The Urban Design Guidelines are a set of design principles that:

- Reinforce a set of existing citywide policies, goals, and values
- Promote design excellence and compatibility with context
- Improve the process for everyone by creating a common language

Nearly 30 sets of design guidelines exist and have become:

- Redundant or inconsistently applied
- Indirect, vague, or simply outdated
- Lacking relevant examples or clarity
- Lacking consistency and a clear regulatory authority

The guidelines are intended to be used by:

- The Planning Commission
- Planning Department staff
- Community groups
- The public
- Project Sponsors
The **Residential Design Guidelines** will continue to apply where they do now.

Residential areas specifically **RH-, RM-, and RTO- districts**.

The **Urban Design Guidelines** may apply to all districts where the RDGs do not apply.

**Mixed-use, neighborhood commercial, and downtown districts plus to residential districts for mixed use or larger projects with a combined frontage longer than 150’ or taller than 40’ with 6 or more units to non-residential uses**

- **RH-** Residential, House Character Districts
- **RM-** Residential, Mixed Districts
- **RTO-** Residential Transit-Oriented Districts
- **PDR** Production, Distribution, & Repair Districts
Goals

**Assure compatible projects**

Explain how projects can better support existing neighborhood patterns and context.

**Inspire great design**

Establish a baseline standard and promote design excellence.

**Contribute to the human experience**

Demonstrate how buildings, open space, and streets work together to promote well-being and a sense of place.

**Establish effective process**

Establish a more consistent, thoughtful, and holistic approach to the city’s design review process.

Process

The adoption process involves the participation of the groups intended to use the Guidelines:

**Draft 1 Existing Policies**. Design review staff develop initial content from existing policies and design guidelines.

**Draft 2 Internal Planning Review**. Design review staff incorporate Planning staff review and comments.

**Planning Commission Informational: January 2016**

**Draft 3 External Advisory Group Review**. Staff work with built environment professionals and community members to assure inclusion and comprehension of existing policies and best practices.

**Planning Commission Informational: October 2016**

**Draft 4 Broad Public Engagement**.

Meet with neighborhood organizations to discuss progress and collect comments for guideline development.

Host community workshops with interested parties to revise guidelines, discuss impacts, and offer specific input about neighborhoods.

Offer access. One or more staff will be available for informal discussion about the UDGs at various locations once a week beginning in October.

**Final Comment Draft**. Combine all input and offer a final comment period for all previous groups.

**Planning Commission Review and Adoption: 2017**
How do they work?

Topics

The guidelines consist of an introduction, a glossary and the three topics below:

Site Design

S1 Recognize and Respond to Urban Patterns
S2 Harmonize Relationships between Buildings, Streets, and Open Spaces
S3 Integrate Common Open Space and Landscape with Architecture
S4 Respect and Exhibit Natural Systems and Features
S5 Create, Protect, and Support View Corridors
S6 Create a Defined and Active Streetwall
S7 Recognize and Enhance Local Variations
S8 Organize Uses to Complement the Public Environment

Architecture

A1 Express a Clear Organizing Architectural Idea
A2 Modulate Buildings Vertically and Horizontally
A3 Render Building Facades with Texture and Depth
A4 Harmonize Building Designs with Neighboring Scale and Materials
A5 Design Buildings from Multiple Vantage Points
A6 Shape the Roofs of Buildings
A7 Design Active Building Fronts
A8 Coordinate Building Elements

Public Realm

P1 Design Public Open Spaces to Connect with and Complement the Streetscape
P2 Program Public Open Spaces to Encourage Activity, Play, and Rest
P3 Express Neighborhood Character in Open Space Designs
P4 Design Sidewalks to Enhance the Pedestrian Experience and Encourage Walking
P5 Integrate Sustainable Practices in the Public Realm
P6 Locate and Design Open Space to Maximize Physical Comfort and Visual Access
P7 Support Public Transportation and Bicycling

GUIDELINE
WAYS OF ACHIEVING

For more information visit:
http://sf-planning.org/urban-design-guidelines

Or contact Anne Brask anne.brask@sfgov.org