design Guidelines

• A single curb cut or driveway should not be wider than what is minimally required by the Department of Public Works for the safe movement of traffic.

• Curb cuts and driveways are discouraged close to the curb line at the corners of blocks. (Fig. 1.1b)

• Where possible, curb cuts should be shared between groups of buildings and uses.
1.2a Pedestrian and Bicycle Circulation Concepts

Note: Streets and curbs shown within the GDP Area are for illustrative purposes only.
1.2 Pedestrian and Bicycle Circulation and Access

**Intent**

- To reinforce the historic pattern, hierarchy, and logic of Denver’s pedestrian sidewalk system.
- To incorporate alternate modes of transportation, especially walking and cycling, into the design of vehicular street systems.
- To connect the development to existing designated bike routes and trail systems where appropriate.
- To connect the development to future and existing neighborhoods.
- To strengthen multi-modal links to Alameda and Broadway Stations.

**Design Standards**

- Every vehicular street shall have a corresponding parallel Pedestrian Walk at the same grade.
- Pedestrian crossings of streets shall be located a safe distance from vehicular curb cuts. Curb cuts and crossings shall be approved both by CPD and Public Works and their distance shall conform to the requirements of the Department of Public Works.
- Primary bicycle access through the site shall occur via the D-16 bike route and the proposed multi-use trail on the western edge of the site. (Fig. 1.2a)
- Primary pedestrian circulation shall follow the intent, standards and guidelines as described in Section 2.3 - Bannock and Overlay District. (Fig. 2.1a)
- The enhanced Broadway/Alameda pedestrian corridor shall at a minimum meet the streetscape standards as set forth in the Broadway Plaza Pedestrian Mall Design Guidelines and Maintenance Plan. (Fig. 2.1a)

**Design Guidelines**

- All new streets should be designed to allow pedestrian and bicycle access.
- The system of pedestrian and bicycle circulation should be designed to connect to and extend from similar circulation systems on adjacent existing streets.
• Pedestrian crossings of all streets should be accommodated at street grade without requiring the use of a bridge or tunnel.

• For designated bike routes, painted lanes or “sharrows” (as approved by the Department of Public Works) are encouraged.
2.1a Circulation Concepts: Street Network and Gateways

Note: Refer to Definitions for definitions of primary and secondary streets. Streets and curbs shown within the GDP Area are for illustrative purposes only.
2.0 Site Planning

General Intent: The success of an urban environment is in the quality of its streetscapes. Planning of individual sites should consider the complex relationship between vehicular streets, sidewalks, sidewalk amenities, landscaping, and the location and continuity of building edges. In addition, open spaces appropriate to the scale of adjacent development and accessible from the public ROW serve the social, environmental, and psychological needs of the community. It is also important to thoughtfully consider the location and design of parking areas, service areas, and site utilities so they do not detract from the quality of the urban experience.

2.1 General Streetscape Design

NOTE: Streets qualifying as Streetscape Open Spaces -- Bannock, Dakota, and Center -- must meet higher standards for sidewalk design. Please refer to Section 4.2 for required sidewalk widths for these open space streets.

Intent

• To encourage streetscapes that distinguish and support various modes of transit, including but not limited to vehicular traffic, cycling, and walking.

• To provide adequate and logical connections of streets and sidewalks within the development and between the development and adjacent neighborhoods.

• To provide sidewalks of adequate width to contain, define, and concentrate pedestrian uses.

• To encourage pedestrian activities on the sidewalk such as walking, eating and browsing retail storefronts.

• To encourage streetscapes with tree rows that create a continuous canopy at maturity.

Design Standards

• All sidewalks within the public ROW must meet the separate standards of and be approved by the Department of Public Works.

• All plantings in Public Amenity Zones shall meet the requirements of the City Forester.

• For all primary streets, and for secondary streets in Sub-areas 1, 2, & 3 (Fig 2.1a), sidewalks shall be designed to include at a minimum:
  • an eight foot wide Pedestrian Walk, free of all obstructions,
  • a five foot wide Public Amenity Zone, measured from the curb line. This zone shall contain street trees (Fig. 2.1b).

Note: The width of all streets, including public and private amenity zones, must meet the minimum required dimensions. Proposed widths that exceed the minimum requirements will be evaluated at site plan review with the City and County of Denver - Public Works.
Every sidewalk on a secondary street within Sub-areas 4 and 5 (Fig. 2.1a) shall be designed to include at a minimum:

- a six foot wide Pedestrian Walk, free of all obstructions,
- a five foot wide Public Amenity Zone that shall contain street trees (Fig. 2.1c)

Within the public ROW, encroachments into the Pedestrian Walk by the Private Amenity Zone shall be allowed by permit only.

The enhanced pedestrian corridor along Broadway and Alameda shall at a minimum meet the design requirements as set forth in the Broadway Plaza Pedestrian Mall Design Guidelines and Maintenance Plan.

Streetscape Elements in the ROW shall be approved by the Department of Public Works. Streetscape elements that are different from City standards require the establishment of a maintenance district.

Secondary streets will require the approval of CPD and must meet at a minimum the standards in the PBG/PUD Rules and Regulations and the Streetscape Design Manual.

**Design Guidelines**

- Sidewalk design should exceed minimum width requirements for Pedestrian Walks and Public Amenity Zones where appropriate.

- Private Amenity Zones, which include building-related functions such as sidewalk seating, are encouraged on enhanced pedestrian streets (Fig. 1.2a) such as Bannock and Dakota.

- Where street trees are planted in rows in the Public Amenity Zone, trees should be spaced to provide a continuous canopy at maturity.

- On-street parking should be provided on both sides of all primary streets.

- The majority of secondary streets should accommodate parallel or diagonal parking on at least one side as a traffic-calming measure.

**2.2 Overlay Districts**

**Intent**

- To provide a cohesive streetscape for three primary corridors: Bannock as a north-south retail main street, Dakota as an east-west link to the Alameda Station, and Broadway as a regional main street (Fig 2.2a).

- To encourage pedestrian activities on the sidewalk such as walking, eating, and browsing retail storefronts.
2.2a Overlay District

Note: Streets and curbs shown within the GDP Area are for illustrative purposes only.
Design Standards

• 75 percent of ground floor frontages facing Bannock Street, Dakota Avenue, and Broadway shall be occupied by Pedestrian Active Uses.

• Build-to zones are required along Bannock Street, Dakota Avenue, and Broadway in all Sub-areas. This zone is an area between the required front lot line and a line set back an additional eight (8) feet. For each street frontage, at least 75 percent of the length of the building façade shall be located within the build-to zone. (Fig. 2.4a)

• Primary building entrances serving pedestrians shall be oriented toward and visible from Bannock Street, Dakota Avenue, and Broadway.

Design Guidelines

• Dakota Avenue and Bannock Street should incorporate an integrated and visually cohesive system of decorative paving.

• The portions of Bannock Street and Dakota Avenue that as designated as Expanded Streetscapes must meet the requirements outlined in Chapter 4.0.

2.3 Building Location, Orientation and Use

2.3.1 - Build-To Requirements

Intent

• To create a street wall that defines the three-dimensional space of the street and contributes to its sense of place.

• To maintain the continuity of the street wall for the majority of the length of the street.

Design Standards

• All buildings shall adhere to the setback requirements of the underlying zone district in which the building or structure resides except as modified below.

• Build-to zones are required along primary streets in all Sub-areas. This zone is an area between the required front lot line and a line set back an additional eight (8) feet. For each street frontage, at least 66 percent of the length of the building façade shall be located within the build-to zone. (Fig. 2.3a)

Design Guidelines

• Except for within a proposed private educational campus, for rowhome style housing, or when a building fronts a public open space, the majority of a building edge should be built-to or close to the property line or minimum required setback line for the majority of the street frontage.
• Where gaps between buildings are contemplated (Fig. 2.3b), they should be located and proportioned to:
  • relate to major transitions in use or character,
  • relate to significant, designed open spaces,
  • relate to adjacent buildings,
  • correspond to historic or surrounding zone lot widths or depths.

• In general, ground floor arcades are discouraged in favor of building façades that directly front the street. However, arcades (Fig. 2.3c) may satisfy the build-to requirement when:
  • they extend no more than two floors in height,
  • the exterior face of the arcade column line is within the build-to zone,
  • the exterior face of the column line generally continues the wall plane of the building above,
  • the average depth of the arcade is no less than six feet clear as measured from the back face of the column line,
  • the average depth of the arcade is no more than 2/3 of its average clear height as measured from the front face of the column line,
  • the arcade column width and column spacing does not substantially impede views of the Pedestrian Active Uses from the Pedestrian Walk.

2.3.2 - Pedestrian-Active Use Requirements

Intent

• To locate and orient uses in a way that encourages and intensifies pedestrian activity and interest along the street.

• To require a predominance of Pedestrian Active Uses fronting the street.

Design Standards

• 75 percent of ground floor frontages facing Bannock Street, Dakota Avenue, and Broadway shall be occupied by Pedestrian Active Uses. For all remaining primary streets (Fig. 2.1a), at least 65 percent of all ground floor frontages shall be occupied by Pedestrian Active Uses.

Design Guidelines

• A majority of the ground floor frontage of commercial buildings and parking structures on all streets should contain Pedestrian Active Uses.

• Portions of the building not parallel with the street should be related to building uses that complement pedestrian activities along the street (Fig. 2.3d).
2.3.3 - Gateway Areas

**Intent**

- To emphasize and differentiate special corners or intersections from the surrounding building architecture.
- To aid in way-finding and articulate important changes in character and use.
- To inform building design in a manner that will successfully articulate designated gateways and encourage pedestrian active use.

**Design Standards**

- Signature Corners and Primary Gateway Areas shall be designated at primary intersections, as shown in Figure 2.1a.
- Within each designated Signature Corner or Primary Gateway Area, at least two of the following design strategies shall be employed:
  - visibly increased or decreased density, building height, and/or building setback relative to surrounding structures,
  - provision of a plaza or expanded streetscape,
  - incorporation of monumental signage and/or art,
  - enhanced building character (form, materials, fenestration, façade articulation - See Section 3.0) on building façades visible from the street.
- Within a designated Signature Corner or Primary Gateway Area, the pedestrian active use requirement shall be increased to 100 percent of the area.
- Within a designated Signature Corner Area there shall be at least one pedestrian entrance.
- Exposed parking garage frontage shall not occur at any level within a Signature Corner Area.
- Exposed parking garage frontage shall not occur at the ground floor within a Primary or Secondary Gateway Area.

**Design Guidelines**

- Additional Gateway Areas may be explored to reinforce the overall hierarchy of streets, buildings, and open spaces within the development area.

2.4 Parking Location and Orientation

This section addresses issues of general location and orientation. For Standards and Guidelines related to Building Design, Landscape, Lighting, and Signage, refer to Sections 3.0-6.0
2.4.1 - Surface Parking Lots

**Intent**
- To locate and orient surface parking on the site in a way that reduces its visual and environmental impact.

**Design Standards**
- New surface parking shall not exceed 25 percent of block frontage along any primary street or 50 percent of block frontage along any secondary street.
- No new surface parking is allowed between the front of a building and the street.
- New surface parking shall provide safe pedestrian passage by incorporating an efficient system of 5-foot wide pedestrian paths.

**Design Guidelines**
- Surface parking lots are discouraged in favor of structured parking.
- At least 15 percent of the paved surface area of each new surface parking lot should be shaded by mature landscaping (within 5 years) and constructed of light colored/high-albedo materials with a solar reflectance of at least .30.

2.4.2 - Structured Parking Garages

**Intent**
- To encourage structured parking of a mixed-use character.
- To locate and orient structured parking on the site in a way that reduces its visual and environmental impact.

**Design Standards**
- Exposed above-grade parking structures shall not exceed 30 percent of block frontage along any primary street at the ground floor. (Fig. 2.4a)
- For all exposed above-grade parking structures on secondary streets, at least 50 percent of the ground floor level must be covered by an architectural screen.
- Exposed parking garage frontage at any level shall not occur within a Signature Corner Area. (Figure 2.1a)
- Exposed parking garage frontage at the ground floor shall not occur within a Primary or Secondary Gateway Area. (Figure 2.1a)

**Design Guidelines**
- Above-grade parking structures should be located and oriented to minimize frontage on all streets, especially primary streets.
- Below-grade structured parking is encouraged.
Above-grade structured parking should be located on the site in a way that minimizes its visual impact on adjacent residential areas.

The exposed faces of above-grade parking garages should be oriented away from residential areas. Where faces are exposed to view, enhanced building materials, details, and/or landscaping should be employed to improve their aesthetic appearance.

Where feasible, above-grade parking should be wrapped with or contain commercial or residential uses, especially at the ground floor. (Fig 2.4b)

2.5 Site Service and Utility Areas

**Intent**

- To minimize the visual presence of service functions, such as delivery and refuse pickup.

**Design Standards**

- Service and utility areas shall not be located:
  - within 25 feet horizontally of any pedestrian entry,
  - between the building and the street.

- Service and utility areas shall be concealed from the street by employing means such as:
  - locating underground,
  - locating internal to a structure or group of structures,
  - providing enclosing walls, fences, screening and/or landscaping of sufficient height and density year-round,
  - locating along internal alleys or service drives.

**Design Guidelines**

- Utility and service areas should be shared between buildings, among groups of similar uses, or otherwise consolidated to minimize the proportion of the site dedicated to these functions.
3.0 Building Design

**General Intent:** Buildings do more than contain uses. Their level of art, craft, and materiality help characterize and define the street, enhance the sense of “place,” and contribute to the high quality expected of a vibrant, mixed-use urban community. Buildings that enhance the urban realm pay careful attention to issues of massing, form, façade articulation and the location of entrances. Special consideration must be given to the thoughtful integration of building utilities and services as well as the design of parking structures.

*Note:* Buildings facing I-25 should have a complimentary level or architectural finish as buildings that front other streets or public rights-of-way.

3.1 Building Massing and Form

**Intent**

- To encourage buildings whose forms are responsive to the surrounding context.
- To encourage original building design.
- To generate visual interest in the built environment by:
  - emphasizing changes in use,
  - marking transitions between districts,
  - responding in form to the Alameda light rail station,
  - creating iconic elements that mark entrances and terminate views.
- To moderate scale changes between adjacent buildings.
- To encourage building forms that promote sun and sky exposure to streets and open spaces.
- To mitigate the wind downdraft effects of taller buildings.

**Design Standards**

- Stepbacks shall be required in transition areas for any façade that fronts a Pedestrian Walk along Alameda and Broadway and is higher than 75 vertical feet (Fig. 3.1.a) For that portion of the façade that is over 75 feet in height, at least 25 percent of the vertical length of the façade should step back five feet from the front lot line.

**Design Guidelines**

- Stepbacks are encouraged for any building façade that faces a Pedestrian Walk or open space and that is higher than 75 vertical feet. For that portion of the façade over 75 feet in height, at least 25 percent of the vertical length of the façade should step back five feet from the front lot line (Fig. 3.1b).
- Additional bulk reduction is encouraged for buildings on the south and east sides of streets and open spaces to allow for greater penetration of sunlight into these spaces.
3.1a Transition Areas

Note: Streets and curbs shown within the GDP Area are for illustrative purposes only.
• Articulation of the building form is encouraged to express typical architectural elements such as:
  • the location of entrances and vertical circulation,
  • significant changes in building use or occupancy,
  • changes from one residential unit to another,
  • the expression of structural bays,
  • the expression of balconies and above-grade terraces.

• Articulation of the building mass and form is also encouraged to express a building’s relationship to its context, including:
  • adjacency to significantly lower or taller buildings,
  • response to existing structures and the Alameda light rail station,
  • relationships to the corners of blocks or major site entrances,
  • response to the termination of views,
  • the creation of an engaging profile or skyline.

3.2 Building Character

3.2.1 Materials

Intent
  • To create visual interest through a varied palette of texture, color, and module.
  • To give buildings and surfaces a human scale.
  • To ensure the consistent use of high quality materials appropriate for an urban environment.
  • To promote durability, sustainability and ease of maintenance.
  • To complement existing materiality of the GDP Area and the surrounding neighborhoods.

Design Standards
  • Only primary building materials shall be used on façades visible from the street for the first 75 feet in height and shall be suitable for an urban environment and the Colorado climate. The following materials are approved for use in any quantity. Other materials of equal quality may also be utilized.
    • brick, including glazed brick,
    • natural and architectural cast stone,
    • architectural pre-cast concrete,
    • terra-cotta or architectural clay-tile systems,
    • hard coat stucco,
    • glass, glass block, and channel glass units,
    • architectural metal panel systems,
    • decorative metal framing systems with an exterior-grade finish system,
    • concrete masonry units with an architectural coloration or finish.
• Exterior insulation and finishing systems (EIFS) shall not be used on ground floor façades up to 75 feet in height.

• Materials of a structural or unfinished nature such as tilt-up concrete panels and plain concrete masonry units, shall not be used on building façades visible from the street.

**Design Guidelines**

• The expression of smaller material modules is encouraged to enhance the sense of human scale and interest, especially at ground and second floor façades.

• Materials with the greatest durability, such as brick or stone, should be used on ground floor façades. Other materials, such as glass and wood, may also be added to ground floor façades where appropriate.

• Materials should also be selected with consideration given to their environmental and sustainable attributes, including:
  • life-cycle cost - including embodied energy,
  • proportion of post-consumer or post-industrial recycled content,
  • local or regional availability,
  • re-use or recycling potential after useful life.

• Materials should be composed within the building façade in a way that adheres to a visual and structural logic. For example, materials that clad or express a structural element should be more prominent than those that clad or express an infill element.

• The use of synthetic materials that imitate natural materials should be avoided. A synthetic material should be used in a way that reflects the material’s intrinsic characteristics.

3.2.2 Fenestration

**Intent**

• To enhance street-level activity and interest by providing a high degree of transparency, particularly at the ground floor.

• To provide a level of transparency at upper floors sufficient to be aware of internal activities when viewed from the street.

• To create rhythms and patterns on building façades that provide visual interest and reflect the uses within.

• To limit the glare from reflective glass.

**Design Standards**

• Commercial ground floor façades shall provide no less than 60 percent window to wall area. Commercial façades above the ground floor shall provide no less than 40 percent window to solid wall area.
• Residential façades shall provide no less than 15 percent window to solid wall area.

• All glazing shall have a minimum of 60 percent light transmittance factor.

• In new construction, no highly reflective glazing shall be permitted. All glazing shall have a maximum reflectance factor of 0.20. No first-surface reflective coatings shall be permitted.

• No more than 50 percent of the required glazing area in a façade shall be consolidated in one area.

• Individual windows above the ground floor exceeding 35 square feet shall be subdivided by at least one horizontal or vertical mullion or joint (Fig. 3.2.2a)

Design Guidelines

• Glazing serving ground floor Pedestrian Active Uses should have greater than a 60 percent light transmittance factor.

• Where the required window to wall ratio is not feasible or is in conflict with internal functions, elements such as public art, retail displays, or enhanced signage and building detail should be integrated to maintain the visual interest at street level.

• Glass block or other glazing products that provide adequate light transmission but distort view should not be used on ground floor building façades.

• Clear glazing is preferred at the ground floor, but the use of colored, patterned, or fritted glass may be allowed when it is above the required percentage of transparency.

• Fenestration should recess or project from the adjacent wall surface or surround to create a visible shadow line.

• Large areas of glazing should be subdivided by mullions, joints, or similar scaling elements to provide a reasonable level of scale and detail, especially at the ground and second floors.

• Louvered or other unglazed façade openings should also be articulated with a system of scaling elements to provide a level of scale and detail complimentary to glazed areas.

• Operable windows are desirable and should be strongly considered in residential and commercial buildings.

• Durable and permanent low-emissivity coatings on the second or third glazing surface are encouraged to provide greater energy efficiency.

• Sun-shades and screens are encouraged as long as they do not significantly obstruct views through the window in either direction.
3.2.3 Façade Articulation

Intent

- To create visually interesting and human-scaled façades, particularly those that face streets or open spaces.
- To avoid large areas of undifferentiated façades.

Design Standards

- Building façades or portions of building façades visible from the street shall incorporate, at a minimum, three of the following architectural scaling elements:
  - A change in color,
  - A change in material or material module or pattern,
  - A system of horizontal and vertical scaling elements such as a belt course, string course, projecting fins, or projecting cornice or eye brow.
  - Expression of the structural system and infill panels through a change in plane of at least 3;”
  - Articulation of window and doorway surrounds, which may include sills, lintels, pilasters, and mullions, through a change in plane of at least 2;”
  - A system of horizontal and vertical articulating reveals of at least 3/8” width by 3/8” depth.
  - A system of art or ornament integral to the building (such as an inset decorative panel or metal framework anchored to embeds in the building façade).

- Architectural scaling elements shall occur both horizontally and vertically and be part of a cohesive system. They shall not occur only to satisfy minimum requirements.

Design Guidelines

- Architectural scaling elements should be composed in a way that highlight a building’s intrinsic architectural characteristics, including but not limited to the building’s:
  - structural module,
  - vertical divisions represented by the floor, sill, lintel, and parapet.
  - “base,” “middle,” and “top,”
  - patterns of fenestration,
  - primary uses or transitions between use or ownership.

- Façade articulation should be more detailed at the ground floor.

- Architectural scaling elements should be integrated into the building façade and not appear as an insubstantial overlay.

- Where a primary building façade abuts a façade of secondary importance (such as along an alley or internal service area), architectural scaling elements should be integrated into that portion of the secondary façade exposed to public view.
3.3 Building Entries and Access

3.3.1 Pedestrian Access

**Intent**
- To encourage pedestrian activity between buildings and the street by providing adequate ground level, street-oriented entrances.
- To promote pedestrian safety by separating pedestrian and vehicular points of access.

**Design Standards**
- Primary building entrances serving pedestrians shall be oriented toward and visible from the street.
- A vehicular entrance shall not be combined with a pedestrian entrance.

**Design Guidelines**
- Locating primary pedestrian entrances within an arcade is discouraged in favor of entrances that open directly to a public street or open space.

3.3.2 Vehicular Access

**Intent**
- To provide for safe and efficient vehicle ingress and egress.
- To promote pedestrian safety by segregating pedestrian and vehicular points of access.
- To locate vehicle entrances in a way that preserves the continuity of the pedestrian streetscape.

**Design Standards**
- The location, width, and spacing of all vehicular access points within the public ROW shall be approved by the Department of Public Works.
- A vehicular entrance shall not be combined with a pedestrian entrance.
- Vehicular entrances incorporating a ramp shall be screened from view of the street.

**Design Guidelines**
- Driveways serving groups of similar uses should be consolidated.
- Vehicular entrances should not be located within or directly oriented to public open spaces, except when open space is incorporated into the public ROW. Vehicular entrances may be allowed within or oriented toward open spaces if their design is appropriately integrated with that open space.
• Vehicular entrances should be spaced in a manner that allows for an uninterrupted Pedestrian Walk.

• Vehicular entrances requiring curb cuts should be limited on street sidewalks that qualify as Streetscape Open Space (see Chapter 4).

• Driveways directly accessed from the street and serving individual tenants in multi-tenant buildings or serving individual dwelling units are discouraged, though they may be allowed at the discretion of the Manager of Community Planning and Development if, for example:
  • The tenant is of sufficient size,
  • The tenant’s building is physically isolated from other nearby buildings.
  • If the driveway is in the public ROW, its design is approved by the Department of Public Works.

3.3.3 - Building Entries

Intent

• To provide convenient access to buildings and pedestrian active uses from the street.

• To clearly articulate and create a visual hierarchy of building entrances as an aid in way-finding.

• To locate building entrances in a way that activates streetscapes, enhances Gateway Areas and building corners and invigorates public open spaces.

Design Standards

• Every single building or combined structure shall provide at least one primary building entry opening directly onto a street or public open space for every 300 feet of building frontage or portion thereof.

• Groups of uses on higher floors with no direct street connection shall be accessed by at least one primary building entrance at the ground floor serving as a common lobby and facing a street.

• Service entries shall appear visually distinct from the primary pedestrian building entry.

Design Guidelines

• Building entries should be incorporated into the composition of a building’s mass and form, and in the case of pedestrian building entries, may be located at corners or take advantage of the termination of views.

• Primary building entrances should be articulated in a way that differentiates them from adjacent storefronts, building façades, and secondary building entrances. Strategies may include:
  • concentrating or relaxing architectural scaling elements,
• greater differentiation of the color, scale, and module of those elements,
• substantially greater or lesser transparency,
• inclusion of building accessories and lighting (see below and Section 5.0).

• Each tenant at the ground floor should have one primary tenant entrance that opens onto a street or open space and is accessible to the public. Exceptions may be made for entrances from a common lobby if that lobby opens directly onto a street or publicly accessible plaza.

• Ground floor residential units facing a street or publicly accessible plaza should have individual unit entrances oriented to that street or plaza.

• Buildings directly adjoining structured or surface parking may have a secondary building entrance oriented to and accessed from that parking.

• Service entrances visible from the street should not be emphasized or articulated in a manner that visually competes with a primary building entrance or significant tenant entrance facing a street.

• Service entrances should be screened.

3.4 Building Accessories

**Intent**

• To integrate building accessories into the architectural composition.

• To design building accessories that enhance the pedestrian environment, improve building performance and are attractive.

**Design Standards**

• All building accessories shall be of durable material and construction suitable for an urban environment.

**Design Guidelines**

• All building accessories customarily attached to the building face (including awnings, canopies, attached metal fabrications providing shade or screening) should be complementary to the building design in terms of structural and architectural rhythm and proportion while allowing for creative use of form, material, and color.

• Accessible ramps, stairs, platform lifts, and railings customarily located adjacent to the building face, when visible from the street, should be compatible with the building design in terms of materials, details, massing, and form.
3.5 Building Services and Utilities

Intent

• To reduce the visual impact of building services and utilities on the public realm.

Design Standards

• Utility pads and similar “on-grade” building services shall not be located between a building façade and a primary street or open space or within the public ROW. These services shall be located along an alley, service drive, or within a screened service area whose design is compatible with the building being served in terms of form, material, detail and color.

• Rooftop mechanical units or other services and utilities located above grade shall be screened from the street and street-level views in surrounding neighborhoods by implementing one or more of the following strategies:
  • locating the utility within or behind an architectural screen,
  • enclosing the utility within a roof that is integrated into the building form, (Fig. 3.5a)
  • locating the utility within an enclosed mechanical penthouse whose materials and detailing complement the building architecture, (Fig. 3.5b)
  • locating the utility far enough from the parapet so as to be effectively invisible from adjacent primary and secondary streets. (Fig. 3.5c)

Design Guidelines

• No utility or service should be visible from the street, regardless of architectural or landscape treatment.

• Utility pads and similar “on-grade” building services should be screened from the ground floor view of adjacent properties.

• Small-scale utilities and services (individual meters, telephone and communications pedestals, HVAC condensing units, and the like) should not be mounted on or in front of primary building façades without screening that is integrated into the building architecture or landscape design.

• Landscaping may be an adequate screening material for small-scale utilities and services if its branch structure is sufficiently dense or it has foliage throughout the year.
3.6 Parking Garage Design (Visible from the Street)

Parking garage location and orientation is addressed in Section 2.5. This section addresses the architectural character of above-grade parking garages and portions of below-grade parking garages exposed to public view.

**Intent**

- To minimize the visual impact of structured parking garages on the public realm.
- To mitigate the impact of vehicle noise, headlights, building lighting, and mechanical systems associated with parking facilities.
- To design garages to be visually compatible with the surrounding development.
- To encourage garages with a mixed-use character.

**Design Standards**

- The façades of parking garages exposed to view shall be orthogonal in composition and shall not express ramping systems.
- Spandrel panels or opaque architectural wall systems, a minimum of 42" high, shall be required to screen the view of parked cars and car headlights from the opposite side of the street and from streets within adjacent neighborhoods. (Fig. 3.6a)
- For any parking garage fronting a primary street, at least 65 percent of its ground floor shall contain Pedestrian Active Uses.
- For all exposed above-grade parking structures on secondary streets, at least 50 percent of the ground floor level must be covered by an architectural screen.
- Parking structure lighting shall be screened from all streets.
- Parking garages exposed to view shall be subject to the same standards as buildings in terms of massing, form, and building character.
- Internal lighting shall be designed to limit the visibility of light sources from the street. Strategies may include providing full-cutoff fixtures for interior lighting near perimeter openings.

**Design Guidelines**

- Opaque architectural screening with a minimum height of 42” may be substituted for spandrel panels if it can be demonstrated that car headlights will not create glare in direct view by adjacent uses or neighborhoods.
• The ground floor of parking garages should be designed to a height and depth that is easily converted to Pedestrian Active Uses such as retail or commercial.

• The exposed, above-grade portion of a below grade parking garage should be designed in a manner that is visually compatible with the design of the building it serves. Strategies to achieve this guideline may include:
  • Use of similar cladding materials and material modules on the exposed portion,
  • Screening with landscaping, fences, or walls, if those fences or walls are visually compatible with adjacent buildings.
  • The use of open railing systems.
4.0 Open Space

This section addresses the general configuration and design concepts for all open spaces required per the Denver Design District GDP. This section does not address private open spaces designed for the exclusive use of building tenants or residents, including private internal courtyards and open-air terraces and patios.

4.1 Open Space Layout

**Intent**
- To provide open space of an adequate size and proportion to serve a variety of community recreation and leisure needs.
- To complement but not replace existing public parks which have historically served the surrounding neighborhoods.
- To create variety of urban open spaces - including parks, plazas, and expanded streetscapes - that will help define neighborhoods and nodes within the GDP area.

**Design Standards**
- Open spaces shall be architecturally defined by the buildings that surround them.
- Open spaces shall have direct access from a pedestrian walk on at least one side and for at least 50 percent of the length of that side.
- The open spaces shall:
  - Be easily accessible and viewed from the street,
  - Be at a level within 18 inches above or below the nearest adjoining public sidewalk.
  - Be publicly accessible and publicly usable.
  - Be open to the sky, but could include structures such as pavilions or gazebos.

**Design Guidelines**
- Open spaces should be of a size, proportion, and orientation in relation to surrounding structures that optimizes sky and sunlight exposure over the course of the year.
- Open spaces may be located where they support a transition between Sub-areas, between areas of substantially different use or character, or between new development and existing communities.
- Open spaces should generally coordinate with locations per Figure 4.1a and meet character descriptions as follows on page 43.
4.1a Open Space Concepts

Note: Only primary open spaces may qualify as GDP required aggregated open space. Streets and curbs shown within the GDP Area are for illustrative purposes only.
Primary Open Spaces

1. Mercado (Min. size = 0.8 acres)
   • Inspire and support local retail activity adjacent to the Alameda light rail station and along Dakota Avenue.
   • Include decorative hardscapes that will create a unique identity.
   • Provide a setting for a farmer’s market, outdoor concert, or rotating outdoor event that will serve the community.

2. Central Square (Min. size = 2.0 acres)
   • Anchor the surrounding mixed-use community with a central gathering space.
   • Provide a green “backyard” for urban dwellers.
   • Allow for a mix of active and passive recreational uses and enable year-round programmable events.

3. Village Green (Min. size = 0.7 acres)
   • Provide a multi-use park that will serve the office and design districts.
   • Combine active and passive recreational uses.
   • Provide enhanced setting with formal gardens and adjacent restaurants or cafes.

4. Broadway Pocket (Min. size = 0.1 acres)
   • Create an urban oasis along Broadway that will draw people into the site.
   • Enhance pedestrian connections to Dakota Promenade, the Mercado and the Alameda light rail station.
   • Relate to adjacent retail uses on Broadway.

5. Design Center Triangle (Min. size = 0.5 acres)
   • Create a relaxing setting for surrounding workers, students, and residents.
   • Orient around a central feature such as a fountain or art piece.
   • Provide the opportunity for outdoor showrooms or art installations.

6. Campus Green (Min. size = 0.8 acres)
   • Punctuate Center Avenue and provide a visual and physical link to the bike trail to the west.
   • Encourage activity and events, enlivened by adjacent cafes and educational uses.
   • Provide an area for permanent or rotating art installations.

7. Southside Plaza (Min. size = 0.5 acres)
   • Create a sense of entry into the southern office district.
   • Engage ground floor retailers and office uses.
   • Provide a place for workers and other users of the site to gather and eat lunch.

8. Bike Trail (Min. size = 0.3 acres)
   • Link cyclists and pedestrians to neighboring communities and adjacent light rail stations.
   • Provide a unique recreational amenity.
   • Create a green buffer along the western edge of the site.
• The bike trail should include a path no less than 5 feet in width.
• The bike trail should include a system of pedestrian-scaled lighting to ensure safety for users at night.

**Streetscape Open Spaces**

9. Bannock Street (Min. size = 0.9 acres)
   • Provide a central north-south axis that promotes pedestrian connections through the site.
   • Create a vibrant streetscape that engages storefronts and other active ground floor uses.
   • Promote pedestrian amenities, including street trees, public art and outdoor seating.

10. Dakota Promenade (Min. size = 0.7 acres)
    • Provide a pedestrian-friendly connection to the Alameda light rail station.
    • Create an active retail promenade to link the site with existing neighborhoods.
    • Promote pedestrian amenities such as benches, street trees and cafe seating.

11. The Crossroads (Min. size = 0.2 acres)
    • Create a lively node at the nexus of the site’s primary east-west and north-south pedestrian corridors.
    • Building massing and articulation, as described in Section 3.1, should help define this important intersection.
    • Engage adjacent ground floor retail uses.
    • Enhance setting with plantings and adjacent restaurants or cafes.

12. Design Center Promenade (Min. size = 0.4 acres)
    • Enhance pedestrian connections through the Design Center.
    • Engage adjacent stores and restaurants.
    • Create opportunities to display outdoor showrooms and public art.
    • To the Alameda light rail station and along Dakota Avenue.
    • Include decorative hardscape that will create a unique identity.
    • Provide a setting for a farmer’s market, outdoor concert, or rotating outdoor event that will serve the community.

4.2 Streetscape Open Space Sidewalks

*Intent*

• To create vibrant streetscapes that will contribute to the public realm and surpass City minimum standards.
• To ensure that sidewalks qualifying as open spaces surpass City standards.
**Design Standards**
- For all Streetscape Open Spaces (Fig. 4.1a), and additional 8’ of sidewalk width must be provided for the entire street section.
- The additional 8’ may be split symmetrically, with 4’ on each sidewalk (Fig. 4.2a) or asymmetrically so that sidewalk seating and other amenities may be concentrated on one side of the street.
- The additional sidewalk width must be within private property (Fig. 4.2a).
- Sidewalks qualifying as open space shall incorporate a cohesive system of amenities in the Public Amenity Zone that may include decorative paving, plantings, and site furnishings.

**Design Guidelines**
- Given the length of Bannock Street, the application of amenities along this street may vary by Sub-Area.
- For required furnishings, refer to Section 4.4.
- For required decorative paving, refer to Section 4.5.

### 4.3 Open Space Landscaping

**Intent**
- To introduce natural elements and hardscaped gathering areas into the built environment.
- To provide urban open spaces which give relief to the streetscape and create opportunities to gather and interact.

**Design Standards**
- A minimum of 15 and maximum of 40 percent of the area of a plaza shall be composed of planting materials (grass, ground covers, planting beds).

**Design Guidelines**
- A minimum of one tree should be planted for every 2,500 SF of open space.
- Open spaces should be oriented to take advantage of views and sunlight.
- Open spaces should visually and physically connect to the adjacent streetscape.
- No portion of the surface area of an open space should be greater than 18 inches vertical from adjoining grade to preserve a sense of physical connectedness.
- The placement of trees and planting should conform to an overall identifiable design and should not be located in a way that would prevent optimal growth and maintenance.
- Ornamental trees and plantings that provide seasonal interest are encouraged.
4.4 Open Space Furnishings

**Intent**
- To provide a system of street and open space furnishings that unifies and adds character to the streetscape.
- To encourage pedestrians to inhabit and engage the streetscape and open spaces through activities such as relaxing, eating, browsing, gathering, and reading.
- To provide street furnishings that are durable, attractive, and maintenance free.

**Design Standards**
- Site furnishings shall not impede the required clear width of the Pedestrian Walk.
- Permanent seating shall be placed to serve bus stops, plazas and other open spaces. Seating shall meet the following requirements:
  - a minimum depth of 15”
  - a minimum width of 18”
  - a height between 16” and 18”

**Design Guidelines**
- Open spaces should provide adequate permanent seating supportive of informal gathering and passive recreational activities.
- Open spaces should incorporate at a minimum one linear foot of seating for every 50 square feet of area.
- Seating at least 30” in depth and with access to both sides may count double toward seating requirements.
- Low site walls, including those for water features and planter beds, may be used to satisfy the seating requirement if they meet the minimum dimensional criteria above and are not obstructed.
- Trash receptacles should be provided at a minimum of four cubic feet of capacity for every 2,000 square feet of open space area.
- Trash receptacles should be placed convenient to seating areas, but not directly against any individual seat.
- In addition to tree planting and seating area requirements, each open space should contain at least one of the following amenities:
  - Formal planters, planting beds, or hedges,
  - A drinking fountain,
  - Public art, a shelter (gazebo, trellis), a water feature (fountain, water wall), or similar permanent focal element. Elements shall consider year-round appearance.
- The quantity, placement and design of outdoor amenities should respond to the natural environment, adjacent structures, and the proximity of other amenities.
- For open space lighting, refer to Section 6.3.
4.5 Open Space Hardscape Component Standards

**Intent**
- To encourage a logical, hierarchical system of standard and decorative paving within designated open space areas.
- To provide paving materials which are safe, durable and easy to maintain.

**Design Standards**
- All sidewalk paving shall meet City standards and where required, be part of a Maintenance District.
- Any paving within the public ROW must be approved by the Department of Public Works.
- Improvements to the public ROW, such as corner bulb outs, handicapped curb ramps, curb and gutter and sidewalks shall be consistent with the Department of Public Works standards and CPD approval.

**Design Guidelines**
- Special paving systems are encouraged in the following open space areas: Bannock Street, Dakota Avenue Promenade, Design Center Promenade, The Crossroads, and the Mercado.
- Special paving with the public ROW is typically only allowed in the streetscape area and only if it is not maintained by the City.
- Special paving systems should be appropriate for heavy urban traffic. Colored concrete, brick, concrete unit pavers, and unpolished stone are recommended.
- The use of permeable pavement systems is encouraged.
5.0 Landscape Design

This section addresses general landscape design for the overall GDP area.

General Intent: Denver has a long-established tradition of green streets and neighborhoods dating back to the founding of the city when residents took the initiative to beautify their residential streets by planting street trees. At the turn of the twentieth century, the City Beautiful movement profoundly influenced the public perception of civic green space. Modern landscape design expands these early concepts to include a greater sense of environmental stewardship and broader range of recreational choices.

The Standards and Guidelines of this section address general landscape requirements as well as requirements of specific streetscape and landscape components. In general, the Design Standards and Guidelines of this section are intended to supplement the design criteria addressed in the Streetscape Design Manual (City and County of Denver, 1993). Where an element of landscape and streetscape design is not specifically addressed in this document, it is assumed that the applicable standards and guidelines in Streetscape Design Manual govern for all street types.

5.1 General Landscape Requirements

Intent

- To ensure that all site areas receive thoughtful landscape design.
- To encourage landscape and hardscape design that is resource efficient, improves site permeability, reduces the urban heat island effect and is easily maintained.

Design Standards

- All areas of the site not including those areas covered by buildings, structures, parking areas, service areas, standard walks, pathways, or other non-decorative improved impervious surfaces, shall be landscaped or hardscaped.
- All plantings shall adhere to the requirements of the City Forester.
- Irrigation systems shall be required for all landscaping within the street. All irrigation systems in the public ROW must comply with CCD Rules and Regulations concerning Minor Encumbrances.
- On any single primary or secondary street front, street trees shall be planted in a uniform pattern, centered on the width of the Public Amenity Zone and spaced equally to create a relatively continuous canopy upon maturity.
- Plant material, fencing, screening, or any other landscape improvement within the public ROW shall adhere to the requirements of the Streetscape Design Manual and the Department of Public Works in regard to planting within all “Sight Triangles.”
Design Guidelines

- No area of the site exposed to public view should be left without landscape or hardscape treatment.

- Landscape design within the development should use a minimum of 20 percent less potable water than conventional designs. Reductions of up to 50 percent less water are encouraged. Strategies to reduce consumption may include the following:
  - Specification of low-water need plant materials,
  - Specification of mulches or ground covers that limit evaporation,
  - Use of drip irrigation or other systems that more efficiently deliver water to plants,
  - Use of reclaimed or captured, rather than potable water.

Note: Complete elimination of plant materials in favor of paving systems or inorganic mulches are not encouraged as a water conserving technique.

- Small variations in street tree location or spacing are allowed if approved by the City Forester and the manager of CPD.

- Effort should be made to reuse existing topsoil removed during construction activity for areas of the site requiring re-vegetation and landscaping.

- General landscape design, including the location of landscaped areas, their type, form and materials, should control erosion and limit sedimentation of municipal water drainage systems.

5.2 Landscape Component Standards

Intent

- To ensure that specified plant materials are healthy, meet horticultural industry minimum standards, and are suited to an urban environment.

- To encourage the use of plant materials which are resource efficient.

- To encourage reasonable water conservation practices.

Design Standards

- All plants shall be A-Grade or No. 1 Grade, free of any defects, of normal health, height, leaf density and spread appropriate to the species as defined by the American Association of Nurserymen or as approved by the City Forester.

- Plant materials shall be drought tolerant, suited to the climate, and/or native to the region.

- Plant materials with similar water and light needs shall be grouped together.

- Street trees within the Public Amenity Zone shall have a minimum 2-1/2” caliper. Ornamental trees as approved shall have a minimum 2” caliper.
• The minimum shrub size shall be five gallon.
• The minimum vine and perennial size shall be one gallon.
• The minimum size for mass ground covers shall be 2-1/4” with a minimum planting density of 6” to 9” on-center.

Design Guidelines
• Plant materials should be selected that are appropriate for the regional climate, reflective of historic patterns, and provide seasonal interest.
• Landscaped areas within the development should endeavor to exceed a 20 percent reduction in the use of potable water over conventional landscape practices.
• Irrigation systems should be automatically controlled to respond to daily and seasonal variations in evapo-transpiration rate and precipitation levels.

5.3 Hardscape Component Standards

Intent
• To provide paving materials which are safe, durable and easy to maintain.

Design Standards
• All sidewalk paving shall meet City standards and where required, be part of a Maintenance District.
• Any paving within the public ROW must be approved by the Department of Public Works.
• Improvements to the public ROW, such as corner bulb outs, handicapped curb ramps, curb and gutter and sidewalks shall be consistent with the Department of Public Works standards and CPD approval.

Design Guidelines
• Special paving with the public ROW is typically only allowed in the streetscape area and only if it is not maintained by the City.
• Special paving systems are encouraged within designated Gateway Areas and to identify special areas of the streetscape such as intersections, pedestrian building entrances, and plazas.
• Special paving systems used in private spaces should be coordinated with paving systems in public areas where they are both visible from the street.
• Special paving systems should be appropriate for heavy urban traffic. Colored concrete, brick, concrete unit pavers, and unpolished stone are recommended.

• The use of permeable pavement systems is encouraged.

5.4 Site Furnishing Standards

Intent

• To provide a system of street furnishings that unifies and adds character to the streetscape.

• To encourage pedestrians to inhabit and engage the streetscape through activities such as relaxing, eating, browsing, gathering, and reading.

• To provide street furnishings that are durable, attractive, and maintenance free.

Design Standards

• Site furnishings shall not impede the required clear width of the Pedestrian Walk.

• Permanent seating shall be placed to serve bus stops, plazas and other open spaces. Seating shall meet the following requirements:
  • a minimum depth of 15”
  • a minimum width of 18”
  • a height between 16” and 18”

Design Guidelines

• Covered bus stops are encouraged. Bus stops are encouraged to incorporate maps, benches, and other amenities where appropriate.

• Low site walls, including those for water features and planter beds, may be used to satisfy the seating requirement if they meet the minimum dimensional criteria above and are not obstructed.

• Trash receptacles should be placed convenient to seating areas, but not directly against any individual seat.

• The quantity, placement and design of outdoor amenities should respond to the natural environment, adjacent structures, and the proximity of other amenities.

5.5 Screening, Fencing, Walls, and Railings

Intent

• To conceal undesirable uses or services without impeding the transparency and visibility of the pedestrian realm.

• To integrate screening, fencing, walls, and railings into the general architectural character of the development.

• To encourage design of these elements that is safe, durable, and easy to maintain.
Design Standards

- Fences and walls shall use similar materials, modules, and details as those on nearby or adjacent buildings.

- Railings located at the ground floor between buildings with Pedestrian Active Uses and the street shall be at least 50 percent open or transparent.

Design Guidelines

- Fencing, walls, and railings visible from the street should be of high-quality materials, decorative rather than utilitarian, and substantial in appearance commensurate with an urban environment and the scale of adjacent buildings.

5.6 Site Detention Areas

Intent

- To accommodate detention of storm water on-site in a way that is a positive part of an integrated landscape design.

- To create storm water detention areas that are attractively landscaped and can serve the active and passive recreational needs of the community.

- To utilize underground detention areas where appropriate.

Design Standards

- Site detention areas shall use land forms and live plant material in a way that satisfies detention and water-quality requirements while allowing for passive or active recreational uses.

- Site detention areas shall minimize the use of pea gravel, rip-rap, rock, cobble stones, or other non-organic landscape materials.

- Water detention and quality features for private on-site runoff will not be allowed in the public ROW.

Design Guidelines

- Site detention should creatively combine detention strategies and technologies, including but not limited to the use of planted roofs, below-grade vaults, water features, and pervious paving systems.

- Encourage the dispersal of site detention to reduce size.

5.7 Parking Area Landscaping

Intent

- To enhance the aesthetic appearance of surface parking areas and screen them from view.

- To reduce the urban heat-island effect attributed to large areas of exposed paving.

- To provide safe and attractive pathways through parking areas for pedestrian traffic.
Design Standards

- Minimum parking area landscaping standards for all new parking areas shall be governed by the Section 10.5.4 of the Denver Zoning Code.
- New surface parking areas shall have a minimum 42" high perimeter wall, not to exceed 48," along all sides facing a street.

Design Guidelines

- All new surface parking areas with sky exposure exposed to view from the street, should be landscaped.
- Landscaping within a new parking area should be evenly distributed.
- New parking areas should accommodate safe and direct pedestrian passage between building entrances, through the parking lot, and from the parking lot to the street.
6.0 Site and Building Lighting

**General Intent:** Illumination of building and landscape elements can provide additional nighttime interest and foster community identity. Enhanced street lighting, if designed properly to reduce glare and limit contrast, can enhance feelings of pedestrian security and safety. However, lighting design must consider energy efficiency and glare control so that it does not detract from the quality of the urban environment.

6.1 Street Lighting

Street lighting in the public ROW is the purview of the Department of Public Works which has standards for lighting type, location, and spacing.

**Intent**

- To integrate City standards with regard to general street illumination into the character of the development.
- To encourage pedestrian lighting in commercial areas that enhances district character and the pedestrian experience.
- To limit additional pedestrian lighting in residential areas.

**Design Standards**

- Pedestrian lighting is only allowed in the public ROW if it is not maintained by the City. Where provided, pedestrian lighting shall be located in the Public Amenity Zone.
- Light levels for pedestrian lighting shall be designed to:
  - Limit glare into adjacent properties and surrounding neighborhoods,
  - Avoid extreme contrasts between light and shadow.

**Design Guidelines**

- For Bannock and Dakota, a system of pedestrian lighting along the Pedestrian Walk is encouraged.
- Pedestrian lights, if provided, may match an approved City light fixture (such as the Acorn-type luminaries suggested in the Denver Streetscape Design Manual) or be of a different type with equivalent durability and quality.
- A system of pedestrian lights along primary streets should:
  - Consist of only one fixture type, or consist of a limited vocabulary of fixtures that visually complement one another,
  - Be spaced evenly and align with each other along the length of the Pedestrian Walk, in the Public Amenity Zone.
- All fixtures should provide cut-off or shielding to minimize light trespass directly to the sky or into residential areas.
- Lamps in light fixtures exposed to public view should provide as high a color rendition index as is feasible.
6.2 Parking Area Lighting

**Intent**
- To limit glare onto adjacent properties and surrounding neighborhoods.
- To provide adequate light levels to create a safe, secure environment.

**Design Standards**
- Parking area lighting shall be designed to:
  - provide no more than the recommended level of illumination as set forth by the IESNA Lighting Handbook for pedestrian and vehicular safety,
  - reduce glare into adjacent properties,
  - avoid extreme contrasts between light and shadow,
  - minimize light trespass directly to the sky by orienting downward and/or shielding the fixture.
- Maximum light pole height shall be 25 feet.

**Design Guidelines**
- Where possible, light sources should be placed closer to rather than further from the surface being illuminated. For example, a closer spacing of lower-height light poles is preferable to a greater spacing of taller light poles.

6.3 Open Space Lighting

**Intent**
- To create a comfortable and safe night time ambience in open spaces.
- To highlight appropriate elements of open spaces to aid in orientation and provide visual interest.
- To provide continuity in light levels between streetscapes and adjoining open spaces.

**Design Standards**
- Lighting in open spaces shall be designed to:
  - illuminate pedestrian paths,
  - limit glare into adjacent properties and surrounding neighborhoods,
  - minimize glare directly to the sky.
- General illumination of large areas of landscaping shall not be allowed (for example, using fixtures with a flood-type distribution to illuminate rows and clusters of trees or large areas of lawn).
- Illumination of individual landscape elements (trees and individual planter areas) shall be limited to 2,000 lumens.
- General overhead or service pack lighting shall not be used.
**Design Guidelines**

- Pedestrian lighting may be used to illuminate primary walking paths or accent paved areas. Spacing should generally be equivalent to or less than that of the adjacent Pedestrian Walk along a major street to indicate an area of heightened activity and interest.

- Focal points such as gazebos, trellises, and water features should be lit in order to become an inviting presence at night.

- Illumination sources that are low to the ground such as bollard, step, and walkway lighting are encouraged.

- Lamps should provide a minimum color rendition index of 60.

### 6.4 Building Lighting

**Intent**

- To provide appropriate building accents above street level.
- To ensure an appropriate quality of lighting for service areas.

**Design Standards**

- Building lighting shall be designed to light specific building elements or usable exterior spaces such as balconies and terraces rather than provide general illumination of a façade.

- Building lighting shall be designed to:
  - reduce glare into adjacent properties and surrounding neighborhoods
  - minimize light trespass directly to the sky,
  - integrate into the building architecture by being concealed or through the use of materials, detailing, form, and spacing that complements the building being illuminated.

- Building light fixtures shall be of architectural quality in regard to durability, construction, and aesthetic appearance.

- Building light fixtures on all streets, whether exposed or concealed, shall not have exposed conduit runs, junction boxes, or other “unfinished” elements exposed to view.

- Utilitarian building lighting fixtures located in service areas shall be concealed from view from primary and secondary streets.

**Design Guidelines**

- Building illumination above the second floor should be shielded or provide full cutoff to minimize the view of exposed lamps from the street, adjacent occupied space, or adjacent neighborhoods.
• Where lighting of buildings and buildings elements is proposed, the overall lighting design should:
  • orient to South Broadway or I-25,
  • reinforce Gateway Areas,
  • reflect primary building entrances,
  • complement adjacent plazas and expanded streetscapes,
  • avoid illuminating building faces adjacent to and directly facing existing residential areas,
  • avoid glare.
7.0 Site and Building Signage

General Intent: Mixed-use communities contain an intensity and density of uses commensurate with an active urban environment. A well conceived system of site and building signage is important for making sense of this environment. To be most effective, signs should be integral and complementary to the character of the streetscape and the architecture of the buildings that they serve. In addition to basic functions such as tenant identity and way-finding, signage should enhance the character of specific building types, reinforce the hierarchy of streets and spaces, and contribute to the ambience of the district.

Signage requirements are addressed in the Denver Zoning Ordinance for all zone districts (Sec. 59-536 to 59-545), and are specifically modified for mixed-use districts (Sec. 59-315). Existing regulations govern signage within the GDP Area unless specifically modified below.

7.1 District Signage

Intent

• To identify and mark streets, Sub-areas, districts or light rail station within the GDP area.

• To create an organized and interrelated system of signs, sign structures, sign lighting, and graphics.

• To create signage that is creative in its use of form, materials, lighting, color and graphics.

• To accommodate signage that aids in way-finding while enhancing the character of a district.

• To mitigate visual clutter of the streetscape.

Design Standards

• All district signs shall conform to the Denver Zoning Code and any required comprehensive sign plans.

• All district signs shall be of durable and attractive materials and construction suited to an urban environment.

• All conduits, transformers, or other “unfinished” elements providing support or power to district signs shall be concealed from view from the street.

• No portion of a district sign shall be located closer than 25 feet horizontally from any other district sign.

• Public Works has the signage authority for all public ROW. Signs will be placed by the developer and must meet CCD standards.

Design Guidelines

• District signage should be located within 25 feet vertically of adjacent grade and oriented toward the street.
• District signage should be located in the Public Amenity Zone:
  • aligned with, centered between, or otherwise integrated into the design of the street tree and street furnishing system.
  • within Signature and Primary Gateway areas.

• District signage design should be compatible with the architecture of surrounding buildings in terms of form, material, color, and detailing.

7.2 Building Signage

Intent

• To create signs and graphic elements that are appropriate to and expressive of the use they identify.

• To encourage signs which are creative in their use of form, materials, lighting, and graphics without creating visual clutter.

• To provide building signage that communicates effectively and is visually integrated into the building architecture.

• To mitigate the external effects of building signs on adjacent properties and surrounding neighborhoods.

Design Standards

• All building signs shall conform to the Denver Zoning Code and any required comprehensive sign plans.

• All buildings with ground floor commercial uses shall provide areas of the primary building façade designed to accommodate changeable tenant signage. Structure, materials, detailing and power sources shall be designed with consideration of signage installation requirements and shall be readily adaptable and repairable as tenant sign needs change.

• All building signs shall be of durable and attractive materials and construction suited to an urban environment.

• All conduits, transformers, or other “unfinished” elements providing support or power to building signs shall be screened from view from pedestrian walks on all streets.

• In addition to one universal parking sign, parking garages shall be allowed only one other building identification sign per vehicular entry and exit.

• No portion of a projecting sign shall be located closer than 25 feet horizontally from any other projecting sign.

Design Guidelines

• Building sign design should be compatible with the architecture of the building being served in terms of form, material, color and detailing.
• Building signs of any type should not be located within the façade of any residential portion of a mixed-use building.

• Wall, window, and arcade signs should not overlap or conceal major architectural elements. Certain projecting signs may overlap architectural elements if specifically approved by CPD.

• Tenant identification signage should not directly orient to existing residential areas.
7.0 **Procedures for Design Review**

7.1 **Design Review Process**

The following process is adopted pursuant to Section 59-313(b) to create a Design Review process that supersedes the process set forth in Section 59-313(c) of the Denver Revised Municipal Code so that Design Review will proceed, as far as possible, concurrently with development/site plan review ("Design Review").

7.2 **Applicability**

All of the area illustrated in Figure C: Sub-Area Boundaries is subject to these Denver Design District Urban Design Standards and Guidelines (UDSG). Design Review shall be conducted by Community Planning and Development (CPD) for compliance with the UDSG.

7.3 **Objective**

The objective of the Design Review process is to create a clear, consistent, and predictable process for development within the GDP Area as envisioned in the Denver Design District GDP and at an additional applicable property in Sub-Area 5. It is the goal of CPD to simultaneously perform the Design Review with the site plan review process.

7.4 **Submittal Requirements**

The Applicant shall meet with or submit to CPD design documents at the following three key project phases: Pre-Submittal Conference, Schematic Design Phase, and Design Development Phase. Design Review meetings may be requested by the Applicant at any point in the development process to provide clear direction on specific design issues.

7.5 **Pre-Submittal Conference**

A mandatory Pre-Submittal Conference shall be held between the Applicant and CPD staff to review the scope of the site plan and the Design Review process and to identify all requirements, presumptions, and considerations. Prior to the Pre-Submittal Conference, the Applicant shall submit the following:

- Project intent, including design intent
- Project scope, project uses and adjacent uses and site description
- Context photos
- Conceptual site plan
- Special considerations such as project phasing, etc.

7.6 **Schematic Design Phase**

For the Schematic Design Phase, the Applicant plan shall submit the following materials:

- Preliminary Plan submittal as defined in the Denver Planning Office’s PUD/PBG Site Plan Rules & Regulations,
- Detailed narrative of how the UDSG have been met by the Schematic Design Phase submittal,
- Building Elevations.
- Floor Plans

If a Standard is not met, the Applicant must demonstrate in the narrative that the alternative shown on the Schematic Design Phase submittal meets one or more of the following criteria:

- The alternative better achieves the Intent Statement,
- The Intent Statement that the Standard was created to address will not be achieved by application of the Standard in this particular circumstance,
- The application of Guidelines to achieve the Intents will be improved by not applying the Standard in this particular case,
- Unique site characteristics or market factors make the Standard impractical or cost prohibitive.

The Schematic Design submittal shall be reviewed and comments given by CPD within twenty-five (25) working days after receipt of a complete submittal. Review periods may be extended by an amount of time equal to any delay caused by the Applicant, or with the Applicant's consent. Any proposed alternatives shall be deemed acceptable if approved by CPD.

7.7 **Neighborhood Notification**

Within five working days of a Schematic Design Phase submittal, CPD shall notify the City Council member(s) in whose District the project is located and all Registered Neighborhood Organizations (RNOs) within 200 feet (200') of the project, in accordance with Section 12-96, of a submittal that requires Design Review. Such Council member(s) or RNOs may request additional information. Written comments may be submitted to CPD within fifteen (15) working days after the notice is sent.
For the Design Development Phase, the Applicant shall submit the following materials:

- Final Plan submittal as defined in the Denver Planning Office’s PUD/PBG Site Plan Rules & Regulations,
- Reply to written CPD comments on the Schematic Design Phase submittal with updated detailed statement of how the UDSSG’s have been met,
- Building Elevations,
- Floor Plans,
- Landscape/Streetscape plan and materials,
- Cross sections, if required by CPD,
- Façade details and treatments,
- Exterior building materials and sample board,
- Renderings – optional.

The Design Development Phase submittal shall be reviewed and comments given by CPD within ten (10) working days after receipt of a complete submittal. Review periods may be extended by an amount of time equal to any delay caused by the Applicant, or with the Applicant’s consent. CPD shall approve, recommend that the Applicant revise and resubmit, or deny the submittal.

Proposed modifications to an approved Design Development Phase submittal may be administratively approved (redlined), if such modifications are consistent with these UDSSG. CPD shall review the proposed modifications and shall approve or deny the request within ten (10) working days of receiving a complete request. If the modification is substantial, CPD staff may request that the modification go back through the Design Review process.

Certain uses in the GDP may require Special Review. The following are the criteria to be used by the Zoning Administrator for determining whether the standards for approval of special review uses as found in Section 59-306(f) of the Revised Municipal Code have been met:

The establishment, maintenance, and operation of the special review use will not be detrimental to or endanger the public health, safety or general welfare of the community.

Criteria:

- The special review use shall be consistent with the Denver Design District GDP and the GDP Area’s zoning.
- The concerns of abutting property owners can be reasonably mitigated.

The establishment of the special review use will not impede the normal and orderly development and improvement of the surrounding property for uses permitted in the district.

Criteria:

- The special review use shall be consistent with the Denver Design District GDP and the GDP Area’s zoning.
- The special review use shall not change the character of the Sub-area where it is located, as described on GDP.
- The concerns of abutting property owners can be reasonably mitigated.

The proposed special review use meets all of the applicable provisions of Chapter 59 (zoning) and all applicable regulations.

Criteria:

- The special review use shall be compliant with any zoning requirements, as applicable to the GDP Area.

The aggregate impacts of similar uses shall not result in harmful external effects or environmental impacts.

Criteria:

- The special review use shall be consistent with the Denver Design District GDP and the GDP Area’s zoning.
7.16 Standard 6

The special review use shall conform to all applicable regulations of the zone district in which it is located.
Criteria:

• If the special review use complies with all applicable regulations of the zone district or any variances granted, it will be deemed to comply with the Denver Zoning Code and applicable regulations.

7.17 Standard 7

The special review use shall be consistent with the Denver Design District GDP and shall enhance access to or use of multiple modes of transportation.
Criteria:

• The arrangement of the special review use shall allow residents, workers and shoppers to walk to transit and other destinations within the project.
• The special review use shall be consistent with the Denver Design District GDP and the GDP Area's zoning.

7.18 Standard 8

The proposed use shall be consistent with the purpose and objectives of the GDP Area's zoning in which it is located.
Criteria:

• The special review use shall be consistent with the Denver Design District GDP.

7.19 Standard 9

The proposed special review use shall be sited and designed to be compatible with adjacent uses.
Criteria:

• The special review use shall be consistent with the Denver Design District GDP and the GDP Area's zoning.

7.20 Standard 10

The potential impacts of the proposed special review use will be adequately mitigated.
Criteria:

• The special review use shall be consistent with the Denver Design District GDP and the GDP Area's zoning.
DENVER DESIGN DISTRICT GDP
Property Description

DENVER DESIGN DISTRICT GDP
Urban Design Standards and Guidelines

Adopted November 17, 2008
Amended June 22, 2017

Applicant

Brad Buchanan, FAIA
Executive Director, Community Planning and Development

Approved for Legality

Nathan Lucero
Assistant City Attorney, City and County of Denver

Approved and Adopted

Julie Underdahl
Chair, Denver Planning Board

Brad Buchanan, FAIA
Executive Director, Community Planning and Development

Adopted and published as enabled by Section 59-314(e)(2)a and pursuant to Section 12-18 of the Revised Municipal Code, as amended, of the City and County of Denver.