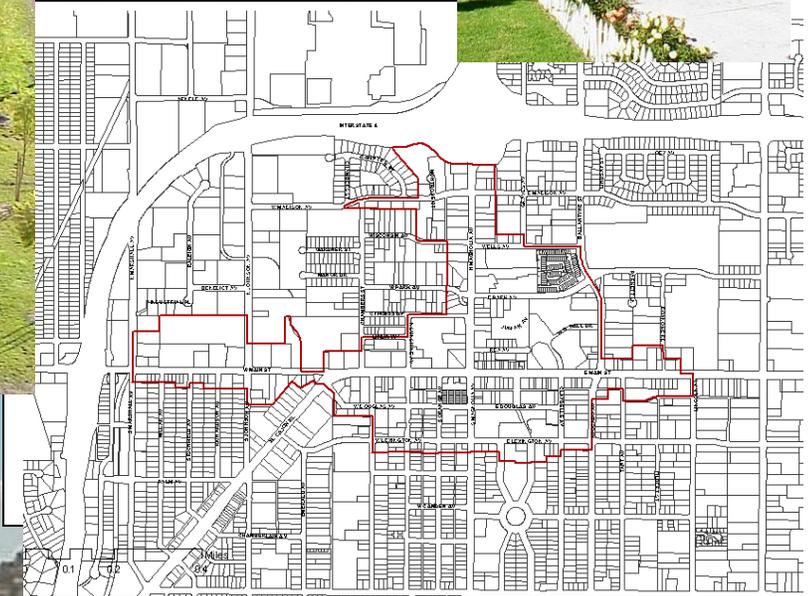




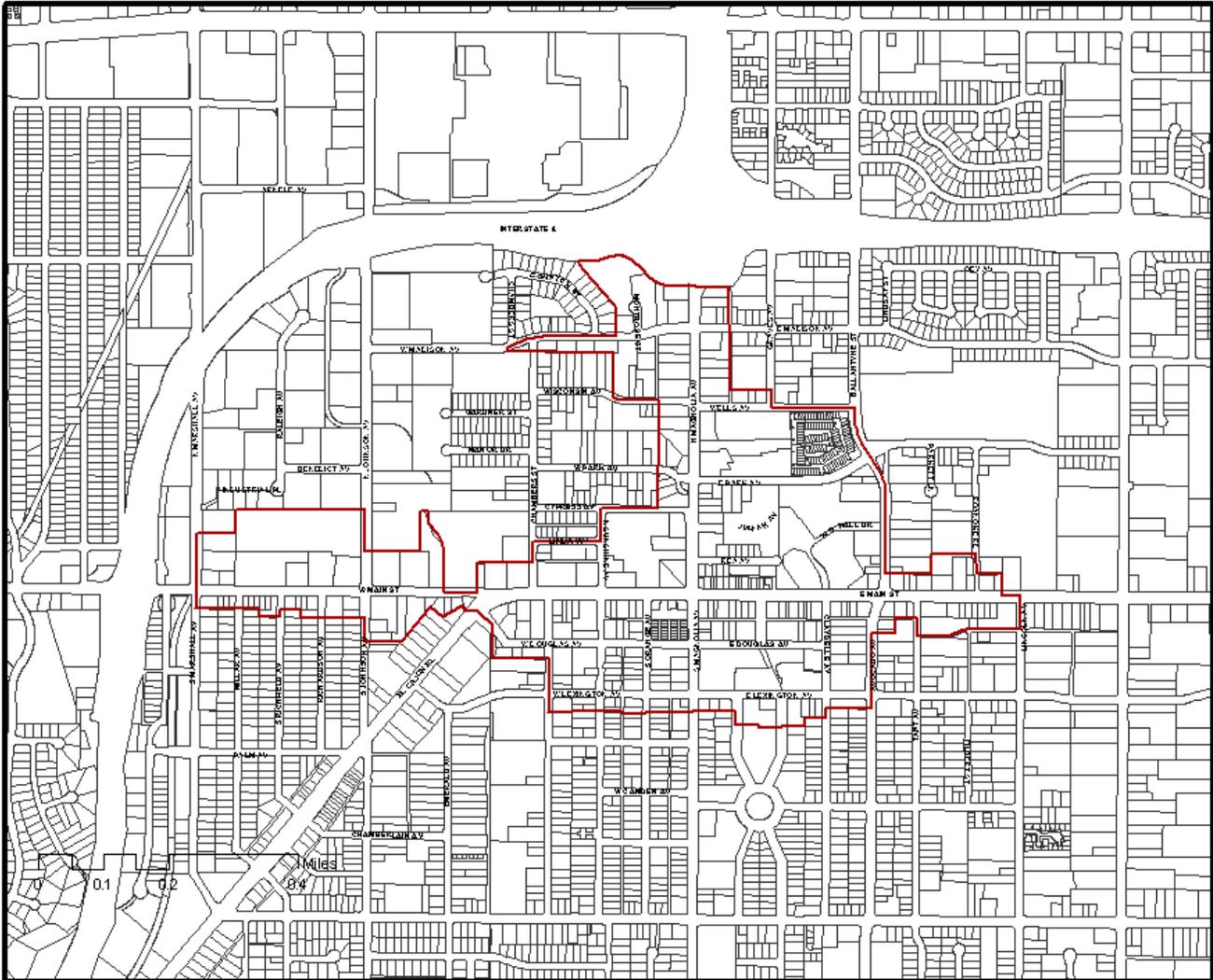
# CITY OF EL CAJON



## DOWNTOWN EL CAJON SPECIFIC PLAN 182



# CITY OF EL CAJON



## DOWNTOWN EL CAJON SPECIFIC PLAN 182

### Intent and Purpose of SP 182

It is the intent and purpose of Specific Plan 182 to implement the recommendations of the Downtown Master Design Plan adopted on November 24, 1992. In addition to uses permitted by right in the underlying zone, it is intended that this specific plan will provide for mixed-use including retail and/or offices and residential uses in one development project. However, there are permitted and conditional uses which are normally allowed in the underlying zones which are not permitted within the boundaries of Specific Plan 182. Please verify any proposed uses with the Planning Division at (619) 441-1741.

**Includes amendments adopted by City Council through August 23, 2011 – Ordinance No. 4976**

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## I. PROPERTY DESCRIPTION

These regulations shall apply to those properties included in Special Development Area No. 9 as shown on the General Plan and on attachment "A". Additional properties may be included as approved by an amendment to the General Plan, Special Development Area No. 9 and this specific plan.

## II. INTENT AND PURPOSE

It is the intent and purpose of this specific plan to implement the recommendations of the Downtown Master Design Plan prepared by Tucker, Sadler and Associates and dated June, 1991.

The Downtown Master Design Plan contains recommendations for land uses and development standards.

In addition to uses permitted by right or conditional use permit in the underlying zone, it is intended that this specific plan will provide for mixed-uses including retail and/or offices and residential uses in one development project.

It is further intended that all developments emphasize pedestrian access with the scale and design of buildings promoting and reflecting the pedestrian environment.

## III. PERMITTED AND PROHIBITED USES

- A. All uses permitted by right in the underlying zone except as listed below on Exhibit 'A' may be approved by right within Special Development Area No. 9.
- B. All uses permitted by conditional use permit in the underlying zone except as listed below on Exhibit 'B' may be permitted by conditional use permit within Special Development Area No. 9.
- C. Automotive service and repair uses are only permitted in the portion of Special Development Area No. 9 that is also a part of Special Development Area No. 10 and zoned C-M. All automotive service and repair uses shall obtain a conditional use permit in accordance with Section V. Development Process of this specific plan.

## IV. SPECIAL USES

- A. Mixed-use developments, composed of retail, office and/or residential development may be permitted by conditional use permit within Special Development Area No. 9.

An example of a mixed-use development would be a residential development built above a retail and/or office development in a commercial or office zone.

- B. Density bonuses to increase residential densities beyond that permitted by the underlying zone and consistent with the General Plan, State law and City ordinances may be permitted by conditional use permit within Special Development Area No. 9.

A density bonus may be requested as part of a residential project in a residential zone or as part of a mixed-use project in commercial or office zones.

V. DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

All proposed development projects shall be required to process a development plan. Development plans shall be of the following types:

Site development plans as described in Chapter 17.65 of the Zoning Ordinance.

Conditional use permits as described in Chapter 17.50 of the Zoning Ordinance.

Specific plans as described in Chapter 17.70 of the Zoning Ordinance.

Planned Residential Developments as described in Chapter 17.165 of the Zoning Ordinance.

Planned Unit Developments as described in Chapter 17.60 of the Zoning Ordinance.

Sign Permit as described in Chapter 17.190 of the Zoning Ordinance.

Administrative Zoning Permit as described in Chapter 17.40 of the Zoning Ordinance.

A. Site Development Plan

A site development plan shall be required for all proposed developments which are permitted by right in the underlying zone. Such a site development plan shall be processed in all respects like any other site development plan except it shall also be reviewed and approved by the Planning Commission and approved by the City Council. These reviews need not require a public hearing.

B. Conditional Use Permit

A conditional use permit shall be required for all proposed developments involving uses which require a conditional use permit in the underlying zone; or which involve a mixed-use development consisting of residential and commercial and/or office development; or which involve a development

consisting of both uses permitted by right and by conditional use permit in the underlying zone; or which involve a modified parking requirement; or which involve a density bonus for residential development; or which involve a modified building height, a modified lot coverage, or modified building setbacks.

Such a conditional use permit shall be processed in all respects like any other conditional use permit, except it shall be approved by the City Council after a public hearing to be effective.

C. Specific Plan

A specific plan may be required or utilized for certain uses or to modify certain development standards.

D. Planned Residential Development

A planned residential development is required for any common interest development in a planned residential development zone.

E. Planned Unit Development

A planned unit development is required for any common interest development including residential condominiums, townhouses, office condominiums and similar separate ownership opportunities.

F. Sign Permit

A sign permit is required to install any new commercial sign, except allowable window signing, within Specific Plan 182.

G. Administrative Zoning Permit

An administrative zoning permit is required to remodel the façade of a commercial storefront/building governed by Specific Plan 182, install an ancillary outdoor dining area, or establish other uses listed as requiring an administrative zoning permit in Chapter 17.40 of the Zoning Ordinance.

VI. DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS

Except as expressly provided as follows, all developments shall be subject to the development standards set forth in the underlying zone.

A. Parking

Except as provided below, all original new uses in newly constructed buildings shall comply with the applicable parking requirements of the underlying zone.

1. Permitted Uses

All subsequent new permitted uses in existing or enlarged buildings shall comply with the applicable following provisions:

- a) If the existing development does not have the required on-site parking that complies with the current parking requirements of the underlying zone and there is no enlargement of the building, any new use must be one that has a parking requirement that is equal to or less than the prior use as determined by the parking standards of this title; or
- b) If the existing development does not have the required on-site parking, and there is a proposed new use which has a parking requirement that is greater than the prior use as determined by the parking standards of this title or if there is a new use which proposes an enlargement of the existing building or use without providing the current number of parking spaces required by this title, or if there is both a new use and a new building which cannot satisfy the current parking requirements of this title, a conditional use permit must be obtained to allow a reduced number or no on-site parking spaces, subject to findings, including a determination that the proposed new use and/or new building will not result in a parking inadequacy that is detrimental to adjacent uses or properties and the downtown area as a whole. This conditional use permit shall be processed in all respects like any other conditional use permit, except that it shall also be approved by the City Council after a public hearing to be effective.

2. Special Uses

- a) If a building is intended to be used for a proposed mixed-use development as described in section IV.A. above, the parking requirement may be reduced to 70 percent of the total number of parking spaces required for each individual use; or
- b) If a mixed-use development is proposed for an existing building and the parking provided is less than 70 percent of the total number of parking spaces required for each individual use, or if a mixed-use development is proposed for an existing building that must be enlarged or if a mixed-use development is proposed for a new building and the number of parking spaces is less than required by this title, a conditional use permit must be obtained to allow a reduced number or no parking spaces for the mixed-use development subject to findings, including a determination that the proposed mixed-use development will not result in a parking

inadequacy that is detrimental to adjacent uses or properties and the downtown area as a whole. This conditional use permit shall be processed in all respects like any other conditional use permit, except that it shall also be approved by the City Council after a public hearing to be effective.

B. Building Height

There shall be no maximum building height for any properties included in Special Development Area No. 9 as shown on Attachment "A" except that the maximum height of any building on any property in Special Development Area No. 9 and which is within 100 feet of any property zoned and/or developed with residential uses shall be 35 feet, unless a greater height is approved by conditional use permit.

C. Lot Coverage

All buildings, including accessory buildings and structures, and all parking areas and driveways shall not exceed the lot coverage of the underlying zone, unless a greater lot coverage is approved by conditional use permit.

D. Building Setbacks

All buildings, including accessory structures, shall comply with the building setbacks of the underlying zone except as follows:

1. All commercial and/or office buildings or mixed-use developments with residential units shall observe street frontage setbacks as follows:
  - a) One- and two-story buildings: No requirements;
  - b) Three- to six-story buildings: 10 feet;
  - c) Seven- to ten-story buildings: 15 feet.
2. All commercial and/or office buildings are permitted to observe no interior setbacks.
3. All mixed-use developments with residential units shall observe interior setbacks as required by the building and fire codes.
4. All street frontage setbacks, if required, shall be landscaped.
5. Setback requirements may be further reduced, through approval of a conditional use permit.

E. Exterior lighting

An on-site lighting plan prepared in accordance with Section 17.130.150 of the Zoning Ordinance shall be submitted for approval. The lighting plan shall address all building façades, especially those adjacent to alleys, parking areas and walkways.

F. Residential Density

All residential developments shall comply with the density limitations of the underlying residential zone, unless a density bonus is approved pursuant to Section IV.B.

In a mixed-use development, the maximum residential density shall be determined as part of the approval of the mixed-use development pursuant to section V.B.

G. Open Space/Common Recreational Area

All residential developments shall comply with the open space/common recreational area requirements of the underlying residential zone.

In a mixed-use development, some form(s) of open space/common recreational area such as a swimming pool (indoor or outdoor) or passive open space or combination thereof shall be provided. The amount or type of the required open space/common recreational area shall be determined as part of the approval of the mixed-use development pursuant to section V.B.

H. Signs and Graphics

All signs and graphics shall comply with the Signing and Architectural Graphics Guidelines adopted in June, 1993, or any subsequent revision and the City's sign regulations contained in Chapter 17.190 of the Zoning Ordinance, whichever is more restrictive and except as follows:

1. Building face or building wall signs shall be limited to a maximum sign area of two square feet of sign area per linear foot of building face or building wall width.

Building face or building wall signs may be attached to the wall, building face or arcade of a building that is constructed on a street frontage property line where the sign extension is intended to provide interior lighting or a relief effect to the sign.

The extension of the sign shall not exceed twelve inches beyond the wall or face of the building and shall maintain a minimum ground or sidewalk clearance of eight feet.

2. Projecting Signs.

Projecting signs may project a maximum of twenty-four inches from the supporting wall or building face with a maximum sign area of ten square feet per face. Projecting signs may not project into the public right-of-way. Projecting signs shall maintain a minimum ground or sidewalk clearance of eight feet. A projecting sign shall not exceed the height of the building wall to which it is attached.

3. Suspended Signs.

Suspended signs under an arcade shall be limited to one for each entrance to the building, shall be no wider than sixty percent of the width of the arcade with a maximum sign area of six square feet per face and shall maintain a minimum ground or sidewalk clearance of eight feet.

4. Freestanding Signs.

Freestanding signs shall be limited to monument signs with one monument sign permitted for each street frontage of each commercial development or individual commercial use. The maximum height of a monument sign is eight feet and the maximum sign area is one hundred twenty (120) square feet per face.

Unless a monument *sign* is set back at least ten feet perpendicular from the public right-of-way, it shall be located at least fifteen feet to the side of any driveway or interior property line to assure visibility. On any corner radius, a monument sign shall be set back from the public right-of-way unless it is demonstrated that safe and proper visibility can be maintained at a lesser setback.

5. Window Signs.

Window signs shall not occupy more than fifteen percent of the total window sign area and the sign area of any window signs shall be included in the maximum allowable building face of building wall signs.

6. No box or can signs, internally illuminated or not, shall be permitted within the boundaries of Specific Plan 182.

7. All new signs shall be reviewed in accordance with Section V.F.

VII. DESIGN GUIDELINES

All projects shall comply with the design guidelines contained in Exhibit "C".

VIII. AMENDMENTS TO SPECIFIC PLAN

Amendments to this specific plan shall follow the process contained in Chapter 17.70 of the Zoning Ordinance and may be initiated by:

1. The verified application of the owner or his/her agent or any property within the boundaries of Specific Plan 182;
2. The City Council;
3. The Redevelopment Agency;
4. The Planning Commission.

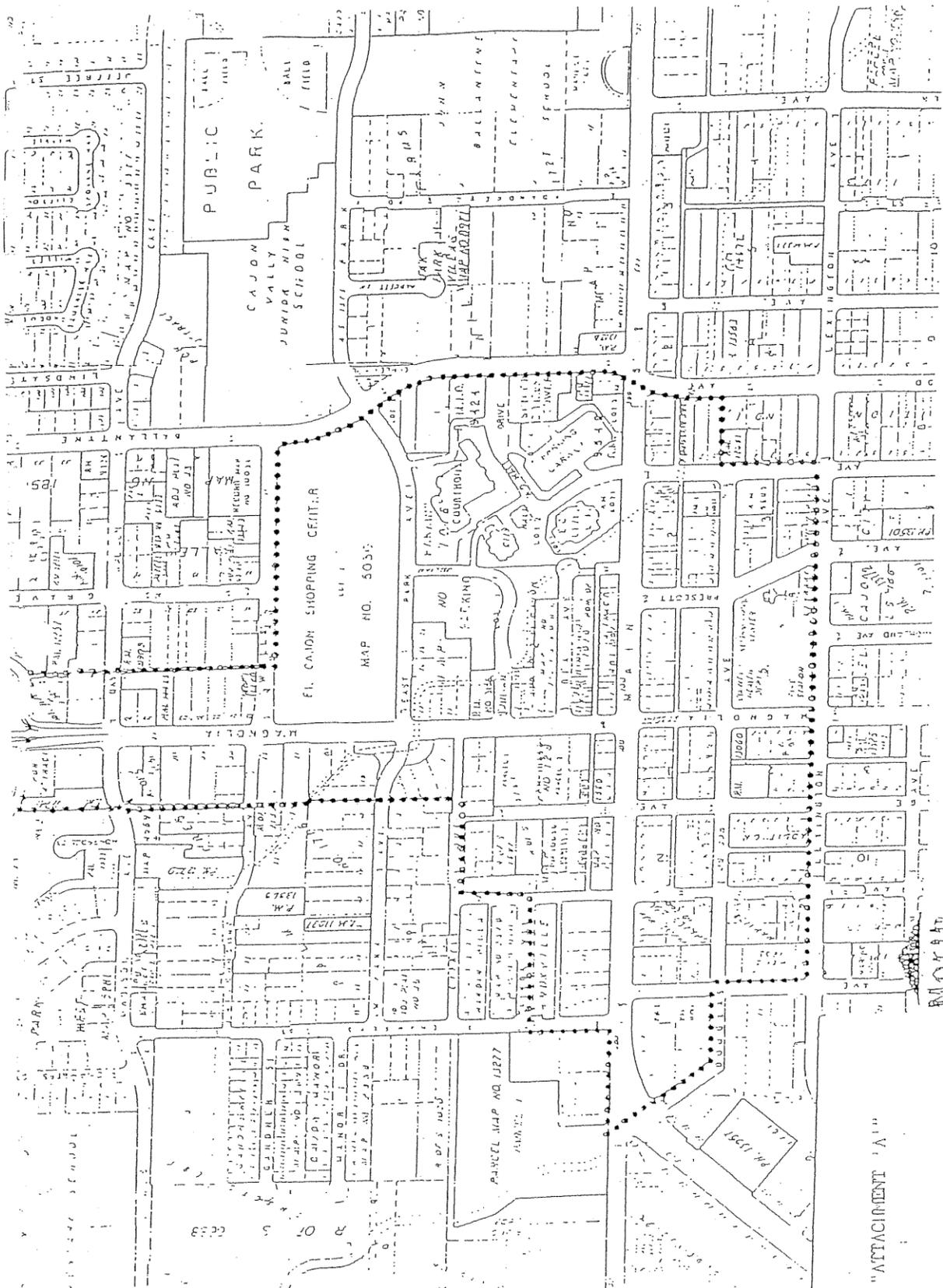


EXHIBIT "A"  
SPECIFIC PLAN NO. 182

The following uses usually permitted by right in the specified zones are *prohibited* within Special Development Area No. 9.

<u>LUC</u> *	<u>USE DESCRIPTION</u>	<u>ZONES</u>	
52A	Building materials, hardware, farm equipment (no outside storage)	C-G	C-R
5313	Surplus store	C-G	C-R
5313	Volume Discount, closeout or 99¢ stores	C-G	C-R
5520	Sale and installation of tires, batteries and accessories	C-G	C-R
5932	Secondhand clothing and shows	C-G	C-R
5933	Secondhand furniture	C-G	C-R C-M
5934	Secondhand bookstores	C-G	C-R
5935	Secondhand auto parts		C-M
5936	Thrift shops	C-G	C-R
5969	Plant nurseries	C-G	
598	Fuel and ice		C-G
61	Check cashing	C-G	C-R
6123	Pawnbroker	C-G	C-R
6124	Bail bonds	C-G	C-R
6241	Funeral parlors and mortuaries	C-G	C-R
6256	Locker rentals	C-G	C-R
6295	Tattoo parlor	C-G	C-R
6394A	Equipment rental with outdoor storage and display	C-G	

6397	Auto, truck and trailer rentals	C-G	
6411	WIC	C-G	C-R
6497	Gunsmith	C-G	C-R
6498	Saw, knife, lawnmower and tool repair and sharpening	C-G	C-R
6518A	Blood banks	C-G	C-R

\*Land Use Code

Note: Where no zone is indicated, the use is automatically not permitted in that zone.

EXHIBIT "B"  
SPECIFIC PLAN NO. 182

The following uses usually permitted by conditional use permit in the specified zones are *prohibited* within Special Development Area No. 9.

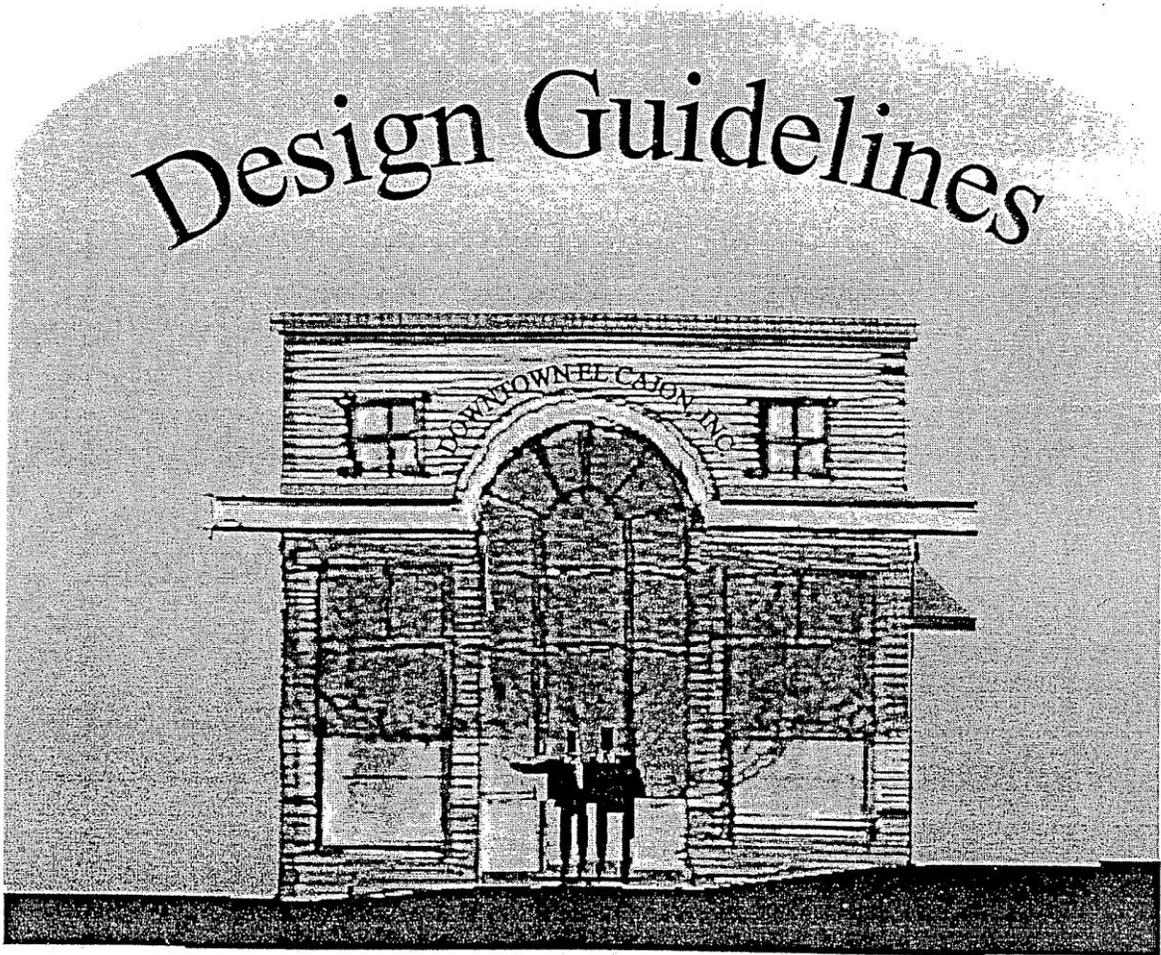
<u>LUC*</u>	<u>USE DESCRIPTION</u>	<u>ZONES</u>	
12	Board and care facilities	C-G	C-R
4294	Ambulance service	C-G	C-R
4603	Long term storage		C-M
485	Solid waste disposal		C-M
52B	Building materials, hardware, farm equipment with outside storage	C-G	C-R
592	Liquor store – off-premises alcoholic beverage sales	C-G	C-R
5999	Swap meet	C-G	C-R
6296	Massage parlors, steam baths, sauna baths	C-G	C-R
6381	Auction house	C-G	C-R
6393B	Detective and protective services with dogs	C-G	C-R
6411	Automotive repair	C-G	C-R
6413	Automotive paint and body	C-G	
6414	Automotive upholstery and tops	C-G	
6415	Motorcycle repair	C-G	
6416	Car washing and detailing (automatic)	C-G	
6417	Car wash (self-service)	C-G	

6418	Auto glass installation	C-G	
6419A	Auto diagnostic clinic (no repair)	C-G	C-R
6419B	Towing service	C-G	
692	Welfare and charitable services	C-G	C-R
745	Firearms and archery (indoor only)	C-G	C-R
6516	Sanitariums, convalescent hospitals, rest homes	C-G	C-R
7491	Camping overnight travel stopping	C-G	C-R
8221	Veterinarian services	C-G	C-R
8222	Animal hospital services	C-G	C-R
	Adult entertainment	C-G	C-R

\*Land Use Code

Note: Where no zone is indicated, the use is automatically not permitted in that zone.

EXHIBIT "C"  
SPECIFIC PLAN NO. 182



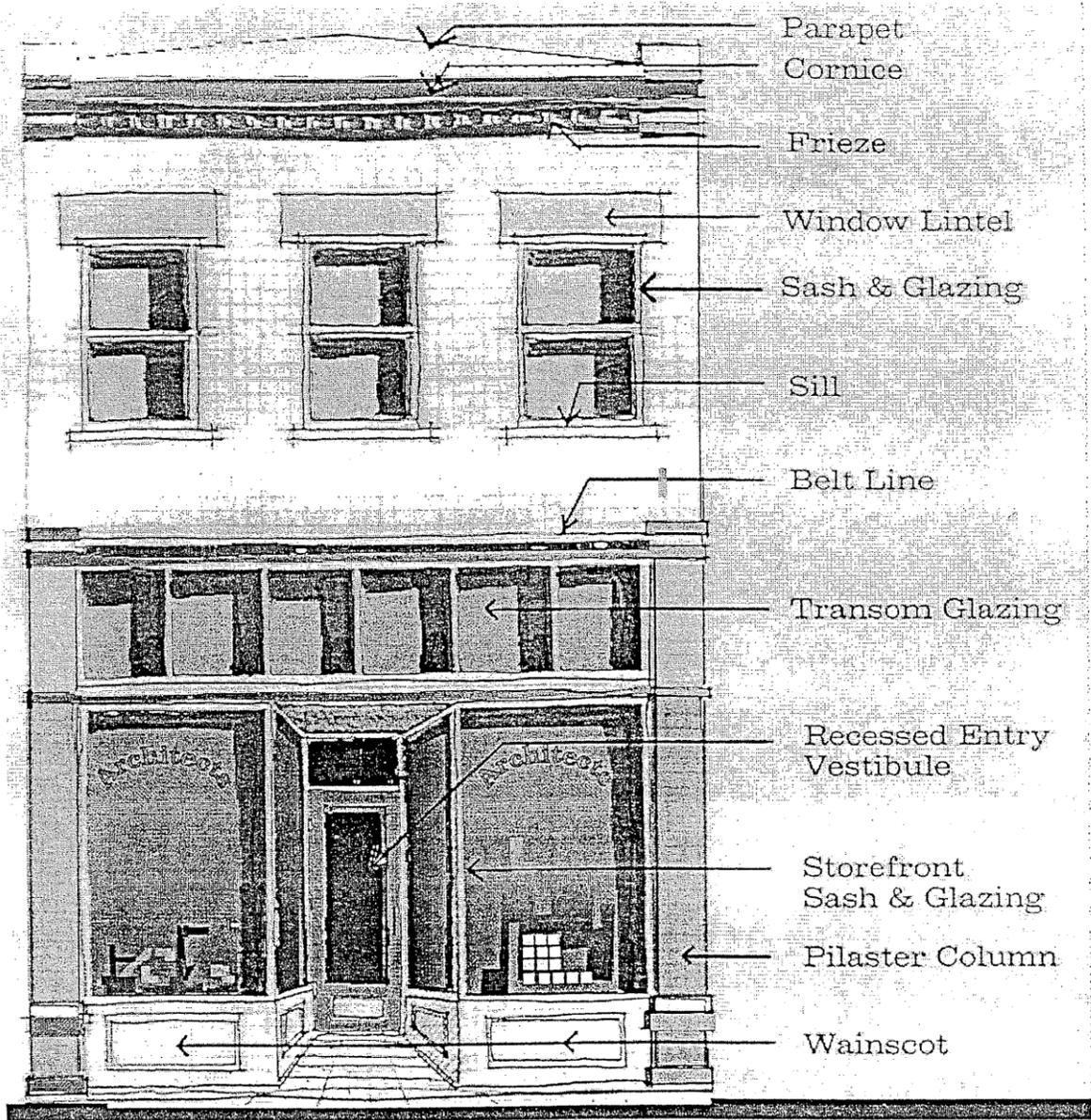
DESIGN GUIDELINES  
FOR BUILDING FACADE RENOVATIONS AND NEW BUILDINGS

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# Façade Guidelines Contextual Design Elements



*An Illustrated Glossary*

ARCHITECTS  
FASON  
&  
FORREST

# PREFACE

This Plan is based upon the stated desires of Stakeholders to establish a set of regulations for the El Cajon Downtown Management District. The intent of these regulations is to advise all building and business owners on what they need to do to make their building facades visually successful while contributing to the redevelopment of the downtown District. These Design Guidelines outline appropriate repair and renovation of facades to increase the monetary value of individual structures and stimulate the rebirth of the entire commercial District.

In broad terms, repairs or renovations are encouraged to bring the buildings back to the quality of their original structure and design. New buildings may be designed to represent any era, as long as they fit seamlessly within the unity of the District. These regulations and guidelines specifically do not prescribe or require a particular architectural style or theme for the built environment. All building styles are allowed when the integrity and the character of the proposed architecture is compatible with the existing or historical perspective of El Cajon and the development objectives of the Management District.

Renovated and new buildings alone will not encourage shoppers to leave malls and other retail areas. More is required if Main Street is to return to the busy, prosperous social avenue it was for 75 year. The same is true for the rest of the District. To recapture a fair portion of discriminating shoppers now going elsewhere, the District must renovate and create places for the any people visiting the County Courthouse, East County Performing Arts Center, City Hall, and local businesses. Services for shoppers must be increased, and merchandise lines expanded. More inviting spaces for visitors, employees and local residents are required so that people can meet, gather, and talk before strolling or moving on. These standards provide guidance to enhance the pedestrian experience and improve the value of building facades.

These regulations attempt to encourage desired entrepreneurial redevelopment of the Downtown District as an art, entertainment and specialty retail, and service district for the East County region. The guidelines apply to redevelopment and new construction for all properties in the District, not just those properties on Main Street and/or Rea Street.

Although many existing properties within the District, especially along Magnolia Avenue, do not have an enhanced pedestrian experience fronting a transparent business storefront, these objectives are adopted District wide. The guidelines attempt to rehabilitate El Cajon's community, civic and commercial core and correct the debilitating effects that autonomous retail strip centers cause when allowed inside an otherwise pedestrian commercial center.

# OVERVIEW

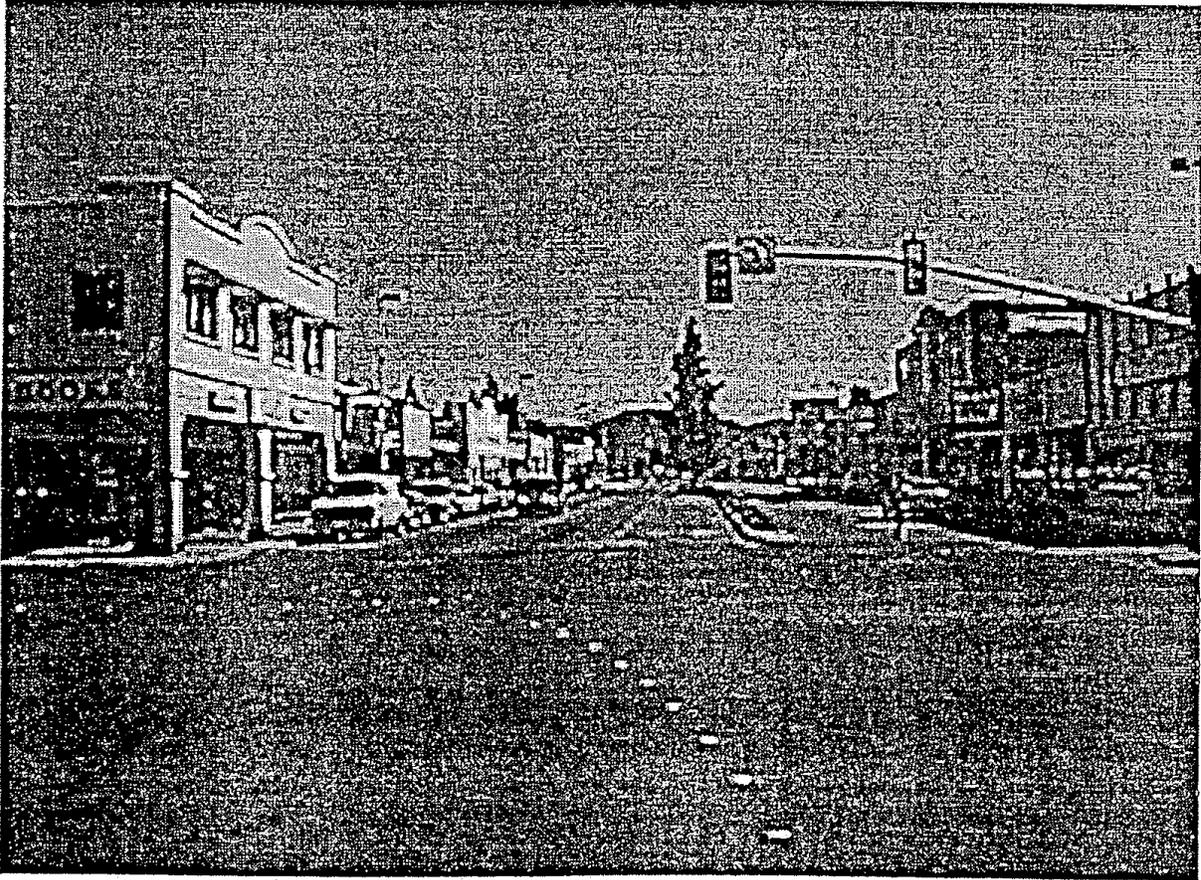
Adoption of District Standards for Building Façade Renovation and Design provides regulations to refine and define the image of the District and its individual businesses by reclaiming the architectural integrity of its buildings.

Established design standards shall be used to evaluate the appropriateness of any and all projects.

Renovating facades on existing properties, as well as the addition of new building projects, will provide District Stakeholders opportunities to improve the commercial viability of their businesses. Each Stakeholder is assured that the value of their property is protected through preservation and extension of historic architectural styles and elements and the eras they represent. This includes extending the arcades currently on the north side of Main Street to promote this outstanding architectural feature of the District. It also includes recommendations to install awnings on the other Main Street facades. Each of these improvements will enrich the enjoyment of pedestrians and shopper.

The goal is not to restrict individuals, but to provide quality control benefiting all Stakeholders and the citizens of El Cajon.

# Yester-Year Main Street



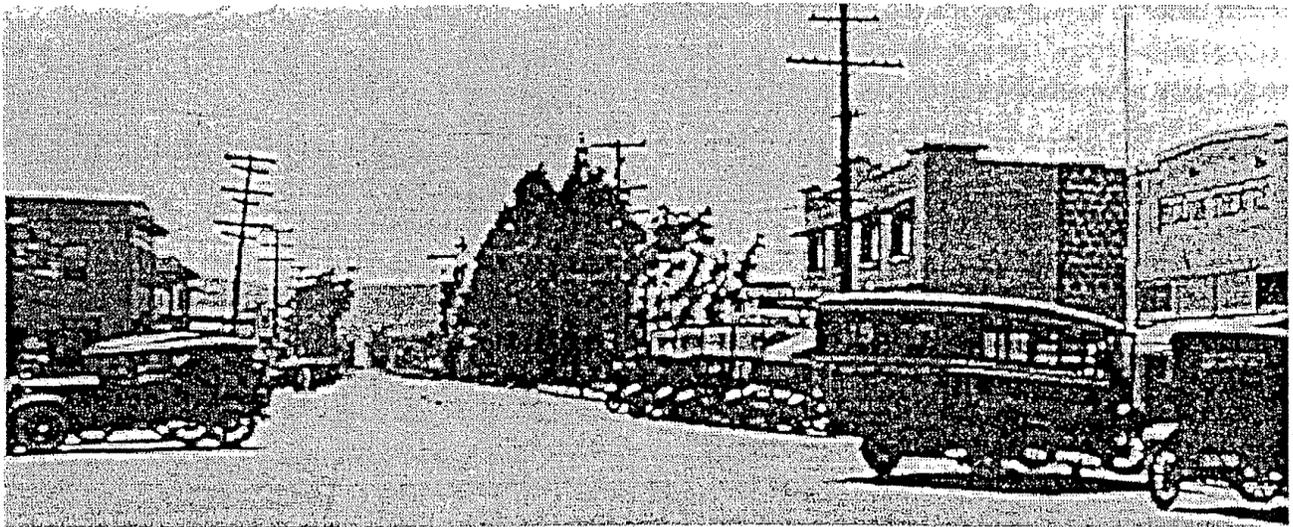
## History Behind Business District Architecture

## Main Street El Cajon

The function of Main Street has changed little from the time of Richard the Lion-hearted. Main Street, traditionally, has been where most business was transacted; Main Street was where entertainment, food, and drink were plentiful. Especially on Saturdays, it was most obvious that Main Street was the social, the financial, and often the physical center of the community.

El Cajon began and expanded in much the way most American towns evolved. First, there was a rough road that became the main street. That road in El Cajon started in San Diego and moved eastward over the Grossmont Grade and down onto our valley floor. Its primary service was to and from a scattering of citrus, olive, and grape ranches. That changed in the mid-1870s when gold was discovered in the neighboring Cuyamaca Mountains. Suddenly, there was a flood of foot, horse, and wagon traffic on the road. So much traffic was on the road that a hotel and stable were built, becoming the area's first commercial buildings.

Within months of the hotel completion, settling families arrived, building homes, businesses, and churches. In less than two years, both sides of the two-block-long Main Street were filled with shops. Most were of boomtown construction, on parcels less than 25 feet wide and built only inches back from the roadway.



*Main Street, circa 1923, reprinted by permission: Eldonna P. Lay, Valley of Opportunity (El Cajon: Eldonna P. Lay & Associates, 1987) , p. 81.*

As the only business district in East County, El Cajon's Main Street filled the daily retail and professional needs of most of those living in the valley. But on Friday evenings, Main Street became more. With shoppers coming from as far as Lemon Grove, La Mesa, Dulzura, Potrero, and the reservations, Main Street became a social and commercial melting pot of visitors, travelers, area locals, and Native Americans.

After World War II, a booming economy brought two-car families, freeways, suburbs, and shopping centers with large on-site parking lot. Most of Magnolia Avenue reflects these

opportunities. Then suddenly, main streets across the nation seemed old fashioned and out-of-date. The retail revolution of the 1970's left entire blocks on main streets to deteriorate. Over time, they grew more blighted and became a visual embarrassment to the community.

We in El Cajon are fortunate that our Main Street still has many traditional American Main Street elements intact, making it a prime candidate for resurrection and revitalization. Foremost, the District's historic buildings along with governmental and cultural institutions are in the central area, supporting a community identity and a sense of place.

Furthermore, a modern City Hall and Council Chambers, and a County Courthouse provide the District with prestigious civic buildings, adding to the integrity and authenticity of our community identity. The District's historic storefronts and contemporary institutions. The East County Performing Arts Center also contributes to El Cajon's vibrancy. The importance of these buildings, their services and the district they create are reinforced by relatively new structures housing the region's main Fire Station, a full-service community center, regional library and senior apartments, less than a block away.

## NORTH SIDE OF MAIN STREET

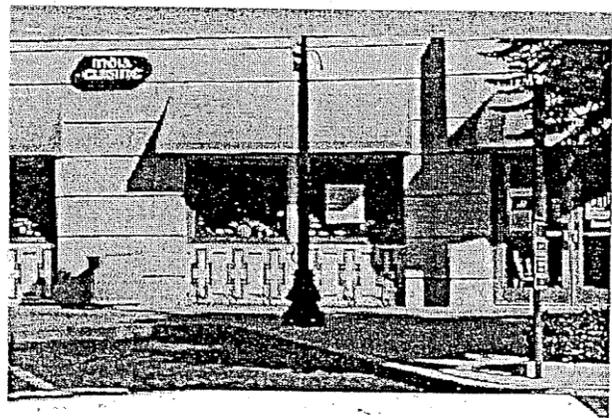
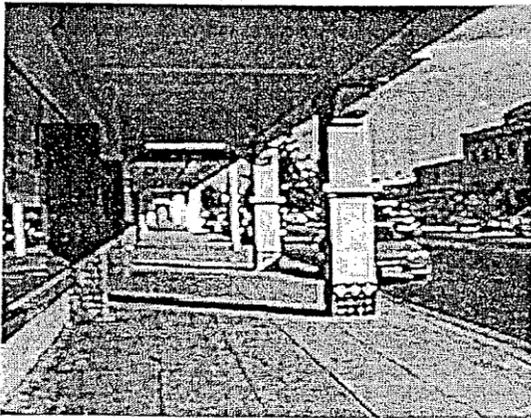
In the early years of the century, the invention of the automobile began to influence Main Street businesses. By the mid-1920s, the street was declared part of the State highway system. By the 1930s, this required a wider, paved street and sidewalks. But shop-fronts were in the way, forcing the State to order business owners on Main Street to either tear the front dozen feet of their buildings off, or move the entire building back. Not wanting to do either, owners were allowed to move ground floor storefronts back the required distance. But they left their roofs, and second floors in some cases, where they were, propping them up with support columns to form an arcade. This has become the District's most distinguishing architectural feature today.

Above the arcade, many of the buildings still retain false-front facades. This type of façade gives squat buildings the appearance of height to conceal the actual roofline and create a vision of prosperity and affluence. In truth, many buildings on Main Street have upper stories, which are used for professional offices and private apartments.



*Perhaps the most recognized icon in the Downtown District at the northeast corner of Main and Magnolia.*

Downtown on the first floor, historic building facades still boast tile or terrazzo wainscoting below large display windows. Frequently the business' name or address is emblazoned on matching tile or terrazzo on the entry flooring leading to a recessed door. These architectural features are worth saving at existing locations and replicating in new development. These same features help create a visual rhythm from the façade to another. Building bays, pilasters, transoms, and column details create interest on otherwise monotonous storefronts.



*Pedestrian friendly elements such as ground floor arcades and storefront visibility contribute to the sense of promenade and affluence.*

## SOUTH SIDE OF MAIN STREET

A large section of the original false front buildings along the south side of Main Street burnt down during a single fire in 1899. Following more than a decade of empty lots separated by a few small businesses, new buildings began to replace them. And they were designed in the newer “modern” architectural style.

Moderne, with its occasionally wacky lines and angles, austere pipe columns, and large plate glass windows, differs radically from the north side architecture. Nevertheless, modern buildings are a valuable component of our Main Street. Firstly, the style has its own charm, contributing visible excitement to the eye. Secondly, the buildings tend to stay within one or two-lot widths. Therefore, the scale, mass, and rhythm of the south side is consistent with the north. Finally, the street itself provides a buffer between the difference in styles, preventing an unharmonious hodgepodge of structures.

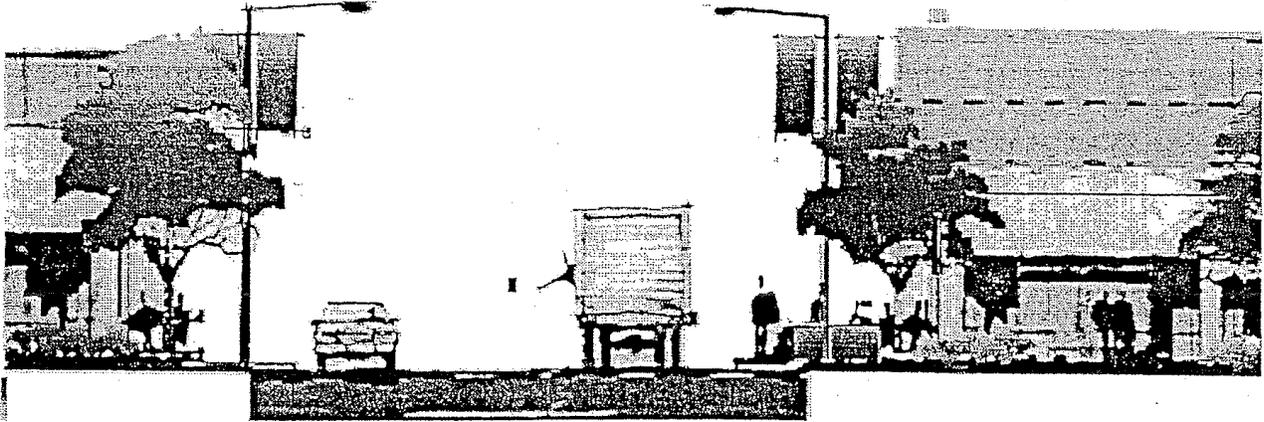
Another issue is that the original owners of south side buildings were willing to use high quality construction: terrazzo entries with cover base under the windows, large windows and entry doors with heavy duty aluminum and stainless steel frames and hardware. More often than not, these original elements will look new if cleaned.

All of the above elements are refined and reflect good design and craftsmanship. Equally important are color, texture, and display windows. During Main Street’s first 75 years of successful retail trade, large show windows enticed pedestrians to stop and inspect the merchant’s goods. What was true then is true now: windows and other design aspects of architectural elements attract passersby, calling them to come inside and see the rest of the merchant’s wares. Visibility into the merchant’s space was never obscured with tenant signage or advertising.



*Extruded aluminum window sash and doorjamb epitomize this buildings era, circa 1955.*

# Main Street Tomorrow



*The Pedestrian Zone - between the Street and Building Facade*

New Buildings, Renovated Facades

## BRING BACK OUR MAIN STREET

First, understand that what each property and business owner does have an impact. To get crowds back to Main Street, action is required!

Improving the building and business public image and the value of all businesses in the District is the primary goal of these architectural guidelines. These guidelines guarantee that the buildings, businesses and business neighbors' improvements and renovations benefit all District Stakeholders.

Begin with identifying upgrades or improvements that were done to your building façade over the last 50 to 70 years. In all likelihood, those changes are what have led to the building's loss of attractiveness and value. Identifying the building's drawbacks is the beginning of restoration of the façade to its original style and condition.

As building owners rejuvenate their building facades, adjacent building owners and District neighbors will follow. The time is right to invest in the integrity of storefront and building restoration. Shoppers also, will share the pride and excitement of restored buildings and the District experience. Retail malls are struggling to overcome predictability and repetition. Shoppers are looking for innovation, entertainment and authentic old-time charm of Main Street, El Cajon.

## GENERAL TERMS OF A BUILDING'S FAÇADE

The **BASE** of any building is its first floor or ground floor. Whether a street-level storefront, a two story bank lobby, a restaurant, or other pedestrian-oriented business, the base includes the walls, display windows, entries, arcade or awnings, and signs, that relate directly to the sidewalk/pedestrian environment. Many of the District's facades retain the original materials and feature in their bases. Others have been covered over.

The **UPPER STORIES** of buildings provide space for offices or apartments. The architectural feature separating the base from the upper stories is a cornice or beltline, which can be made of wood, cement, or plaster, and runs horizontally across the width of the building. Generally, a cornice is no lower than 12 feet and no higher than 20 feet from the street level. A change in material used on the base and the upper stories above is not unusual. Buildings with false fronts can also have separating cornices.

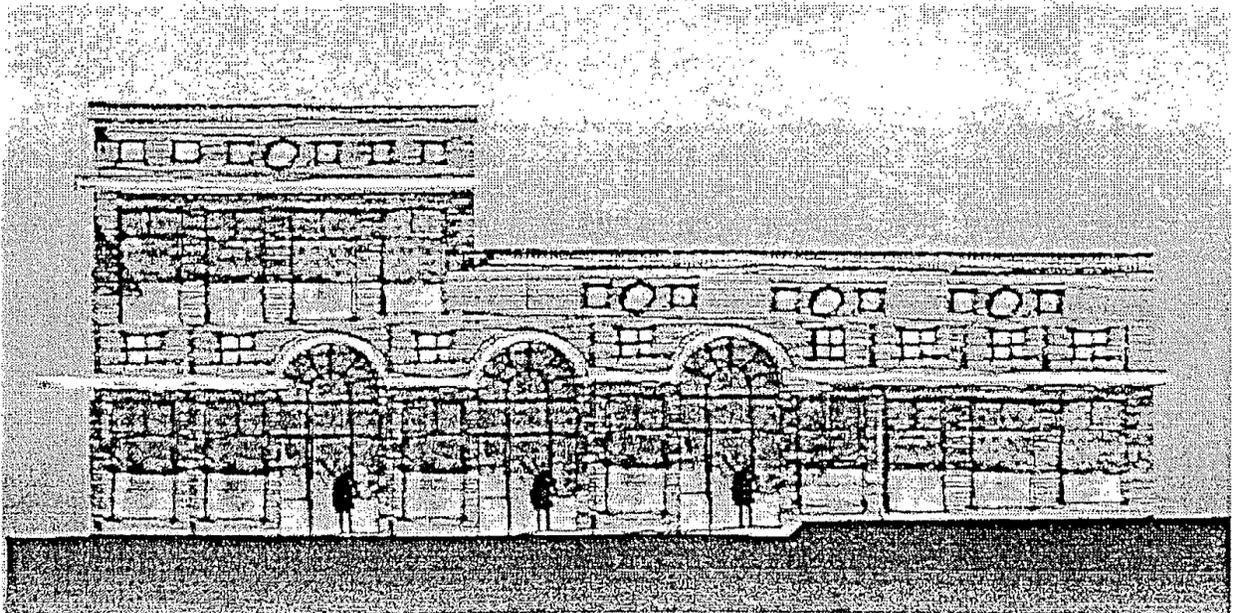
The **TOP** of a building is defined by the parapet. The parapet is the plain or ornamental border that hides a roof's edge. The parapet is a design feature rather than a structural one, but is important in giving a building a finished appearance. Many of the tops of historic Main Street buildings have ornamental parapets.



*Another feature of an upper floor (or floors) of the facade is the placement, size, and shape, of windows, which identifies those areas as living or office space.*

## CORNER ANCHOR BUILDINGS

Corner buildings establish the beginnings and ends of blocks of buildings. Corner buildings visually anchor themselves and everything in between with their size and massing. Because corner buildings are exposed on two sides, their two facades are generally taller and larger than “infill” buildings, giving corner buildings a grander, more imposing, appearance.



*Corner buildings should maintain the building façade at the PROPERTY LINE.*

## INFILL BUILDINGS

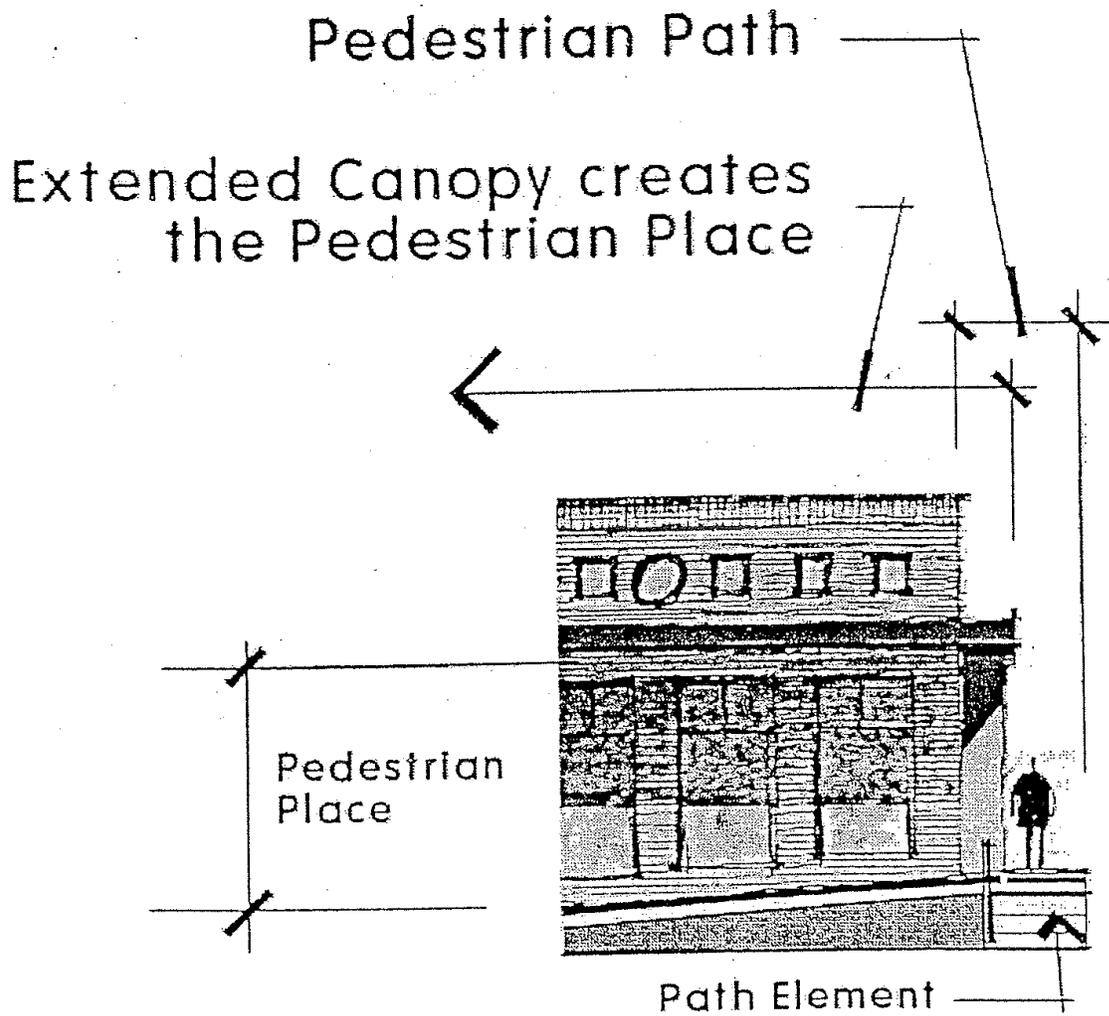
Constructed side-by-side between corner buildings, individual infill buildings are generally smaller and lower. On our Main Street, they are further defined by the narrowness of lots – 50 feet long lots behind 25-foot wide facades. The uniformity of Main Street setbacks fortifies a classic sense of order, scale, and visual unity.



*Although size and detail of windows and openings vary between facades, the overall scale of all of the building facades is the same.*

Building variety within that unity can provide even more interest through the use of renovated or new parapet designs, textures, columns, reveals and colors.

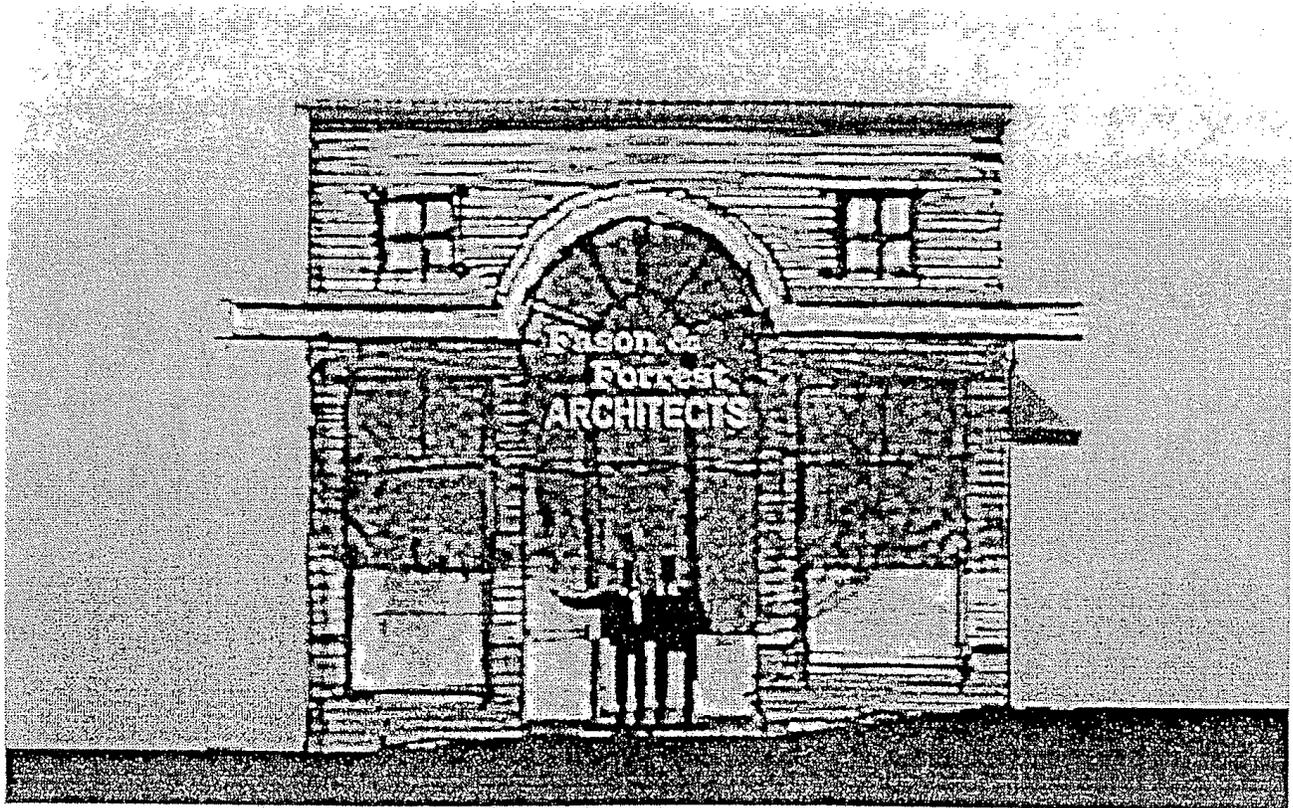
# Standards For Improvement



Detailed Guideline Requirements

## NEW CONSTRUCTION

New construction must respect the authenticity of historic Main Street District styles and architecture. New buildings must be compatible with the scale, materials, color and texture of original buildings on either side, and shall contain contextual design aspects of El Cajon's historic commercial Main Street architecture.



## RENOVATION & REPAIR

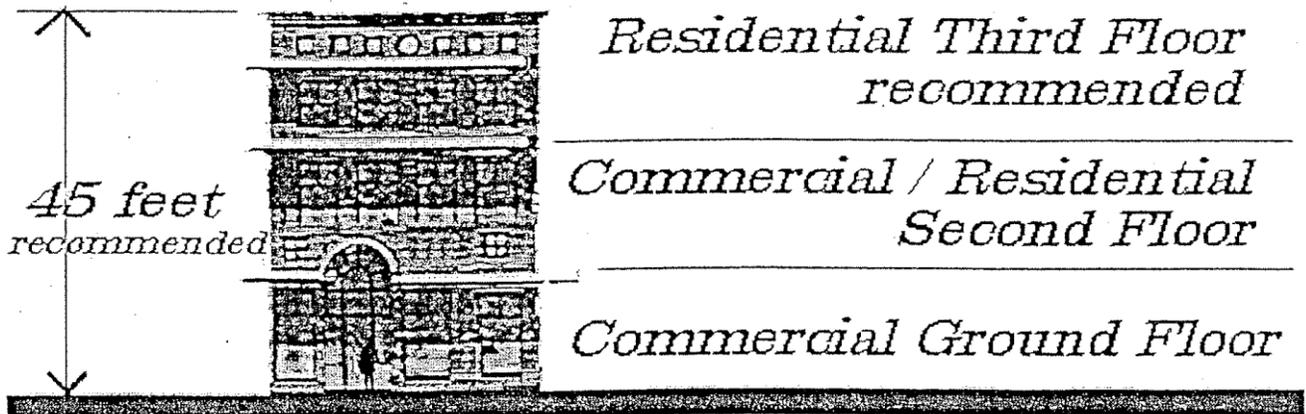
Renovation and repair shall match or replicate the design and construction of the original building to recreate its original character. Introducing new designs or changing the original design of the existing façade is not allowed, except upon approval of an Administrative Zoning Permit. Repair or original deteriorating architecture includes removal of shoddy or inappropriate add-ons that replaced or covered up the original construction.

A caveat here is that not all original Main Street architecture is either unique to El Cajon or even contributes to the character of the District. For such buildings, more design leeway will be allowed to contribute to the spirit of District redevelopment.

## HEIGHT LIMITS FOR NEW BUILDINGS AND FLOOR ADDITIONS

All new buildings are to be in accord with the architectural and historic character of District standards. New structures may reach maximum allowable heights as defined in the City's zoning ordinance, or otherwise permitted by Specific Plan 182. Specifically, these Guidelines encourage the following design criteria:

1. Buildings should maintain a continuous vertical façade and not introduce setbacks of upper floors along the street façade.
2. Excess building ornamentation, massing and form, or building elements above 45 feet are not to visually disrupt or adversely affect neighboring views, or in any other way significantly compromise the scale and character of adjacent facades.
3. Addition of second and third floors are encouraged above ground floor areas, provided their facades repeat the proportion and detail of the ground floor's façade.
4. Facades and elements exceeding 4 feet in height shall continue the traditional vertical design of proportionate and symmetrically stacked window openings, building bays, and other details of historic District buildings.
5. On parcels of 10,000 square feet or more, projects should regulate or adjust building heights for variation in accordance with historic District lot pattern widths. Projects will also correlate building mass and form to adjacent structures.



## ROOFS, PENTHOUSES, AND ATTICS

Roof forms or parapets topping new construction are to be understated in design and always subordinate to elements, features and forms of historic rooflines.

Elevator penthouses and attic features are to be set back from the façade and should cover no more than 30% of the rooftop area. They are to be subordinate in architectural importance to the main building façade below and are not to be visible from any of the surrounding streets.

## FAÇADE MATERIALS AND FABRIC

The District's historic buildings are generally constructed of substantial highly finished natural materials. Predominantly wood, brick, aluminum, stucco, tile, and terrazzo are typical building materials in the District. New buildings are to maintain that same quality of materials and construction.

Colors and lighting are to be used to discreetly complement natural materials and highlight architectural forms and details. Buildings should have storefront lighting to help project building and merchant appearance as well as to contribute to a secure, well-lit nighttime environment. However, lighting should be carefully designed not to project onto other buildings or into public sidewalk areas.

The following criteria should be considered when developing these elements:

1. Brick, stone, granite, masonry or smooth and sand plasters are recommended facing materials. Plaster detailing, on the other hand is allowable when needed to limit or define large areas of flat building faces.
2. Window sill plate and cornice detailing can be of ornamental sheet metal, carved or cast stone, tile, brick, stucco, paint, or terra cotta. Wood, when appropriate, is to be carefully sealed and finished to prevent maintenance problems.
3. Framing element on storefronts – such as head, jamb, rail and stiles – may be painted wood, cast iron, or other highly finished, substantial materials.
4. Window frames are to be painted wood, painted steel sashes, or high quality natural metal finishes. Neutral aluminum storefront and window systems shall match existing styles.

### NOT APPROVED:

1. Residential finishes such as plywood, siding, wood shingles, and “lace” plaster finishes will not be approved.

2. Inappropriate modern – rectangular shape, extruded aluminum storefront sections will not be approved for ground floor storefronts.

## COLORS

Building colors used between 1870 and 1950 celebrated developments within the building and paint industry. In El Cajon, the colors used were light, tending toward pastels, Sharper accent colors on wainscots and doors, and around display windows, transoms, and other details provided interest and composition. Variations of color within a range add life and interest to the street ambience while monochromatic color schemes lack interest.

The following criteria should be considered when developing these elements:

1. Brick or stone is to be natural and unpainted.
2. Painted plaster walls, fronts, pilasters, and columns shall be in light tones. Paint colors include pastels, pale blues, greens pinks, and ochre, along with more sophisticated colors such as varying shades of white, beige, and taupe.
3. Accent colors (wainscots, detailing, frames, doors) are to correlate to the base color of walls.
4. Ceilings and soffits are to be light-colored.
5. Selections of building colors are to complement colors used on adjacent buildings.
6. Color schemes, along with samples of materials are to be submitted for review and approval in conjunction with applicable development review process before being applied.

## CORNICES & FAÇADE APPLICATIONS

Shapes and forms of building cornices establish a building's scale and proportion. Renovated or repaired cornice ornamentation is to establish building style and character consistent with the architecture of the District. New construction will adopt and replicate the various styles, forms, and massing seen in the District. The wide of new cornices and building facades are to be compatible with the scale, materials, color, and texture of adjacent historic buildings.

The following criteria should be considered when developing these elements:

1. Cornice heights are to be compatible with existing commercial buildings, except when the addition of a second floor is to be used for residential or office space. Third floor additions are encouraged for residential uses.

2. Existing buildings having uninterrupted parapet and rooflines and large, blank facades can be embellished with moldings and ornamentation in keeping with the original architectural spirit of the building.
3. Building signs and murals, when allowed, are an effective technique in embellishing blank facades.
4. Pilasters and cornices may be used to relieve flat areas on a façade.
5. Use of masonry and plaster are encouraged for embellishment as they add interesting color variation in brick definition, pattern, profile, texture and shape.
6. Additional detail materials – metal, cast masonry, concrete, and tile are permitted provided that the integrity of design is maintained.

## DISPLAY WINDOWS AND GLAZING

The value of visibility cannot be overstated: clear, uncluttered display windows encourage pedestrians to linger, then come inside. Storefronts must retain a building's original display window(s) as primary features of the façade. Entries should be recessed; window framing should meet with door framing to provide large viewing areas and an unobstructed view into store interiors.

When the original storefront exists, preservation and repair of the original elements is recommended. Restoration should be based upon accurate duplication of features, substantiated by historically accurate written records or pictorial evidence.

In renovating, introducing a storefront that significantly alters the original character of the building, or one that significantly alters the relationship of the building to the sidewalk and street is to be avoided.

The following criteria should be considered when developing these elements:

1. Display windows should not to be used for graphic advertisement, banners, or signs, which obscure the interior of the building or its merchandise. Business signage applied to storefront windows should not cover or obscure more than 10% of the glazed area. Storefront business signage should identify the name of the business and type of business or service provided. Storefront business signage should have clear – readable typeface, and conform to the City's sign ordinance.
2. Display windows are to retain the building's original widow sash and size proportions, as well as keeping the original glazing glass type. Exceptions will be allowed for building code compliance. When original windows have been covered or altered, restoring or recreating original window size with new or restored sash elements and glazing is recommended.

3. When window elements have been altered or remodeled, all incompatible construction is to be removed, and replicas of the original elements installed.
4. New display windows are to be compatible with the design and construction integrity of the building as a whole, as well as related to the building's original character.
5. New modernization equipment, such as air-conditioners are to be installed in such a way as to not violate the character of the District.
6. Window glazing is to be safety-type glazing when required by code.

NOT APPROVED:

1. Residential applications, materials, or equipment will not be approved.
2. Incompatible construction from earlier remodeling that include flush break metal panels and components, 2x strip aluminum mullions, imitation masonry, knock-down stucco, false shutters, opaque panels, undressed lumber, or historically incorrect "revival" architecture, imitation materials or décor themes will not be approved.
3. Reflective, mirrored, or tinted glazing, including stain glass or decorative panels, in front of or adjacent to storefront windows will not be approved.
4. Changing the location and size of windows that alter the original architectural character of the storefront will not be approved.



*Visibility into the tenant space should not be obscured with tenant signage or advertising.*

## DOORS AND ENTRIES

Storefront entries and doors are the primary elements of any storefront. Doors more than any other single element help define the individual character and exterior ambience of a building.

Current code requirements for accessibility and protection may require modification or replacement of existing entry doors. District standards require complete compliance with California Title 24 and the Americans with Disabilities Act on old buildings except under specific conditions of hardship or historic preservation. Restoration and refinishing cannot introduce new materials or systems from more recent building eras, except for compliance with exiting and accessibility codes.

New construction must provide accurate duplication or original entry doors and/or features, along with the storefront design. Restoration and refinishing should not introduce new

materials and systems from different building eras, with exceptions allowed only for compliance with exiting and accessibility codes.

The following criteria should be considered when developing these elements:

1. Original doors should be retained whenever possible. Preservation and repair of original hardware pull plates, kick plates, thresholds and window sash, mullions, proportions and size is recommended when possible. New and restored entry doors shall provide an accurate duplication of the building's original features.
2. Where door and glazing elements have been altered or remodeled, all incompatible construction must be removed and replaced with replicas of original elements.
3. Jambs, casing and thresholds for doors are to match the storefront display window mullions and sash. Ideally, the entry element is a continuation of the display window.
4. All Main Street façade entry doors, including secondary and ancillary entry doors, vestibules, foyers, corridors, and lobbies, shall have a minimum glazing area greater than 50% of the total door area. Door glazing shall match adjacent glazing.
5. Secondary building facades and storefront doors that provide access into entry vestibules, lobbies, hallways, and stairs are required to maintain visual connection to the inside space and shall have a minimum glazing area no smaller than 30% of the total door area.
6. Interior vestibules, foyers, and lobbies constructed to screen interior spaces will require Design Review Commission approval. When permanent screening of business activity from sidewalk pedestrians is appropriate, approval can be sought for permanent partitions, screening devices and opaque glazing.

**NOT APPROVED:**

1. Introducing doors and entries that alter the original character of the building storefront will not be approved.
2. Introducing imitation "historic" doors will not be approved.
3. Contemporary hardware and accessories except those approved by the Design Review Commission will not be approved.
4. Opaque or solid entry doors will not be approved. Interior facades to screen business activity from pedestrian spaces are allowed only with Design Review Commission approval.

5. Under no circumstances will the addition of storm, screen, security grilles, opaque, or solid doors to the exterior of the storefront façade be approved.

## UPPER-STORY WINDOWS

Upper-story windows traditionally serve offices and residences, providing light and ventilation. Generally narrow and placed in sets, upper-story windows usually have a relatively complex system of jambs, sills, and sashes. Upper-story windows provide rhythm, interest, and design to a building's middle.

The following criteria should be considered when developing these elements:

1. Upper-story windows shall be traditional sash-type and set in frames.
2. Operable windows are encouraged. Operable windows shall be double or single-hung, casement, or projected types.
3. Windows shall be set inboard at least 3 inches of the exterior wall plane.
4. Multi-pane glazing is encouraged.
5. Articulated window head and sill details are required.
6. Upper-story windows shall be sized and proportioned in accordance with the architecture of neighboring buildings.
7. Use of trompe l'oeil treatment or artificial windows on solid walls will be allowed when approved. See guideline requirements for Murals and Public Art.

## TRANSOM, CLEARSTORIES & SKYLIGHTS

Before efficient lighting was developed, transom and clerestory windows and skylights were used to bring natural light into the interiors of buildings. Artificial light cannot duplicate natural lighting. Transoms, clerestories, and skylights are encouraged in new and renovated buildings whenever possible.

When existing transoms and clerestory openings have been covered or altered, all incompatible construction is to be removed and replaced with replicas of original glass and framing. Replicated transom and clerestory windows are to match the design and construction of the original building to return the façade to the building's original character.

The following criteria should be considered when developing these elements:

1. Transoms and clerestories are to retain or replicate original window sashes and sizes. When the original interior ceiling has been lowered below to hide transoms or clerestories, a transition ceiling should be installed above the

transom windows and be designed to continue into the tenant space and transition to the lower ceiling in a neat and visually pleasing manner.

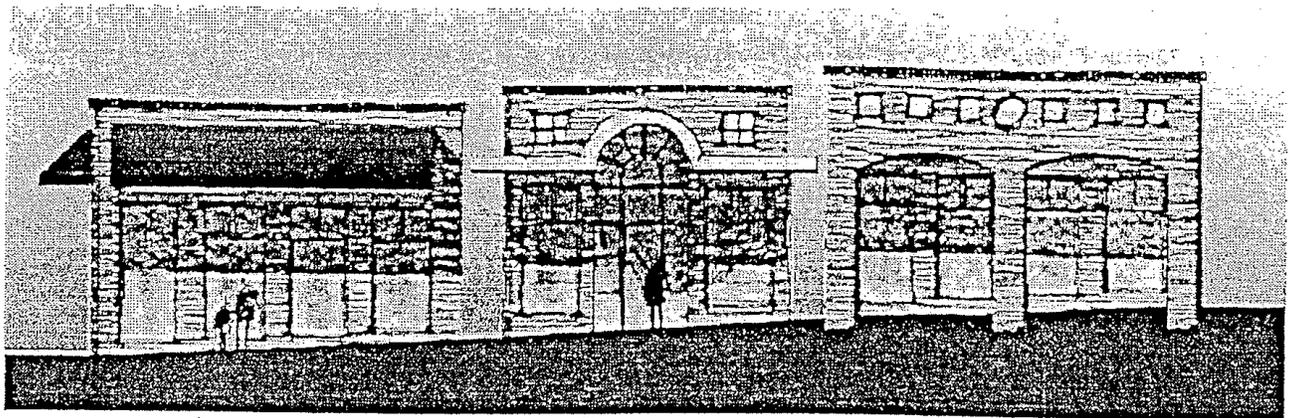
2. Transom and clerestory glazing is to match adjacent display window glazing.
3. Although skylights usually occur in interior rooms, skylights are encouraged to bring natural light into arcade areas.

#### NOT APPROVED:

1. Residential treatments, materials, or equipment will not be approved.
2. Any kind of air-conditioning units on the building façade will not be approved.

### AWNINGS, ARCADES & CANOPIES

Awnings, arcades, and canopies are recommended to provide protection to buildings and pedestrians from sun and inclement weather. In addition, these elements enhance the pedestrian ambience.



*Awnings*

*Canopies*

*Arcades*

The following criteria should be considered when developing these elements:

1. Existing arcades are to be retained. For new construction arcades are encouraged, however, an encroachment permit may be required from the City Building or Public Works Department.
2. Fabric awnings were a traditional Main Street fixture and are encouraged, particularly on buildings without a constructed arcade.
3. Colors and patterns of awnings and canopies must relate to the color scheme of the building.

4. Maximum projection of ground floor awnings and canopies no closer than 2 feet from the curb line is encouraged, however, an encroachment permit may be required from the City Building or Public Works Department.
5. A 3-foot projection from the building façade is encouraged for upper story windows; however, an encroachment permit may be required from the City Building or Public works Department.

## SIGNS

The following items are general signage criteria and standards.

1. Signage must comply with City sign ordinances and SP 182. Exceptions for historical signs are encouraged and may require a variance granted by the City of El Cajon. The Planning Commission may approve exceptions upon receipt of documentary evidence that signs of such size, shape, design, material, coloring, lighting, and location to advertise a similar business were in use before 1960.
2. Preservation of historic commercial graphics painted on the sides of buildings is encouraged. See Guidelines for Murals and Public Art.
3. When all provisions and conditions stated in earlier design, color, fabric, and materials requirements are met, neon, flashing, moving, or animated signs will be considered as long as they meet the historical integrity of the era but will not necessarily be approved.
4. Signs affixed to inside or outside façade display windows shall not obscure the interior of the building or the contents of display merchandise.

The following items are general signage criteria and standards of the District:

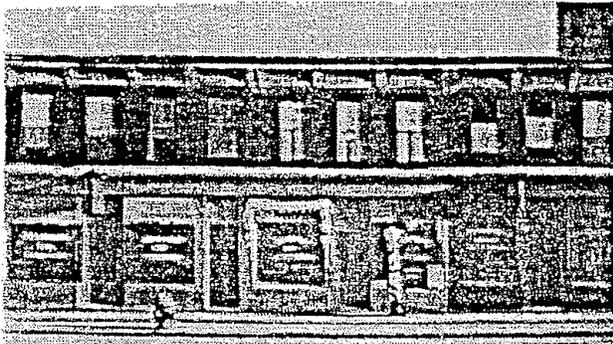
1. Signage must comply with City sign ordinances and Specific Plan 182. Exceptions for historical signs are encourage and may require a variance granted by the City of El Cajon. The Planning Commission may approve an exception to the sign ordinance to approve an historically compatible sign upon receipt of documentary evidence that signs of such size, shape, design, material, coloring, lighting, and location to advertise a similar business were in use before 1960.
2. Preservation of historic commercial graphics painted on the sides of buildings is encouraged. See guidelines for Murals and Public Art.
3. When all provisions and conditions stated in earlier design, color, fabric, and materials requirements are met, neon, flashing, moving, or animated signs will be considered al song as they meet the historical integrity of the era but will not necessarily by approved.

4. Signs affixed to inside or outside façade display windows shall not obscure the interior of the building or the contents of display merchandise.

## MURALS

Depictions of actual events, products, or eras in the history of El Cajon are encouraged on blank walls visible to the public. Quality and type of historical graphics shall meet the following criteria:

1. Mural plans must be submitted to the Public Arts Committee for approval.
2. Murals are desired that accurately represent the social, retail, and professional success of the District during the lifetime of its present buildings, or that depict typical life between 1876 through the 1950s.
3. Colors must be discreet rather than garish.
4. Detailing and relief's in materials can be included to add depth and interest to a mural.



*Examples of acceptable Mural – Master work, left: Hopper's "EARLY SUNDAY MORNING" (1930) , right: Homer's "SNAP THE WHIP"(1872)*

## SIDEYARDS, COURTYARDS, NEW ARCADES, AND ALLEY SPACES

Many back doors of some Main Street buildings are recessed from property lines and affront broad alleyway spaces. These spaces invite the development of new courtyards and arcades in which additional retail opportunities can be developed. Infill lots adjacent to open alleys and pedestrian pathways are encouraged to enhance their faces facing these areas.

Rooftop terraces and balconies above these internal courtyards and alleys provide additional business spaces. Building and business owners are encouraged to enhance these areas and the facades facing these areas.

The following criteria should be considered when developing these areas:

1. Subject to building and fire codes, the addition of outer walls may include recessed windows or small, alcoves that allow air circulation when located above the height of adjacent development.
2. Rear and side building walls adjoining courtyard and arcade spaces may incorporate windows and alcoves to take advantage of light and air while providing access to useable open space.
3. Rear entrances, which permit visitors to pass through the building to Main Street, are encouraged.
4. Recessing building facades to create “Mid-block courtyard uses” are permitted as long as they are not detrimental to Main Street use and/or the existing rhythm and character of the entire Main Street façade.

## OFF-STREET PARKING

No off-street surface parking is to be visible from the street frontage.

## PUBLIC ART

The use of Public Art to visually connect commercial Downtown with the East County Performing Arts Center and other “art experience” sites within the District is strongly encouraged. These efforts reinforce the Downtown District as the “center” of East County culture.

District members interested in donating space to enhance the exterior of their buildings’ secondary or side facades are urged to contact the City Manager’s office. The Public Arts Committee is charged with identifying desired professional artists and defining appropriate mediums for these spaces such as museum-quality paintings or replicas of master works reproductions of historic local photographs, murals representing local life and/or downtown commerce, or trompe l’oeil treatment. Public Art also includes sculpture, friezes and relief’s, specific signage, screening or covering for light fixtures in alleys or other areas identified as art walks, and designs or treatments applied to architectural features, poles, posts, equipment, or hydrants.

Artists interested in donating time to apply finishes, techniques, or murals are welcome to register and leave project proposals and examples of their work with the City Manager. They and solicited artists will be given equal consideration by the Public Arts Committee for available space. Projects must include appropriate preparation of existing surface(s) and durable quality of material. Each Public Art mural or other project is selected upon its ability to fit into the District’s artistic master plan that requires smooth transition between approved styles, subject matter, and placement.

The first step for Public Art projects starts with proposals made to the Public Arts Committee for project site approval. Once approved, the Public Art Committee will review and select an artist and mural for the site.

Requests to place sculpture or statues on City land will be presented to the City Council for its consent. Projects are to be cooperative ventures between the Public Art Committee and department representatives assigned by the City Manager. Each project shall comply with the city's codes and regulations for installation, placement, public safety and welfare.