



Agenda Item 5C

Council consideration of a motion to adopt additional changes to the 2016 Downtown Urban Design Guidelines.



Feb 16 - CC unanimously adopted the Guidelines and recommended PB consider the following:

- Revise the bulleted list on page 4 to include additional language about views.
- Allow solar panels to be visible from the public right-of-way outside of the Historic District.
- To discourage surface parking lots throughout the downtown area.



Mar 3 – PB adopted the Guidelines consistent with the Council recommendations from February 16 and *Ordinance 8028* adding areas north of Canyon Boulevard within the DT-4 and DT-5 zones as areas where height modifications may be considered.



In addition, PB adopted amendments to the Guidelines in the following areas:

- Restoring original language on views
- Restoring original language on sun and shade
- Adding additional building design guidelines to Sections 2 & 3



- Design innovation and excellence in form and visual character that respects and references the historic architectural context;
- Careful consideration of the urban and natural interface including views, green spaces, and waterways;
- The preservation and celebration of Boulder's mountain views from the public realm and surrounding area;
- Human-scaled buildings and spaces that result from the designed interplay of enclosing mass, void, and light;
- Street-level design oriented toward the pedestrian in motion; and,
- Sustainable design practice with respect to solar access, water, energy and materials.

Staff Recommended Additions

Staff recommends additions consistent with Council recommendations and one PB revision as follows:

- ❑ Revise the *Introduction* “Downtown Vision” to include additional language on views
- ❑ Clarify bullet 4 to include “Buildings”



Staff Recommended Additions

- ❑ **Revise “2.1 General guidelines for the Non-Historic and Interface Areas”**
 - *Allowing solar panels to be visible from the public realm*
 - *Discouraging surface parking*
- B. Minimize the visibility of mechanical, structural, or electrical appurtenances.
 1. Use low-profile mechanical units and elevator shafts that are not visible from the street. If this is not possible, set back or screen rooftop equipment from view.
 2. Be sensitive to the views from the upper floors of neighboring buildings. Skylights and solar panels should have low profiles. Solar panels should be as unobtrusive as possible.
- C. Design all sides of the building including alley elevations.
 1. Well designed rear building entrances, windows, balconies, and planting areas are encouraged.
 2. Improve rear or side alley elevations to enhance public access from parking lots and alleys.
 3. Where buildings are built to the alley edge, consider opportunities for alley display windows and secondary customer or employee entries.
 4. Materials utilized on the primary elevation are to extend, or wrap, around building corners onto the secondary elevations extending back at least the width of a structural bay.
 5. Screening for service equipment, trash, or any other rear-of-building elements should be designed as an integral part of the overall design. Where intact, historic alley facades should be preserved along with original features and materials.
- D. Exterior building lighting should be designed to enhance the overall architecture of the building. Security lighting should be designed for safety, as well as night-time appearance.
- E. Reduce the visual impact of structured and surface parking.
 1. Parking structures should be compatible to the historic district and adjacent buildings. All parking structures should be architecturally screened and/or wrapped with an occupiable use.
 2. Surface parking is discouraged. Locate any surface parking to the rear of the property and screen from view.
 3. Pedestrian routes in structures and parking lots should be easily identifiable and accessed, with clear visual connections to the sidewalks and buildings.



Staff

Recommendation

Staff does not recommend inclusion of the remaining March 3 PB revisions, outlined in the PB minutes, for the following reasons:

1. The changes represent significant revisions to the working group recommendations.
2. Additional changes are redundant with points covered elsewhere in guidelines and/or do not substantively address design issues.
3. Impact on the work plan due to continued staff time devoted to this effort.



Suggested Motion

Motion to adopt the following amendments to the 2016 Downtown Urban Design Guidelines:

1. Page 4, Sidebar - Add bullet with “The preservation and celebration of Boulder’s mountain views from the public realm and surrounding area”; and,
2. Page 4, Sidebar – Revise bullet 3 to “Human-scaled buildings and spaces that result from the designed interplay of enclosing mass, void, and light”; and,
3. Page 26, 2.1.B.2 – Revise item to “Be sensitive to the views from the upper floors of neighboring buildings. Skylights and solar panels should have low profiles. Solar panels should be as unobtrusive as possible”; and,
4. Page 26, 2.1.E.2 – Revise item to “Surface parking is discouraged. Locate any surface parking to the rear of the



Downtown Urban Design Guidelines



Additional PB

Revisions

Revision	Addressed	Inconsistent with the Working Group Recommendations
ADD 2.1.B (inserted before the currently proposed 2.1.B) "Views: Downtown Boulder is blessed with exceptional mountain views and projects should be designed to preserve access to this extraordinary asset from the surrounding area. The south and west edges of downtown offer the most spectacular views."	Introduction: Downtown Vision	Recommended consolidating the overarching urban design criteria to the Introduction.
· ADD 2.1.C (inserted before the currently proposed 2.1.B) "Sun and Shade: In Boulder's climate, sun and shade are important design considerations for providing natural light in buildings, and creating appealing pedestrian areas that are ice free and sunny in the winter and shady in the summer."	Introduction: Downtown Vision	Recommended consolidating the overarching urban design criteria to the Introduction.
· DELETE 2.2.B.3	Removes the guideline directed towards consideration of the effect of the building design on views and solar access.	
· ADD 3.2.B (inserted before the currently proposed 3.2.B) "Views: Downtown Boulder is blessed with exceptional mountain views and projects should be designed to preserve access to this extraordinary asset from the public realm and surrounding area. The south and west edges of downtown offer the most spectacular views."	Introduction: Downtown Vision	Recommended consolidating the overarching urban design criteria to the Introduction.
· ADD 3.2.C (inserted before the currently proposed 3.2.B) "Sun and Shade: In Boulder's climate, sun and shade are important design considerations for creating appealing public realm areas that are ice free and sunny in the winter and shady in the summer."	Introduction: Downtown Vision	Recommended consolidating the overarching urban design criteria to the Introduction.
CHANGE 3.2.C.1, third bullet point Railings: "Railing designs should reflect an open, transparent feeling. Visually closed-in railings that "box-in" the extension area are not appropriate. No signage, advertising, goods or merchandise may be placed on railings. Railing design in the Historic District shall be simple."	3.1.C 3.5.D	
ADD "2.1.H Rhythm: "Maintain the rhythm established by the repetition of the traditional approximately 25' facade widths for projects that extend over several lots by changing the materials, patterns, reveals, or building setbacks in uniform intervals or by using design elements such as columns or pilasters."	2.2.A 2.2.C.1	Discussion to allow more flexibility in design but to maintain a building rhythm.
ADD 2.1.I Floor Height: "Distinguish ground floor height from upper floor heights. Ground level floor to floor height is encouraged to be taller than upper stories."	2.2.C.3	Allow more flexibility in design but encourage distinction between the ground floor and upper floors.
ADD 2.1.J Shade: "Shade storefront glass by appropriate means such as awnings or	Requiring awnings on all new buildings is inconsistent with the existing building	