

An Overview of the

Urban Design Guidelines

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Creation of Austin's Design Commission



§2-1-130 - Design Commission

- (A) The Design Commission membership should include a diverse group of persons having expertise in urban design, architecture, landscape architecture, historic preservation, civic art, real property development, construction, and economic development.
- (B) The commission shall provide advisory recommendations to the city council as requested by the city council to assist in developing public policy and to promote excellence in the design and development of the urban environment.
- (C) The commission shall:
 - (1) offer policy recommendations regarding specific issues of urban design;
 - (2) participate in developing design guidelines;
 - (3) unless otherwise directed by the city council, for projects that require the approval of the Planning Commission or the Zoning and Platting Commission:
 - (a) review a project only after a formal request by the project sponsor or applicant; and
 - (b) complete the review before the respective Planning or Zoning and Platting Commission takes final action;
 - (4) provide citizen education and outreach regarding quality urban design;
 - (5) provide a venue for citizen input on the design and development of the urban environment;
 - (6) maintain liaison relationships with city staff and other boards and commissions; and
 - (7) perform other activities as directed by the city council.
- (D) The commission may appoint one or more of its members to serve as liaison to a project-specific community advisory group addressing urban design and planning issues at the formal request of the project sponsor.

Design Commission Workflow

City Council directs the workflow of the Design Commission through ordinances and resolutions

DDBP Gatekeeper Requirement:

“The Design Commission shall evaluate and make recommendations regarding whether the project complies with the Urban Design Guidelines and the director shall consider comments and recommendations of the Design Commission.”

§ 25-2-586 – Downtown Density Bonus Program

Items requested by City Council or project sponsor

§ 2-1-130

Municipal AEC rule:

Requires all municipal buildings and associated site development which include AEC components to seek Design Commission review

Resolution No. 20100923-086

UDG Update:

Resolution directing the update to the Urban Design Guidelines

Resolution No. 20210902-046

Infrastructure guidelines:

Resolution directing staff to work with the Design Commission on recommendations for design guidelines for infrastructure projects commissioned by the City of Austin

Resolution No. 20100819-035

City buildings & development:

Resolution directing staff to present plans for all municipal buildings & associated site development to the Design Commission to ensure compliance with city design & sustainability standards

Resolution No. 20071129-046

Urban Design Guidelines

Area-Wide Urban Guidelines

- AW.1 Create Dense Urban Development
- AW.2 Create Mixed-Use Development
- AW.3 Limit Developments which Close Downtown Streets
- AW.4 Buffer Neighborhood Edges
- AW.5 Incorporate Civic Art in Both Public and Private Development
- AW.6 Protect Important Public Views
- AW.7 Avoid Historical Misrepresentations
- AW.8 Respect Adjacent Historical Buildings
- AW.9 Acknowledge that Rooftops are Seen From Other Buildings and the Street
- AW.10 Avoid the Development of Theme Environments
- AW.11 Recycle Existing Building Stock

Guidelines for Buildings

- B.1 Build to the Street
- B.2 Provide Multi-Tenant, Pedestrian Oriented Development at the Street Level
- B.3 Accentuate Primary Entrances
- B.4 Encourage the Inclusion of Local Character
- B.5 Control On-Site Parking
- B.6 Create Quality Construction
- B.7 Create Buildings with Human Scale

Public Streetscape

- PS.1 Protect the Pedestrian Where the Building Meets the Street
- PS.2 Minimize Curb Cuts
- PS.3 Create A Potential for Two-Way Streets
- PS.4 Reinforce Pedestrian Activity
- PS.5 Enhance Key Transit Stops
- PS.6 Enhance the Streetscape
- PS.7 Avoid Conflicts between Pedestrians and Utility Equipment
- PS.8 Install Street Trees
- PS.9 Provide Pedestrian-Scaled Lighting
- PS.10 Provide Protection from Cars / Promote Curbside Parking
- PS.11 Screen Mechanical and Utility Equipment
- PS.12 Provide Generous Street-Level Windows
- PS.13 Install Pedestrian-Friendly Materials at Street Level

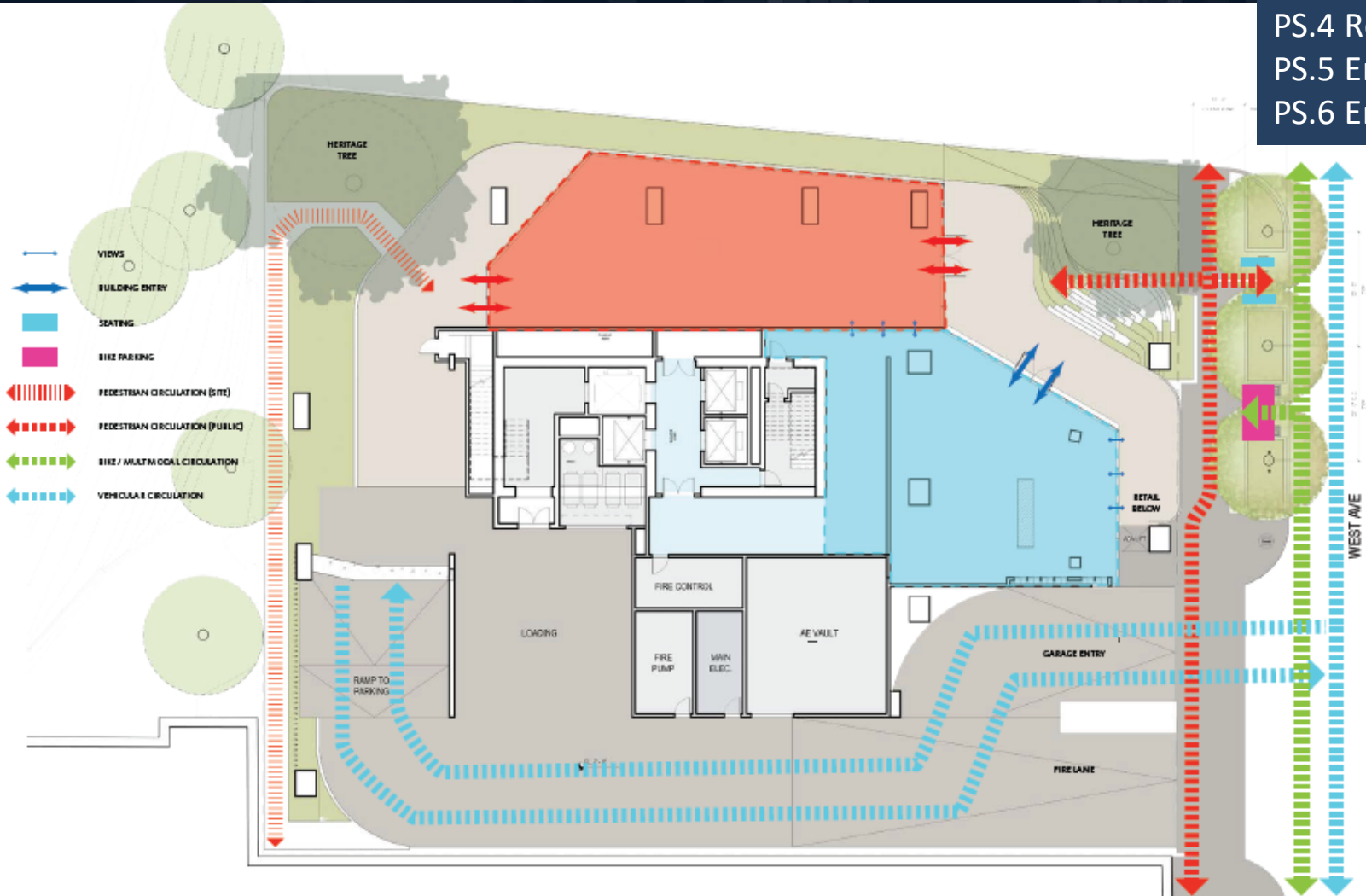
Guidelines for Plaza and Open Spaces

- PZ.1 Treat the Four Square with Special Consideration
- PZ.2 Contribute to an Open Space Network
- PZ.3 Emphasize Connection to Parks and Greenways
- PZ.4 Incorporate Open Space into Residential Development
- PZ.5 Develop Green Roofs
- PZ.6 Provide Plazas in High Use Areas
- PZ.7 Determine Plaza Function, Size, Activity
- PZ.8 Respond to Microclimate in Plaza Design
- PZ.9 Consider Views, Circulation, Boundaries, and Subspaces in Plaza Design
- PZ.10 Provide and Appropriate Amount of Plaza Seating
- PZ.11 Provide Visual and Spatial Complexity in Public Spaces
- PZ.12 Use Plants to Enliven Urban Spaces
- PZ.13 Provide Interactive Civic Art and Fountains in Plazas
- PZ.14 Provide Food Service for Plaza Participants
- PZ.15 Increase Safety in Plazas through Wayfinding, Lighting & Visibility
- PZ.16 Consider Plaza Operations and Maintenance

Scope & Purpose

AW.5 Incorporate Civic Art in Both Public and Private Development

PZ.2 Contribute to an Open Space Network



- PS.2 Minimize Curb Cuts
- PS.3 Create A Potential for Two-Way Streets
- PS.4 Reinforce Pedestrian Activity
- PS.5 Enhance Key Transit Stops
- PS.6 Enhance the Streetscape

B.2 Provide Multi-Tenant, Pedestrian Oriented Development at the Street Level

Utilizing Urban Design Guidelines



Urban Design Guidelines Update

RESOLUTION NO. 20210902-046

WHEREAS, the Urban Design Guidelines were created in 2000 and are a set of recommendations that promote architectural and urban design standards reflective of Austin’s shared values; and...

WHEREAS, on May 24, 2021, the Design Commission adopted a multiphased framework for a comprehensive update to the Urban Design Guidelines, including the creation of a more user-friendly document to illustrate the design principles; and **WHEREAS**, the Planning Commission approved the draft framework for the Urban Design Guidelines update on its July 27, 2021 consent agenda;

NOW, THEREFORE,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF AUSTIN:

The city manager is directed to initiate an inclusive and robust multi-phased stakeholder process for updating the Urban Design Guidelines as outlined in the Design Commission’s document: "Urban Design Guidelines Update Draft Framework".

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

The city manager shall provide the necessary support and resources to the Commission to achieve the multiple phases of the update, including preparation, creation and finalization of the guidelines and ensure appropriate review by relevant City departments and boards and commissions before returning to city council for approval upon completion of this work.

HOW THE UPDATE WILL BE ACCOMPLISHED

The following work plan outlines a set of steps crucial to the success of an inclusive and robust process to address identified deficiencies in the guidelines. Each Phase considers specific deliverables and public engagement to receive feedback and inform the final update to the guidelines.





Thank you!



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DESIGN**
PLANNING DEPARTMENT