



Austin Design Commission

Board/Commission Recommendation

20130722-004A

Update to Mayor and Council on crafting of Infrastructure Design Guidelines as requested by Resolution No. 20120816-060.

Unanimously approved by the Design Commission on a 7-0 vote.

July 30, 2013

Dear Mayor and Councilmembers,

We would like to update you on our progress in developing the new Infrastructure Design Guidelines for the City of Austin in response to City Council Resolution 20120816-060. Infrastructure comprises a significant part of the urban environment and approaching this issue has presented a tremendous challenge to the Commission. After numerous discussions with staff, departments, and within the Commission, we are developing a clear framework to address infrastructure related projects. The Urban Design Guidelines has served as the model to ensure that the document will be familiar and fit in with current expectations and process. The focus of the guidelines is to shape its relationship to the urban landscape and not affect the technical requirements.

Given the complexity of the work, the Design Commission requests staff assistance for the next fiscal year. Specifically we will need 2 staff personnel for 6 months to work on graphics, editorial, photo selections, and desktop publishing on a part time basis.

The following document is the Introduction and Table of Contents for the Infrastructure Design Guidelines. A version with more detailed information will be distributed to the appropriate departments for review and comment. We will continue to develop the document and interface with the departments to ensure inclusion and understanding of its proper use.

Thank you very much for the opportunity to explore and address such an important issue of for the City.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact us anytime.

Sincerely,

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Section 1

Introduction (DA & HH)

The Design Commission provides advisory recommendations to the City Council on matters pertaining to the quality of proposed urban development, and as requested by the Council, assists in developing public policy and in promoting excellence in the design and development of Austin's built environment. In our capacity as stewards of Austin's built identity, Council has asked the Design Commission to broaden its scope to include policies and standards for the design and review of the infrastructural components of our city. This annual of Infrastructure Design Guidelines, is meant to complement both the city's Urban Design Guidelines, and the Imagine Austin Comprehensive Plan. The Infrastructure Design Guidelines address the design character and construction of components and systems that structure and support the ongoing development and growth of the City of Austin and aim to enable the City to attain its vision of becoming the most livable city in the country.

Infrastructure can generally be defined as the set of interconnected structural components that provide the necessary supporting framework for urban development. Typically referring to the technical structures that support a society's needs, such as roads, bridges, water supply, sewers, electrical grids, telecommunications, and so forth, infrastructure is comprised of "the physical components of interrelated systems providing commodities and services essential to enable, sustain, or enhance societal living conditions." [Fulmer, 2009]. The Design Commission is primarily concerned with achieving excellence in the design of such structures and systems.

Infrastructure plays two primary roles in the design of urban environments: performative, and connective. Performative in this context refers to the capacity of the infrastructure to accomplish the technical function for which the system has been designed, be it the distribution and collection of water, electricity, transportation, etc., or the provision of systems of public space, streets, sidewalks, etc. Performative standards and criteria are the purview of City Staff and City Departments. Connective refers to the ability of infrastructure to integrate disparate urban development components and projects into an integrated system. Connective also refers to the socially supportive role that infrastructure may play in enhancing the quality of life of the citizens of Austin. The Design Commission seeks to work with and advise City Staff, City Departments, and developers on attaining excellence in the design and integration of the physical and social systems of our city.

These Infrastructure Guidelines outline the vision, principles and connective design criteria that are required for the design of our city's urban structure. The Infrastructure Design Guidelines provide the necessary framework for the design of a compact, connected and sustainable urban environment for Austin. The Design Commission's role in evaluating infrastructure proposals is to ensure that each development project is designed adequately and systematically reflects the values and principles espoused by the framework.

1.1 Design Commission Mission for Infrastructural Design

1.2 The Virtues of Integrative Design

1.2.1 Examples of Integrative Design (Great Streets)

Section 2

Contextual History (ET & HH)

2.1 Significance of Infrastructure

(CALC. percentage of Austin service area dedicated to infrastructure)

2.2 Define Infrastructure

2.3 Existing City of Austin Infrastructure Guidelines

Due to the recent adoption of the Imagine Austin Comprehensive Plan, which is built around the concept of “compact and connected”, infrastructure suddenly takes on a new meaning, as it will be the element that connects the activity centers, whether it’s transportation, utilities, or green space/watersheds. So, this is a good time to reassess what infrastructure is, or needs to be, as we face many environmental challenges for the next thirty years, something the new Comp Plan espouses as tantamount for Austin’s future. Infrastructure must now support smart, positive development in a sustainable way.

But, some of this reassessment of infrastructure already has a good start, in such City of Austin planning efforts as those listed below. It’s great when infrastructure is addressed in these master plans, as it can be specific to that area or concept, but when it doesn’t apply to a certain area or concept, the Infrastructure Design Guidelines will need to be implemented.

- The Great Streets Master Plan- promotes walkability through smart streetscape design and integrates bicycle paths and public transportation, encouraging less reliance on the automobile. The Bicycle Master Plan goes even further in developing bike routes throughout the City.
- The Austin Resource Recovery Master Plan- promotes minimal waste by through recycling. The goal is to keep 90% of discarded materials out of the landfill by 2040.
- The Watershed Master Plan- assesses erosion, flood and water quality problems in Austin. It also prioritizes and implements effective solutions that address all three problems.
- Airport Boulevard, Riverside Drive, Burnet Road Corridor Studies- these separate studies envision transforming these areas from auto-dominated, aging corridors, to people-oriented destinations with lots of people living, working and playing within walking distance of transit. The Airport Blvd Study goes one step further in implementing form-based code, which can control environmental standards in a more sustainable manner than traditional zoning.

Transit Oriented Design Ordinance and Station Standards- TOD district boundaries are established and TOD district zoning classification is identified. The Station Area Plans include specific design standards and development goals for each TOD district (located around transit stops on the city’s rail line), including land use regulation, density, building height, site and building design, and general standards.

2.4 Technical Criteria Manuals Currently in Use

Section 3

Values and Vision for the Design Commission (DA & JC)

3.1 Design Principles- Specific to Infrastructure

Design plays an important role in the development of a compacted and connected urban fabric that functions well. A sustainable, compact and connected city is an element of the vision of the comprehensive plan, Imagine Austin.

Design Guidelines are not to conflict with safety codes, federal guidelines, Homeland Security, or other similar safety standards.

Design principles should not rely on interpretation by staff, but instead should be a clear checklist. The design principles are meant to give a broad vision so that city departments can continue to make specific guidelines that are most applicable to them.

3.2 Introduction to Values

To paraphrase the Urban Design Guidelines, the city is a community of people and how people interact with buildings and the infrastructure is informed by values shared by the people. The Commission believes that, for Austin, important shared values include:

- Humane Character
- Density
- Sustainability
- Diversity
- Economic Vitality
- Civic Art
- A Sense of Time
- Unique Character
- Authenticity
- Safety
- A Connection to the Outdoors

The design of our Austin infrastructure, as well as the design of our buildings, must be based on the people's basic shared values

Although not necessarily exhaustive in scope, these shared values constitute the foundation for the infrastructure design guidelines that follow.

3.2.1 Humane Character

Humane character is of value because it is the basis for comfort in a built environment, and people are more inclined to live, shop, eat or recreate in a city whose infrastructure supports an environment that is physically and psychologically comfortable. The design of our infrastructure, whether streets, parks or even underground or overhead utility systems, should demonstrate that it was built for people; it should foster a sense in inhabitants that this place was made for comfortable human living. Designers, developers and transportation engineers can move the physical nature of the city closer to an ideal human habitat, while recognizing that urban places are special and more concentrated. In the same way, the use of materials, the scale of construction, human amenities, the mitigation of sunlight, the level of complexity, the design of streets, open space, water, waste water and power systems, communication systems, and the amount of plants and trees may all be manipulated to suggest that urban areas have been designed for human use. This understanding will contribute to a sense of well-being as we feel well matched to our surroundings – as we feel that they have been designed for us. It will also promote the use of our sidewalks and streets by pedestrians, increasing the activity level and economic viability of the city core. Humane character is achieved when people no longer distinguish infrastructure separately from the built environment, when they no longer perceive it as an obstacle.

3.2.2 Density

Density refers to the concentration of people, buildings and activities. With this concentration comes a great efficiency and vitality. We value density because density facilitates commercial and social interaction by simply placing many people together in a relatively compact space. The serendipity arising from this inevitable interaction is evident in all great cities of the world.

Density and concentration are not to be confused with overcrowding. According to Jane Jacobs in *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*, density is critical “to generate exuberant diversity in a city’s streets and districts.” In the same book Jacobs quotes Lewis Mumford on the function of the city. In summary, density promotes vitality and diversity. In the suburbs where most often there is neither density nor diversity, it is a homogenous majority that defines the character of the community. Dense urban places are, by their very nature, highly diverse in character and therefore more representative and democratic in character, more experientially diverse and exciting.

Infrastructure can enhance the nature of a dense urban environment or, when not well designed, can in effect turn density into unhealthy overcrowding.

3.2.3 Sustainability

Sustainability is a value because a city that is self sustaining—that which achieves an ongoing and maintainable balance between the total resources it consumes and the total resources it creates—is better able to survive over a long time period. A sustainable infrastructure is an infrastructure which promotes a healthy urban ecology. The city is a setting for our lives and the life of our families, and this constancy contributes to a sense of well being, a sense that we are part of a more civic whole. Sustainability considers that future generations in Austin should have flexibility and choice available to them as it was to our generation.

Sustainability addresses more than the simple effort to minimize energy consumption, emphasize “green” construction practices, and institutionalize recycling. It also encompasses the reuse of existing infrastructure, the creation of an infrastructure with long life spans, and the creation of an infrastructure with built-in flexibility to allow for differing future uses. Sustainability assumes that our community is a human community and that the built environment is an extension of the infrastructure which allows a dense population to live in a relatively small area in relative comfort. Sustainability also encompasses economic sustainability, leading to the conclusion that our economic health requires an affordable infrastructure that supports the commercial spaces and that investment in these spaces can provide returns necessary to support it.

3.2.4 Diversity

The support of diversity (the distinction of characteristics, qualities, or elements) is a societal strength and one of the central principles of democracy. A diverse place for living ignites the imagination, capturing cultural and business pursuits. Diversity fosters inclusive ownership of private, public, and civic amenities. Diversity in our built environment and infrastructure applies to function, culture, style, and use. Development which is multiuse or diverse in other ways will result in a city that evolves into a rich and vibrant place to live, work, and play, and will support continued economic growth.

3.2.5 Economic Vitality

Economic vitality describes a condition where all sectors of the economic machinery are working well and are working together. It represents a sustainable return on investment for all measures of urban life. Without the energy and vigor of the economy, downtown revitalization is not possible. The powerful draw that Austin has as a unique and highly desirable city can be enhanced by ensuring that future development does not result in a city in decline. Successful private projects and the infrastructure to support them will create higher property values in general and thus increase the tax base. Private projects, however, must be profitable if they are to expand the tax base and enrich the civic presence.

3.2.6 Civic Art

Art for public defines the public realm and distinguishes the fine points in a city. Art creates a civic good which can inform the inhabitants and the world of their commitment to the expression of a collective identity. Expressing this identity celebrates what is unique about the community, transforming the everyday, honoring and valuing the past, as well as expressing the community aspirations for the future.

Civic art stimulates the cultural life of the region. Civic art, whether initiated by the city or by private development, promotes economic development, cultural tourism, downtown and neighborhood revitalization, international prestige and recognition, and an improved quality of life for a community.

Civic art gives places back to the people; it leads visitors as well as inhabitants into the discovery of a city. Over time Austin has evolved through the many purposes, ideas, ideals, and the traditions of those who have shaped and lived here; a work of art or architecture over time becomes an important link to a city's past. From it future generations learn of the perceptions and attitudes of their predecessors. When the work is new, it can help people understand today's ideals and traditions and the changes going on around them.

Over time, our artists—whether they be fine artists, artisans, or folk artists— have shaped and created Austin in response to the rich natural resources of the region and the traditions and cultures they brought with them. They are a natural resource which should be supported.

Infrastructure presents a particularly rich opportunity for the inclusion of civic art. Vehicular and pedestrian pathways, wayfinding systems, public transportation stops and urban open space and parks provide rich opportunities for civic art.

3.2.7 A Sense of Time

A sense of time and its history is important to the protection of valuable resources and the continuity of our community. Moments of accelerated growth can cause the destruction of resources, the value of which is often realized too late, after the resources are gone. Much of the development which will occur in the future has the opportunity to protect and reveal the history and stories of the place, while responding to the needs of the present. Our city is more valuable to us when we sense this continuity throughout the past, the present and plans for the future. The design of infrastructure should not interfere with this sense of time.

Austinites value the fact that we are simultaneously fiercely protective of our diverse natural and cultural environments, and forward-thinking—open to new technologies and encouraging change for the better. By valuing a sense of time, we recognize the importance that each moment in time be represented. As we create the future, we ensure that what we do now will someday become a part of a history that we will want to protect. Development will, in this way, take on the role of the story teller. Everything we build will become a story within the larger story of Austin. The decisions we make as we build, that is, how we tell the stories, will determine the way in which our history is manifested in downtown Austin. The stories told must be thorough, truthful, articulate, engaging, enduring and challenging.

3.2.8 Unique Character

Through the singularity of its landscape and the diversity of its people, Austin has built a character which is unique, something increasingly rare and precious in a time when cities worldwide are becoming homogenous collections of buildings, highways and signs advertising similar lifestyles. Unique character succumbs to attack when cultural franchising is accepted as the most successful way for large enterprises to sell goods and promote services, buildings, businesses, food, clothing and entertainment. Our physical environment, under such conditions, becomes more homogenous and predictable. It can become a dehumanizing place, where individuals face a uniform environment beyond their control. . Much of our infrastructure, particularly vehicular and pedestrian circulation has the potential to exacerbate this siege on our unique character. It is imperative that the design of infrastructure projects be reviewed to ensure the maintenance of Austin's unique character.

Austin is a collection of what we find valuable in our region—the river, the hill country, the State Capitol, parks, special places, building types, styles, architectural details, and town form, as well as the activities of commerce and special events. Within this collection of activities is an individual spirit which is valuable because it gives us a stronger sense of identity in a world which is quickly losing individuality. One reason for Austin's current growth is the attraction others feel to the differences it provides. Many people are moving here from cities which offer no sense of membership because they lack an individual identity. This sense of place is therefore a strong economic factor as well as a positive force in the creation of a healthy community.

3.2.9 Authenticity

Because cities create, over time, a physical story of the life of that place and the people who live there, it is important that those who shape Austin do so with a sense of authenticity. This concept has value because a city shaped by it will be better able to create a sense of membership and community. By assuring that the physical story corresponds well to the authentic history, people will be more inclined to trust it, participate in it, and associate themselves with it. The closer a city aligns itself with what is genuine about itself, and the real lives of the people who live there, the stronger the connection people can make between themselves, their identity, the history of the place and the physical environment. In other words, the when, why and how a city formed. People are less inclined to associate with or feel connected to a place or thing which is contrived or unnatural.

As a value, authenticity suggests that Austinites would prefer to have a city whose image and physical context clearly references the time in which it was built and the activities and needs of the people who live and work there, rather than one created through false historical constructions or commercial imagineering designed to deceive the user through theatrical manifestations.

When authenticity has played a role in the creation of a city, buildings and spaces accumulate meaning and significance naturally over time. Here, the story of the place can be told by the physical environment and people, by association, can relive the story of their own lives by moving through the city. In the same way that one reaffirms one's identity by visiting a childhood home, one is reminded of one's past by the physical part of one's hometown. The reminding can create a strong attachment to a city and to a community through the retelling of small stories on a daily basis.

Authenticity in this context refers to a real city where people live and work and explore personal and collective opportunities and conflicts. It refers to a place where one's assumptions about their physical surroundings can be trusted. Real stories will collect around places that people really inhabit.

3.2.10 Safety

The creation of safe urban places, free from danger, is a difficult but important objective. Urban areas can be filled with strangers, inherently noisy and condensed. To attract people, it must also feel safe. We value safety because it frees people to fully engage themselves in chosen activities. A safe downtown provides a venue for these many activities. Making people feel safe among strangers and in the midst of such abundant activity can be facilitated by the design of streets, sidewalks and buildings, the many infrastructure elements that people confront, and by lighting and lines of sight. Public streets and other open places can help direct attention and promote the intuitive safety mechanism of observation. Design may facilitate safety by coding space, clearly identifying where it is safe to go.

3.2.11 Connection with Outdoors

A connection with the outdoors is of value because it brings natural forces and elements such as sunshine, breezes, clouds, rain, shadow patterns, water and vegetation into urban places. Immersion in the natural environment adds complexity and transition to our experience of a day in contrast to the experience of a more static built environment. Outdoor environments offer options for reviving the senses and the lives of people who spend long periods indoors.

Austin is already distinguished by its value for outdoor connections, as seen in its strong legacy of parks and greenbelts, waterfronts and tree canopy, where people can enjoy both active and quiet pursuits. Residents have traditionally protected public green spaces and the right to be outdoors, and

newcomers are attracted to Austin because of the opportunity it provides to connect with the natural environment. As the city becomes denser, access to the outdoors becomes even more important, requiring protection and enhancement of existing green spaces as well as the creation of new plazas and other urban forms of open space.

3.2.12 Compact and Connected

3.3 A Vision for Our Infrastructure

When the fundamental basis for the guidelines was established, through the articulation of shared values, a vision for downtown was formulated, establishing the goals and aspirations which, if applied throughout the city, could ensure that new urban places were vibrant and exciting.

The eleven shared values described in the previous section are broad concepts. A more specific list of goals follows. These goals were derived from the shared values, but hold a complex and indirect relationship with them, where the lines between goals and values frequently overlap. Each goal is stated and its main point briefly explained. Italicized in the margins are the specific shared values which the goal helps promote.

3.3.1 Promote an intuitive understanding of the layout of any urban place

The intensive use associated with thriving urban centers may be enhanced if the physical layout can be easily understood. Understanding requires that we form a mental map of the area. The logic of the place needs to be understood sufficiently to orient pedestrians.

3.3.2 Reinforce the sense of time and historical continuity.

This goal speaks to the preservation of historical buildings and other facilities and of historical planning, but equally important, speaks to the relationship among buildings built over time—including those built in the present time.

3.3.3 Foster physical continuity.

Physical continuity speaks to the freedom of movement in pedestrian, transit and automobile environments, but is most important in the pedestrian circumstance. Encouraging movement within an urban place allows comfort and promotes our staying there for a variety of activities.

3.3.4 Develop the public nature of all urban places.

The public nature of urban areas is most apparent in public open space—plazas, sidewalks, streets and parks. The design of the lower levels of buildings is also vital in promoting inclusion in the place.

3.3.5 Encourage a diversity of uses, activities and sizes of development.

Achieving this goal will require balancing the existing uses with additional uses that an urban area lacks, such as residential and destination retail. It will also require that we do so while allowing for differing economic status of the residents. Diversity should apply to retail, residential, commercial, office, entertainment, and all other sectors.

3.3.6 Encourage public and private investment in the future of Austin.

Perhaps no other goal provides more opportunity to demonstrate the value we place on civic behavior than this one. Where those who have gone before us have been willing to invest in the future—to regard the value of their investment over a long period—we generally have bridges, buildings and other structures which have endured and which we now regard as important to our history.

3.3.7 Reinforce the unique character of Austin.

To better promote a sense of connection to and membership with Austin, our urban places should be a unique signal for a unique place. Developing a unique character should start with what is already unique about Austin.

3.3.8 Create a safe urban environment.

All of the users of our urban places, men, women, children, young and old, those with physical challenges, natives and visitors, customers and service personnel— should be considered when designing a dense environment. A safe urban environment will encourage economic activity and foster commerce.

3.3.9 Create a comfortable urban environment.

Comfort includes shelter from the harsh Texas sun and other weather, a reorientation of urban places away from a fast moving, automobile oriented place and to a slower moving, pedestrian-oriented population, and an understanding of intuitive way finding.

3.3.10 Create a hierarchy of transportation which begins with pedestrians.

The hierarchy in order of priority is:

1. Pedestrians
2. Public transit systems
3. Bicycles
4. Vehicles

3.3.11 Actively promote civic art.

Civic art promotes economic development, cultural tourism, downtown and neighborhood revitalization, international prestige and recognition, and an improved quality of life for a community. Art in a city describes the way in which the city honors spirit and soul. Public art can create a civic message that expresses community identity, myth and culture.

3.3.12 Encourage a vibrant cultural atmosphere

Arts, entertainment, and other cultural activities add richness and viability to our everyday lives. Such activity is an advantage to Austin because it promotes economic development, cultural tourism, downtown and neighborhood revitalization, international prestige and recognition, social service opportunities, and an improved quality of life for the community.

3.3.13 Encourage intense street level activity.

The street is a place for extra activities — sidewalk seating, vendors, waiting for a bus. Activities that don't require enclosed spaces or are enhanced by being outside should be added to the activities that already happen outside to create intense street level activity.

3.2.14 Maintain a sense of connection to the natural environment.

Austin's natural environment is a primary attribute. Every economically feasible effort to preserve, maintain and enhance Austin's natural environment should be pursued.

3.3.15 Encourage an architecture whose design responds to functional needs and reinforces urban activities.

Buildings designed to sculptural effect are not discouraged, but formalist aspirations should not be attained at the expense of functional requirements and a positive position within the requirements of other buildings and users. Architecture should respond to the whole array of human needs.

3.2.16 Encourage quality building.

Buildings in urban centers should have a permanence that some other areas of the city do not require. Quality adds to the overall value of any urban place.

3.3.17 Promote urban residential uses.

A residential component provides for 24 hour activity, a consumer base for retail activity, eyes and ears on the street, and reduces the need for transportation.

3.3.18 Create an economically vibrant urban area.

None of the values can be promoted without the economic engine to drive urban redevelopment.

3.3.19 Strive for environmental balance.

All development should take into consideration the need to conserve energy and resources. It should also strive for a small carbon footprint.

3.3.20 Create an interconnected system of attractive open spaces.

An interconnected system of attractive open spaces supports the pedestrian activity which creates vitality and provides a natural experience which can make dense urban development more comfortable and successful.

Section 4

Design Guidelines (JS & BW)

4.1 Area Wide Guidelines

4.1.1 Site Selection

- Issue: Guidelines are needed to help the city select and negotiate on the purchase of proper infrastructure sites. Proper siting is intrinsic to infrastructure that successfully blends with the urban environment. Decorating a blank wall or fence that faces a street will not help make that section of street more pedestrian friendly. Due to contract negotiations, the land purchase process is not open for public review.
- Recommendations:
 1. Land for infrastructure should be acquired with a strong consideration on how the location selected supports a high quality urban environment.
 2. Area for infrastructure within a private development should be vetted by the city.
 3. A potential infrastructure site's roadway type classification and neighboring uses can guide consideration of the appropriateness of a site. The city should develop a site selection decision matrix in cooperation with the Design Commission.
 4. Each city department should have a master plan, and long-range projections, in relation to infrastructure, should be coordinated between departments.

4.1.2 Infrastructure Development Should Align with Sustainability Goals

- Issues: Environmental and social values of a project should be communicated in dollars. Projects should be assessed for their contribution to the economy and their total project cost (life-cycle). (The sustainability goals for the city are ...)
- Recommendations:
 1. Capture water from public right of way in a sustainable manner using above ground pre-treatment with elements such as porous concrete, dry swales, and rain gardens.
 2. Apply sustainability valuation to a project that is proposing value engineering.
 3. Maximize the use of cool pavement strategies.
 4. Design larger projects (over \$5 million valuation ?) to be context sensitive using elements as public art, place-making features, and outreach.
 5. Utilize native plantings.
 6. Larger projects (over \$5 million valuation ?) shall have a monitoring and commissioning plan.

7. Minimize use of toxins and VOCs.
8. Use recycled and reclaimed materials.

4.1.3 Buffering Against Adjacent Uses

- Issue: Some infrastructure projects may be incompatible with nearby uses, like the placement of an odor control facility next to residential or the placement of a walled substation on a pedestrian priority way or core transit corridor.
- Recommendations:

4.1.4 Minimize Public Risk

- Issues: Safety.
- Recommendations:
 1. Landscaping should not block views of motorists to other motorists, cyclists or pedestrians.
 1. Provide pedestrian areas of refuge in the center of right of ways over 120' wide.
 2. Provide bulb-outs at street intersections where streets have street-side parking.

4.2 Mobility Components

4.2.1 Bridges

- Issues:
- Recommendations:

4.2.2 Rail

- Issues:
- Recommendations:

4.2.3 Bus

- Issues:
- Recommendations:

4.2.4 Parking Lots

- Issues:
- Recommendations:

4.2.5 Wayfinding

- Issues: Landmarks, protected views, signalization
- Recommendations:

4.3 Mobility Systems- Infrastructure Along Roads, Pathways

4.3.1 Seen and experienced infrastructure – systematic

- Roads and Pathways

1. Elements

4.3.2 Roads and Pathways

- Most prominent infrastructure that we rely on every day.
- It ties our destinations together.
- However it is often overlooked
 1. Spend efforts designing the destinations
 2. Cost
- Opportunities
 1. Express local character (of city or neighborhood) to the journeymen
 - a. Indulge them to stop
 - b. Express pride in the area
 - c. Respect historical significance
 - d. Four Squares
 2. Break up monotony of the journey
 - a. Trees
 - Rhythms or clusters
 - b. Lighting
 - c. Signage
 - d. Paving
 3. Great Streets
- Dangers
 1. Along long lengths, using same specs
 - a. Can become monotonous without changes

4.3.3 Reference Urban Design Guidelines – Guidelines for the Public Streetscape

4.4 Ecological Infrastructure

4.4.1 Watersheds

- Issues:
- Recommendations:

4.4.2 Parks & Conservation Areas

4.4.3 Landscape Systems

4.5 Utilities

4.5.1 Unseen and Not Experienced

1. Underground
2. Invisible
3. Overhead
 - a. Although “seen” experience can be lessened or eliminated
4. Water detention
 - a. Can be underground as well

4.5.2 Importance

1. Life blood of a City
2. Organization of city
 - a. Compact and Connected
3. Ease of maintenance
4. Ease of expansion

4.5.3 Factors to consider

1. Manifests what is seen
 - a. Importance of organization
2. Minimize impact of Utility Work
3. Coordinate for Easy Access and Maintenance
4. Bury utility infrastructure
5. Overhead lines
 - a. Water quality and detention
6. Use trenchless technologies when possible
7. Develop and Enforce Site Protection Plan
8. Protection of Existing and Future Planted Areas

9. Protect Water Sources During Construction
10. Overhead utility – additional consideration
 - a. Support system
 - Design
 - Rhythm
 - b. Height of system
11. Visibility scale

4.5.4 Water Detention, Treatment

4.5.5 Water Towers

4.5.6 Utility Buildings

Section 5

Process (JS & JW)

5.1 Qualifying Projects

5.1.1 Use the checklist (similar to Urban Design Guideline Checklist currently used)

- Based upon Infrastructure Guidelines
- Comment on how addresses each point
- Comment is need help with specific items

11.1.2 Staff to Promote Design Coordination (City Architect)

5.2 Requirements for Submission to the Design Commission

5.2.1 Reasons to have set process standards

- Clear set of tools
- Provide efficient path
- Meaningful discussion
- Assistance to help focus

5.2.1.1 Clear Guideline Implementation Process

- Issue: Guidelines that are unclear or that do not provide a mechanism to deal with special circumstances become irrelevant.
- Recommendations:
 1. The Design Commission should comment on cases where the Infrastructure Guidelines seem to be in inherent conflict with the proposed infrastructure project.
 2. Departments should create design criteria based on the guidelines to incorporate in their standard workflow and to coordinate with other departmental requirements and standards.
 3. Departments should implement management tools that help coordinate work between departments in the most early planning phases of infrastructure projects.

5.2.2 Design phase when to come to Design Commission

- 75% Schematic Design Phase
- Early enough so direction suggestions can be considered

5.2.3 Cross Department Cooperation

- List of Departments in the Team and role that they play
- Department representatives available to present

5.2.4 Exhibits required – focus is to depict the relationship to the public experience

- Area map within 500'
 - Zoning
 - FLUM
- Site plan thru adjacent right of way
- Site Section extending thru right of way
- Elevations with height (scale figures) and materials

5.2.5 Schedule

- Design Phases
- Construction start and completion

5.2.6 Expected Outcomes

5.2.7 Process for Stakeholder Engagement

5.2.7.1 Current Stakeholder Project Involvement philosophy

- Project team assigned for large and complex projects
- Stakeholder process is handled on case by case basis depending upon:
 1. Location
 2. Number of stakeholders impacted
 3. Nature of the project impact on the public realm/interface
- Activities initiated through the PIO offices of sponsoring departments (AWU, AE, Parks, Transportation, AAR) and Public Works working collaboratively.

5.2.7.2 Stakeholder Process/Objectives

- Notification of stakeholders
- Stakeholder meetings to provide information on type of infrastructure project and the need (function)
- How project adheres to neighborhood plan
- Discuss and gain input on how project may impact stakeholders.

- Determine areas of input team would like from stakeholders
- Project team to demonstrate for feedback, to the extent possible,
 1. Project drawings-(schematic design)
 2. Models
 3. Landscaping samples
 4. Fencing samples
 5. Lighting fixtures
 6. Sustainability features
 7. Green standards, etc.

5.2.7.3 Stakeholder Input and Fiscal Responsibility

- Issues: Public process should be tailored based on the type and amount of impact to the public realm a project would have. An example of tailoring a public process based on the intensity of the project, is that PARD uses a third party facilitator when there is no existing park master plan. Otherwise projects are vetted with the public by PARD staff, using their standard tools and guidelines. Costs associated with incorporating a public process or additional design in infrastructure planning should take into account lifecycle costs such as maintenance, and the positive economic impacts that well design urban spaces can have on a city.
- Recommendations:
 1. The extent of a needed public process can be determined by the amount of feedback or concern that is generated after the city sends out notification of an infrastructure project in plain speak with graphics that communicate what is being proposed.
 2. Larger, or more impactful projects, should follow a public input process regardless of notice feedback received from the public. Examples of more impactful projects are electrical substations, water towers, and new bridges.
 3. The Design Commission can facilitate public input by having a project as an agenda item at one of their meetings.
 4. Early in the planning process, design integration and stakeholders should be identified.
 5. Stakeholder and Design Commission interfaces can be streamlined with clear guidelines and expectations.
 6. Implement a system to measure design success of major infrastructure projects

5.3 Integrative Department Processes

5.3.1 Integration of Technical Criteria Manual Across Departments

5.3.1.1 Strategic Facilities Governance Committee

5.3.1.2 Capital Planning Office

5.3.1.3 Real-estate

5.3.1.4 Building Department

5.4 Challenges and Benefits of Integrated Design

- Site Section extending thru right of way
- Elevations with height (scale figures) and materials

5.2.5 Schedule

- Design Phases
- Construction start and completion

5.2.6 Expected Outcomes

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6. Sustainability features
7. Green standards, etc.

5.3 City Departments to Update Technical Criteria Manuals and Demonstrate Design Principle Integration.

5.4 Tools