



SAN FRANCISCO
PLANNING
DEPARTMENT

Bayshore Boulevard Home Improvement District Design Guidelines

GUIDELINES FOR NEW CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS AND
MAJOR ALTERATIONS IN THE BAYSHORE BOULEVARD
HOME IMPROVEMENT SPECIAL USE DISTRICT

SAN FRANCISCO PLANNING DEPARTMENT | NOVEMBER 2010





INTENT

The intent of these design guidelines is to give the Bayshore Boulevard Home Improvement District a more coherent and attractive built form, while at the same time allowing a wide range of light-industrial and retail uses. Unlike Neighborhood Commercial Districts, the Home Improvement District is not envisioned as a fine-grained mixed-use locally serving community hub. Rather, it is envisioned for larger scale retail and more industrial-like uses, with a wider regional draw focused on home improvement. Like Neighborhood Commercial Districts, the Home Improvement District is envisioned to be friendly to pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit riders. However because of its larger scale and unique setting within the city's transportation network, design considerations should also take into account those arriving at and moving through the District by car.

Currently, Bayshore Boulevard is characterized by a wide range of building sizes, orientations, and levels of activation. Many buildings present blank facades towards the street, or are set back behind extensive parking lots. There are many wide curb cuts and almost no landscaping. This results in a street that often feels uninteresting, unpleasant, and unsafe. As property owners improve their properties over time, the design guidelines will help create a built environment that is pleasant and attractive to shoppers, employees and visitors. The guidelines are informed by the following four basic principles:

1. Buildings should be designed and sited to encourage walking, bicycling and transit use, and to encourage multiple-stop visits.
2. Street frontages should be active and transparent, to increase interest and perceived safety.
3. Buildings and landscaping should contribute to the unique image of the district, with a particular focus on sustainability.
4. The configuration of parking and loading should minimize adverse impacts on the street, and allow for flexible parking arrangements such as shared parking.

ORGANIZATION:

These four basic principles are articulated in guidelines grouped under the following six headings:

- Site Design and Orientation
- Building Mass Articulation
- Parking and loading
- Open Areas
- Green factors
- Signage and lighting

SITE DESIGN AND ORIENTATION

1. Orient the primary façade of buildings to Bayshore Boulevard.
2. Buildings should be built to the property line, except when landscaped buffers are provided to screen blank walls or parking areas, when useable outdoor space is provided such as entry plazas or seating areas, or when setbacks are suggested elsewhere in these Design Guidelines.
3. Pedestrian entries should be conspicuous and easily accessible from the sidewalk. When several businesses share a single building, each should be identifiable and accessible from the sidewalk (avoid interior-oriented “mall” configuration).
4. Place and design areas devoted to active uses (such as workshops, check-out counters or other areas that are more likely to be occupied) so that they contribute “eyes on the street” and enliven the public realm.
5. Site parking to minimize impacts to the public realm. See parking and loading section.
6. Provide ample entries, windows or display cases on all walls fronting the street.

BUILDING MASSING AND ARTICULATION

7. Blank walls should accommodate greening. Those longer than 10 feet fronting Bayshore Boulevard should generally utilize a “green wall” system or be set back behind a landscaped buffer at least 5 feet deep. The use of this landscaped buffer for stormwater facilities is encouraged.
8. Utilize horizontal and vertical plane shifts to break the mass of larger buildings, in order to achieve a more human scale and interesting visual experience.
9. In buildings with longer frontages, utilize a system of regular bays to establish a strong vertical rhythm.
10. Building façades should include three-dimensional detailing: these may include cornices, belt courses, window moldings and reveals to create shadows and add interest.
11. Building form should celebrate corner locations. Special design elements and architectural features are encouraged, and special entries should be used strategically at street intersections and near important transit nodes.
12. The roof, cornice, and/or parapet area should be well integrated within the building’s overall composition and create visual interest. Use of sustainable/green roof elements such as solar panels, wind turbines, vegetated roofs etc. is strongly encouraged.

PARKING AND LOADING

13. In order to minimize adverse impacts on transit, bicycle and pedestrian circulation, new curb cuts are strongly discouraged on Bayshore Boulevard. Where lots have access on other streets, parking and loading areas should generally be accessed from those streets. Abandonment and efficient consolidation (i.e. reduction) of existing curb cuts is strongly encouraged.
14. When parking or loading access on Bayshore Boulevard is unavoidable, curb cuts should not exceed 20 feet per lot, and should be located so as to minimize adverse impacts on transit, bicycle and pedestrian circulation.
15. Parking and loading areas should be configured so that all anticipated vehicle queues are internal to the site and do not adversely impact transit, bicycle and pedestrian circulation in any public right-of-way.
16. Generally, place off-street parking and loading areas inside, below, behind, or on top of buildings rather than in front of buildings.
17. Use plants or decorative screening devices to screen parking and loading areas from the street. When parking occupies the upper levels of a structure, consider using planted trellises, solar panels or other elements that provide shade or other desired environmental services.
18. When an open parking area or parking structure fronting Bayshore Boulevard is unavoidable, it should generally occupy no more than 50% of the Bayshore Boulevard frontage of the parcel, and should be set back behind a landscaped area at least 10 feet deep.
19. For surface parking lots and loading areas, landscaped and permeable areas should be located towards the Bayshore Boulevard frontage and should be designed to enhance the public realm.
20. Provide prominent pedestrian access to parking areas from the street, in order to enable sharing of parking facilities, and to provide additional street activity.
21. Utilize enclosed loading areas where possible.

OPEN AREAS

22. Exterior storage areas, corporation yards and other open areas fronting Bayshore Boulevard should be set back behind a landscaped buffer at least 10 feet deep and should be fully screened from view.
23. Exterior retail areas (e.g. those typically found at retail plant nurseries or garden supply establishments) are active use areas that do not need to be set back from the Bayshore Boulevard frontage if designed so as to be visually open to the sidewalk.

In this example of a renovated older industrial building, a large solar array forms a distinctive canopy projecting over the sidewalk. See guidelines 12 and 24.



GREEN FACTORS

24. Visible use of sustainable/green building and landscape elements such as solar panels, wind turbines, green roofs, green walls, pervious paving, rain gardens etc. can enhance the area's identity as a center for sustainable home improvement technologies. Where appropriate, use sustainable/green building and landscape elements where they will be conspicuous from Bayshore Boulevard or surrounding streets.
25. The use of California native or drought tolerant species in landscaping is strongly encouraged.
26. The use of Bayshore Boulevard frontage for stormwater management devices such as rain gardens is strongly encouraged.
27. Performance beyond the City's green building requirements is strongly encouraged (e.g. building to LEED Gold where Silver is required etc.).
28. Performance beyond the City's stormwater management requirements is strongly encouraged.

SIGNAGE AND LIGHTING

29. When designing and placing business signs, consider the needs of pedestrians. Appropriately located and scaled business signs can help pedestrians locate business entrances.
30. When lighting building facades and adjacent areas, consider safety and aesthetics. Appropriately located and detailed lighting can increase the sense of security in the public right-of-way. Avoid overly harsh lighting or excessive light pollution which degrade the public realm.



NOTES



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