Date: October 24, 2019

To: Municipal Facilities Committee

From: Reza Bagherzadeh, PE
Program Manager
Los Angeles Street Civic Building
Bureau of Engineering

Subject: MUNICIPAL FACILITIES COMMITTEE MEETING OCTOBER 31, 2019 SUBMITTAL OF THE DRAFT CIVIC CENTER DISTRICT URBAN DESIGN VISION AND GUIDELINES - CD14

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Please receive and file the submittal of the Draft Civic Center District Urban Design Vision and Guidelines as instructed by Council (CF 14-1604).

BACKGROUND

In March of 2017 (CF 14-1604), relative to the approval of the Final Environmental Impact Report regarding the Los Angeles Street Civic Center Building, the City Council instructed the Bureau of Engineering (BOE), in collaboration with the Department of City Planning (DCP), to initiate a study to develop urban design guidelines for the conceptual Civic Center Master Development Plan (CCMP).

Pursuant to these instructions, BOE has developed the Draft Civic Center District Urban Design Vision and Guidelines to capture a vision that extends beyond the ground plane for a vibrant public experience, where streets, sidewalks, public spaces, and architecture come together to enrich the street-level public life.

The draft Vision and Guidelines encompasses urban architecture that frames the public realm. This conceptual re-imaging of Civic Center includes the redevelopment of three city blocks east of City Hall and the adjoining streets. It includes a redevelopment strategy for City owned sites, the consolidation of services, the proposed implementation through public-private partnerships, and envisioning Civic Center as a 24/7 mixed-use civic neighborhood.

The conceptual CCMP study identifies six phases of development and three structures for demolition (City Hall East, City Hall South, and the LA Mall), and the construction of new civic buildings, residential/retail structures, and a new Civic Square and Cultural Center. All phases are part of the conceptual study for the CCMP under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).
NEXT STEPS

The Vision and Guidelines is a multi-purpose document to promote high-quality design throughout the District and to establish consistency of principles over the duration of the redevelopment of the District. It serves as a guide for the City as an owner, occupant, and steward of the buildings and spaces that could be as part of the draft conceptual CCMP.

The guiding values for the draft conceptual CCMP include:

- Built for Inclusiveness
- Built for Social Resilience
- Built Transparent Governance
- Built for Safety by Design
- Built for the Future
- Uniquely Los Angeles

The design principles for the draft conceptual CCMP include:

- Civic Mixed-Use Neighborhood
- Public-Realm Focus
- Forward Looking Infrastructure
- Connected Downtown Neighborhoods
- New Public Spaces
- Architectural Diversity
- Design Excellence
- Celebration of City Hall

The architecture of the district reflects the diversity of Los Angeles while respecting City Hall’s prominence as an iconic building. The intent is to place architecture that is sensitive to:

- Framing the Public Realm
- Massing
- Scale

The Draft Civic Center District Urban Design Vision and Guidelines along with the draft conceptual CCMP will be pursuant to CEQA and will be subject to further City Council action. The DCP, with support from the BOE, will pursue the Environmental Impact Report in order to finalize the CCMP.
MK/RB:dk

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The redevelopment of the Civic Center District brings the opportunity to create a vibrant new 24/7 neighborhood in downtown Los Angeles. It is also the opportunity to reimagine a Civic Center, which for decades has felt separate from its surroundings, as a place that actively connects with Little Tokyo, El Pueblo, the Historic Core, and other downtown communities—a place that celebrates Los Angeles’s diversity and is a welcoming destination for Angelenos and visitors alike.

Three city blocks east of City Hall will be redeveloped with new civic offices, residences, ground-floor commercial spaces, and other civic uses. This will be accomplished over several development phases by multiple teams of developers, contractors, and designers who will shape world-class architecture in the shadow of LA’s iconic City Hall.

But the key feature of the new Civic Center District will be the streets and public spaces. The redesigned streets will demonstrate that the space between the buildings can be interesting, enjoyable, and comfortable year-round. New public spaces will be canvases for meeting, activities, and the celebration of LA’s people.

The Civic Center District Urban Design Vision and Design Guidelines are the culmination of a multi-year process that engaged community members, stakeholders, and LA City departments to shape the Civic Center’s future. Building upon prior planning work, they will shape the quality and character of the new spaces and buildings and serve as a yardstick to guide future decisions.
Re-Imagining Civic Center

A Mixed-Use Civic Neighborhood

Document Purpose

Guiding Values

Design Principles

Planning Context

How to Use This Document

Guideline Checklist

Primary Reviewing Department: TBD
Introduction
RE-IMAGINING THE CIVIC CENTER

Los Angeles’s Civic Center is a paradox: It is one of most significant employment centers in the country, yet it has struggled to engender an active civic life.¹

The Los Angeles Civic Center hosts the largest concentration of government employees outside Washington D.C., but its sidewalks and public spaces generate little activity. In fact, the Civic Center is not a part of most Angelenos’ everyday lives. It’s a destination for special occasions—concerts, political expression, and occasional business with city government—but it’s not an environment that creates a vibrant urban scene.

In 2017, the City Council resolved to change this. Councilmembers adopted the Civic Center Master Development Plan to redevelop three city blocks east of City Hall and the adjoining streets. It’s a rare opportunity to re-imagine the Civic Center as an integral part of downtown’s built fabric and as a part of Los Angeles’s civic life.

The integration of city governance and civic life has strong precedent in Los Angeles. Historically, the city’s governance was wholly integrated with its day-to-day life. The old 1888 City Hall on Broadway stood in the midst of commercial activity. Similarly, upon its completion in 1928, today’s City Hall presided over narrow, bustling streets (pictured next page) lined with a mix of businesses, hotels, and homes, and shared by cars, streetcars, and pedestrians.

After City Hall’s completion, a series of planning schemes resulted in streets being straightened and widened, businesses and homes in Little Tokyo and Bunker Hill demolished, and new civic buildings erected in their place, substantially reshaping the area. Two planning objectives in particular diminished activity in the Civic Center: the systematic accommodation of the automobile and modernist planning principles that separated uses and placed buildings in large open spaces. The changes created the Civic Center as we know it but drained vibrancy from adjoining communities.

Today, downtown Los Angeles is in the midst of a remarkable revival. Streets and neighborhoods are brimming with activity. Strategic investments and a renewed appreciation for urban living have invigorated communities from South Park to the Historic Core. The redevelopment of the Civic Center District (“the District”) brings the opportunity to establish guiding values and rebuild the urban fabric that once connected Little Tokyo, the Historic Core, El Pueblo, Chinatown, and the greater downtown area.

This document, the Civic Center District Urban Design Vision and Guidelines (Vision and Guidelines) lays out a detailed vision for the re-imagined District. It was prepared with input from city stakeholders, community members from adjacent neighborhoods, and the Los Angeles general public. It is the standard against which each project of this redevelopment will be measured.

¹ Adapted from the exceptionally well-written Battery Park City Draft Summary Report and 1979 Master Plan.
In 1928, City Hall stood in the midst of a bustling commercial district and the city’s governance was wholly integrated into Los Angeles’s day-to-day life.

Late 1920s: City Hall stands amidst a bustling mixed-use neighborhood.
Source: LAPL

Today: Current view of City Hall looking towards the South Lawn
Source: Consultant Team
Introduction

A MIXED-USE CIVIC NEIGHBORHOOD

What will a re-imagined Civic Center offer?
A vibrant civic life.

Imagine a visit a decade from now to experience that Civic vibrancy. Starting with the streets and public spaces, the new District is known for its vibrant public realm: streets built around the needs of people; sidewalks that are pleasant to use year round; activity-generating edges that frame public spaces; public squares where Angelenos meet visitors from around world; and an architecture that enriches street-level public life.

The public realm is considered holistically, from building face to building face. Every aspect of the built environment contributes to the urban experience. Blank walls, sterile landscape planters, and unsightly infrastructure have no place here.

The vision extends beyond the ground plane. A decidedly urban architecture frames the public realm, with inhabited spaces that overlook it. As entire city blocks redevelop, a new urban fabric emerges to remind us of the Los Angeles we know. New buildings collectively create a memorable whole that is much more than individual buildings. Together they form a recognizable district.

City Hall is downtown’s unmistakable icon. New architecture should respect its primacy and allow it to hold center stage. Only with increasing distance do new buildings reach up and add to the Civic Center’s own distinctive skyline.

In the Civic Center, designs for mobility have proven to be forward looking. They anticipate a future that is less reliant on the personal car. The pedestrian experience is shared by all, whether people arrive by public transit, shared vehicles, or scooter, or by a technology yet to be developed. As a result, roadways that had been widened to accommodate large numbers of cars can reflect a more equitable balance among modes.

Beginning with early investments, the Civic Center is now a model for a sustainable Los Angeles. Our built environment is not separate from the natural environment, but rather strives to diminish its negative impacts on climate and resources. Strategies showcased in this new District can be replicated across the city. The Civic Center has become be a leader among neighborhoods.

Our physical environment shapes who we are, how we engage with each other, and how we understand our city. The re-imagined Civic Center represents a new Los Angeles, a place we can immediately recognize as our own, and where Angelenos can come together to meet the world.
The Civic Center District will be a meeting point and a hub for activity in Downtown.

- Active sidewalks at all times of the day support a high quality district public life
  Source: Consultant team

- A surrounding active urban environment is essential to the success of a thriving and positive workplace
  Source: dtah.com
Introduction

GUIDING VALUES

Striving to build the new Civic Center District vision, we recognize that the District is more than a grouping of buildings. It’s a place for people—those who visit Los Angeles and those who call it home. Beyond the specific physical and spatial characteristics spelled out in the Vision and Guidelines, the outcomes of the District redevelopment must serve the purposes of the Civic Center. To that end, all projects and improvements will be measured against the values set forth below.

BUILT FOR INCLUSIVENESS

The Civic Center District is a place where all feel welcome. As the center of city government, as a residential neighborhood, and as a destination for visitors, the re-imagined Civic Center is a place that does not exclude or segregate people. Therefore, the new Civic Center is careful to avoid physical barriers and visual or other cues that are inconsistent with conveying a sense of “belonging” to all its residents and visitors.

BUILT FOR SOCIAL RESILIENCE

The Civic Center District provides a strong “social infrastructure.” Sidewalks, public spaces, childcare facilities, coffee shops, and similar spaces of broad public accessibility allow Angelenos of diverse backgrounds to meet and form social networks. They create the infrastructure that allows social capital to develop, encourages a culture of mutual support, and makes a community resilient in times of crisis. In the re-imagined Civic Center, this infrastructure will be encouraged by allowing for a variety of uses and activities to take place.

BUILT FOR TRANSPARENT GOVERNANCE

The Civic Center District is a place of participation. Here, city government and the decision-making process must be accessible to Los Angeles’s citizens. The re-imagined Civic Center provides many opportunities for participation: by attending and observing meetings; through government functions arranged around a district-wide wayfinding concept; and, perhaps, through more casual spaces that use art and technology to bring government proceedings into the public realm. Finally, the Civic Center’s streets and public spaces are always ready for public expression of opinion.
**BUILT FOR SAFETY BY DESIGN**

The Civic Center District relies on “eyes on the street” first. The Civic Center District provides more populated spaces, enabling safety through self-policing. A well-designed and engaging built environment creates a space that feels welcoming and safe, ensuring that visitors and residents can occupy these places throughout the day. Increased foot-traffic acts as a crime deterrent, improving safety. In addition, security devices and active policing will promote an increased sense of safety and enable the District to remain active 24/7.

**BUILT FOR REMEMBRANCE**

The Civic Center District remembers its history. The Civic Center is a place with a deep, layered, and complex history. It’s a place that has seen the displacement and oppression of targeted groups of people. Parker Center, in particular, played a pivotal symbol in this City’s history based on the use of eminent domain to displace Japanese-Americans from their Little Tokyo homes and shops, as well as through its role in the Watts Rebellion, the 1992 civil unrest, and other significant historical events. In the re-imagined Civic Center, this history is acknowledged and enduring as Los Angeles tells its many stories of civic life.

**BUILT FOR THE FUTURE**

The Civic Center District is forward-thinking. Rapidly progressing environmental change, continuous evolution of technology, and shifting cultural, societal, and economic forces require nimble solutions. By providing opportunities for each aspect of the design to promote sustainable energy, effective water management, new technologies, and permeable spaces, it pushes boundaries to build the “future Los Angeles.”

**UNIQUELY LOS ANGELES**

The Civic Center District is Los Angeles. In a city that is continually reinventing itself, the re-imagined Civic Center expands the potential of Los Angeles. Simultaneously, this new neighborhood is uniquely Los Angeles, with architecture and public spaces designed to express the city’s diversity, its climate and its creative leadership, and its open arms to change and invention.
DESIGN PRINCIPLES

Introduction

The design criteria within the Vision and Guidelines are derived from eight principles that shape the understanding of the interconnected elements of the physical environment—streets, public spaces, and architecture; access and identity; and sustainability and infrastructure—from which the new people-centered Civic Center District emerges.

1. A CIVIC MIXED-USE NEIGHBORHOOD

Civic Center District should offer varied uses and activities. Transforming the Civic Center from a single-use governmental district into a mixed-use civic neighborhood is a basic objective of the 2017 Master Development Plan. The authors of the plan recognized that lack of use diversity directly results in a pervasive lack of activity throughout the District. The District’s predominant use by building area will remain civic offices, but commercial, retail, restaurant, recreational, cultural, and residential uses will augment the neighborhood and give residents and visitors reasons to be there at all times of the day.

Buildings in the new Civic Center District will make provisions to successfully accommodate these uses and maximize their potential to activate the public realm. Therefore, all sidewalk-adjacent ground-floor spaces will be designed so that they can be readily converted to retail and commercial uses in the future. Proposed projects in the District will also give attention to the mix of uses to achieve the kind of vibrancy, safety, and social cohesion envisioned for the neighborhood.

2. PUBLIC-REALM FOCUS

Focus activity on public streets and sidewalks; design for ground-floor activity and human comfort. The Civic Center redevelopment provides an opportunity to show that Los Angeles’s well-designed streets and public spaces are filled with inviting places worth visiting. Instead of focusing activity on interior spaces, the Vision and Guidelines prioritize activation of public street frontages.

Security concerns often restrict civic buildings’ ground-floor articulation and uses. Taken together, a group of public buildings can create a fortress-like feeling along the street. Active and lively frontages along streets, paseos, and other components of the public realm can overcome these limitations.

High-quality, tree-shaded, and durable streetscapes with human-scaled paving ensure that sidewalks are comfortable year-round.
3. FORWARD-LOOKING INFRASTRUCTURE

Build the future Los Angeles — streets, sidewalks, systems, and infrastructure. The materials, fixtures, and details that shape the public realm significantly affect its usability, comfort, and sustainability. With increasing climate change, standard practices may no longer work in the future. Infrastructure solutions need to be evaluated for their sustainability, their ability to be reused or adapt to change, and their physiological influence on the people that use them.

Research has found that urban spaces that encourage casual interactions help build social resilience—a quality that directly affects a community’s life expectancy. These considerations must help shape the way we design infrastructure in the Civic Center District.

4. CONNECTED DOWNTOWN NEIGHBORHOODS

Connect Civic Center District with the adjacent Downtown neighborhoods and communities. Portions of today’s Civic Center stand apart from surrounding communities and in some instances, turn their backs on their neighbors. The new Civic Center, on the other hand, will seamlessly, intuitively, and comfortably connect to adjacent neighborhoods. By picking up on the patterns that shape these neighborhoods, the redeveloped Civic Center District will help rebuild the urban fabric of downtown Los Angeles.

Rather than being a district with hard boundaries marked by a perimeter with gateways, the Civic Center District will have soft and permeable edges.

5. NEW PUBLIC SPACES

Create new, culturally connected destinations for civic gathering, expression, and togetherness. The new Civic Center District aims to create a network of inviting, open public spaces, connecting them within the District and outside it. These public spaces encourage a variety of gatherings, allow for public expression, and create moments of togetherness.

The new public spaces will be appropriately scaled and have qualities to make them feel like outdoor rooms. They are envisioned to provide an experience distinct from Grand Park. They also serve the widely differing needs of a diverse population, including visitors and local residents, young and old, and in particular the most vulnerable members of the community.
6. ARCHITECTURAL DIVERSITY

Allow for creative solutions, innovative approaches, and an expression of diversity reflective of Los Angeles in the District’s architecture. The District is shaped by a diversity of architectural expression; homogeneity or conformity to a particular style is not desired. As a result, the Vision and Guidelines provide only limited architectural guidance, and restrict that guidance to characteristics related to the District and the public realm.

Similarly, the Vision and Guidelines cannot anticipate the technological innovations and changes that will occur over the course of the Civic Center redevelopment. Thus, architectural innovation is expressly encouraged.

7. DESIGN EXCELLENCE

Use Phase 1 to set the bar for future phases of the re-imagined Civic Center with the completion of the Los Angeles Street Civic Building. Phase 1—the Los Angeles Street Civic Building (LASCB)—is a standalone project and will be the first completed project in the redevelopment. As such, it will underscore the design vision for the new Civic Center. It’s a tall order, but imperative to get right, since this first phase will inform future phases.

The building and the associated public paseo will be active visitor destinations and will significantly alter people’s perception of the Civic Center District.

8. CELEBRATION OF CITY HALL

Feature Los Angeles’s iconic building in a new urban setting. City Hall is and will continue to be the center of gravity in the Civic Center. This beacon of local identity should be celebrated. New buildings of all sizes have a place in Civic Center, but their locations and designs must consider the prominence and symbolic importance of City Hall.

New guidelines and plans for the Civic Center place taller buildings at a distance from City Hall, allowing for better visual connections across and to the District. The Civic Center District, with City Hall at its center, houses the City of Los Angeles’ highest executive, legislative, and operational branches of government. Guidelines on materials similarly create a high-quality environment, without distracting from the central focus point of the historic City Hall building.
Introduction

DOCUMENT PURPOSE

This document serves multiple purposes. Overall, it promotes high-quality design throughout the District and consistency of principles over the duration of the redevelopment of the District or until the Vision and Guidelines are amended or superseded.

This document provides guidelines that will be used by development teams and City agencies when preparing or reviewing project proposals. This document also serves as a guide for the City as an owner, occupant, and steward of the buildings and spaces that will be completed as part of the Civic Center District Master Plan.
Introduction

DOWNTOWN CONTEXT
Introduction

DISTRICT BOUNDARY

The District boundary encompasses seven city blocks and the streets that surround them. Three of these blocks will, over phases, be completely redeveloped. They include the blocks currently hosting the LA Mall, City Hall East and City Hall South, and the block that hosted the former Parker Center. City Hall, CalTrans District 7, LAPD Headquarters, and the Los Angeles Superior Court Building will remain.

The District boundary includes all of the streets that surround these seven blocks, and they were purposefully drawn so that, at the perimeter streets, they extend to the right-of-way line at the far side of the street. Hence, the boundaries will ensure that both sides of perimeter streets will be treated consistently and follow these Guidelines.
Introduction

PLANNING CONTEXT

The Vision and Guidelines build upon the 2017 Master Development Plan and the City’s other relevant planning documents. They have been drafted to complement the new city-planning approach being implemented through DTLA 2040 and re:code LA.

Relationship to the 2017 Master Development Plan

The 2017 Master Development Plan provides the vision and principles for the redevelopment of the Civic Center District. The document contains a redevelopment strategy for City-owned sites; recommends consolidation services; proposes implementation through public-private partnerships; and envisions the Civic Center as a 24/7 mixed-use civic neighborhood.

The Vision and Guidelines build upon the 2017 Master Development Plan. They focus on the spatial and aesthetic characteristics of the new Civic Center. The Vision and Guidelines deepen urban design and architectural concepts; refine the urban design plan; recommend District massing; and compose a comprehensive, accessible document.

Downtown Community Plan

The Downtown Community Plan Update, also referred to as DTLA 2040, presents Los Angeles’s new approach to city planning. It has been developed in conjunction with the comprehensive zoning code update and community plan update that consist of the following components:

- Community plan policy document
- Community plan map
- Zoning standards
- Downtown Design Guide
- Subarea-specific design guidelines

The Vision and Guidelines will be used as the basis for formalizing development guidelines that may be incorporated into the Downtown Community Plan and the Downtown Design Guide.
Documents Reviewed

Numerous other planning and implementation projects, guidelines, standards, and policies shape the broader Civic Center planning context. The following constitutes a non-exhaustive list:

• Bureau of Engineering Standard Specifications for Construction
• California High-Speed Rail
• Civic Crossroads Plan (2008)
• Complete Streets Manual (2014)
• LASCB Conceptual Stacking Plan (in Master Development Plan)
• Downtown Development Guidelines
• First and Broadway (FAB) Civic Center Park Design
• LA Metro First Last Mile Strategic Plan (2014)
• First Street Now (2005)
• Grand Avenue Project
• Los Angeles Green Building Ordinance (2017)
• La Plaza Cultura Village
• Link Union Station
• Little Tokyo Community Design Overlay (Approved 04/29/2014)
• City of Los Angeles Low Impact Development Ordinance (LID, adopted 05/09/2016)
• Civic Center Master Development Plan Report
• Metro TIGER Grant, Union Station Esplanade
• Mobility Plan 2035 (2015)
• Park 101 Feasibility Study (2008)
• Parker Center Final Environmental Impact Report (FEIR, adopted 11/2016)
• Standard Specifications for Public Works Construction (“Green Book”)
• Standard Urban Storm Water Mitigation Plan (SUSMP, adopted 2000)
• Sustainability City pLAn (2015)
• Sustainable Little Tokyo (2014)
• Ten-Minute Diamond Plan (1997)
• Union Station Master Plan (2014)
• Urban Mobility in a Digital Age (2016)
• Central City Historic Districts, Planning Districts, and Multi-Property Resources (2016)
Introduction

HOW TO USE THE GUIDELINES

The image below outlines a typical guideline page and its structure.

Guideline Category and Number (e.g. Streets and Open Spaces, 9)

Guideline Name

Guideline Intent Statement

General Guideline

Actionable Guideline Item: Metrics

Specific Guideline

Precedent Image

Recommended Development Standard

References to guidelines related to City documents (where applicable)

SO-9

CROSSWALKS

The Civic Center is a pedestrian-oriented destination. Crosswalks function as natural extensions of pedestrian paths and public spaces, designed to accommodate simple and safe pedestrian crossings.

General

- Include crosswalks en route to other pedestrian activity to provide safe crossings where people want to cross, e.g., at intersections and mid-block.
- Crosswalks play an important role in linking public spaces separated by roadways.
- All crosswalks, high-contrast markings, shortened crossing distances, and strong visibility provide for safer crossings.

Mid-Block Public Space Crossings

- Crossings between City Hall and Civic Square, between Civic Square and the Paseo, and between Paseo and Little Tokyo build a connected experience with the adjacent public spaces.

Recommended Development Standards

- In the District, all mid-block crossings are executed as raised crosswalks that connect public spaces in a safe and pedestrian-friendly manner. All crossings will be signalized.
- Crosswalks separate the width of the public space.
- Crosswalk paving to be compatible with adjacent public space paving.

Reference

* Raised crosswalks are an effective traffic-calming device for mid-block crossings.
  Image source: Consultant Team
Introduction

GUIDELINE CHECKLIST

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Urban Design Plan

UD-1 Illustrative Plan
UD-2 Plan Concept Diagrams
UD-3 Public Realm Design
UD-4 Building Height and Massing Diagrams
UD-5 District Build-Out Scenario
UD-6 LASCB Massing Studies

Primary Reviewing Department: TBD
This chapter illustrates the overall vision for the District. Building on the land use plan developed in the Civic Center Master Plan, the Urban Design Plan provides more specificity and supports a stronger set of design guidelines as outlined in this document. The plan to the right shows the overall design intent and one possible build-out scenario based on the guidelines and recommendations of this document.

This Urban Design Plan delineates the following:

• Plan Concepts
• Public Realm Design Concepts
• Ground Design Concepts
• Building Height and Massing Approach
• A District Build-out scenario
• Phasing and Land Use Diagrams
• LASCB Massing Studies

KEY

- District Boundary
- Existing Metro Stations
- Future Metro Station
- City Hall

Scale: 1" = 300’0”
Block Scale and Neighborhood Connections

As the Civic Center was established, the neighborhood’s underlying street network was altered. Streets were straightened and in some cases eliminated. This resulted in larger blocks and fewer connections to surrounding neighborhoods, Little Tokyo in particular.

New public spaces and pedestrian connections break down these blocks and provide increased connectivity within the District and to the adjoining neighborhoods.

Engaging Public Streets

For decades, street design focused on accommodating ever-higher numbers of automobiles. All too often, the response has been to orient activity inward, away from public streets, resulting in bleak, uninviting street frontages.

The re-imagined Civic Center makes a point of focusing activity on public streets. Emulating local precedents such as Little Tokyo’s 1st Street, the District will demonstrate the liveliness and diversity of the future streets of Los Angeles.
Network of Activated Open Spaces

The Civic Center has an abundance of large, flowing—and attractive—public spaces that lack human vitality and regular activity. It is a reminder that the most active and successful public spaces stand in close relationship with the buildings and spaces that surround them. New public spaces will be designed so as not to be over scaled.

The Civic Center’s new public spaces are arranged as an interconnected network. Each serves a function and is sized accordingly. All are framed by building facades that provide a sense of spatial enclosure; ground-floor uses engage them with activity.

Connected Cultural Destinations

Downtown Los Angeles has significant cultural venues: museums, auditoriums, theaters, galleries, and memorials. In particular, Little Tokyo’s 1st Street North block (bounded by 1st Street, Judge John Aiso Street, Temple Street, and Alameda Street) and Grand Avenue on Bunker Hill are home to some of Southern California’s prime cultural destinations. A sequence of new public spaces in the Civic Center District will connect them.

Beginning at Judge John Aiso Street, through the new Civic Building Paseo, across Los Angeles Street to Civic Square at the foot of the east side of City Hall, around City Hall, and finally through Grand Park, these spaces connect cultural venues small and large. These connections brings the opportunity to bridge the historic separation of Civic Center from Little Tokyo by providing a platform for new venues and spaces for cultural expression with a focus on East Asian arts and culture.
A Canvas for Sidewalk Activity

Successful public realm design begins with making space for people. The approach to the District’s sidewalks focuses on creating paved areas that are wide, as level as possible, and allow for a wide variety of activities to take place.

Pavers give the sidewalk a human scale and are more sustainable than poured concrete. Street furniture is simply bolted down so that it can be replaced with ease. Sidewalks design considers accessibility and the fact that increasing activity in the District will bring more people to the streets.

Year-Round Comfort

The public realm design of the District strives to create a comfortable year-round micro-climate at sidewalks and on public spaces. Los Angeles is known for its temperate climate, yet the City’s sidewalks can be uncomfortably warm and bright on warm days. Large-canopy trees provide shade and take the edge out of the heat. Together with strategically placed landscape elements, awnings and canopies, and carefully selected building materials they create a pleasant street-level experience: heat and glare are mitigated, noise is dampened, and surfaces have some give to them.
Active Ground Floors

In the District, the design and uses of ground floors shape the public realm experience. Varied and engaging, they make a walk down the streets interesting. Entries provide access to commercial establishments and building lobbies and connect the public to the program. Transparent windows and storefronts create a visual connection between interior and exterior spaces.

The building uses that front onto sidewalks are carefully selected to maximize opportunities for engagement. Building features like stepped floor slabs, awnings, outdoor dining areas, and others facilitate engagement with the public.

Streets for Many Modes of Mobility

At the time of writing, Angelenos are witnessing dramatic innovation in the way we move around our cities. From LA Metro’s significant investment into public transit to innovative startups that provide mobility for a small fee, mobility options abound. While we cannot anticipate all future innovations, the design of the roadway can often be modified to accommodate more users with as little as some paint.

In the District, people will be a short walk from four rail and subway stations. Streets should be designed with pedestrian safety in mind. Unused parking lanes are rethought to make greater use of the space.
Respecting City Hall’s Prominent Role

A distance-based height limit ensures that new towers maintain a respectful distance to City Hall’s tower. Towers close to City Hall have lower height limits than those that are farther away. These height limit are defined by a bowl-shaped height plan that is based on the height of City Hall’s tower.

New towers exceed 450 feet in height or the absolute height of City Hall.
Establishing Consistent Podium Height

The Vision and Guidelines do not prescribe an architectural style or materials. Instead, they rely on a consistent approach to shaping the street space to establish a consistent building scale throughout the District. Building podiums are required to be placed at build-to lines and meet a height range of 65 to 80 feet to frame streets and public spaces.

Skyline and Tower Massing

Just like the building podium concept, the Vision and Guidelines establish a consistent approach to skyline and tower massing. The taller a tower, the more stringent the massing restrictions. Towers are restricted in several ways: the floor area of each floor (maximum floor area), the longest extent of the floor (maximum plan diagonal), and the length of building faces (apparent building face).

Within these parameters, skyline expression is encouraged as part of the overall architectural concept of each building.
DISTRICT BUILD-OUT SCENARIO

This model view renders one possible build-out scenario using the building areas established by the 2017 Master Development Plan and the principles, guidelines, and standards of the Vision and Guidelines.
Land Use Diagram

KEY
- Residential
- Retail/Cultural
- Civic Office
- LASCB Phase 1
The following forms were completed as part of a study of some of the various ways in which the Phase 1 LASCB site could be addressed based on the guidelines. These are by no means mandatory or prescribed forms the building must take.

A variety of massing approaches are possible on all sites. During the preparation of the Vision and Guidelines, the LASCB served as an early focus for the development of architectural massing guidelines. For the LASCB site, solutions ranging from 15 to 29 stories were explored and found to be viable. The massing studies shown here are for reference only, and are intended to demonstrate that a diversity of design solutions can meet the intent of the Vision and Guidelines. Actual massing solutions may differ significantly from these initial studies.

**Building Placement**

- Frame streets by following build-to lines and frontage standards (A-1, A-2, A-3)
- Shape public spaces defined by build-to lines in the Urban Design Plan (A-2)
- Meet podium height requirements (A-3)
- Keep lower podium heights at Judge John Aiso Street (A-2, A-3)
General Tower Massing

- Meet inflection plane standards (A-4)
- Consider views and building energy performance when positioning and orienting towers (A-4, A-5, SI-3)
- Maintain distance-based height limits from City Hall and do not exceed 450 in height (A-5, A-6)
- Study tower massing relative to City Hall in the Grand Park view axis (A-5, A-6, A-7)
- Follow tower top articulation guidelines (A-5, A-7)

Height-Specific Tower Standards

- Identify height ranges for tower components (A-5, A-7)
- Meet height-specific average floorplate standards (A-6)
- Meet height-specific maximum diagonal standards (A-5, A-6, A-7)
- Meet height-specific maximum apparent face standards (A-4, A-5)
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Public Space Concepts

PS-1 Civic Square
PS-2 Los Angeles Street Crossing
PS-3 Civic Building Paseo
PS-4 Judge John Aiso Street Crossing
PS-5 Spring Street Art Walk
PS-6 Toriumi Plaza
PS-7 Triforium Square and Paseo

Primary Reviewing Agency:
TBD
Public Space Concepts (PS)

OVERVIEW PLAN

Public Spaces:
PS-1  Civic Square
PS-2  Los Angeles Street Crossing
PS-3  Civic Building Paseo
PS-4  Judge John Aiso Street Crossing
PS-5  Spring Street Art Walk
PS-6  Toriumi Plaza
PS-7  Triforium Square and Paseo

KEY
- - District Boundary
  M Existing Metro Stations
  M Future Metro Station
  ∗ City Hall

Scale: 1" = 300'0"
Civic Square is the District’s public living room. It accommodates civic life and civic expression for Angelenos and visitors alike.

**Size and Arrangement**

- The roughly 230-foot-by-230-foot outdoor space is located on the east side of City Hall, on axis with City Hall, Grand Park, and the John Ferraro Building. The arrangement of the buildings surrounding it will create a strong sense of spatial enclosure, a desirable characteristic that is lacking in many of Los Angeles’s public spaces. People can access the square from all directions.

**Use and Design**

- This square serves as the stage for the daily lives of its users, whether they are one-time visitors, or civic employees or nearby residents. Day-to-day activity exists along the perimeter, where allées of formal, upright evergreen trees shade walks and ground-floor storefronts. Fixed or moveable seating within the tree allées helps activate the space by inviting visitors to linger. Cafes and restaurants seize the opportunity to inhabit outdoor areas overlooking the activities on the square’s spacious central plaza.

- This plaza will host a variety of activities: markets, exhibits, group activities, daytime music events, and seasonal activities featuring holiday displays. The large scale of the square is further delineated by seating areas, displays, landscape features, and other elements that convey a sense of intimacy, and that is conducive to small group gathering.

- Civic-scaled interactive public art will activate the space and serve as a District identifier. The art installation will be appropriate to the scale of the plaza and will stand in relationship with City Hall. One key feature of this art installations will be to provide a means for visitors to engage with city government. For example, the art installation could translate and communicate proceedings in council chambers to the civic square.

- The building fronting the eastern edge of Civic Square sits on axis with City Hall and Grand Park. As such a prominent building it has the opportunity to be a highly public showcase building such as a public library, museum, or a building with a similar use.

**Access and Connections**

- The Civic Square extends westward from City Hall’s east entrance, across Main Street, to Los Angeles Street. Where Main Street meets the square along one edge, a raised mid-block crosswalk the full length of the square slows cars and ensures that the square is pedestrian-oriented. Consistent paving for the square and the crosswalk conceptually extends the square from City Hall to the future building face framing the east edge.

- Toward the east, Civic Square connects to Los Angeles Street through a pair of pedestrian paseos.

- Bike services and amenities, such as ground-floor bike hubs are encouraged to be strategically located at the entrances to the square to encourage cyclists to dismount and circulate through the District on foot.

- Well-maintained public restrooms are important to the success of the Civic Square.

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A hardscaped plaza provides a gathering space programmed for various activities
Source: fortworth.culturemap.com

Play and art combine to invite the visitors of the square to engage
Source: pinterest.com

Shade and outdoor dining provide year-round comfort for visitors
Source: theolinstudio.com
Civic Square Concept Plan

City Hall
Enhanced and raised crosswalk
Shade Structures
Canopy Trees
Interactive Public Art
Potential Site for Public Library, Museum, or similar Civic Building
Civic Square
Los Angeles Street Crossing

KEY
- LASCB Phase 1
- Civic Square

TEMPLE STREET
MAIN STREET
LOS ANGELES STREET
N
A public space that spans Los Angeles Street. Its sidewalks are an active meeting space and an enhanced crosswalk connects Civic Square with the Civic Building Paseo.

Size and Arrangement

- Los Angeles Street Crossing is a street space that provides an important pedestrian link between destinations to the west (Civic Square, City Hall, Grand Park) and the east (Civic Building Paseo, Little Tokyo) of Los Angeles Street. The space is only slightly wider than adjoining sections of Los Angeles Street, but it’s marked by streetscape improvements extending along Los Angeles Street from the Civic Square to the Civic Building Paseo entrance.

- Los Angeles Street Crossing should be completed in conjunction with the LASCB (Phase 1).

Use and Design

- Los Angeles Street Crossing is an enhanced crossing and is comprised of an extensive raised crosswalk and the adjoining sidewalks. It’s characterized by paving that spans the street from building face to building face, and by lighting that allows it to be perceived as a singular and connected space. Approaching Los Angeles Street Crossing from the north or south, visitors will experience a dramatic sense of arrival. In lieu of street trees, shade structures could provide shade at sidewalks.

- In the east-west direction, the raised and signalized crosswalk allows safe and easy pedestrian flow across the street.

- Following the Build-To Line Plan, building setbacks on either side of the crossing create expanded pedestrian spaces on the west and east sides of Los Angeles Street. The resulting spaces help receive pedestrians into areas of heightened ground-floor activities. Furnished areas at storefronts and restaurants are shaded by building canopies, awnings, and stand-alone shade structures.

- Street medians are removed within the pedestrian crosswalk and terminated appropriately.
Los Angeles Street Crossing Concept Plan

- Terminate existing street medians
- Los Angeles Street Crossing
- Enhanced and raised crosswalk
- Shade structures
- Sidewalk spaces

KEY
- LASCB Phase 1
- Los Angeles Street Crossing

To Future Civic Square
PS-3

CIVIC BUILDING PASEO

A human-scaled pedestrian connection between Los Angeles Street and Little Tokyo, with activities and amenities to make it a destination from morning until night.

Size and Arrangement

- The Paseo is located south of the new LASCB. Its west end opens to Los Angeles Street Crossing and its east end to Judge John Aiso Crossing. Ground-floor shops and amenities frame the invitingly scaled, pedestrian-only Paseo.

- Each day, several thousand people, including Civic Building occupants and visitors to the city, will activate the Paseo. The Civic Building’s mid-block lobby entrance will bring a steady stream of people to the Paseo. At the lobby, the Paseo widens to accentuate the entrance to this significant building.

- Entrances to the LASCB parking garage will be located towards the paseo to encourage pedestrian activity between parking entrances and the building lobby. A direct connection from the parking garage into the building lobby should be avoided.

- Across from the Civic Building entrance, a one- to two-story liner building will line the south side of the paseo and house commercial uses that will activate the paseo.

- The redevelopment of the 911 Call Center to the south will add a pedestrian connection from 1st Street to the Civic Building entrance. This connection can be an open-to-the-sky paseo or a covered, publicly accessible galleria.

- The Civic Building Paseo will be approximately 30 to 55 feet wide (see A-2).

- The Civic Building Paseo will be open to the sky and LASCB information and wayfinding signage shall be provided in the paseo.

Use and Design

- Semi-evergreen canopy trees provide a comfortable year-round environment. Furniture is integral to the Paseo design: simple A-frame signs and displays and shallow outdoor seating areas are envisioned to activate the ground-floor frontages; outdoor seating clusters serve multiple establishments; and interspersed seating provides casual places to rest and to observe the Paseo activities.

- Strategically placed overhead and vertical vine-covered lattice structures are recommended to provide shade for the Paseo visitors.

- Well-maintained public restrooms are important to the success of the Civic Building Paseo.

- The curated ground-floor storefront uses make the Civic Building Paseo an attractive all-day destination: cultural events, basic services, exercise and wellness, and breakfast, lunch, and dinner will attract visitors from morning until well into the evening.
Civic Building Paseo Concept Plan

- Los Angeles Street Crossing
- Canopy Trees
- Commercial Liner Building
- Lobby Entrance
- Shade Structures (location and extent TBD)
- Future Pedestrian Connection to 1st Street
- Judge John Aiso Street Crossing

KEY
- LASCB Phase 1
- Civic Building Paseo
JUDGE JOHN AISIO STREET CROSSING

Judge John Aiso Street Crossing is a public space that links the District with Little Tokyo. It establishes a connection between cultural institutions to the east and west. Its plaza space and sidewalks and on special occasions, the roadway, are a community gathering space.

Size and Arrangement

• The Judge John Aiso Street Crossing will begin at the Paseo and extend at least 80 feet parallel to the street, and will set back at least 30 feet from the property line.

Use and Design

• A raised crosswalk aligns with the Civic Building Paseo and allows easy crossing of Judge John Aiso Street. It is sited parallel to the southern project boundary and across from the LA Artcore Union Center for the Arts.

• The plaza within the public space provides space for family-oriented programming, outdoor dining, and other indoor and outdoor activities. This tree-shaded communal gathering space will feature fixed and movable street furniture, as well as art elements that encourage socialization and play.

• This plaza is an expansion of the sidewalk along the west side of Judge John Aiso Street, and will feature the same paving materials and site amenities.

• District information and wayfinding signage will be provided in the plaza.

• Bike services and amenities, such as a Bike Hub on the ground floor of an adjacent building, will encourage cyclists to dismount and walk through the District.

• The sidewalk paving at Judge John Aiso Street should preserve existing components of Little Tokyo’s sidewalk placards and should consider its extension where appropriate.

A pedestrian connection that establishes connections between the residents and district
Source: swagroup.com

Create a space for pop-up cultural events that support the surrounding communities
Source: ltsc.org

Integrate shade, furnishings, and play features to accommodate all user types
Source: Consultant team
Judge John Aiso Street Crossing Concept Plan

- **Civic Building Plaza**
- **Plaza**
- **Canopy Trees**
- **Enhanced and raised crosswalk**
- **Future Connection to Museums and Cultural Institutions**

**KEY**
- **LASCB Phase 1**
- **Judge John Aiso Street Crossing**

LA Artcore Union Center for the Arts
SPRING STREET ART WALK

Extending the LAPD sculpture garden will turn Spring Street into an art walk that extends from Second Street to the 101 Freeway and could go even further to El Pueblo de Los Angeles and Union Station.

Use and Design

- The art walk will extend the sequence of existing art installations at the west side of LAPD Headquarters. The result is a linear sculpture garden along Spring Street, with coherent and consistent landscape character and elements that run along the west side of City Hall and extend north to the 101 Freeway.

- The existing public spaces north and south of City Hall are also redesigned to enhance pedestrian connectivity in those spaces, as well as with adjacent streetscapes.

- Art plinths will be spaced at regular intervals within the existing landscaped setback along City Hall and the Federal Courthouse.

- Street tree planters will be placed along the east side of Spring Street, while the existing street trees in front of City Hall (Washingtonia robusta, or Mexican Fan Palm) and in front of LAPDHQ and the Federal Courthouse (Platanus acerifolia, or London Plane Tree) will be protected.

Local art installations provide an engaging experience for passing pedestrians
Source: flickr.com

Continue the experience created along Spring Street currently with Peter Shelton’s ‘sixbeaststwomonkeys’ (2009)
Source: petershelton.com
Spring Street Art Walk Concept Plan

Clara Shortridge Foltz Criminal Justice Center

Grand Park

Canopy Trees

City Hall

Civic Square

1ST STREET

TEMPLE STREET

STREET

BROADWAY

Spring Street Courthouse

KEY

- Spring Street Art Walk
PS-6

TORIUMI PLAZA

Toriumi Plaza will serve as a central meeting space that connects the existing First Street retail to the east and new retail to the west, as well as activities along Judge John Aiso Street.

Size and Arrangement

• Toriumi Plaza should be at least 80 feet by 150 feet.

Use and Design

• A communal gathering space will be lined with storefronts and outdoor dining. Trees will provide shade while maintaining visibility of ground-floor uses.

• Communal gathering spaces should be a mix of fixed and movable seating to allow for flexibility of uses.

• The plaza will have the capacity to host small-scale cultural events, performances, and other public gatherings.
Torumi Plaza Concept Plan

KEY
- --- LASCB Phase 1
- --- Torumi Plaza

Future Pedestrian Connection to 1st Street
To Civic Building Paseo
Judge John Aliso Street Crossing
Future Connection to Museums and Cultural Institutions
Communal Gathering Space
Canopy Trees
LA Artcore Union Center for the Arts

1ST STREET
ALSO STREET
JUDGE JOHN
TRIFORIUM SQUARE AND PASEO

The Triforium sound sculpture will be celebrated in an updated hardscaped square and will play a prominent role in anchoring the northern part of the District.

**Size and Arrangement**

- Triforium Square will be a minimum 90 feet by 90 feet directly adjacent to the pedestrian right of way.

**Use and Design**

- The Triforium is an art sculpture and sound installation created by Joseph Young. It was installed in 1975 and has recently been restored.
- The Triforium will be maintained in place unless modifications to the basement and parking structure below require relocation. New buildings will create an intimate urban square that frames and celebrates the Triforium in a new context. Using the existing topography, the Triforium will stand on a hardscaped area framed by landscaping to the west and south.
- A pedestrian paseo will create a shortcut toward Union Station and provide visibility of the Triforium from Los Angeles Street.
- Storefronts and outdoor dining areas facing the square and paseo will help activate adjacent social spaces.
- Bike services and amenities, such as a ground-floor bike hub, will encourage cyclists to dismount and circulate through the District on foot.
- Well-maintained public restrooms are important to the success of the Triforium Square and Paseo.

The Triforium sound sculpture is currently and will continue to be an anchor to the Civic Center District

Source: Consultant team
Triforium Square and Paseo Concept Plan
Design Guidelines

- Streets and Open Spaces (SO)
- Architecture (A)
- Access and Identity (AI)
- Sustainability and Infrastructure (SI)
Temporary Street Closures
Ground-Floor Frontages
Safety Features
Street Trees and Landscape
Furnishings
Flex Zones

Ground-Floor Frontages

Temporary Street Closures

Safety Features

Street Trees and Landscape

Furnishings

Flex Zones
Streets and Open Spaces

Primary Reviewing Agency
TBD
Streets and Open Space (SO)

INTERN

The Vision and Guidelines set out to reimagine the Civic Center as a downtown neighborhood with an active civic life. Realizing this goal begins by enlivening the spaces between buildings.

Public Realm Experience

Redeveloping three entire city blocks, along with improving several adjoining streets, presents an opportunity to completely rethink the public realm experience of the Civic Center, including streets, sidewalks, public spaces, and the building faces that enclose them.

A mobility-focused perspective often overlooks the fact that streets serve as a city’s primary public realm. In the Civic Center, the streets and public spaces will themselves become destinations, with qualities and characteristics that make them worth our attention and time.

This will require a different approach to designing streets, sidewalks, and public spaces in the District:

- Pedestrian-centric streets: Streets designed to accommodate multiple transportation modes, with pedestrians given highest priority.
- Human comfort: Sidewalks designed for year-round comfort, including shade.
- District experience: Consistent quality of experience, material palette, and landscape materials.
- Public space network: Integrated public space network with seamless transition between sidewalks and public spaces.

Two strategies underlie the Vision and Guidelines approach to streets and public spaces:

- Creating a contiguous canvas for pedestrian activity, defined by a simple, human-scaled approach to sidewalk paving.
- Enabling street trees to mature into large-canopy trees that provide year-round human comfort.

Consistency in the quality of experience, pedestrian comfort, material palette, and plantings and in how buildings frame public spaces, will create a recognizable District identity.

Commitment to sustainability and stormwater management will reduce the urban heat-island effect within the District.

Canvas for Sidewalk Activity

- Accessible and continuous sidewalks, without abrupt elevation changes, help provide a comfortable pedestrian experience.
- Sidewalks with continuous and consistent surface materials create an inviting and pleasant environment.
- Vehicular drop-off and street parking areas incorporated into an overall curbside approach.
- Space devoted to pedestrians prioritized over space accommodating moving cars.

Designing Streets and Open Spaces for Human Comfort

- Even though Los Angeles is in one of the more temperate places on earth, street-level human comfort is challenged by heat, glare, lack of shade, and an environment shaped by hard, concrete surfaces.
- Street designs must respond to rising temperatures and more frequent occurrences of extreme weather.
- Comfortable microclimates rely significantly on large-canopy street trees. Designing for the needs of these trees is a worthwhile long-term investment.
Street Zones

• Streets are divided into sidewalk zones and roadway zones. In the District, these zones are delineated by the curb line. The above-the-curb zones will largely be fixed; the below-the-curb zones can be flexibly adapted (preferably with paint) as mobility needs and solutions change over time.

Sidewalk Zones

Walkway Zone

• The walkway zone directly adjacent to building frontages, provides a clear path of travel for pedestrians, and may accommodate outdoor dining and similar activities. The walkway zone may be a combination of the public right-of-way and required setbacks. The build-to line plan lays out requirements for setback areas.

Parkway Zone

• The parkway zone is located between the walkway zone and the face of the curb or flex zone (see below) and may include a step-out strip.

Flex Zone

• Where they occur, drop-off and emergency vehicle zones are treated as extensions of the sidewalk. This is accomplished by extending sidewalk paving into these areas and providing vehicular access by means of a dropped curb. Integrated drop-off and emergency vehicle parking zones are delineated by bollards.

Roadway Zone

• The roadway zone, located between the curbs, accommodates multiple modes of transportation: automobiles, buses, bicycles, and alternate mobility vehicles.

Mobility Lanes

• Mobility lanes accommodate a number of modes, such as bicycles, scooters, and other forms of micromobility. In accordance with current LADOT policies, mobility lanes are executed as protected bike lanes.

Relevant Documents

• Mobility Plan 2035, Downtown Community Plan
SO-1
SURFACE MATERIALS

The design of the ground plane sets the stage for active civic life. Carefully designed and maintained, the paving of streets and sidewalks will shape a unified District experience in terms of human comfort and placemaking.

General

• District-specific paving supports a unified design approach to all sidewalks and public spaces, with the ability to selectively introduce compatible accent materials in civic public spaces.

• Human-scaled materials promote human comfort and support sustainability practices.

• Materials should be chosen in recognition that the urban environment is constantly evolving and changing infrastructure needs necessitate removal of paving for underground work.

• The amount of materials sent to landfills will be minimized.

• Paving will use high-quality and durable materials with the ability to withstand the wear and tear of the urban environment, remain in place under duress, and maintain a favorable appearance over time.

• The District has three base pavement materials: concrete unit pavers, concrete curbs, and asphalt for roadways. In addition, compatible accent paver can be used in the paseo.

• Unit pavers will be used throughout the Civic Center and other high-density city neighborhoods. Pavers are set in sand or gravel sub-bed when placed at sidewalks and public spaces. Pavers may also be set on suspended paver systems, e.g., over tree wells in high-traffic pedestrian areas.

• All paving materials and installation method for sidewalk and public space paving shall be coordinated with the Bureau of Street Services.

Concrete Unit Pavers

• Material continuity creates an expansive and generous appearance, fitting the civic scale of the District and inviting pedestrian activity within the sidewalk zones.

• Since they are set in sand or resting on suspended paver supports, pavers readily accommodate utility work, enable tree growth, and support stormwater management.

Recommended Development Standards

• A concrete paver is the primary sidewalk paving material. Three different pavers are specified for sidewalks and as base pavers for public spaces.

• All paving materials and installation method for sidewalk and public space paving shall be coordinated with the Bureau of Street Services.

Paver Characteristics

Recommended Development Standards

• Walkway zone paver: 24 x 24 inch light cool gray paver executed as stack bond, e.g., Unilock Series in Mineral Ice Gray or equal.

• Building base paver: 4 x 4 inch dark cool gray cobble executed as stack bond, e.g., Unilock Series in Onyx or equal.

• Parkway and flex zone paver: 12 x 24 inch light cool gray paver executed as running bond offset by one half paver per course, e.g., Unilock Series in Mineral Ice Gray or equal.

Poured-in-Place Concrete

• Curbs, pedestrian curb ramps, and driveway aprons are poured-in-place concrete following City Standards. Where appropriate, bus pads and lanes are also executed in concrete.

• Concrete curbs delineate sidewalk zones from roadways.

• At drop-off areas and emergency vehicle parking areas located in flex zones, concrete curbs are executed as recessed curbs to facilitate vehicular access.
This flexible paver system allows for a small section to lifted up and reset for any maintenance or repair without having to demolish a large section of sidewalk.

Asphalt

- Asphalt is the principle roadway material and readily accommodates utility work and other roadway repairs.
- Where appropriate and consistent with City Standards, asphalt can be “cool pavement” with low albedo to reduce the urban heat island effect.
- Build up municipal hot mix asphalt capacity to pave all City streets using 50% recycled asphalt.

Accent Materials

- Accent materials can set apart activity areas in public spaces, create emphasis, or accommodate functional needs of the public space design (e.g., specific activities or sustainability features). They are not prescribed but should coordinate with materials of this palette.
STREET TREES

The ability of large-canopy street trees to create comfortable microclimates makes planting trees one of the more important long-term investments toward activating the District’s public realm.

General

• While Los Angeles’s climate is temperate, downtown’s sidewalks can be an extremely hot environment due to the large amount of impervious surface areas.
• Street trees can moderate heat and glare, which is significant given the anticipated rise in urban temperatures.
• Conditions for successful tree growth, such as providing sufficient soil volume for roots to spread, maximize the ability to create comfortable year-round environments.

Species and Spacing

• Pest- and drought-resistant, large-canopy trees, with good canopy clearance and with no exceptional maintenance requirements, are preferred.
• Tree species with light foliage are preferred.
• Trees selected for their long-term effects on sidewalk maintenance, such as sap stains and root growth uplifting sidewalks.
• Street tree species at Judge John Aiso Street should be coordinated with the Sustainable Little Tokyo street tree plan.
• Species and spacing are selected in collaboration with City agencies.

• Consider Silva Cells and similar street-tree-planting systems where parkways and tree wells do not accommodate sufficient soil volume.

Parkways and Open Tree Wells

Recommended Development Standards

• Soil volume for root development shall be 600–1,000 cu. ft. with a depth of four feet.
• Parkways and open tree wells to be a minimum of five feet wide with ground planting to prevent compaction of soil from pedestrian traffic.

High Traffic Areas

• In high-traffic pedestrian areas accommodate adequate soils volume below paved areas and using suspended paver systems that allow pavers to “float” above tree planters.

Tree Well Design

• Consider a variety of tree well designs including continuous parkway, individual tree wells, and suspended-paver-system tree surrounds.
• Enable full tree development by providing sufficient soil volume for root developments while protecting sidewalks from root damage.
Trees that shade sidewalks and public spaces lower summer temperatures.

- Large-canopy street trees significantly reduce head on urban sidewalk
  Image Source: Consultant team

- Vertical plantings in tree wells protect the soil from excessive compaction around street trees and their roots
  Image Source: Consultant team
PUBLIC REALM FURNISHINGS

Street furnishings enhance the experience and functionality of the public realm, both at sidewalks and in public spaces. Thoughtfully placed, they can accommodate people of different abilities and ages and allow Angelenos and visitors to gather.

**General**

- Well-selected street furniture supports civic life and the usability of sidewalks and public spaces and encourages a clean and safe environment.
- Use street furniture that responds to the needs of different user groups, ages, and modes of transportation.
- The placement of furniture is as important as its selection; the right furniture in the wrong place will not function well.
- Select simply designed furniture that is either fully movable or bolted down, rather than built in; this allows easy replacement as the furniture ages or needs to be moved over time.
- Curate furniture of similar finish and form, with a preference for a simple, modern look, and form a palette of compatible pieces.
- District-identifying street furniture will invite lingering and help activate the space.

**Location**

**Benches and Seats**

- Orient seating toward views or toward activity on sidewalks or public spaces.
- Building-adjacent rather than curb-adjacent locations are preferred so people do not feel their backs are overly exposed to either passing traffic or pedestrians.

**Bicycle Racks**

- Locate curb-adjacent, preferably near building entries and other destination points.

**Trash Receptacles**

- Larger bike corrals, which provide more natural surveillance, versus dispersed individual lock-up locations are preferred.
- Co-locate trash receptacles with other street furniture, lighting, or wayfinding signage.
- Locate trash receptacles adjacent to but clear of pedestrian throughways.

**Bus Shelters**

- Locate bus shelters out of pedestrian throughways, but co-located with other street elements to limit visual clutter.
- Select one bus shelter type to complement the District’s furniture palette from the approved City standards.
Street furnishings are routinely maintained and replaced to meet changing design preferences.

- Movable and bolted down street furnishings can easily be replaced as stylistic preferences change
  Source: Consultant team

- Secure bike parking in visible public areas can encourage cycling
  Source: designboom.com

- Movable chairs and tables can be rearranged to meet the specific needs of users
  Source: Consultant Team
SO-4

DISTRICT LIGHTING

Lighting contributes to the perceived and actual safety of the District. A consistent lighting approach also supports wayfinding and enhances the Civic Center’s visual identity.

General

- Lighting is equally distributed through the district and contributes to the sidewalk and public realm experience.
- Ample and strategic lighting provides safety and accessibility at all times of the day and night and can function as a wayfinding system.

Pedestrian Lighting

Recommended Development Standard

- Install Dark Sky Association compliant and energy-efficient lighting.
- Use pedestrian-scale streetlights, with 12- to 14-foot high poles.

Lighting Standard

- Pedestrian standards should match the existing Downtown lighting standards.
- Select lighting for ease of maintenance and availability of replacement parts.
- Maintain specified illumination levels for sidewalks and public spaces.

Location

- Place pedestrian-level lighting at civic public spaces and along major walks; illumination for activity areas may require additional lighting by other sources.
- Place additional lighting near entrances to building lobbies to provide visual cues for building entries.

Security Lighting

- Locate lighting for vehicular entries, gated areas, utility areas, and restricted access, without drawing attention to spaces that are not intended to be public.
- Illuminated bollards are preferred.
- Lighting to be Dark Sky Association compliant.

Reference

- Downtown Design Guidelines (Section 9.I Lighting)

Image source: Consultant team

Downtown street lighting per the current city standards

DRAFT URBAN DESIGN VISION AND GUIDELINES
SO-5

LANDSCAPE

Opportunities for extensive landscaping are limited in an environment that focuses on pedestrian activity; nonetheless, landscaping plays an important role. When deployed thoughtfully it will enhance human comfort, organize spaces, and support stormwater management strategies.

**General**
- Diverse landscaping enhances an urban setting and pedestrian spaces.
- Support opportunities for tree wells and landscape planters on street sidewalks.
- Prioritize sustainable, native landscaping that uses little to no water and assists with stormwater management.
- Avoid creating areas that are concealed from view.

**Tree Well and Parkway Plantings**
- Designed to keep pedestrian traffic (people and pets) out of tree wells to avoid unnecessary compaction of soil.
- Parkway planting should have limited height to provide visibility, but discourage pedestrians from stepping on it.

**Landscape Planters on Streets**
- Opportunities for landscape planters vary. Primary opportunities are adjacent to ground-floor residential and office lobbies. Opportunities at retail spaces are limited, to prevent dividing storefront displays from sidewalk activity.
- Simple planter designs are preferred, without curbs, elaborate concrete, or other permanent structures.
- Recessed planters with metal edges are preferred where edges function as seating.

**Recommended Development Standards**
- Landscape plantings shall be low, maintained at not more than 36 inches in height. Trees and plants on trellises or similar structures are exempt from this requirement.
CIRCULATION AND CURBSIDE SPACE PLAN

The circulation and curbside space plan contemplates a District where more people get around without a personal car. Defunct curbside parking lanes provide a space resource that can expand pedestrian areas, designated drop-off and pickup zones, curb extensions, and parking for bikes and micro-mobility devices.

General

The plan outlines the following components:

- Enhanced crosswalks locations
- Emergency vehicle parking zones
- Curbside parking zones
- Curbside drop-off and loading zones
- Potential boarding island locations
- Curb cut limitations

Curb Cut Allotment

Recommended Development Standards

- The plan designates frontage areas with black dashed lines and corresponding maximum numbers of curb cuts. At each designated frontage the maximum number of curb cuts shall not be exceeded.
- Frontages without a curb cut allocation shall not have a curb cut.
- Curb cuts that provide emergency vehicle access only are exempt.
SIDEWALK FLEX ZONES

Allow curbside drop-off and parking for emergency vehicles, but not for government employees; when not needed for emergency vehicles, these spaces become an extension of the pedestrian realm.

General

- Focus on creating an active pedestrian-friendly District, with opportunities to creatively expand the pedestrian realm beyond the sidewalk.
- There is limited curbside parking and loading zones in the District for safety concerns; therefore, utilizing the sidewalk flex zones will help alleviate the need for these spaces through providing flexible curb management and multimodal general public access in the District.

Design and Location

- Treat drop-off areas and flex zones with the same materiality as sidewalks and bound on the roadway side by recessed concrete curb.
- Slope so that sidewalk flex zones merge with sidewalks, but are separated from them by bollards.
- Flex zones are located in place of traditional curb-side parking lanes. A plan shall indicate the proposed locations of flex zones and flex zone areas allocated toward passenger loading.

Curbside Management

- Loading zone areas are for passenger and goods pick-up and drop-off, as these uses exist today and are expected to increase. By designing for these zones at strategic locations and working with mobility companies to use them for pick-up and drop-off activity, ad-hoc loading that creates safety hazards and causes double-parking can be greatly reduced.
- When curb space is programmed correctly, modal conflicts decrease. When possible, use curbside design and curb management to prioritize safe bicycle facilities.
- Curbside parking is not to be designated for city employees or other special users. On-street parking is be priced and publicly available to improve access to municipal facilities. Where public on-street parking is not provided due to security concerns, do not allocate that space for reserved City parking. Rather, government employees will have off-street parking options, and space deemed unsuitable for public parking at the curb is reallocated for loading, additional landscaping, pedestrians, or bicycle storage.

Recommended Development Standards

- Where street parking is priced, manage pricing toward an 85% occupancy target.
Vehicular loading bays are incorporated into the sidewalk.

- Shortened crossing distance at crosswalk
- Official Vehicle Parking
- Shortened crossing distance at mid-block crossing
- Micro-mobility Parking

Source: Consultant Team

Loading bays located above the dropped curb and delineated with bollards | UC Davis
Source: Consultant Team

Loading bays located above the dropped curb and delineated with bollards | Seattle
Source: Consultant Team
TEMPORARY STREET CLOSURES

Temporary street closures are an excellent way to increase the size and accessibility of the public realm during weekends and special occasions.

General

- Identify prioritized blocks and intersections for temporary closures through an analysis of use type.
- Prioritize portions of streets in front of indoor and outdoor public gathering spaces for the location of temporary street closures.
- The City will work with specific tenants and neighborhood groups to identify streets and times for closures.
- Protect streets and blocks identified for regular temporary closures for special events, farmers markets, public space extensions, and other reasons with a system of retractable bollards.
- The paving in these areas should be distinct from the typical vehicular travel surface and be generally consistent with sidewalks and crosswalk surfaces.

Recommended Development Standards

- Configure a segment of Judge John Aiso Street so that it can be closed for community and arts events. The street closure areas shall be coordinated with City agencies and preserve vehicular access to parking facilities. Rated retractable bollards are installed in the roadway.
The Civic Center is a pedestrian-oriented destination. Crosswalks function as natural extensions of pedestrian paths and public spaces, designed to accommodate simple and safe pedestrian crossings.

**General**

- Visible crosswalks encourage robust pedestrian activity by providing safe crossings where people want to cross, e.g., at intersections and mid-block.
- Crosswalks play an important role in linking public spaces separated by roadways.
- At crosswalks, high-contrast markings, shortened crossing distances, and strong visibility provide for safer crossings.

**Mid-Block Public Space Crossings**

- Crossings between City Hall and Civic Square, between Civic Square and the Paseo, and between Paseo and Little Tokyo build a connected experience with the adjacent public spaces.
- Crosswalks span the entire length of the public space.

**Recommended Development Standards**

- In the District, all mid-block crossings are executed as raised crosswalks that connect public spaces in a safe and pedestrian-friendly manner. All crossings will be signalized.
- Crosswalks span the width of the public space.
- Crosswalk paving to be compatible with adjacent public space paving.

Raised crosswalks are an effective traffic-calming device for mid-block crossings.

Image source: Consultant Team
SO-10
CURB CUTS

Vehicular curb cuts may be necessary to access on-site parking garages and loading areas, but their impact on sidewalks must be limited and potential conflicts between vehicles and pedestrians mitigated.

General

• Curb cuts disrupt the pedestrian environment through unexpected grade changes and increased chance of vehicular–pedestrian contact.

• The impact of curb cuts can be reduced by limiting their number and controlling their dimensions and locations.

• Wherever possible, allow curb cuts to be used for multiple purposes, e.g., parking access combined with loading access.

Location and Number

• Curb cuts for vehicular access to the project are to be located at Temple Street (not more than one curb cut) or Judge John Aiso Street (not more than two curb cuts). No curb cuts are permitted at the Los Angeles Street frontage.

• Locate curb cuts away from high-volume pedestrian areas, prominent building frontages, and public spaces to limit disruption of ground floor spaces.

• Consolidate pedestrian entry points to buildings and group destinations within the development instead of along the street. Serve multiple purposes by allowing parking access and loading access through the same curb cut.

Dimensions and Design

• Pave curb cuts and sidewalk with same material to create a continuous path for pedestrians.

• Use bollards to guide vehicles across sidewalks, if necessary.

Recommended Development Standards

• Vehicular curb cuts are limited to not more than two vehicular lanes each; refer to LADOT Standards for design requirements.

References

• See also Parking and Loading (A-11)
SO-11

MULTI-MODAL DESIGN

Streets within the District safely and efficiently accommodate various modes of traffic and give priority to the most vulnerable users of the street. Flexible street design helps minimize future cost as technology and street layout inevitably change.

General

• Simple delineation of roadway and sidewalk with paint and barriers provide flexibility to reallocate roadway space over time.
• Design streets to be consistent with LADOT policies and practices.

Shared Space Approach

• Narrower travel lanes discourage speeding and increase driver awareness of the surrounding environment.
• Position bicycle lanes behind highly used transit stops (creating “transit boarding islands”) to minimize conflict between cyclists and buses.
• Encourage transit use by providing comfortable facilities at transit stops (e.g., shelters and benches).
• Coordinate with City and LA Metro installation of concrete pavement on curb-side lanes along transit routes in order to maximize pavement longevity and minimizes disruption for repairs and maintenance.

Micromobility

• Wide, designated paths for bicycles can also accommodate other micromobility devices, such as electric scooters.
• Designated micro-mobility (i.e., “dockless”) device parking areas in flex zones or buffer areas minimize disruption to sidewalks or bicycle lanes.
BOARDING ISLANDS

Boarding islands, sometimes called bus bulbs, resolve potential conflicts between bicyclists and buses at bus stops. Appropriately placed, boarding islands increase safety for bicyclists and create high-quality boarding areas.

General

• Boarding islands should be considered for all District bus stops that adjoin a bike path. In coordination with City departments and LA Metro, the merits, placements, and design should be evaluated. Their design shall follow City standards.

References

• BOE/LADOT Design Manual “Bus Bulbs”
SAFETY FEATURES

The civic nature of this District requires heightened safety considerations. Well-designed safety measures help activate a neighborhood and prevent it from becoming a fortress. Safety features can be rated and non-rated.

**General**

- Each building and public space will require a safety assessment; this should be conducted with the intent to deliver the active, pedestrian-oriented environment envisioned in the Vision and Guidelines.
- In streets and public spaces the primary safety features should be curbs and bollards; moats, boulders, and furniture designed to function as protective barriers should be avoided.
- Bollards should be employed only where needed for safety and to delineate vehicular drop-off areas or permitted curb cut areas.

**Rated Bollards**

- A continuous perimeter of rated bollards around buildings is likely not required, but protection against vehicle intrusions at civic office building entries and public spaces must be addressed.
- Rated bollards are placed near building entrances to civic uses and public spaces for heightened security measures and to prevent vehicle intrusions.

**Non-Rated Bollards**

- While non-rated bollards will not stop vehicles, they can guide them and highlight potential conflict points between modes of travel.
- Non-rated bollards are used to guide vehicles and delineate pedestrian areas, e.g., at edges of loading zones.

**References**

- See also Temporary Street Closures (SO-8)

**Type**

- Rating and bollard design per safety assessment and to complement public space design.
- Finish material, color, and general aesthetic should complement street furnishings.

References
Primary Reviewing Agency: TBD

- Rooftops
- Tower Height and Massing
- Preserve City Hall Views
- Podium Height and Scale
- Bridges and Tunnels
- Active Ground Floors
Architecture

- Courtyards
- Tower Top Articulation
- Materials and Transparency
- Parking and Loading
- Paseos and Gallerias
Architecture (A)

INTENT

The architecture of the District reflects the diversity of Los Angeles, fits the civic character of the Civic Center, and respects City Hall’s prominence as the District’s iconic building. There is no prescribed style or character for the District.

Framing of the Public Realm

It is the intent of the Vision and Guidelines to provide designers with considerable liberty to explore and realize different approaches to designing buildings in the Civic Center, as long as the architecture frames and activates the public realm.

- Design should begin with consideration of the sidewalk experience, the way most visitors will experience the Civic Center. Work from the ground floor up to the top of the building.
- Create a consistently proportioned, human-scaled street spaces that help enliven the ground-floor experience.
- Frame streets and public spaces as designated in the Build-to Line Plan.

Massing

- Prioritize simple massing with clear building lines that create a cohesive form.
- Compose buildings of one or multiple discernible masses. Layered facades and façade treatments, and elements that appear “tacked on,” are discouraged.
- Building components should respect City Hall’s height and massing: podium, podium to tower transition, lower tower, upper tower, and tower top.

Scale

- Scale of the building should to respond to the surrounding context. Little Tokyo sets a successful scale for ground-floor uses; while new buildings will be significantly larger, the ground-floor design will reflect the existing scale.
- The scale of the building should help create a pleasant and well-proportioned street space.
- Avoid creating long building walls that block views in upper stories.

Recommended Development Standards

- While the District allows for significant height, buildings shall not exceed the height of City Hall.
- A height benchmark 80 feet above street level shall define the street space. Above 80 feet, buildings recede from the street space.
District architecture is primarily composed of simple building masses.

- 185 Post Street, San Francisco, CA
  WZ Architecture
  Source: archello.com

- Via 57 West, New York, NY
  BIG
  Source: nypost.com

- Centurion Commercial Center, Hamburg
  Baumschlager & Eberle
  Source: hafencity.com
GROUND-FLOOR DESIGN

Active uses and public entries fronting sidewalks and public spaces are the primary means of encouraging sidewalk activity and enlivening the District’s public realm. They serve as a link between the exterior public spaces and the uses inside buildings; the stronger the links, the more interesting, active, and vibrant a neighborhood tends to be.

General

- The District should have a consistent pattern of active ground-floor spaces and building lobbies that encourage pedestrian activity at all times of day.
- Ground-floor spaces that adjoin a street or public space should be designed to accommodate active ground-floor uses and building lobbies.
- Uninhabitable spaces, blank walls, spaces that accommodate vehicular functions, and utility rooms should be located away from streets, with as little frontage exposure as possible.
- The Vision and Guidelines identify three ground-floor frontage types: active ground floors, building lobbies and entries, and blank walls and vehicular spaces. Ground-floor frontages must meet the Vision and Guidelines for the appropriate type.
- To establish an identifiable wayfinding pattern, locate active ground floor uses near building corners; place other building entrances and lobbies to civic offices at mid-block.
- Frontages activate the ground floors and the edges of the sidewalks; avoid blank walls and frontages with long single uses.
- Visually connect interior uses with the public realm.
- Design of ground floor frontage should consider that the field of vision extends well above the height of a person, and the effects of horizontal mullions on the field of view.

Recommended Development Standards

- Ground floors, or ground floors in conjunction with the level above, have a one- to two-story expression at public frontages, 20 to 35 feet high, except that ground floor facing Judge John Aiso Street may have a one-story expression 18 to 35 feet high. Ground floors facing Little Tokyo across 1st and Judge John Aiso Streets should consider the scale of adjoining ground floors.

Active Ground-Floors

- Active ground floors accommodate a variety of uses, including retail, restaurants, gyms, cultural venues, customer service offices, community services, or similarly sidewalk-engaging functions.
- Ground floor civic offices are acceptable uses provided the spaces are designed and built so that they can be converted to more active uses in the future.
- An active ground floor links the public realm to the uses of the buildings.
- Where necessary, the building floor slab is stepped to reduce the grade difference between the interior ground-floor space and the sidewalk. Access entries with minimal grade change, and step building’s ground floor as necessary.
- Encourage outdoor seating, displays, A-frame signs, and benches at active frontages.
- Outdoor dining is encouraged where appropriate.
- Limit outdoor dining enclosures so that space is available when these areas are not in use.
- Ground floor design should consider use changes over time and anticipate changing functional requirements, e.g., restaurant equipment.
- Comply with City standards.
Ground-floor design should consider first how it can contribute to an active civic life in the District.

- **Ground-Floor Indoor-Outdoor Spaces**
  
  Large openings at ground-floor commercial uses help activate sidewalks and public spaces
  
  Source: Consultant team

- **Ground-Floor Frontage Diagram**
  
  Ground-floor active spaces with frequent entries line building frontages. Building lobbies are located toward the middle of the block.
Recommended Development Standards

- Active ground floors shall occupy at least 60% of the length of the street-level frontage.

- Functional entries shall be placed no more than 75 feet apart along all building frontages. At building corners, the first functional entry is placed no more than 50 feet from the corner. Exception: At grocery stores and fitness centers functional entries are placed no more than 125 feet apart along all building frontages.

- Ground-floor spaces shall have a floor-to-floor height of 18 feet or more and are at least 30 feet deep, measured from the face of the building.

- At entries, the grade change between the interior ground-floor space and the sidewalk shall be kept to a minimum, no more than 18 inches in height measured from the adjoining sidewalk. Wherever possible a grade change of 10 inches or less is encouraged.

Awning and Shade Devices

- Architectural awnings and shade devices that extend over the sidewalk are encouraged.

- Awnings should be of durable, high-quality materials. Awnings made of fabric are discouraged.

Building Lobbies

- Building lobbies provide access to civic offices and residential uses and are integrated into the overall ground-floor experience.

- Where building lobbies have multiple entries, resolve grade differences within the interior of the lobby.

- Lobby frontages are located toward the middle of blocks, leaving corner frontages to more active ground-floors uses.

- Lobby spaces are scaled according to the buildings they serve. Civic office lobbies should reflect their public character with tall ceilings and spaces that accommodates reception functions, waiting, and (if appropriate) commercial uses.

- Lobby frontages may be inset from the build-to-line to create a small forecourt as long as the entire frontage meets build-to-line requirements.

Recommended Development Standards

- Building lobbies shall occupy no more than 40% of the length of a street frontage; each lobby frontage occupies no more than 100 feet of frontage.

Blank Walls, Utility Spaces, and Vehicular Spaces

- Frontages that accommodate blank walls, utility spaces, and vehicular spaces, including vehicular ingress/egress space, are subject to the restrictions below.

Recommended Development Standards

- Blank walls, utility spaces, and vehicular spaces combined may occupy no more than 20% of the length of a street frontage; such spaces shall occupy no more than 50 feet of continuous frontage; such frontage segments shall be separated by active ground-floor space or lobbies.

Transparency

- All ground-floor spaces facing a public space must be kept visible and unshuttered at all times. This must be stipulated in all tenant leases.

Recommended Development Standards

- All ground-floor frontages that face a public space must have clear glass on at least 60% of their façades along the adjoining sidewalk and 12 feet in height.

- Blank walls (without doors or windows) are limited to a total of 75 feet in length and no more than 25% of any building frontage.

Exceptions

- The block frontage facing the freeway off-ramp is exempt from the Vision and Guidelines.
The detailing of ground floors significantly affects the sidewalk experience.

- Grade difference is resolved within the building creating a continuous experience for the pedestrian outside.
  
  Source: Consultant team

- Outdoor Dining Areas
  Outdoor dining areas bring activity directly to the sidewalk.
  
  Source: Consultant team
BUILD-TO LINE PLAN

The Vision and Guidelines envision an urban district in which buildings line streets and frame public spaces. Since the District will be built by different development teams in multiple phases, it is crucial that the framing of the public realm follow a coherent approach. The build-to line plan on this page demonstrates the urban design direction for the entire District.

Build-to Lines

The build-to lines regulate the placement of building front-ages relative to the property line.
The podiums of buildings frame nearly all street and public spaces. They establish a civic scale throughout the District and create a positive sense of enclosure at the street level that is characteristic of successful urban spaces.

**General**

- Podiums shape street spaces with an approximate height-to-width ratio of 3:4. They should have a strong street presence and frame street corners, except where a public space is shown in the urban design plan; eroded corners and corner plazas not designated in the urban design plan are strongly discouraged.
- Podium frontages must meet the build-to line requirements of the Urban Design Plan.
- Where two or more building podiums frame one public space, the podiums should be carefully planned so that the public space is clearly defined.

**Recommended Development Standards**

- Podiums must be at least 65 feet and not more than 80 feet in height, except that podiums facing Judge John Aiso Street are at least 45 feet and not more than 65 feet in height.

**Building Placement and Podium Height**

**Recommended Development Standards**

- Building frontages shall occupy at least 80% of the build-to line at each block frontage, with the first 35 feet of height set at or within one foot of the build-to line.
- Building faces between 35 feet in height and the top of the podium shall occupy at least 60% of the build-to line at each block frontage.
- Reference Build-To Plan (A-2)

**References**

- Ground-Floor Design (A-1)
- Inflection Plan (A-4)

**Party Wall Conditions**

- Where two building phases abut each other, party walls with a minimal gap between the buildings are strongly encouraged. At build-out, views of party walls should be minimized; this can be achieved by matching the adjoining buildings’ faces relative to the build-to line.
- Phase-boundary building breaks are discouraged, except where they create a shared entry court upon which several building entrances or lobbies front. Each entry court is treated as one building break and is subject to the requirements above.

**Building Breaks**

- Building faces that front building breaks are subject to active frontage and ground-floor design guidelines. Building breaks that at build-out expose a neighboring building’s party wall are strongly discouraged.
A consistent podium height brings continuity to the public realm and an appropriate scale to the District’s street spaces.

- Residential podium with indoor/outdoor space
  Source: Consultant Team

- Office podium with punched openings
  Source: Consultant Team

- Mixed-use podium
  Source: Consultant Team

- Podium-Street Space Relationship
The inflection plane creates “comfortable lightness” in the public realm; it is achieved by shifting tower masses toward the interiors of sites so that they do not dominate the street-level experience.

**General**

Recommended Development Standards

- The inflection plane guideline regulates tower location relative to the public while providing maximum flexibility. Building masses located above 80 feet in height may not penetrate the inflection plane, except as provided for in tower top articulation and the standards below.
- The inflection plane originates 80 feet above the build-to line and inclines 8 feet toward the interior of the site for every 100 feet in height.
- To allow for the articulation of tower massing, the short side of a tower not more than 100 feet in length measured along the build-to line may penetrate the inflection plane as long as all other tower faces meet all encroachment planes, i.e., this does not apply to corner towers. This exception also does not apply at the 1st and Judge John Aiso Street frontages.
Inflection Plane Concept
The inflection plane sets a height datum along streets and public spaces and ensures that tall buildings don’t overpower the public realm.

Inflection Plane | Possible Building Responses
Inflection plane standards do not prescribe building form and provide opportunity for creative responses.

Exemption to Inflection Plan
Under specific circumstances, short tower faces may penetrate the inflection plane.
TOWER MASSING

The redeveloped Civic Center will be recognizable by its well-proportioned skyline. Each new building has the opportunity to enhance the skyline, and will weigh its tower massing strategy in relation to its program, building function, sustainability approach, and relationship to City Hall.

General

- Upper building portions use the opportunity to shape the identity of the District while considering existing view corridors, building functionality, and sustainable design.
- Tower massing consists of the following tiers: podium to tower transition, lower tower, and upper tower; the tower tops are subject to tower-top-articulation guidelines.
- Slender building proportions with a high height-to-width ratio are encouraged; “wedding-cake” towers are discouraged.

Tower Orientation and Position

- Towers should consider their solar orientation to optimize the building’s energy performance.
- Grand Park View Corridor: Buildings placed in the view corridor of Grand Park will consider the impact on the view looking east from Grand Park toward City Hall. Considerations include the axial relationship of the John Ferrero Building and City Hall, and the view of City Hall looking down Grand Park.

Recommended Development Standards

- For optimal solar orientation, design towers such that 60% of the tower façade area of conditioned spaces is oriented within ±20 degrees of geographical east-west.

Podium to Tower Transition

Recommended Development Standards

- Applicable to building components above the podium and up to 165 feet in height.
- Maximum average floorplate and maximum plan diagonal shall have no limit.
- Maximum apparent face: 230 feet in length; longer faces require articulation by means of a façade break.

Lower Tower

Recommended Development Standards

- Applicable to building components between 165 and 325 feet in height.
- Maximum average floorplate: 18,500 GSF
- Maximum plan diagonal: 225 feet
- Maximum apparent face: 200 feet in length; longer faces require articulation by means of a façade break.

Upper Tower

Recommended Development Standards

- Applicable to building components between 325 and 450 feet in height.
- Maximum average floorplate: 15,000 GSF
- Maximum plan diagonal: 190 feet
- Maximum apparent face: 150 feet in length; longer faces require articulation by means of a façade break.

Explanation of Metrics

- Average Floorplate Size: The maximum average floorplate is computed by dividing the total gross floor area of all floors of one height tier by the number of floors.

References

- Tower Top Articulation (A-7)
UPPER TOWER
- Architectural Appurtenances
- Maximum 450 ft

Maximum Average
Floorplate: 15,000 GSF

LOWER TOWER
- Maximum Average
Floorplate: 18,500 GSF

POD IUM TOWER TRANSITION
- Maximum Average
Floorplate: No Limit

POD I UM
- Maximum Average
Floorplate: No Limit

Tower Massing Concept Diagram

Maximum Plan Diagonal

Park Tower | San Francisco
Source: SF Chronicle
HEIGHT LIMITS

City Hall is an icon of Los Angeles. All new buildings in the District will stand in relation with City Hall to preserve its prime status. New buildings will not exceed its height; buildings in close proximity will limit their height to preserve the visibility of City Hall’s tower.

General

Recommended Development Standards

• No portion of any building shall exceed the absolute height of City Hall.

• No portion of any building except as provided in tower top articulation shall exceed 450 feet in height.

Distance-Based Height Limit

• In addition to the general height limit, buildings are subject to a height limit relative to their distance to City Hall’s tower. Buildings will not exceed an elliptical height plane as described by the adjacent diagrams. The elliptical height plane has a height-to-width ratio of one times City Hall’s tower height by one and a half times said height.

View Axes and Grand Park
View Corridor

• View axes shown in the Illustrative Plan shall preserve views of City Hall’s tower from the public right of way; view axes terminate at City Hall’s tower and have a clear width of at least 60 feet.

• View axes need not extend to the ground plane; projects shall demonstrate visibility of City Hall’s tower from the public realm.

• Projects that locate building masses in such a way that they are visible in the view corridor established by Grand Park looking toward City Hall shall consider their visual impact on this corridor. Projects will demonstrate their approach to preserving the axial view of City Hall through a view study.
All height limits are based on height thresholds established by City Hall.

**Grand Park View Corridor**
The view of City Hall from the top of Grand Park is photogenic, and new towers should consider their visual impact on it.
Source: Consultant team

**Distance-Based Height Limit Concept**
Building heights in close proximity to City Hall are limited by an elliptical plane that is based on the height of City Hall’s tower.

**Distance-Based Height Limit Section**
Building Height Envelope relative to City Hall. Maximum building heights are referenced to City Hall’s tower. Closer buildings have lower height limits than those that are farther away.
New tall buildings make use of the City’s recent building code changes to create dynamic skyline expressions. Creativity in creating tower tops that accentuate a building’s architecture should be actively considered, as long as they do not compete with City Hall’s iconic tower top.

**General**

- Tower tops are architecturally integrated with the overall building design.
- Tower tops avoid expansive flat tops; buildings that taper and create shaped tower tops are encouraged; needle-like spires are discouraged.
- Towers with small upper floorplates, 8,000 GSF or less, do not need to articulate the tower top.
- While variation of tower tops can be accommodated, restraint should be made such that the City Hall tower top remains prominent.

**Recommended Development Standards**

- Above 325 feet in height, uninhabited appurtenances may exceed height limits by up to 15 percent of the tower height, except that they may not exceed the absolute height of City Hall.

**Dimensional Requirements**

- Maximum tower top footprint: 9,000 GSF
- Maximum plan diagonal: 125 feet
Articulated tower tops add to the district skyline and integrate with each buildings overall architectural concept.

Salesforce Tower | San Francisco
Source: Consultant Team

Fremont Residences | San Francisco
Source: Consultant Team

Tour First | Paris, France
Source: Kohn Pederson Fox (KPF)

Title Guarantee Building,
Los Angeles, CA | The Parkinsons
Source: Los Angeles Public Library
ROOFTOPS

Urban rooftops are a space resource and a building’s fifth facade; they accommodate indoor-outdoor activities and sustainability features, and are designed with the understanding that they can be seen from above and below.

General

• Rooftops are designed to maximize their usefulness as indoor-outdoor spaces and to accommodate sustainability features. Rooftop features such as cool roofing, green roofing, and photovoltaic systems that are visible from the street level integrate with the overall architecture and avoid a cluttered appearance.

• Mechanical screens are subject to height limits; they are designed to integrate with the overall architecture.

Recommended Development Standards

• Rooftop mechanical equipment shall be screened from view from the street level and from elevated points in other buildings.

References

• Height Limits (A-6)
COURTYARDS

Block interiors accommodate private and back-of-house functions so that the public spaces can thrive. When possible, they serve as amenity spaces for building occupants; when necessary, they accommodate circulation, loading, and similar functions away from the District’s street frontages.

General

- Courtyard uses include amenities for residents or employees, playgrounds, communal areas, and outdoor dining areas. Active uses should be prioritized at public sidewalks and public space frontages; these uses should only be located in a courtyard when the public realm is fully active. Courtyards can also accommodate loading and other back-of-house uses.

- Any courtyards in the District should generally be enclosed on all sides and interior to the block; openings onto courtyards are subject to building break limitations; openings that connect public spaces with courtyards are strongly discouraged.

References

- Parking and Loading (A-11)
PASEOS AND GALLERIAS

Paseos are open-to-the-sky spaces that, together with their covered counterparts, gallerias, provide publicly accessible pedestrian through-connections that further increase the District’s connectivity.

General

- Paseos and gallerias occur where indicated in the Urban Design Plan. This section does not apply to public spaces, including the specifically defined Civic Building Paseo.
- Gallerias can be enclosed by a roof; tall spaces and transparent roofs are encouraged.
- Ground floors fronting paseos and gallerias should adhere to ground-floor design and active frontage guidelines.

Recommended Development Standards

- As pedestrian connections, paseos and gallerias need not be overly wide; a width of 45 to 60 feet should be considered.
- Paseos and gallerias are publicly accessible between 8 am and 6 pm or during business hours, whichever is greater. This is a minimum and does not apply to Civic Building Paseo which is publicly accessible 24/7. Other paseos might be residential or office only and limited hours might be appropriate.

References

- Urban Design Plan (UD-1)
- Ground-Floor Design (A-1)
Parking and loading areas discretely serve the vehicular access needs of buildings; they are located at block interiors or underground to minimize their impact on the public realm.

**General**

**Recommended Development Standards**

- Parking and loading areas are located below grade or behind habitable space; they shall not front streets or public spaces.
- Parking may be structured or automated; surface parking is not permitted.
- Entrances to parking and loading facilities are integrated with the architecture. Each entrance is limited to no more than one lane in and one lane out. Refer to LADOT standards for dimensions. Where two vehicular entrances adjoin each other, they are separated by a vertical facade element. Entrances that serve multiple purposes, such as combined parking and loading, are strongly encouraged. The number of entrances to parking and loading facilities cannot exceed the allowed number of curb cuts for the street frontage.
- Street-fronting porte-cochers are not permitted; if a porte-cochère is desired it shall be located at the interior of the site, making use of the permitted vehicular entrances and curb cuts.

**References**

- Curb Cuts (SO-10)
- Courtyards (A-9)
- Ground-Floor Design (A-1)
Bridges and tunnels divert activity from public streets; bridges visibly indicate alternate circulation paths and block views. Both are permitted only under special circumstances.

**General**

- The use of tunnels and bridges to bypass the public realm is strongly discouraged. Locate them only where there are safety concerns for specific individuals, such as public officials. Tunnels are preferred. Limit access to the smallest number of approved users by means of access control devices.
- Bridges may not cross public spaces.
- Bridges that connect integrated developments across paseos and gallerias other than the Civic Building Paseo are permitted, e.g., access between adjoining offices or access to residential amenity spaces.

**Recommended Development Standards**

- Bridges are limited to one floor in height and 15 feet in width.
- When placing bridges, impacts on views, and in particular views of City Hall, must be considered; bridges will be located between 35 and 80 feet in height.
The buildings’ exterior cladding materials reflect the District’s significant role as the center of civic government; they signify permanence and durability, and are chosen so that they do not compete with but complement City Hall.

**General**

- Exterior building materials are generally muted and subtle in tone, pattern, and intensity. Overly bright, bold, or dark colors are avoided for the primary building surfaces so that they do not compete for skyline attention with City Hall.

- Building designs consider material strategies that accentuate their straightforward massing. Material strategies that use one primary building material along with glass should be considered. Façade design strategies that, similar to City Hall, employ a combination of solid surfaces and glass (punched windows) are considered.

- Building materials convey a sense of permanence and durability and are of a high quality. Materials that dis-color, fade, or are prone to wear over time are strongly discouraged.

- Material selection considers energy conservation and human comfort. This includes building orientation and exposure of materials to direct sunlight, e.g., materials adjoining habitable outdoor areas consider human thermal comfort in this space.

- Concrete floor slabs and similar elements are generally concealed. The undersides of building overhangs, balconies, and similar structures are architecturally treated and integrated into the overall building design scheme.

**Recommended Development Standards**

- The following exterior building materials are not permitted: EIFS, vinyl, and plastics.

**Building Color and Reflectivity**

- Above 35 feet in height, highly reflective elements such as stainless steel and curved glass are discouraged. Effects on adjoining buildings and spaces are considered when any reflective materials are selected.

**Windows and Glazing**

**Recommended Development Standards**

- Highly reflective, mirrored, or opaque glazing in exterior windows are prohibited.

- Windows have a visible light transmission level of 70 percent or greater. Above 35 feet in height, windows have a visible light transmission level of 50 or greater.

- Vinyl windows are prohibited. Simulated divided lights, between-the-glass divided lights, and similar window features are prohibited.

- Above 35 feet in height, storefront window systems are prohibited, except where upper building spaces adjoin habitable rooftops.
HUMAN COMFORT

Buildings shape streets, public spaces, amenity spaces, and accessible rooftops in a way that considers year-round human comfort; in particular, they consider the effects of uncomfortable airflow, heat, and glare.

**General**

- Building designs consider their impact on human comfort at streets and public spaces; particular focus should be placed on spaces adjoining towers, building entrances, outdoor amenity areas, and public spaces.
- Consider impacts of heat, in particular, direct sun on surface materials and radiant heat at ground-floor spaces.

**Recommended Development Standards**

- A pedestrian wind comfort study is required for buildings with a tower component.

**Reference**

- Materials (A-13)
- Sustainability (SI-3)
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Primary Reviewing Agency: TBD
Access and Identity

Wayfinding Features
District Parking
Accessibility Features
Interactive Art
Access and Identity (AI)

INTENT

As the center of civic government and a significant new active downtown neighborhood, the District is accessible to all visitors and highlights Los Angeles’s creativity. Subtle but intuitive elements make the District particularly easy for pedestrians to navigate, while the celebration of art, history, and culture draws visitors to streets and public spaces.

Identity of the “District”

The Civic Center District comprises the City-owned parcels east of City Hall and the streets that surround them. Its boundaries largely track property ownership and do not correspond to any historic or current neighborhood boundaries. In this context, it is not the intent to create a new and separate neighborhood but to fill in and expand upon the qualities of the surrounding urban fabric — the civic functions of the larger Civic Center, the economic and cultural vibrancy of Little Tokyo, and the building fabric of the Historic Core, to name a few.

Therefore, wayfinding components and public art features intentionally avoid creating gateways or other markers at the perimeter of the district boundary. Instead, all wayfinding features subtly guide visitors to destinations within the District, in particular the public spaces which create a true sense of arrival. They are also the primary locations for large-scape public art pieces.

Mobility Features

The success of activating the District’s public realm will depend largely on visitors’ ability to get there. Four rail stations are located within a short walk of the District.

Downtown Signage and Wayfinding Plan

A comprehensive Downtown Signage and Wayfinding Master Plan is being developed. To the largest extent possible, the primary wayfinding elements of the District are guided by the Downtown Signage and Wayfinding Master Plan. Additional wayfinding elements specific to the District and described in this chapter will augment the larger palette. At the same time, some Downtown Signage and Wayfinding Master Plan elements such as gateway markers will not be appropriate for or used in the District.
General

- Public art has the ability to perform a wide range of functions. It provides the opportunity for a shared experience, open discussion, self-expression, community interchange, education, communication of history, and enhancement of a physical space—ultimately, it stimulates thoughtful and often lively dialogue between people and their environment.

- Each piece of public art is designed for its specific location. Art should explore opportunities to engage with the street and public spaces envisioned by the Vision and Guidelines, which are different from most other urban spaces in the City.

- Performance spaces are a significant part of the larger arts experience and included in ground floor and open spaces.

- Partnerships between the neighborhoods and residences surrounding the Civic Center District can advance art and cultural events and installations.

- Implement arts and education programs that help contribute to a healthy environment and enhanced quality of life.

Interactive Art

- Commission new or relocate existing public art pieces so that they encourage public engagement in public spaces.

- Publicly accessible exhibition spaces would support a 24-hour district by activating ground-floor civic spaces.

- A signature art piece on the Civic Square will engage visitors with city decision-making processes.
SIGNAGE AND WAYFINDING

A successful wayfinding program is more than getting someone from point A to point B. It reinforces and supports the District’s identity and helps connect the District with the surrounding neighborhoods and other Downtown districts.

General

- Well-designed wayfinding features help direct visitors to and from destinations, amenities, and services within the Civic Center District and its surrounding neighborhoods. It is based on a consistent unified design motif will add to a cohesive look that compliments the City’s DTLA Signage Master Plan.

- Wayfinding works to support all modes of transit and site access, ranging from vehicles to pedestrians to cyclists.

- Offer wayfinding features that are user-friendly and accessible for everyone and serves to orient new visitors and offers a sense of familiarity to returning ones.

- Integrate wayfinding into the streetscape environment with strategic locations for maximum visibility and access.

Recommended Development Standards

- Wayfinding located within the public realm shall be designed to standards developed as part of the Downtown Signage and Wayfinding Master Plan efforts.

- Create signs that present clear and simple messages. Concise signage with few words tends to convey the best message.

- Construct signs of durable, high-quality materials with withstand weathering. Durable signage will create a feeling of permanence.

Downtown Signage & Wayfinding Master Plan

- Direction signs for vehicles, pedestrians, and cyclists that contain destinations with arrows and other supplemental information, such as walking times.

- Map-based signs to help orient visitors unfamiliar with the Downtown area through “heads-up” maps that highlight local destinations and incorporate walking times.

- District and neighborhood markers incorporated in light poles, transit shelters, and other streetscape features to help foster a sense of neighborhood identity and pride.

Finding the Front Door

- In addition to signs and other features typically associated with a city- or district-wide wayfinding plan, other cues within the public realm can help District visitors easily find their final destination. The network of public spaces created as part of the Urban Design Plan outlines a series of wayfinding nodes. Each node has its own character-defining features while connecting to the existing urban fabric of the District and surrounding neighborhoods through shared streetscape elements.

- Directional paving creates paths of circulation by changing material, color, or texture in paving material. Going beyond, a subtle change in paving material, graphics, and interpretive storytelling elements can be folded into the visitors’ paths to their destinations.

- Building addresses and naming corresponds to the actual location of the front door and is thoughtfully located for maximum visibility. Establish a clear hierarchy between building names and their street address.

Pedestrian Directional Signage

General

- Directional signage to be located along major pedestrian circulation routes and other locations that will serve to guide the pedestrians toward public and/or guest services and amenities.

- Pedestrian directional signage to maintain pedestrian flows and sight lines.

- Signs to be scaled to their surroundings for a comfortable read by pedestrians and cyclists.
Cues in the open space design augment the overall wayfinding strategy.
SIGNAGE AND WAYFINDING

- Directional signage to enhance District identity and maintain compatibility with the overall signage program in DTLA.

- Signs to be created from high-quality and durable materials that are weather- and vandal-resistant.

Recommended Development Standards

- Apply anti-graffiti coating to all signs within nine feet of adjacent walking surfaces.

- Directories are located within or near major pedestrian-gathering spaces and key intersections subject to heavy pedestrian flow.

- Wayfinding directories present essential information needed to navigate the District. Map-based signs to help orient visitors unfamiliar with the downtown area, highlighting local destinations and incorporating walking times.

- Directories are made from high-quality durable materials, as these elements are exposed to the weather and will receive an especially high degree of contact with the public.

- Wayfinding directories and maps may also locate points of interests and essential services provided off site.

- Present information in a clear and highly graphic manner, locating District tenants, major destinations, and public or guest services.

Wayfinding Directory

General

- Kiosks are situated to maintain pedestrian flows and preserve sight lines.

- Information kiosks present visitors with the essential information needed to navigate the District. Information is clear and highly graphic.

- Kiosks can also function as “community boards” that advertise upcoming events.

Recommended Development Standards

- Apply anti-graffiti coating to all kiosks.

Vehicular Directional Signage

General

- Directional signage to be located at parking entrances and key intersections, and other locations that will serve to guide motorists and cyclists to their destination. Signs direct toward parking, and major destinations.

- Vehicular directional signage to be freestanding or mounted on light poles and scaled to their surroundings for a comfortable read by slow-moving vehicles and cyclists.

- Materials for vehicular directional signage to be similar to those making up other project signage and compatible with the overall DTLA signage program.

- Signs to be visually attractive with highly legible text and graphics.

Recommended Development Standards

- Apply anti-graffiti coating to all signs within nine feet of adjacent walking surfaces.
High-quality signage for ground-floor commercial uses enriches the sidewalk experience, especially when signs are designed with the pedestrian in mind.

**General**

- Tenants are encouraged to creatively integrate the following into their identity signs:
  - Three-dimensional forms and shapes
  - Dimensional individual letterforms
  - Cut or fabricated metals
  - Etched or sandblasted metals and glass
  - Film or other glass-applied window treatments
  - Internal illumination

- Tenants may be identified by a building wall, canopy, or window sign integrated into its entry or a projecting “blade-type” sign at the entry.

- Individual tenants at the Facility express their identity and brands through thoughtfully designed signage that enhances the public realm.

- The color, material, and lighting of building identity and tenant signs contributes to the street environment and the building.

- Ensure all building identity and tenant signs are compatible with the overall scale of the building and elevation on which they are located.

**Recommended Development Standards**

- All signage is shall be located no more than 35 feet in height above the adjoining sidewalk.
BUILDING IDENTITY SIGNAGE

Building identity signage within the District adds vibrancy and energy to the streetscape through the use of materials, colors, graphics, and forms that tie it to its urban context and promote the identity, character, and image of the District and its tenants.

**General**

- District identity pieces should be integrated, highly visible design elements that, in addition to announcing each area, should enhance the District and establish a welcoming point of arrival. Identity signs will be especially useful in orienting first-time visitors, while offering a sense of familiarity to returning people.

- District and neighborhood markers should be incorporated onto light poles, transit shelters, and other streetscape features to help foster a sense of neighborhood identity and pride.

- Directional paving creates paths of circulation through a change in material, color, or texture in paving material. In addition to subtle changes in paving material, graphics and interpretive storytelling elements can draw visitors through a space to their destination.

**Recommended Development Standards**

- Apply anti-graffiti coating to all signs within nine feet of adjacent walking surfaces.

- All signage is located no more than 35 feet in height above the adjoining sidewalk.

- Building addressing/naming should correspond to the actual location of the main entrance and be thoughtfully located for maximum visibility. A clear hierarchy should be established between building names and their street addresses.

- Facility-identity monument design to be consistent with the building landscape character(scale) or coordinate with the Downtown Los Angeles (DTLA) Signage Master Plan guidelines.

- Integrated lobby or Paseo building identity features to be integrated with the public space and architectural design.

- The LASCB address and name shall be located either on the wall adjacent to the primary entry or integrated into architectural features such as entry canopies.

- All signs which identify civic buildings shall be constructed of durable and timeless materials which connect to both the building and the surrounding neighborhoods.

**Civic Building Identity**

- All signs which identify civic buildings will clearly identify the primary public entry with the street address or building name.

- Locate the building address or name either on the wall adjacent to the primary entry or integrated into architectural features, such as entry canopies.

- Construct all signs which identify civic buildings with durable and timeless materials that connect to the building and to the surrounding neighborhoods.

**Residential Lobby Identity**

- Integrate all signs that identify residential lobbies into the design of the buildings and the urban fabric of the street on which they are located.

- Residential lobbies may be identified by a sign integrated into the entry area (building wall or canopy) and/or a projecting “blade-type” sign at the entry.

- Post-opening leasing signs for residential buildings:
  - designed by a professional graphic design or marketing firm;
  - artfully combine font, color, graphics, and photography;
  - be constructed of durable, non-fading materials;
  - be securely fastened, anchored, or applied; and
  - be removed within 30 days after leasable space is available.
Little Tokyo and the District’s histories are closely intertwined—as will be their futures. The joint celebration of arts and history brings the opportunity to strengthen this bond and reconnect the two neighborhoods.

**General**

- Judge John Aiso Street and the Civic Building Paseo represent a significant opportunity to connect the District with Little Tokyo through the extension of an arts and cultural corridor. To this end, the Civic Building Paseo and Judge John Aiso Street frontage of the LASCB should include new venues for indoor and outdoor performances and exhibitions. The local arts community has expressed a particular interest to programming focused around East Asian arts.

- Historically, the Parker Center block was a part of Little Tokyo. Public art should highlight the history of Little Tokyo on this block.

- As part of the LASCB project, provide a ground-floor arts and cultural space up to 2,500 square feet. The space will front either the Civic Building Paseo, Judge John Aiso Street or Los Angeles Street. The space will be activated by community-based organization with involvement of Little Tokyo stakeholders in selecting the tenant.
ARCHITECTURAL LIGHTING

Architectural lighting supports the nighttime skyline of the District without distracting from iconic City Hall.

General

• Architectural lighting should highlight a building’s massing without distracting attention from City Hall. Lighting levels of tower tops may be higher than for the remainder of the building.

• Above 35 feet in height, indirect illumination of building surfaces is preferred. Visible light-emitting elements such as light ribbons are discouraged but may be approved on a case-by-case basis.

• Lighting shall avoid the creation of bright or hot spots on building surfaces.

• Lighting shall be centrally controlled and may be dimmed or turned off when City Hall is illuminated for special events. Lighting strategies allowing the synchronization of colors with City Hall should be explored.

• All conduit runs and equipment are concealed from public view.

• All architectural lighting is subject to review and approval by the City.
CONNECTIVITY

Access to infrastructure, amenities, and information is key for the resilience of the District and the city. The Vision and Guidelines expand on the physical improvements to the public realm that are outlined in previous chapters.

**Pedestrian, Cycling, and Transit Improvements**

- Per previous chapters, improvements to streets, sidewalks, and cycling infrastructure will improve connectivity within, to, and through the District. The ability to access jobs, healthcare, recreation, and other components of civic life is crucial to people’s health and wellness.

**Public Wi-Fi**

- A key goal of the Resilient Los Angeles plan is the reduction in technology disparities through provision of public Wi-Fi. All public spaces in the District include publicly accessible Wi-Fi. Consider designs supporting other technologies, such as smart benches for charging devices with solar power.

**Visible and Accessible Government**

- Transparency is a key architectural theme in the District, ensuring new and improved public spaces are designed to make city government highly visible and accessible.

**Entry Design**

- Wherever possible, and keeping security concerns in mind, public spaces and streets celebrate civic architecture and create clear and inviting lines to building front doors.

**Public Space Programming**

- Create a programming strategy for the public spaces in the District. Activities such as farmers markets, art fairs, community concerts and dances, recreation and exercise activities, and other events large and small draw residents and visitors to the public spaces and create a year-round activation. Develop a strategy in conjunction with community leaders to ensure that the public spaces serve the needs of locals and visitors.
In the near future, providing parking will remain vital to the functioning and accessibility of the District. Over time, parking may be minimized as the District relies more on active mobility, public transit, and future technologies, and less on personal cars.

**General**

In conjunction with investment in public transit, one of the best ways to encourage people to not drive personal cars is by reducing parking to the minimum required. Some parking will always be necessary for universal access, emergency access, servicing, and movement of goods. However, alongside an increased reliance on public transit, private vehicles will increasingly be shared and thus will create much less demand for parking. The District must plan for adequate parking provision for current demand, but also look to the future when space required for parking will be reduced and thus will open up land for other uses such as housing and commercial and public spaces.

- Parking structures that meet the intent of A-10 and can be repurposed or demolished once parking is no longer needed are viable options.

**Current Phases**

- In the near term, reduce a development’s required parking as much as is possible under current statutes and demand numbers. A comprehensive transportation demand management framework is one way to create strategies for reducing parking demand, and encouraging workers, residents, and visitors to use other modes of transportation.

**Future Phases**

- As future phases are developed, District management and City leadership should consider providing as little parking as possible, based on actual parking use data. Include this metric in the goal-setting and evaluation process of the District.

**Creating a Parking District**

- One key way to deal with uncertain parking needs in future phases is to develop a “parking district” approach for Civic Center District. Rather than providing parking within each individual building that may result in oversupply in the near future, consider creating a single shared parking structure.
Integrate placemaking features into the public realm in the form of public art, paving treatments, and streetscape elements. These features serve the purpose of telling the story of the past, present, and future of the Civic Center District and connecting this story with the stories of its surrounding neighborhoods.
Continuing the idea of Little Tokyo’s paving-based timeline, incorporate storytelling features in the Paseo through its paving to tell the story of the District’s past. The story of the City’s transit history and train lines that once crossed through the site and Downtown area could be told through ghosted “tracks” in the paving and metal insets with historical facts and graphics along the pedestrian path.
The story of a future Los Angeles should be told in the Civic Square. Envisioned as a high-tech living room, its centerpiece and place-making feature should be an interactive, digital public art piece. This iconic feature is envisioned as the mouthpiece of City Hall that allows visitors to engage with the City’s decision-makers and artfully provides real-time information on local legislation and events throughout Downtown.
Primary Reviewing Agency: TBD
Sustainability and Infrastructure

New Pedestrian Connection

Water Demonstration Project

Microgrid Controller

Walking

New Civic Space
Sustainability and Infrastructure (SI)

INTENT

Sustainability is central to the future development of the District at every scale, from individual buildings to District-wide systems. The topics included in this chapter are intended to organize and prioritize key efforts to advance sustainability and resilience, but each of the guidelines throughout this document will contribute to the overall sustainability of the district. The District will plan for EcoDistricts equivalency, considering the nine priorities in the EcoDistricts Protocol to address the broad definition of sustainability as including social, environmental, and economic concerns.

Future-Oriented Sustainability

- The future success of the District, as well as the city as a whole, is dependent on considering sustainability and resilience not as stand-alone issues that can be painted onto existing plans and designs, but as ideas woven into the process from the beginning. The Vision and Guidelines have looked to a number of local and global resources to guide the development of sustainability guidelines.

EcoDistricts Protocol

- While EcoDistricts Certification is not being actively pursued at this time, the Protocol should be consulted in all goal-setting and metrics exercises to ensure that any development does not preclude future EcoDistricts Certification. Throughout the Vision and Guidelines, the three Imperatives (Equity, Resilience, and Climate Protection) and the six Priorities (Place, Prosperity, Health + Wellbeing, Connectivity, Living Infrastructure, and Resource Restoration) are represented explicitly and implicitly in the objectives and recommendations.

Sustainable City pLAn and Resilient Los Angeles

- Beyond short- and long-term goals for resilience, the City of Los Angeles has a robust set of sustainability targets and guidelines, laid out in the Sustainable City pLAn, and resilience goals, outlined in the Resilient Los Angeles report. The Vision and Guidelines support overall objectives and goals from the pLAn, but individual design solutions should be evaluated for contributions toward the numerical goals stated in the pLAn.
A District-wide vision for green infrastructure considers streets and public spaces as part of a living system that captures, filters, and diverts stormwater, while creating opportunities for education and aesthetic enhancement.

**Stormwater Management**
- The public realm plays a key role in the management of water in the District. A variety of strategies can be employed depending on the size of intervention and the particular hydrology of the site. Above all, the District should be considered as a unified system.

**System Capacity**
- It is important to understand the capacity of the stormwater system to capture and convey stormwater. In the long term, conduct a hydrological study to understand the current run-off and infiltration rates and set targets for the future.
- As sites are developed or redeveloped identify opportunities to first address storm- and rainwater on site to ease the burden on District systems.

**Capture, Filtration, and Infiltration**
- Depending on the specific capture and conveyance capabilities of the District, a combination of different approaches may be used to manage water in the District.

**Green Streets**
- All street improvements should incorporate a stormwater component. This may include more intensive solutions, such as biofiltration and infiltration planters where space allows, or less infrastructure-intense solutions such as permeable paving, or a combination of the two.

**Water Storage**
- A centralized storage system may be employed to allow for diversion of run-off from the storm sewer system. While some storage may be temporary and on the surface (e.g., rain gardens), a cistern or underground storage tank for non-potable water may be used in the District.

- Where water is captured and stored, consider a combination of slow release into the storm sewer system or aquifer and on-site reuse for irrigation, water features, and other non-potable uses.

**The Role of Plants**
- Plants are vitally important to a functioning sustainable system. They support the aesthetic quality of a place, which in turn creates a more welcoming environment for pedestrians, and they further play a key role in slowing and filtering water during rainstorms. Specify an appropriate plant palette, from trees to ground cover, for stormwater infrastructure projects.

**Urban Heat Island Reduction**
- Consider vegetation for aesthetic and stormwater uses that help reduce the urban heat island effect. As the climate changes and Los Angeles experiences more extreme heat days, climate moderation will become ever more important to the health and well-being of residents.

**Demonstration Projects**
- Locate at least one water demonstration project in the District as part of the education and transparency mission of the City. A stormwater installation, preferably in a public space such as Civic Plaza, will allow the public to better connect to the water cycle and sustainable infrastructure practices.
A resilient energy system balances power use and production potential in individual buildings. A holistic and incremental approach will ease the burden on single developments and create a more sustainable long-term solution.

**Microgrid Development**

- A microgrid is a localized energy grid that can operate independently of the municipal power supply, with the potential to use locally produced power when disconnected from the grid. Creation of a microgrid in the District will enhance resilience by allowing for operations during power interruption, and potentially allowing for energy demand management in future phases.

**Micogrid Ready**

- Early phases of development in the District will be equipped with a microgrid controller switch. While not providing complete grid infrastructure, this technology will open the door for connection to power generation sources and connections to other buildings in future phases.

**Completing the Grid**

- Development of microgrid capacity should be prioritized in future phases of development in the District, through increased on-site generation, storage, or both. Prepare future development to be microgrid-ready with the ability to connect to future grid infrastructure.

**On-Site Generation**

- A minimum amount of solar energy is to be generated on-site.

- Current technology limits the amount of on-site generation possible in individual buildings; however, prioritize opportunities for demonstration projects, as well as integration of future technologies. Consider reevaluating available technology and incorporating additional generation at each subsequent phase.

**Storage**

- Local energy storage is key to the resilience of the District as well as future demand management. Investigate opportunities for District-scale storage, either in public-spaces or within new or redeveloped buildings. Locate storage to be easily accessible for maintenance, but out of the public realm (preferably underground).

- Investigate alternative sources of storage, such as electric-vehicle-to-grid.

**Energy Demand Management**

- As future phases develop and more buildings are microgrid-ready, the goal is to connect street and public realm projects including infrastructure to the grid. By balancing production and usage among buildings and over time, the District may achieve net-zero energy.
BUILDING SUSTAINABILITY

Each building contributes to the overall sustainability and resilience of the District, in terms of individual performance and as part of a networked system. Revisit the Vision and Guidelines regularly to ensure they are up to date.

**LASCB**

- The first phase of development in the District will be the new LASCB. Sustainability guidelines for this building set the standard, in terms of energy, water, and material performance, for future phases.

- LASCB is expected to be LEED certified, and will look to interiors certification such as FitWel or WELL for building occupant health. Site development must support both of these efforts.

**District Energy Ready**

- In the first phase, a modest amount of power will be generated on site. The LASCB will be equipped with a microgrid controller switch to allow for connection to the District grid in future phases.

**Showcase Projects**

- The Sustainable City pLAn calls for each municipal building to be a showcase of sustainability and education. As such, seek out opportunities for innovation and demonstration projects during each phase, whether by going above target minimums, or by using highly visible sustainability solutions such as smart metering or on-site generation.

**Re-Evaluate Every Phase**

- Best practices in sustainability and resilience are changing quickly. Additionally, the City’s priorities, and those of the community, may evolve over time. It is important to revisit the goals and guidelines for sustainable buildings at the beginning of each subsequent development phase in order to capture any changes in practice, technology, and priorities.
As more resources are planned at a District scale, it is important to consider how all these components fit together. A coordinated utility plan will allow for more efficient construction and maintenance as the Civic Center District evolves over time.

**Capturing District Energy and Infrastructure**
- As District-level goals for energy production, storage, and demand management are developed, create a parallel infrastructure implementation plan. This will allow future development phases to understand opportunities and responsibilities for providing elements of infrastructure in order to complete the system.

**Construction and Maintenance**
- Consolidate all new and upgraded utilities, whether in the public right-of-way or on private property, into centralized underground multi-utility tunnels wherever feasible. This will allow for more efficient and less disruptive construction and maintenance by creating an easy-access area rather than digging up entire street lengths to access each separate utility.

**Coordinating the Public Right-of-Way**
- If a District microgrid is developed, the District must coordinate with existing utility infrastructure as well as providers to comply with current statues on private utility exemptions and crossing of public rights-of-way.

**Creating a Utilities District**
- Consult with LADWP and California Public Utilities Commission on the legalities of creating a permanent energy district for emergency or demand-management purposes, and understand if this entity will be private or held by the public agency.

**Crossing the Public Right-of-Way**
- Generally in California it is not legal for private utilities to cross a public right-of-way. If the District energy and microgrid infrastructure is deemed to be private, all connections between buildings must happen through private rights-of-way, and must be coordinated at the time of planning.
GOAL-SETTING AND EVALUATION

To set ambitious but achievable outcomes, District leadership must set goals. Progress against established goals will be monitored and goals recalibrated regularly to create a truly living District.

Set Measurable Goals for the District

- Having definable indicators with specific metrics is key to understanding whether or not stated goals are leading to desired outcomes. Develop a process with District leadership to identify appropriate metrics and indicators for each current sustainability objective, as well as any others identified in the future.

Indicators Workshop

- Work with the City and community leadership to identify local priorities and relevant indicators to track progress over the life of the District.

Embed in Guidelines

- Update sustainability and design guidelines as necessary to align with priority indicators.

Monitor and Evaluate Regularly

- As part of the Sustainability Strategy, develop a process to ensure accountability in tracking and updating metrics, goals, and design objectives.

Create a Monitoring Plan

- Develop an achievable plan for monitoring and evaluating progress. Data points, analysis techniques, and responsible parties must be identified.

- Update goals and the Vision and Guidelines at the end of each monitoring period, revisit stated goals and update based on community priorities and progress. In this way, goals and monitoring are continuously evolving, rather than being a static, one-time event.

Maintain EcoDistricts Equivalency

- One approach for creating, monitoring, and updating goals and metrics with community input is the EcoDistricts Protocol. District leadership may choose to embark on this process at any time. Even without official EcoDistricts Certification, the Protocol process should be consulted to ensure that District development does not preclude the creation of an EcoDistrict if desired in the future.
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Next Steps

CEQA Recommendations
District Level Specifications
Introduction

The City of Los Angeles (City) is seeking a consultant to complete the environmental documentation for the Civic Center Master Plan (CCMP) and CCMP District Design Guidelines, in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). In 2017, the City completed the Draft CCMP, a facilities management plan, that laid out a timeline and a path forward for how to better use City properties located within the CCMP area, and used an axial framework that connects the Civic Center, the Little Tokyo community, Grand Avenue Park, the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion, and Disney Hall.

The CCMP consists of 6 phases and involves the methodical reconstruction of the Civic Center into a world class, international hub of activity located within Downtown Los Angeles. In March 2017, the City completed an environmental impact report (EIR), in compliance with CEQA, for the first phase of the CCMP, which is the Los Angeles Street Civic Building (LASCB), a new Civic Building or Buildings on the former Parker Center site, located at 150 North Los Angeles Street, which will become the office space for various City departments. The City has not yet obtained CEQA environmental clearance for the remaining phases of the CCMP (phases 2 through 6).

While the CCMP identified a phasing plan and general massing and open space areas for the CCMP project area, it did not take the next step of determining what the appropriate aesthetic and spatial characteristics of the district should be under a cohesive set of District Design Guidelines, or in recommending environmental targets for the CCMP. Therefore, the City is currently developing District Design Guidelines that build upon the CCMP. The Vision and Guidelines are intended to establish clear objectives for the CCMP area, focusing on the pedestrian realm and on building design components, in order to codify design elements that will contribute to a cohesive district in look and feel, and in environmental performance, as the CCMP is built out.

After the Vision and Guidelines are developed, the City is seeking a consultant to prepare the CEQA environmental documentation for all 6 phases of the CCMP, together with the CCMP District Design Guidelines.
Recommendations

The LASCB EIR found that the LASCB project, which is the first phase of the CCMP, would result in significant and unavoidable impacts related to aesthetics, air quality and greenhouse gas emissions, cultural resources, land use and planning, and transportation and traffic. Therefore, because of the potential that the CCMP and the Vision and Guidelines would also result in significant environmental impacts, an EIR is the appropriate level of CEQA documentation.

Two types of CEQA environmental documents could be appropriate to environmentally clear the CMMP and the Vision and Guidelines:

- **Master EIR**: A Master EIR may be prepared for a project that consists of smaller, individual projects which will be carried out in phases. The project scope covered in the Master EIR could be general in nature, without specific details regarding individual projects. Therefore, the small, individual projects would each require subsequent environmental reviews once the details about those projects become available at a later time, after the Master EIR has been certified. A Master EIR is intended to streamline the later environmental review of projects or approval included within the project, plan, or program analyzed in the Master EIR. Additional technical studies may also be required to evaluate the cumulative impacts, growth inducing impacts, and irreversible significant effects on the environment of subsequent projects.

- **Program EIR**: A Program EIR is an EIR that may be prepared on a series of actions that can be characterized as one large project. With a detailed analysis of the program, many subsequent activities could be found to be within the scope of the project described in the Program EIR, and no further environmental documents would be required for subsequent projects.

If the CCMP were to be environmentally cleared on its own, without the Vision and Guidelines, a Master EIR would be the appropriate CEQA document because the CCMP on its own does not provide sufficient detail about each phase of the project. However, GPA assumes that the Vision and Guidelines, when added to the CCMP, would provide sufficient detail with regard to the scope of each phase of the CCMP. Therefore, the scope of the CCMP and Vision and Guidelines, together, would be detailed enough to allow for a full analysis of the program.

Based on the risks and benefits shown in Table 1 below, GPA recommends that a Program EIR be prepared for the CCMP and CCMP District Design Guidelines, as long as these documents provide sufficient detail on the scope of each phase of the CCMP. Because each phase of the CCMP would be found within the scope of the Program EIR, no subsequent environmental reviews would be required, resulting in substantial time and cost savings when compared to preparing a Master EIR that would require the additional, subsequent CEQA reviews for each phase of the CCMP.
## Next Steps

### CEQA RECOMMENDATIONS (CON’T)

## Risks and Benefits

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of CEQA Document</th>
<th>Risks</th>
<th>Benefits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Master EIR</strong></td>
<td>A Master EIR would be appropriate if the CCMP and Vision and Guidelines do not include sufficient detail on all the phases of the CCMP. After the Master EIR is prepared, an individual, focused CEQA document would need to be completed for each phase of the project (only phases 2 through 6, as phase 1 was already covered in the LASCB EIR), requiring a total of 6 CEQA documents (the Master EIR, plus an individual CEQA document for each of the remaining phases). The additional CEQA reviews required after the Master EIR is completed would necessitate additional time and costs compared to a Program EIR.</td>
<td>A Master EIR would allow the project to proceed without requiring specific details for each individual phase of the CCMP. The Master EIR would streamline later environmental reviews once the details for phases 2 through 6 of the CCMP become available.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Program EIR</strong></td>
<td>A Program EIR would be appropriate only if the CCMP and Vision and Guidelines include sufficient detail so that the entire CCMP and Vision and Guidelines, including phases 2 through 6, can be environmentally cleared in one CEQA document. If the entire CCMP and Vision and Guidelines do not fall within the scope of the Program EIR, subsequent reviews of phases 2 through 6 would be required.</td>
<td>Only one EIR will be required to for the entire CCMP and Vision and Guidelines, including phases 2 through 6 of the CCMP. Because CEQA clearance will be consolidated into one EIR, time and cost savings would be achieved, compared to a Master EIR.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Program EIR prepared for the CCMP and the Vision and Guidelines may incorporate environmental analysis that was previously conducted for the LASCB EIR in March 2017, if the information is relevant and would not require any additional updates. The following technical studies, at a minimum, are also recommended to support the CEQA documentation for the CCMP and the Vision and Guidelines:

- Traffic, Circulation, and Parking Studies
- Air Quality Study
- Noise Study
- Historic Property Survey Report
- Archaeological Survey Report
- Hazardous Waste Study
- Water Quality/Stormwater Report
- Visual Impact Assessment
- Public Scoping Report

Additional technical studies may be required to support the environmental document, depending on concerns or issues raised during the EIR public scoping period.
Next Steps

DISTRICT LEVEL SPECIFICATIONS

The Vision and Guidelines convey in-depth information regarding the future development of the District. During the development process of this document, many detail issues were raised, relevant documents reviewed, and ideas explored the final determination of which exceeds the scope of the Vision and Guidelines. The following list includes items that should be addressed at the District level.

Street Tree Selection

Street tree species should be determined for each block frontage. At Judge John Aiso and 1st Streets, the Sustainable Little Tokyo plan’s street tree recommendations should be considered.

Street Furniture Palette

While the Vision and Guidelines provide general direction on street furnishings, a specific street furnishings palette should be established for provide a consistent selection of street furniture across the District.

Public Space Programming

The Vision and Guidelines describe several new public spaces that will significantly enhance the District. While this document provides a general description of possible activities for these spaces, they do not constitute a full public space program. Such programs are vital to the success of public spaces and their establishment is highly recommended for each public space.

Reclassification of Streets

This document has outlined proposed modifications to the District’s street sections. They include converting curbside parking lanes into flex zones, equipping streets for temporary closures, providing mobility lanes, and boarding islands (bus bulbs) at bus stops. These proposed modifications need further study to ensure that they comply with City policies, environmental guidelines, and are fully designed to meet the specific needs of each street segment and intersection.
Art Concept on Spring Street

The proposed art walk on Spring Street builds upon the existing arrangement of sculptures at the western frontage of LAPD Headquarters. In the extension of the art walk, an arts concept should be developed that addresses the curation of new art pieces, their specific location, and any related interpretive installations.
GLOSSARY

Apparent Building Face: The longest horizontal extent of a building face.

Building Face: The exterior wall of a building defined by a contiguous and unbroken surface area. A building face can be flat or curved.

Frontage: The extent of a building facade and the adjoining sidewalk area along the public right-of-way or public space.

Maximum Plan Diagonal: The greatest horizontal distance between two opposing points at any tower level.

Public Space: At-grade open space that is generally open and accessible to the public. This document establishes multiple new public spaces in the District.

Tower: Any portion of a building above the established podium height.
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