

Architectural Design Guidelines for Commuter Parking Structure

Draft for Discussion, December 17, 2019

<NOTE TO THE PLANNING COMMISSION (PC): It is anticipated that the following guidelines would be included with an updated version of the Town Center Framework Design Guidelines and accompanied by reference photos and images that illustrate particular details. We have included some images in the current review package, we would like to know if Commissioners have other images they think would more accurately reflect the look and feel of a TC compatible parking structure. Ultimately this written content will be merged together with the images and presented to the PC in January 2020 for review.>

Introduction and Overarching Guidelines

High quality design, materials, and detailing are expected for any freestanding parking structure proposed for primarily commuter use at the Town Center. The intent of these guidelines is to establish a clear understanding of community expectations in order to maximize predictability and certainty about design expectations during project review.

The following overarching design guidelines should be applied:

- The structure should be designed to blend in with the Town Center context and to be visually complementary to other existing structures in the vicinity. The structure should complement the scale and character of nearby existing buildings and potential future redevelopment.
- The structure should be sensitive to the adjacent pedestrian environment and street character. Pedestrian access and orientation between the parking structure and other nearby uses, including City Hall and the future bus rapid transit station, as well as shopping buildings at Town Center, should be emphasized to enhance mobility and connectivity and to comply with all applicable accessibility requirements.
- The Parking structure should be designed to provide a positive, attractive contribution to the visual environment. The outer surfaces of the structure should be designed to look similar to a commercial, office, or residential building on all sides.
- There should be a unity of design treatment on all sides of the parking structure.
- Commercial, active, and public use spaces should be integrated into the ground floor (see 18.42.XX). If the structure is located near City Hall, the frontage that is parallel to City Hall should be designed to include commercial, active, and/or public use space at the ground floor and potentially in upper floors that connect to City Hall.

- Trees and landscaping should be provided all sides of the structure to improve visual quality, buffer views of the structure, and enhance the pedestrian environment.
- Below-grade parking should be incorporated to the extent feasible. The design should have at least one to two levels of parking below grade to reduce the size and bulk of above-grade parking.
- Parking structures (in addition to the commuter parking structure) should be subordinate to other buildings around them and be integrated into other buildings and development at the Town Center.

Architectural Guidelines

1. The design of all parking structures should be more than a rectangular utilitarian box composed of concrete and/or steel beams and columns. All sides of the structure should be designed with high quality facing materials and with design details that provide an attractive appearance and resemble the look of other high quality commercial, office, or residential buildings.
2. Special attention should be given to emphasizing the pedestrian entries of parking garages through architectural features, special materials, landscaping, paving, and public art.
3. Combined function elevator and stairway towers should be designed to be highly identifiable as attractive architectural features of the structure and with sufficient lighting for 24-hour use.
4. High quality materials and finishes should include brick, stone, or timber, as well as the design detailing with articulation and glazing that resembles windows of a quality commercial, office, or residential structure. The integration of metal panels or metal mesh screens and public art treatments on portions of the structure may be considered as part of design review.
5. Facade treatments should relate to the architecture of the primary structures on the site and should incorporate materials and architectural details from those buildings <existing and future?>.
6. Avoid blank wall treatments. Green wall options may be considered for west and south facing elevations.

7. Incorporate fenestration techniques proportionate in size and pattern for the scale of the building. This is particularly important on upper floors, where windows should be divided into individual units with each window unit separated by a visible mullion or other element. “Ribbon windows” (continuous horizontal bands of glass) or “window walls” (glass over the entire surface) are discouraged.
8. Vertical modulation on multi-level structures is encouraged, particularly where it can enhance architectural scale compatibility and minimize the impacts of shade and shadow.
9. Incorporate horizontal building modulation techniques to make the architectural scale more compatible with surrounding buildings and add visual interest. Horizontal modulation is the horizontal articulation or division of an imposing building façade through upper story setbacks, awnings, balconies, roof decks, eaves, and banding of contrasting materials. Elevations that are modulated with horizontal elements appear less massive than those with sheer, flat surfaces. Recommended horizontal building modulation techniques include:
 - a. Roofline modulation and a change in building materials. Varying the height of the parapet wall level is encouraged to avoid the appearance of a flat roofline.
 - b. Step back building facades, generally above the second floor.
 - c. Provide horizontal building modulation cohesive with surrounding buildings. Use roofline modulation, and changes in color and/ or building materials. The depth and width of the modulation should be sufficient to meet the objectives of the guidelines. Avoid repetitive modulation techniques, since they may not be effective when viewed from a distance. Larger residential buildings will require greater horizontal modulation techniques to provide appropriate architectural scale.
 - d. Break up long continuous walls with a combination of horizontal building modulation, change in fenestration, and/or change in building materials. This is especially important for office buildings.
10. A combination of architectural elements should be incorporated that give the structure and at-grade pedestrian areas adjacent to the structure a human scale. Examples include arcades, balconies, bay windows, roof decks, trellises, landscaping, awnings, cornices, friezes, art concepts, street front courtyards and plazas outside of commercial/active/retail spaces. Window fenestration techniques also can be effective.

11. Level (sloped only enough to allow for positive drainage) floor plates should be provided where feasible, especially for floor plates that connect to frontages that incorporate commercial/active uses. Level floor plates facilitate conversion to other uses in the future, and facilitate an architectural design that relates to nearby buildings. Sloped ramps on the exterior are prohibited. Portions of the ramping that incorporate parking should be located on the least visible sides of the structure.
12. The architectural design of the parapet wall should be integrated with the other architectural treatments of the structure and mask views of parked cars from adjacent properties and public areas.

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