VI. Streetscape Beautification and Public Improvements

Introduction

The Streetscape Beautification and Public Improvements chapter addresses improvements to public rights-of-way, sidewalks, and public open spaces. The intent of this chapter is to provide guidance for the City of Gilroy in creating a unified and visually attractive environment that supports Specific Plan goals for beautification of the Downtown. The condition of the public realm is important for creating the desired image and identity of the Downtown and to provide a unified backdrop for the design of various building styles and types. Public realm improvements serve to improve an area’s visual quality and act as an investment catalyst, encouraging private property upgrades and new development.

Purpose

This chapter focuses on improvements to public rights-of-way, including streets, alleys and drives, plazas, and gateways. It identifies public street design elements, landscaping, intersection enhancements, entry treatments, public open space, right-of-way detail, and other unique public realm features within the various Districts of Downtown Gilroy. Focusing on the public right-of-way, these guidelines attempt to balance pedestrian needs with the vehicular and bicycle needs. It is not the intent of this chapter to provide specific street geometric design standards rather, it is to suggest design-oriented treatments of the street environment. For information concerning street and intersection geometric design refer to Chapter VII (Infrastructure).

The guidelines in this chapter are intended to be used as a planning tool for public projects and to guide development conditions of approval for private projects. These guidelines contain concepts, graphic material, recommendations, and design guidance that will aid in near-term implementation of public area improvements. Further, the guidelines contained in this chapter acknowledge the existing and proposed plans and improvements undertaken by the City for the Downtown.
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Urban Design Treatments

Different areas of the Downtown will have varying streetscape atmospheres. How each of these areas is treated is an important factor in reinforcing the desired future downtown environment as expressed in the Specific Plan’s vision. Distinctive design treatments will create the character and sense of place for each area. The design treatments and the areas to which each should be applied are listed below. Figure 6.1 - Urban Design Concepts illustrates the locations of design treatments within the Downtown.

![Figure 6.1 - Urban Design Concepts](image-url)
Downtown Historic District

Monterey Street
Downtown entry arches located at Eighth Street and Third Street will announce the beginnings of the Downtown Historic District. Street configuration between Sixth Street and Third Street will be one lane of traffic in each direction, with diagonal parking on both sides and no center median. Street configuration between Eighth Street and Sixth Street will remain unchanged, with parallel parking and a center median. Wider sidewalks of about 15 feet and the most urban treatments and intensive use of street furnishings will indicate that this area is the heart of the Downtown. Urban treatments include, but are not limited to, outdoor dining, lower vehicle speeds, crosswalks, bulbouts, and key intersection treatments. Lighting, benches, and trash receptacles as well as street trees planted in tree grates will be placed approximately every 100 feet, and large potted plants will offer a pleasing range of pedestrian amenities. Public art, banners, and wayfinding signs will also be introduced in this district.

Gourmet Alley
This section of the Downtown Historic District will function mainly as a pedestrian corridor, although the street will still be open to service vehicles. The street will act as an access route between public parking and the Downtown Historic District along Monterey Street; branding and directional signs similar to those on Monterey Street will be continued along the street. The corridor will be improved with a special paving treatment, increased and enhanced lighting, landscaping, and other urban furnishings. Outdoor dining will be a major focus of the area. An enhanced pedestrian environment will also be encouraged through the undergrounding of utilities and such improvements as reconfiguring trash storage to be compatible with pedestrian functions.

Downtown Expansion District

Monterey Street
The entrance to the Downtown will be marked by gateway monuments at on Monterey Street at Tenth Street and First Street. Parking provided adjacent to the street edge will act as a traffic calming element and will create a buffer between pedestrians and moving vehicles. The area will have wide sidewalks similar to the Downtown Historic District with urban treatments and furnishings. Located approximately every 100 feet, including trees planted in tree grates. Pedestrian connections will be improved with accent treatments at crosswalks and intersecting streets. The ultimate intention is for the heart of the Downtown to expand and encompass this area; therefore, the urban edge treatment of the Downtown Expansion District should be seamless with the Downtown Historic District.
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Eigleberry Street
Public parking facilities and mixed-use development enhanced with urban furnishings, located approximately every 100 feet, and street trees planted in tree grates will characterize the more urban development along the eastern side of Eigleberry Street. The mature and established street trees along Eigleberry Street will be retained amongst the newer street trees to be added to promote and retain the more traditional residential and historic feel of the street as it borders the Transition District.

Transition District

Eigleberry Street
The western and southeastern portions of Eigleberry Street are in the Transition District and exhibit a less urban nature than the northeast portion of the street in the Downtown Expansion District. These portions of Eigleberry Street in the Transition District will have less frequent street furnishings, located approximately every 200 feet, than the northeastern section, though many pedestrian amenities will still be available. The intent is to not overwhelm the residential and small offices uses by an intensive display of urban streetscape treatments but to still provide an enhanced pedestrian environment. Expanded sidewalks and additional street trees in a landscaped parkway will complement the existing mature trees and will promote the historical residential atmosphere of the neighborhood.

Cannery District

Railroad Street
The former industrial/railroad uses will provide inspiration in transforming this area into a contemporary urban streetscape. Loft-type dwellings with an industrial feel will create a residential atmosphere in the converted industrial district that will appeal to individuals who desire a highly urbanized landscape. Sidewalks will be widened and street trees located within tree grates will be added. Frequent benches and trash receptacles, located approximately every 100 feet, along with improved lighting and other street urban furnishings will complement the urbanized environment. A style of street furnishings unique to the Cannery District will complete the contemporary industrial atmosphere of the area.
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Gateway District

The Gateway District portions of the Downtown will exhibit landscaped and beautified entries to entice individuals into the Downtown core. The street will have landscaped parkways to screen parking and buffer and enhance less visually appealing development. Streetscape improvements will include lighting and streetscape furnishings, such as benches and trash receptacles, placed every at regular intervals not exceeding a distance of 200 feet.

All Districts

Typical Cross Streets
The remaining streets and cross streets in the Specific Plan area will also experience streetscape beautification treatments. The addition of lighting, street trees, and selected urban furnishings will increase the aesthetic value of the Downtown area. Improved sidewalks and crosswalks will provide an enhanced pedestrian environment to connect surrounding neighborhoods to the Downtown.

Railroad Corridor
The railroad corridor is a significantly used and highly visible portion of the downtown environment, both to residents of Gilroy and to any other train passengers. In coordination with the rail owner and operator, this corridor will be beautified to the greatest extent possible. Fencing will provide security as well as aesthetic enhancement to the corridor. Landscaping, including trees and other plants, will be used to improve the look of the corridor and help screen undesirable views to adjoining properties. Improved pedestrian crossings at Tenth Street, Old Gilroy Street, Sixth Street, Martin Street, and Lewis Street will also enhance the area. When viewed from the train, this corridor will augment the passengers’ perception of the City of Gilroy as a welcoming, aesthetically pleasing, and pedestrian-friendly environment.
Unifying Elements of the Downtown Streetscape

This section describes the improvements that help in creating a special identity for a particular area. Elements are selected for their ability to create visual appeal, to upgrade the function and attractiveness of the urban environment, and to assist in environmental enhancement. Street trees, landscaping and other design treatments are intended to reduce solar heat gain, calm traffic, and improve the quality of pedestrian space. These are principal goals of the Specific Plan and a key ingredient, along with land use patterns, in changing the predominant character of the area from an auto-oriented environment to a pedestrian-oriented Downtown.

Landscaping

This element includes street trees, parkways, sidewalk landscaping and other accent plants. Urban greening is a key feature in redevelopment activities. The addition of street trees alone in many cases can be the single biggest improvement to a revitalizing community. It is the number one improvement priority for the Downtown.

Sidewalks, Pedestrian Improvements, and Intersections

Providing a smooth and attractive sidewalk is critical in attracting pedestrian use. Sidewalks need to be designed with enough width to be comfortable to stroll down, with smooth paving and special accent paving in select locations, and with buffering from fast and noisy vehicular traffic. Crosswalks also need special attention. Proper location, traffic control devices, and visual markers all are important in encouraging use by pedestrians and in increasing safety. Key intersections are important nodes in the Downtown. Special paving, sidewalk extensions, gateway elements, public art, mini-plazas, information kiosks, enhanced crosswalks, and other features are elements that can be used to emphasize selected intersections.

Street Furnishings

Street furnishings consist of amenities such as decorative street lights with banners, benches, trash and recycling containers, bollards to define special edge conditions, newspaper racks, bicycle racks and parking areas, transit shelters, and special attractions at select locations such as public art, fountains and other focal elements. It is the collection of these amenities that help to define the character of an area and serve to attract pedestrians by supporting the adjacent stores and offices.
Signs

Signs are an effective method to reinforce the identity of an area through graphic arts. Distinctive logos, catch words, colors and images can be displayed in an effective manner to advertise the desired image. Gateways and entry monuments help announce important transitions as one enters the Downtown. Signs also are critical in providing consistency in messages and directions to destinations, such as public parking, public facilities, key retail centers, parks, and plazas.

Public Art

Public Art is one of the most desirable elements to personalize an urban environment and connect it to a community’s own unique and special character. Art can be integral to other public improvements, such as unique benches and trash containers, decorative street lights, signs, paving patterns, etc., or it can be used as a special place-making feature and integrated into gateways and other elements.

Plazas, Paseos, and Public Spaces

Human-scaled public gathering spaces, such as plazas, paseos, and informal public spaces are key components in creating a welcoming downtown. Paseos also provide important pedestrian links from one location to another.

Parking Structures

Parking structures are usually larger buildings and as such can have significant impact upon the streetscape. All proposed parking structures in the Downtown will be public parking structures and should adhere to specific standards in order to minimize the structure’s impact upon the streetscape and create a welcoming downtown atmosphere.
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LANDSCAPING

Street Trees

Street trees are a key element to creating unified street scenes and softening otherwise discordant roadways. Adding scale, comfort, foliage colors, and textures contribute to the Downtown’s unique identity and help improve air quality. The following are general guidelines for street tree planting and placement:

- For each block on a street, no more than three tree species are recommended.
- Tree species that are suitable to the size of the planting area and which carry minimal risk of raising gutters & sidewalks, should be selected.
- Install structural soil systems to direct new root growth downward below hardscape areas to help minimize root damage caused to the surrounding hardscape and structures. A minimum of six feet of structural soil shall be provided for trees. The structural soil can be provided under tree grates and pavement.
- Trees that provide attractive fall colors, seasonal flowers, or large amounts of shade are preferred for the Downtown.
- Tree grates are required within sidewalks and plaza spaces, as these allow for improved accessibility and increased sidewalk usability area and are consistent with the desired urban character. The ultimate size of the tree trunk should be considered when choosing grates; the grate opening should be appropriately sized to accommodate a mature tree. (Refer to street furnishings section for tree grate example.)
- Street tree placement shall be carefully considered to avoid conflicts with functions of adjacent businesses. The trees should not block views of storefront businesses or signs to the greatest extent possible.
- Street trees shall be spaced approximately 30 feet to 50 feet on center.
Specific Plan Area Tree Palette

Tree species will be selected for suitability within the Downtown boundary and within the specific area to be planted. Overall selection of tree species should be based upon the tree’s overall ability to provide pedestrian-friendly benefits, such as shade from summer heat, storefront visibility and general aesthetics which contribute to a vibrant downtown. Species should be hardy and not easily affected by extreme temperatures, wind, water supply, or handling. Highly visible areas, such as seating areas, gateways and intersections, should be planted with ornamental and interesting species that exhibit contrasting foliage, color and texture. Trees should not interfere with necessary sight distance lines for passing traffic. Finally, the selected tree species should require minimal maintenance and should exhibit a clean and healthy appearance in all seasons of the year.
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Median Landscaping

Medians and pedestrian refuge islands function as safety traffic calming measures. While also providing opportunities to aesthetically enhance the streets in the Downtown, landscaped medians provide a visual separation between oncoming traffic and create a narrowed lane perception that slows traffic. Specifically, medians should be furnished on Monterey Street in two locations:

- Leavesley Road to Third Street
- Eighth Street to Luchessa Avenue

Medians also create opportunities to provide pedestrian refuges across wide traffic rights-of-way. Located within the driver’s primary line of sight, medians can greatly influence how passing motorists perceive the community. The following guidelines give general direction for medians:

- Select median trees that have high branching structure to avoid interference with truck and vehicle traffic, provide safe sight lines, and minimize conflicts in maintaining median trees. Use plant materials that are under three feet tall at maturity to maintain sight distance lines for passing vehicles. At crosswalks and pedestrian refuge islands, use plant material that has a mature height no greater than 18 inches for pedestrian visibility.

- Choose species that need minimal maintenance to ensure a clean and healthy appearance.

- Provide a minimum 18-inch paving strip at the perimeter of the median area for maintenance workers to walk on and to provide a buffer between plant materials and traffic lanes.

- Avoid plants that are easily hedged. Avoid trimming plants into box hedges or geometric shapes. This maintains the original intent of the planting design and avoids a homogenous character.

- Select materials that have a strong color contrast with the driving lanes. Integral color in the medians can help minimize the maintenance associated with stains, fading, and dirt. Warm earth tones in the brick red to terracotta range provide an excellent contrast to black asphalt. These colors are common in clay and concrete paving units. Avoid pavers in the gray range with blue or violet tones.
• Intersection design in the Gateway District shall incorporate a median with no less than four feet of width when combined with a left-turn lane. Minimally, this leaves sufficient room for a pedestrian refuge island and directional signs.

• Consistent median treatments help create an identity that unites the Downtown through the use of paving, directional signs, architectural features, and plant materials.

• Medians with turning lanes or tapered ends should be enhanced with special paving.

Sidewalk Landscaping/Parkways

Sidewalk area planting in the Specific Plan area shall include planter pots, landscaped planters/parkways, raised planters, plaza landscaping, and parking lot screening and shading. In an effort to construct public right-of-way improvements to achieve a cohesive appearance and maintain an urban atmosphere, joint participation between private property owners and the City will be required. Some of the beautification efforts can be simply implemented by the City as funding is secured. Cooperation and participation by individual property owners, merchants, special interest groups, and others will be required with the future property development. This may be an opportunity for entities such as a Business Improvement District to facilitate public/private cooperation. The following are general guidelines for sidewalk landscape treatment:

• The use of accent plants with special qualities (e.g. spring flowers and/or good fall color) shall be used to accent entry drives and intersections to unify the Downtown and identify it as a place of special destination.

• Selected streets in the Specific Plan area including Monterey Street, the east side of Eigleberry Street (between Seventh Street and First Street) and Railroad Street should include landscaped planters between the sidewalk and street. This planted area will help buffer pedestrians from busy vehicular traffic.

• Richly landscaped parkways will be provided along the street edge on Monterey Street in two locations to buffer pedestrians from heavier trafficked areas:
  
  Leavesley Road to Third Street
  
  Eighth Street to Luchessa Avenue
Choose species that are hardy and not easily affected by extreme temperatures, wind, water supply, or handling. Near pedestrian traffic, it is important to anticipate some amount of damage to plants and irrigation, and tougher plant materials will help to maintain an attractive streetscape appearance.

Choose ornamental and interesting species for highly visible areas such as near seating areas, gateways, and intersections. Use plants with contrasting foliage, color, and texture; scented varieties; or those that have an especially interesting bloom.

Be aware of necessary sight distance lines for passing traffic and safety issues. At crosswalks and driveways, keep plant material below 18 inches for pedestrian visibility.

Choose species that need minimal maintenance and tend to look good all year to ensure a clean and healthy appearance.


**SIDEWALKS AND PEDESTRIAN IMPROVEMENTS**

Sidewalks

Sidewalks are the key component of the Downtown pedestrian circulation network. Sidewalks provide pedestrian access to virtually every activity and provide critical connections between other modes of travel, including the automobile, public transit, and bicycles. The pedestrian experience plays a very important part in the functionality and the economic health of a downtown environment. Wide sidewalks, street trees and landscaping, and consistent street furnishings all contribute to a desirable pedestrian street scene. Pedestrian improvements are shown in Figures 6.2 and 6.3.

For the most part, sidewalks are found on both sides of the streets in the Specific Plan area. There are some locations where sidewalks are not available, mostly fronting unimproved lots. Sidewalks should be installed at these locations as development occurs.

The success of downtown businesses will, to some extent, rely on the ability of customers to get from their cars to the commercial uses in the downtown. Therefore, adequate pedestrian connections to future parking facilities will be necessary.

The following recommendations are made to provide safe and efficient pedestrian circulation within the Specific Plan area:

- **Sidewalk Gap Closures.** Sidewalks should be built on any street segments that currently do not have sidewalks when the parcels fronting the gap are developed.

- **Pedestrian Connections to Parking Facilities.** Most of the parking facilities that would serve businesses along Monterey Street would be located behind those businesses along Egleberry Street or on the west side of the railroad tracks. It is recommended that direct connections between the future parking facilities and the sidewalks on Monterey Street be built. Wherever feasible, mid-block connections between Monterey Street and the parking facilities should be added so that customers using the parking lots are not forced to walk around the block to access Monterey Street.

- **Pedestrian Safety.** The future pedestrian facilities in the Specific Plan area (sidewalks and pedestrian paths) should be well lit to provide a safe environment for nighttime use. Crossing opportunities for pedestrians at the railroad tracks should be focused to controlled areas. This can be accomplished by installing fencing or walls along the railroad right-of-way that would force pedestrians to cross at the intersections where railroad crossing
guards are available. Additionally, separate railroad crossing guards should be installed across the sidewalks to prevent pedestrians from walking onto the tracks when a train is coming. The existing railroad crossing locations in the Downtown area should be maintained to promote adequate pedestrian circulation.

- Shared-Use Path Adjacent to Railroad Corridor. It is recommended that a shared bicycle/pedestrian path be developed along the east side of the railroad tracks corridor to accommodate north-south pedestrian circulation in the downtown. This path should be complimented with safety fencing along the railroad tracks to prevent bicyclists and pedestrians from crossing at uncontrolled locations.

The following are general guidelines for sidewalk and pedestrian treatments:

- Design features such as enhanced paving on walkways, trellises, or other decorative structures; landscaping; and low level decorative lighting shall be used to distinguish the pedestrian route from the vehicular route.

- Decorative concrete, which could occur in many different forms that would complement the Downtown, should make up the pedestrian zone of the sidewalk.

- On-street parallel or diagonal parking, raised planters, and landscaped sidewalk planting strips shall be used to define the sidewalk edge and provide a buffer between pedestrians and moving vehicles.

- Sidewalk surface shall be stable, firm, smooth, and slip-resistant.

- Sidewalks shall have a “through pedestrian zone” that is kept clear of any fixtures and/or obstructions. A minimum of four feet shall be reserved to allow for two people to walk comfortably side by side and in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements.

- Planting areas, bike racks, street lighting, news racks, and other street furniture shall be contained in the area between the sidewalks and street to keep the “through pedestrian zone” free for walking.
Crosswalks

Pedestrian crossings are critical components of the pedestrian mobility in the Downtown. Due to more pedestrian activity on Monterey Street, pedestrian crossings shall be located at signalized intersections. Mid-block crossings are also proposed in strategic locations to further enhance the pedestrian experience. The following are general guidelines for crosswalks:

- Incorporate accent paving at the following intersections:
  - Monterey Street at Third, Fourth, Lewis, Fifth, Sixth, Seventh, and Eighth Streets,
  - Eigleberry Street at Third, Fourth, Lewis, Fifth, Sixth, Seventh, and Eighth Streets,
  - Church Street at Sixth Street and Seventh Street,
  - Gourmet Alley at Fourth Street and Fifth Street (mid-block crossings), and
  - Other crossings that may need to facilitate and announce heavy pedestrian traffic.

- Where accent paving is not used, zebra crosswalks should be considered to increase visibility as compared to standard crosswalks.

- Crosswalks should be a minimum of eight feet in width. Wider crosswalks may be considered in areas of high pedestrian volumes.

- Pedestrian crosswalks at mid-block crossings shall be designed to minimize pedestrian/vehicular conflicts. Features such as crossing light flashers, countdown pedestrian signals, sidewalk extensions, clear crosswalk markings, pedestrian crossing signs, etc. shall be considered.

- Extensions of the sidewalk into the roadway at crosswalks are called “bulbouts” or “curb extensions.” Designed to give pedestrians greater visibility as they approach the crossing, bulbouts decrease the distance users must cross as well as slow traffic. Sidewalk bulb-outs shall be used where feasible considering the requirements of traffic volumes and specific storm drainage conditions.

- Crossing distances shall be minimized to the greatest extent possible. Uninterrupted pedestrian crossings without a central refuge island shall be limited to a maximum of 50 feet.
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Refuge islands are extensions of the median that create a protected area in the middle of the street.

Minimally, pedestrian refuge areas shall be four feet in width to reduce the possibility of island users, particularly those in wheelchairs propelled by attendants, from projecting into the traffic lanes. The width of a refuge island walkway shall not be less than width of the crosswalk.

It is required that the median be extended a short distance beyond the edge of the crosswalk in order to ensure that turning vehicles do not encroach on the median pedestrian refuge area.

Refuge areas shall be level with the crosswalk and have an accented paving surface different in color and texture to surrounding surfaces.

Turning radius of corners at intersections shall be reduced in order to minimize the crossing distance of pedestrians and help slow traffic. The presence of buses, trucks, and other large vehicles must be considered in designing turning radii.

Pedestrian crosswalks shall be adequately lit, have clear sight distances, and be free from view-hindering obstructions such as foliage and poles at crosswalk entries and median refuge islands.

Key Intersections

Due to the high visibility and substantial vehicular and pedestrian interaction, the Downtown intersections on Monterey Street between Eighth Street and First Street are considered key intersections. Intersections have the highest potential for impacting visitors due to their frequent use and role of stopping both vehicular and pedestrian traffic. Therefore, key intersections provide an opportunity for visually enhancing the street with accent paving and creating pedestrian-friendly crossings. Improvements at key intersections shall consist of accent paving, additional landscaping at corners, directional signs, and selected urban street furnishings.
Street Furnishings

Street furnishings serve an aesthetic as well as utilitarian function and can enliven and provide variety to outdoor spaces used for public interaction. Street furniture includes all items placed within the public right-of-way, such as benches, bus shelters, trash receptacles, plant containers, tree grates and guards, bicycle racks, bollards, kiosks, and fountains. Proper design and placement of such amenities will reinforce a unified Downtown design theme and create a lively and festive atmosphere.

Locations shall be determined through the implementation of this Specific Plan and review of public improvement design plans. Some of the envisioned public improvements will require private property owner participation and/or cooperation at the time of project development. Others can be implemented by the City as a part of the Capital Improvements Program. The following imagery represents recommended furnishings; however, final selection is to be coordinated with the Community Services Division to ensure maintainability, durability, adequacy, and vandal resistance.

Urban Furnishings Palettes

In addition to design treatments listed above, two palettes of streetscape furnishings have been selected for the Specific Plan area. The Traditional Streetscape Palette (Figure 6.2) invokes a conventional historic feel and is to be used in all parts of the Specific Plan area except the Cannery District. The Cannery Streetscape Palette (Figure 6.3) is more contemporary in nature and is intended for use only in the Cannery District.

General Street Furnishings Guidelines

- Street furniture shall be located along street edge of sidewalk. Provisions to accommodate persons with disabilities shall be incorporated into the design and location of furnishings. This includes a provision for space adjacent to walkways for wheelchair and/or stroller parking.

- To create a more organized and efficient use of sidewalk space, furnishings shall be grouped together rather than scattered. Trash and recycling cans shall be located near benches. A greater frequency of the number of furnishings should be located in higher-use pedestrian traffic areas.

- Items should be securely anchored to the sidewalk, and a graffiti-resistant coating shall be applied to street furniture elements to ensure a good longer-term appearance.
FIGURE 6.2 - TRADITIONAL STREETSCAPE PALETTE

Tree Guard by XXX

Street Light by XX

Bench by Creative Pipe Inc.
“Zephyr ZPB8-FB-6-SM-P”

Bicycle Rack by Site Specifier
“BKRO19”

Bollard by Urban Accessories
“St. Louis”

Tree Grate by Urban Accessories
“COHO”

Trash Receptacle by Dumor
“84”
DOWNTOWN GILROY SPECIFIC PLAN

Cannery District Streetscape Palette

FIGURE 6.3 - CANNERY DISTRICT STREETSCAPE PALETTE

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BENCHES AND TRASH RECEPTACLES

Two styles of benches are recommended along the public right-of-way in the Specific Plan area: one is a traditional style to complement the Downtown historic elements overall and one is more contemporary for the Cannery District. A six-foot bench, as well as trash and recycling receptacles, shall be placed approximately every 100 feet on Monterey Street, Egleberry Street, Railroad Street, Gourmet Alley, and other Downtown streets and shall be clustered at transit stops. Where public trash receptacles need replacing, these elements shall be replaced with furnishings identified in this Specific Plan.

TREE GRATES

The use of tree grates is required where street trees are proposed to be located in the sidewalk area. Tree grates provide more area for pedestrians on the sidewalk while reinforcing the desired urban character. Tree grates for the Downtown must comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements.

BIKE RACKS

Bike racks shall be located near transit stops, throughout commercial areas, event areas, and parking lots as well as incorporated in the site design of private projects. Well placed and secure bike racks will encourage bicycle ridership and provide an attractive alternative to locking bicycles to trees and light poles. Along Downtown streets, bike racks are required at key locations on every block. The “U” shape style rack works well in an urban setting because it allows bikes to be parked parallel to the sidewalk, which keeps them out of the pedestrian zone of the sidewalk. It also is a preferred design by cyclists due to its functionality and ease of use.

BUS SHELTERS

Bus shelters and transit stops are important elements for Downtown circulation needs. They shall be conveniently located near parking areas, shopping areas, event areas, and public facilities through coordination with the City Engineering Division. Because the Valley Transportation Authority bus shelters and stops are located throughout the Downtown, they need to have a unifying, clean, and uncluttered appearance. Transit stops shall provide benches and lighting for the comfort of passengers waiting for their transit vehicle and shall take the needs of disabled users into consideration.
Lighting Concepts

A lighting standard has been selected and implemented in portions of the Downtown. To reinforce Gilroy’s historic image, the more traditional lighting style is planned to be used in all Districts except the Cannery District. The Cannery District lends itself to a style of lighting that will complement more contemporary structures as well as new architecture with a quasi-industrial style.

Street lighting plays both an aesthetic and safety role in urban areas. The guidelines encourage downtown lighting which:

- Contributes to the safe and efficient use of Downtown streets,
- Enhances security,
- Helps unify the Specific Plan area,
- Enhances and encourage evening activities, and
- Uses full or partial cut-off lighting fixtures to minimize light pollution and glare.

The following are general guidelines for street lighting:

- Pedestrian street lighting shall be provided along sidewalks and pedestrian pathways, particularly in areas where street beautification and higher pedestrian use is desired, such as Monterey Street, Egleberry Street, Gourmet Alley, and Railroad Street as well as the Civic/Cultural Arts District area.
- Additional pedestrian-scaled street lights shall be provided at bus stops to provide additional security for transit users.
- Electrical service for seasonal/event lighting in all street lights and at street trees shall be provided on Monterey Street.
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Newspaper Stands

Newspaper stands shall be consolidated to reduce visual clutter along the street edge and provide a unified approach to newspaper vending. Decorative newspaper stands shall be located throughout the Downtown and near the train station to consolidate numerous paper boxes. Newspaper racks shall be clustered in groups of three dispensers to minimize a cluttered sidewalk appearance. Permanent decorative newspaper enclosures to house these racks will also help minimize a cluttered appearance.

Skate Stops

Anti-skating hardware devices designed to prevent aggressive inline skaters, skateboarder riders, and other extreme sports athletes from using street furnishings and planters as props for performing aggressive stunts like riding rails and grinding curbs should be installed in some areas. A custom skate stop adds character and aesthetic appeal to this functional item and is recommended.

Additional Site Furnishings

Drinking fountains, kiosks, banners, telephone boxes, planters, and informational displays, etc., should also be carefully located throughout the Downtown. Waist-high safety bollards should be used to define selected sidewalk extensions, public plazas, and paseos. Properly placed, bollards help to delineate between vehicle and pedestrian zones, creating a safe walking environment.
A strong sign program is one of the fastest ways to make an immediate impact and “brand” an urban area. A logo and sign program shall be established to help distinguish the Downtown from other areas of town. The logo shall be placed on gateways, signs, and banners to develop both a sense of place and an identity for the Downtown.

Lead-in Directional Signs

Lead-in directional signs will be located at key locations outside of the Specific Plan area throughout the City as well as near the freeway to direct residents and visitors to the Downtown.
Street Signs

Street signs are one of the best opportunities to provide a unifying element in the urban environment. Street signs shall be as specified by the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) or by special request, subject to the review and approval of the City Engineer. It is the intent of the Specific Plan to identify every street in the same way in order to provide a recognizable sense of repetition that clearly enables a motorist, bicyclist, or pedestrian to identify the Downtown as a special destination. The street sign program should include the following, as possible:

- A color unique to all Downtown signs
- A font selection consistent with the desired traditional Downtown character
- A design that reflects design components of the other Downtown signs
Gateways and Entry Monuments

Gateways and entry monuments will be instrumental in providing a sense of arrival and transition into the Downtown. These visual gateway features are civic in emphasis and serve to identify and promote the distinct identity of the Downtown. Gateways announce entry into the Downtown area and entry monuments highlight entry into the more traditional and historic heart of Downtown. Gateway treatments are proposed to be located at the intersection of Monterey Street and First Street and at the intersection of Monterey Street and Tenth Street. Entry monuments are proposed to be located along Monterey Street at Third Street and Eighth Street.

In addition to serving as entryways, gateways and entry monuments are important places for directional and informational signs to guide motorists to their destinations. The visual design of gateways should be attractive as well as functional, conveying a ceremonial sense of entry that reflects the traditional importance of a downtown and conveys the unique identity of the Downtown.

Physical elements of the entry, including medians, signs, archways, paving materials, and landscape planting materials, should function together to physically define the entry and establish a positive first impression of the Downtown. Increased landscaping at gateways and entry monuments will help emphasize that one is entering the Downtown.
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ENTRY MONUMENT/ARCH LOCATED ON MONTEREY STREET AT THIRD STREET AND EIGHTH STREET

ALTERNATIVE ENTRY MONUMENT LOCATED ON MONTEREY STREET AT THIRD STREET AND EIGHTH STREET
Directional Signs

Of key importance in the Downtown is a clear and attractive directional sign system to provide direction to important services and destinations such as public parking, city hall, library, performance venues, parks, transportation facilities, etc. The following are guidelines for the development of a directional sign program for the Downtown.

- The sign program shall include a common directional sign with directional arrows and labeling to denote key shopping areas, public parking, civic buildings, and tourist attractions.

- Directional signs shall be oriented to vehicular traffic. Selected signs should be lit, landscaped, and placed permanently at roadsides or within medians at key locations around the Downtown. These signs shall be smaller than the City gateways but similar in style.

- The directional signs shall reflect design materials and components of the gateways, entry monuments, and street signs to provide consistency and unity.
Street Banners

Banners or flags for use on area light standards shall be included in the sign program. Banners with an appropriate logo and graphic representing a community-wide special event or festival shall be developed. Banners may be changed periodically to provide advertisement for special events and promotions.
Public Art

Display of public art is an important way of expressing the personality and character of a community. An arts program to engage local artists in representing various aspects of the City greatly personalizes a community. The City presently has an established “Art in Public Places” program; however, it is recommended that the City consider refining and tailoring the existing program to better meet the characteristics and needs of the Downtown. The public art program should provide various methods to incorporate art either as stand alone individual pieces or incorporated into the design of other urban improvements such as paving, benches, street lights, etc. Incorporation of public art is an intriguing way to enhance the pedestrian environment of sidewalks, plazas, paseos, or other pedestrian spaces. Locations for public art pieces are suggested at most public spaces, such as streets, plazas or along pedestrian passageways.

- Public art can be used in a variety of locations. It can be created in small elements such as tile banding on a stair riser or in larger pieces such as interpretive sculptures and functional art.
- Public art can be an interactive media, such as video projections, a climbing structure, or other features like fountains or water elements.
- Public art can be used as a way finding feature to attract pedestrians to key locations such as a plaza or paseo or can be developed as murals representing the area’s unique history and people of significance.
- Art can be in the form of decorative tiles integrated into paving on benches, walls, stairs, and entries.
- Seating areas and signs are also opportunities for public art.
**Plazas, Paseos, and Public Spaces**

Perhaps one of the most important improvements that can be made to the Downtown is the addition of urban green spaces in the form of plazas, paseos, and informal pedestrian spaces. As the Downtown adds new residents and businesses, opportunities for gathering places and convenient urban recreation in various forms must be provided. The following section describes the urban public open space network that is proposed by the Specific Plan. (Refer to Figure 6.4 Plazas and Pedestrian Connections.)

Throughout the Specific Plan area, plazas and paseos of a variety of sizes shall be incorporated to accommodate different types of activities. Two plazas are proposed, one at the southeast corner of Monterey Street and Martin Street and one at Monterey Street and Hornlein Court. Paseos are proposed throughout the Specific Plan Districts. These public gathering spaces shall serve to establish a sense of place and identity and provide space for private outdoor dining, events, and street side entertainment. Well-designed public space in the form of both plazas and paseos shall provide ongoing opportunities for human activities that create an interactive environment, build a sense of community, and create opportunities for events, entertainment, and gatherings. Public parks and plazas in the Downtown shall adhere to the following guidelines.

**Plazas**

- Plaza spaces shall be designed with flexibility for physical use and shall be designed to accommodate a range of desired activities such as outdoor seating, entertainment (bandstands), and festivals. The areas shall contribute to real and perceived public safety.
- Public space lighting shall be low in height with a maximum height of 16 inches. Lighting in plazas should average two footcandles and incorporate pedestrian oriented lights, such as light bollards, pole lights, and wall-mounted lights. Uplighting of trees and other site features or elements is also encouraged.
- Where feasible, plazas should have an articulated edge (buildings, benches, landscaping, etc.) to define the plaza and create comfortable space.
- Plaza edges which open to pedestrian through-traffic should be defined (without impeding traffic flow) with a planter or low seating wall, a pergola with vines, a water feature, or a sculpture.
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FIGURE 6.4 - PLAZA AND PEDESTRIAN CONNECTIONS
• Provide pedestrian amenities like seating, decorative lighting, planters, drinking fountains, distinctive paving, decorative tiles, public art, landscaping, and bicycle racks. Plazas shall also incorporate focal points such as architectural structures, sculptures and interactive water features.

• Covered areas along the perimeter of parks and plazas (i.e. vine-covered pergola) are strongly encouraged to provide protection from rain and/or sun.

• Soft landscaping and shade trees as well as hard surfaced areas shall be incorporated into the overall plaza design. Color, form, and texture are an integral part of the design of these public spaces.

Paseos

• Paseos shall provide linkages between public parking and the street environment, linkages between residential projects and adjacent streets, and linkages between residential projects and plazas/parks.

• Provide pedestrian amenities such as seating, decorative lighting, planters, fountains, drinking fountains, distinctive paving, decorative tiles, public art, landscaping, and bicycle racks. Paseos shall also incorporate focal points such as architectural structures, sculptures and interactive water features.

• Paseos shall be well lit and include directional signs.
Parking Structures

Parking structures are typically dominated by strong horizontal lines with a flat roof. To soften the horizontal lines and greatly enhance the look of the structure, elevations should be articulated and elements added that help give the structure proportions that reflect a regular building. The deck and railing pattern should not dominate the elevation. All public parking structures should adhere to the following guidelines.

- To give the structure proportions reflective of a regular building. Design the openings to look more like window openings than long, horizontal parking garage openings.

- In some cases it may be appropriate to add framing to openings to create the appearance of windows. The framing will help the structure look more like a regular building and less like an unarticulated parking garage. The framing should have vertical members to de-emphasize the horizontal lines of the structure.

- Substantial massing should occur at the corner of the structures to anchor the building and give the structure proportions more similar to a regular building. These panels should incorporate relief to create shadow patterns and add visual interest.

- Height should be added to the parapet at key areas on the building structure to accent entries and reduce the long horizontal façade that is typical of parking structures.

- Consider adding awnings or trellis structures at vehicular and pedestrian entrances to create a pedestrian scale.

- Horizontal openings should be broken up with vertical columns to create a rhythm of openings, again reflecting proportions of a regular building.

- Where appropriate and feasible, retail spaces should front the pedestrian spaces at the ground floor.

- Where retail is not provided on the ground floor, the structure should be located so that the structure does not directly abut paved areas. A minimum of seven feet of landscaping strip should be provided between paved areas and the structure.

- Consider providing landscaping and vines on façades to help reduce the visual impact of the structure.