DOWNTOWN CONCORD

URBAN DESIGN

MARCH 1987

CONCORD CALIFORNIA
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*Todos Santos Plaza with The Fire House in the background at Grant Street and Willow Pass Road.*
INTRODUCTION

“Downtown Concord Urban Design” is a book dedicated to the achievement of excellence in the environment of downtown Concord, California. It presents ideas about the character of downtown, policies for urban design, and procedures for review of downtown building projects. It is to be used by the City’s elected officials, professional staff, and public Commissions and Boards. And it is to be used by private developers, institutional sponsors, and individuals who have an interest in the quality of Concord’s downtown environment.

The book addresses the physical environment on several levels: generally and specifically, quantitatively and qualitatively. Urban design issues are depicted on maps, discussed in text, and illustrated in photographs and drawings. The book considers issues such as the form and texture of public streets, sidewalks, and open spaces. It distinguishes the predominantly pedestrian from the predominantly vehicular environments. It talks about the location of strategic activities, such as retail shops, offices, hotels, cultural facilities, and housing. It provides guidance for shaping open space and treating landscape. It proposes specific and general design guidelines for the architecture of buildings in the downtown.

The book is intended to be a guide to provide direction and it is intended to be modified as conditions warrant. It is not a specific plan, a zoning ordinance, or a building code (information concerning these and other legal documents of the City of Concord can be obtained upon request from the appropriate administrative departments of the City). It invites change and refinement as experience with its use suggests new concepts or invalidates old ones. It does not require development to occur at a specified rate, but provides guidance for change at whatever rate the City deems appropriate.

Perhaps the most important element of the book is that it suggests an image for the future of downtown Concord. Through the numerous illustrations, maps, notes, and guidelines, the book creates a perceptible and unique urban character, which will become evident through the cumulative effect of completed downtown improvements.
DOWNTOWN CONCORD

In recent years, downtown Concord has been changing from a small town center within a suburban community to a small urban center within the growing Contra Costa County region. Because of Concord's location and role within the central Contra Costa County area, the trend will probably be for the downtown to continue to change in the decades to come. This change necessitates new perceptions of the character of downtown. What should this character or image be?

Until now, Concord's image has been that of a small town. The form of downtown has been defined by small scale buildings, low site utilization, and architectural idioms from Victorian and Spanish Colonial influence. A new downtown must keep what is good and familiar from the past, while permitting and incorporating new ingredients.

A new image calls for a new interpretation of what a small California city can be. America's urban prototypes (e.g. 19th century industrial cities such as San Francisco, Chicago, or Cleveland) are not appropriate as models for Concord's future. A new image for Concord can be found in an emerging California urbanism which responds to lifestyles of the western United States, the climate of California, the post-industrial information age, and the history and geography of Concord. Many people in Concord have expressed their conceptualizations of this new urbanism in the numerous public forums that were held during the planning and preparation of this book.

The new image will have a downtown that will be green with trees, lawns, and flowering plants. Todos Santos Plaza, its neighboring blocks, and the Bank of America office campus will provide extensive landscaped pedestrian spaces on eight city blocks in the downtown core. These green spaces will be defined by continuous colonnades at the street level of buildings along Grant, Salvio, and Galindo streets. Grant Street will be specially designed for pedestrians, with limited vehicular access connecting Todos Santos Plaza to the BART station. It will be lined with shops and cafes and will feature outdoor art and fountains.

Buildings around Todos Santos Plaza will remain low in height. Taller structures will be clustered around the BART station. New and old buildings will house shops, restaurants, hotels, offices, theaters, and housing in an exciting downtown with a relaxed and humane atmosphere.

The map shows a view of downtown Concord in 1985. It registers the image of downtown at a point in time, to be used as a yardstick for comparison with the transitions of the downtown environment in later years.

The plan depicts a pedestrian environment at the core of downtown, bordered on most of three sides by higher density buildings.
The Streetscape Concepts map illustrates the design treatment of streets, sidewalks, and public open spaces. The design of the urban streetscape is the best measure for judging the quality of a downtown and understanding the attitude of a city's inhabitants towards its urban environment.

The map illustrates seven primary concepts:

1. Streets are landscaped with trees along sidewalks and no traffic restrictions. The tree planting concept conforms to other street planting plans prepared for the City.

2. The Clayton/Willow Pass Corridor is conceived as a major boulevard, providing a focal and entryway entrance and exit to the City. Galindo Street (and Concord Avenue) is treated similarly as a boulevard through downtown and as a gateway from the north and south.

3. Major entrances to downtown are demarcated by gateways. The locations of major gateways show and suggestions are made for their design treatment.
4. Grant Street is a major pedestrian promenade extending from Todos Santos Plaza to the BART station. It has special paving on sidewalks and at street intersections. Custom-designed lighting, street furniture, and public art will provide a festive character. The street will be lined with retail and restaurant activities. Short-term, on-street parking can act as a buffer between wide sidewalks and relatively narrow streets. Grant Street could be the route of a public shuttle service utilizing a small jitney or streetcar, although it will not be a transit mall.

A view to the west down Salcio Street with Todos Santos Plaza in the middle ground.

5. Suggestions are given for new public open spaces. The BART plaza, the "Adobe Plaza" at the Associates Bank and Chamber of Commerce blocks, and the retail courtyards adjacent to Todos Santos Plaza are a few of the most important spaces.

6. Streetlighting in the downtown is a system of compatible standards, fixtures, and lamps. Lighting for pedestrian ways, for streets and parking areas, and for buildings and landscaping are conceived as a unified design.

7. Finally, the Streetscape Concepts map illustrates a set of appropriate building footprints for downtown blocks. The footprints work with building setbacks and design guidelines to shape open spaces and to create the downtown streetscape.

A festival at Todos Santos Plaza as seen from Salcio and Grant Streets, showing the pedestrian emphasis of the streetscape.
The Development Controls map illustrates downtown zoning controls for building heights and setbacks. It uses symbols and annotations to explain concepts for the design of downtown development. Locations for major open spaces, arcades and colonnades, downtown gateways, and buildings are identified.

Development around Todos Santos Plaza is to be dense and urban, but relatively low in height at 55 feet maximum. The area north of the Concord BART Station is to have the tallest buildings in the downtown at a maximum of 200 feet. Between Todos Santos Plaza and the BART Station, buildings are to be of medium height and density, with heights from 70 to 140 feet, in order to make a transition between the two different areas. A special height zone with a maximum height of 100 feet has been created along the west side of Calleido Street, south of Clayton Road, to ease the transition between the downtown and a residential area immediately to the west. The Clayton Road and Willow Pass Road corridor, between downtown and Freeway 242, is to have buildings of medium height and density with a maximum height of 140 feet, to serve as an urban pathway into downtown.

Setbacks are minimal in the core of the downtown, the area near Grant, Salvo, Calleido, and Oak Streets. The area bounded by these streets has low buildings to the north around Todos Santos Plaza and taller buildings with significant open space at the Bank of America campus to the south. The streets immediately surrounding this core have minimal setbacks, from zero to ten feet, to help create an urban environment.

A view from the downtown along Clayton Road to the east, with Freeway 242 in the distance.

The urban design study model of downtown, looking south from Todos Santos Plaza to the BART station.

NOTE:
1ST Floors are zero.

DEVELOPMENT CONTROLS

LEGEND

1. Residential
2. Office
3. Commercial
4. Institutional
5. Industrial
6. Park
7. Open Space
8. Street
9. Sidewalk
10. Building
11. Sign

A view of Clayton Road, highlighting the cohesiveness of development along the north side of the corridor.

A view of the site north of Clayton Road, showing the concentration of development along the corridor.

A view of the site south of Clayton Road, showing the development along the corridor.

A view of the site east of Clayton Road, showing the development along the corridor.

A view of the site west of Clayton Road, showing the development along the corridor.

The BART station model showing the layout of the station and surrounding development.

The site of the BART station showing the layout of the station and surrounding development.

The development controls map showing the zoning controls for building heights and setbacks.

The development controls map showing the zoning controls for building heights and setbacks.

The development controls map showing the zoning controls for building heights and setbacks.

The development controls map showing the zoning controls for building heights and setbacks.
Galindo Street is the exception with a 20 foot setback, which is appropriate for the streetscape of a major boulevard through the center of downtown. As one moves further from the core of downtown, minor streets have 15 foot setbacks and major streets, such as Clayton Road, Willow Pass Road, and Concord Avenue, have setbacks from 15 to 25 feet.

Special features of the downtown and items worthy of note are indicated on the development controls map with symbols and written annotations. Arcades and colonnades are specified for building edges at grade around the core area, along Galindo, Salvoa, Grant, and Oak Streets. Gateways to the downtown, major public open space locations, and descriptions of designed development concepts for important sites are included.

The renovated Pete House is now a restaurant and The Old Fire House and City Hall Building (behind) is the Chamber of Commerce and Visitor's Bureau.

The maximum floor area ratio (FAR's) in the downtown, which are a measurement of the intensity of development, follow the heights indicated on the Development Controls map. The floor area ratio of a project is the gross building area of a development divided by the net site area, including parking levels at and above grade (see the Downtown Business District section of the City of Concord Zoning Ordinance). The highest FAR permitted is 5.0, for parcels near the BART station at the south end of Grant Street. The next highest FAR is 4.0, located mainly along Clayton Road from Freeway 242 to Galindo. An FAR of 3.0 is the maximum allowed on blocks around Todos Santos Plaza, and the Bank of America project is designated as 2.5. The lowest maximum FAR is 1.0, shown for blocks in the northeast part of downtown.

Downtown from the north, showing lower development near Todos Santos Plaza in the foreground and higher development near the BART station in the background.
TRANSPORTATION CONCEPTS

Downtown Concord needs a roadway system, parking, and a public transportation network that is continuously improved to handle traffic efficiently. A transportation plan and a construction program have been developed to respond to this need. Public funding sources for these improvements have been identified, but it will also take substantial funding commitments from the developers of the downtown properties to implement the program properly. Further information about the plan can be obtained from the City Department of Public Works.

The study area used in the transportation analysis includes all of downtown Concord and extends westerly to the Freeway 242 interchange. A summary of the traffic volumes in downtown Concord follows:

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Traffic Volumes—ADT (Average Daily Traffic)</th>
<th>1983</th>
<th>2000</th>
<th>Increase</th>
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<tr>
<td>Traffic generated in area</td>
<td>87,000</td>
<td>181,000</td>
<td>94,000 (55%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Through traffic</td>
<td>89,000</td>
<td>197,000</td>
<td>108,000 (22%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total traffic</td>
<td>175,000</td>
<td>378,000</td>
<td>203,000 (60%)</td>
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Downtown Concord is well served by public transit in comparison to most other suburban centers in the Bay Area. BART attracts a significant number of transit trips to destinations outside the study area, but does not serve a large number of trips with origins or destinations within the downtown study area. With the construction of new offices in downtown Concord, an increase in reverse commuting on BART can be expected.

Downtown Concord has good bus service operated by the Central Contra Costa Transit Authority. A major increase in bus usage to the downtown area will help reduce parking needs. The bus routes should avoid small downtown pedestrian streets and should follow the major streets and major boulevards as much as possible. Salvin, Grant, and Mt. Diablo Streets should be avoided, whereas Calaveras/Concord Avenue, Willow Pass, Clayton Road, and the one-way couples of Concord Driveway, Hastings, and Main Street in Palomar, and East Port Chicago can be bonded.

There appears to be good potential for reducing auto trips during peak hours by a transportation systems management (TSM) program of staggered work hours, carpools, vanpools, and parking policies. To this end, the City has adopted a TSM ordinance (Ordinance No. 85-44), which requires the developers of projects of a certain size (e.g., 100 or more employees at peak hour) to submit a TSM Plan and execute a TSM Agreement with the City. The preliminary TSM Plan is submitted along with the developer's project application to the City Planning Department. The plan would include the designation of a Transportation Systems Coordinator for the project, tenant/employee transportation surveys and vehicular trip forecasts, and strategies to reduce peak hour congestion. The TSM Agreement is signed and recorded after project approval and before occupancy. The agreement includes the terms between the City and the project sponsor for operating the project's TSM program.

Even with increased transit usage and a good TSM program, the expected increase in automobile traffic will require the City's proposed street improvements, which are shown on the street improvement map. In addition to these improvements, there will be minor modifications to some existing streets, such as removal of curbside parking, stopping changes, and traffic signal improvements. City provided parking will also be needed near the core area of downtown to augment project specific parking. Potential sites north of Salvin, west of Galindo and east of Colfax have been identified as potential locations for city parking structures.

A transit stop in the Concord BART station with recently completed tall buildings is depicted.

CIRCULATION & TRANSPORTATION

LEGEND

- Recommended pedestrian routes
- BART
- BART expansion in northsouth extent in central corridor
- Major parking sites
- Major parking structure in northsouth extent in central corridor

[Image of map with various symbols and text]
Studies of arterial streets and freeway access were made to determine approximate costs of land acquisition and construction. Funding is available from gas tax, federal aid, and redevelopment sources to pay for part of these costs. All developers constructing projects in the downtown area are charged an off-site street improvement fee which is applied toward the street improvement program. In addition, developers are required to build all street improvements adjacent to their developments, which are needed to handle traffic generated by the developments.

Because of the increase in traffic brought about by development in the downtown and west Concord areas, the City has adopted a policy (Policy and Procedure 121), which has been codified into Ordinance No. 85-8. The ordinance is intended to provide a timely balance between land development and transportation improvements. The ordinance requires that an evaluation be made of traffic to be added to the existing transportation network for each new project proposed in the Downtown and North Concord areas. If the evaluation indicates that the proposed project will impose significant impacts on the transportation network, that could result in the reduction in the existing levels of service to an unacceptable level, then permits for that project will be postponed until the City is satisfied that the necessary traffic improvements will be in place prior to the project's completion and occupancy.

A view of downtown on Clayton Road, the major road to downtown from freeway 242.
An important part of this book is a public art program. Downtown Concord can be unique among cities in the region through a deliberate effort to incorporate public art into the downtown. Artwork can be located outdoors along pedestrian ways, in public plazas, as well as in the courtyards, setbacks, and plazas of private developments. Indoors, art can be located in lobbies and in other major public building spaces.

Publicly sponsored outdoor art is downtown would be concentrated along Grant Street from the BART station to Todos Santos Plaza and from the plaza west along Salvo Street to Adobe Street. Within this area elements of the streetscape, such as paving, tree grates, fixtures, furniture, lighting, and equipment could be subjects for art competitions. Individual or repetitive items designed through the art program should be compatible with the palettes of current streetscape elements around Todos Santos Plaza, which are to be extended throughout the downtown. In addition to the design of parts of the streetscape, specific works of art (e.g., sculpture, murals, and constructions) could be purchased or commissioned for visually prominent locations.

Major gateways to the downtown are important locations for publicly sponsored art. In some or all of these locations, art in the form of constructions, sculpture, lighting or graphics could be used in conjunction with landscaping to create memorable entrances to the downtown.

The Concord City Council has envisioned that public and private buildings, constructed in the downtown, would have interior and exterior public art as part of the development effort. Artwork could be placed in lobbies and other public indoor spaces, as well as in exterior spaces such as gardens and plazas. The subjects of such art may include traditional sculpture or painting and may also extend to paving patterns and materials, wall murals, waterworks, hangings, and other constructions.

The City of Concord has adopted in ordinance which levies "one-half of one percent for art in public places" (Ordinance No. 85/53). The ordinance enables the City to collect one-half of one percent of the construction budget of each development in the downtown for public art. The Redevelopment Agency has also pledged one percent of its yearly tax increment revenue as well as one-half of one percent of its tax allocation bonds proceeds for art in public places within the Redevelopment Project Area (Resolution No. 85 294). The Concord Arts Committee will advise the City's Visual Arts Coordinator on the implementation of the Art in Public Places program. The final approval of all art in public places programs will be given by the City Council, upon receiving recommendations from the Concord Arts Committee.

Publicly sponsored art for this program can be acquired through direct purchase, direct commission, or as the result of design competitions. It is hoped that this major program of public art will generate great excitement and civic interest in the downtown and provide a continuing forum for discussion of the downtown environment.
BUILDING PRESERVATION

Concord has a commitment to preserve the important heritage of its downtown built environment. The map designates buildings and areas to be enhanced and preserved. The buildings drawn on the map are both new and old, some of which have historic and architectural significance. Three categories of buildings are designated: new buildings, older buildings, and buildings that are relatively old and small, which could possibly be moved.

The newer downtown buildings are mostly large projects built in the last two decades, which will exist for at least several generations. The buildings include: (1) Heritage, (2) Plaza Tower, (3) City Parking Garage at Salvo and Guelph Streets, (4) Salvo Paciero Square, (5) Park Terrace Apartments, (6) Bank of America, Concord Main Office, (7) Bank of America, Concord Center complex, (8) One Concord Center, phase one and the future, phase two, (9) Pacific Telephone Switching Building, (10) Professional Office Building at Salvo and East Streets, (11) The Presbyterian Church buildings at Salvo and Guelph Streets, and (12) The Concord BART Station.

Some of the older buildings have historic or architectural significance and some do not. The buildings are listed with their historic name first, where appropriate, and their current use in parentheses: (1) The Fiskett Building (1874 Restaurant), (2) The Old Fire House and City Hall Building (Chamber of Commerce), (3) The Perry House (restaurant building at Guelph and Salvo Streets), (4) The Salvo Paciero Adobe (Ass ociates National Bank), (5) The Fire House at Willow Pass Road and Grant Street, (6) The Veterans Hall, (7) The Mackenzie Collins House at Salvo between East and Post Chicago, and (8) The Keller House on Clayton Road near Sutter Street.

The third category of buildings shown on the map are relatively old and small buildings, which may have historic or architectural significance and which could possibly be moved into historic building areas. The category includes: (9) The Ivy House and (10) The Masonic Temple.

Two potential historic building areas have been identified within the Central Concord Redevelopment Project Area. Other potential areas also exist, which are near downtowns and outside the Redevelopment Area. The two areas within the Redevelopment Area, which are indicated on the map are: (1) The "Adobe Paseo" area, bounded by Concaron Avenue, Salvo, Adobe, and Central Streets, which is suitable for retail and office uses, and (2) a half-block area on the north side of Salvo Street, bounded by East Street and Post Chicago Highway, which is suitable for residential and office uses.

The Fiskett Building at Salvo and Guelph Streets before renovation.

The Fiskett Building after renovation with new streetlighting, streetscape elements, and a fountain.

BUILDING PRESERVATION

LEGEND

- Associated with historic
- Buildings: existing or new
- Buildings: proposed
- Historic areas
- Redevelopment areas
- Redevelopment concepts
The Urban Design Guidelines set forth standards to be used in the creation and public review of building and open space designs. The guidelines apply to private developers and their architects as well as to public sponsors who propose designs for the downtown. The guidelines are the most detailed design policy instruments that a community can create short of creating designs. The Design Guidelines sometimes give quantifiable standards, but more often they are qualitative and require judgement in their application.

The guidelines are a combination of recommendations specific to Concord and recommendations which are common to the design of urban areas throughout the western world. Guidelines such as "Todos Santos Plaza" and "Streetlighting" refer specifically to downtown Concord, whereas "City Outdoor Rooms" and "Bases of Tall Buildings" are applicable to many urban environments.

The Design Guidelines are a manifestation of the community's intentions for its urban environment. They are a tool to evaluate development proposals submitted to the City. They are to be used by Concord public bodies: the Redevelopment Agency, the Planning Commission, and the Design Review Board.

The Design Guidelines should not be a static body of standards, but rather should evolve over time as experience validates some guidelines over others, and as new situations require new guidelines. The body of guidelines need not necessarily be applied as a whole to all projects; particular guidelines and groups of guidelines will be relevant to particular projects or sites.

The use of Design Guidelines is not a substitute for design talent or good intentions on the part of a sponsor. In addition to the guidelines, the City must also communicate a desire to have the highest quality of design from professionals proposing environmental change in the downtown.
Each guideline has a statement followed by a discussion of the guideline's purpose, nature, and application. Many guidelines use diagrams and photographs to illustrate design ideas. The titles of the guidelines, as they appear in pairs, are:

HISTORIC ELEMENTS
BUILDING CONTEXT
DEFINITION OF PLAZAS
TODOS SANTOS PLAZA
BUILDING SETBACKS
CITY OUTDOOR ROOMS
BULK OF TALL BUILDINGS
BASES OF TALL BUILDINGS
BUILDING MATERIALS
COLOR OF TALL BUILDINGS
STREET LEVEL USES
SIDEWALK LANDSCAPE
SIDEWALK HARDSCAPE
BUILDING SIGNAGE
ARCADES AND COLONNADES
SIDEWALK CANOPIES
STREETLIGHTING
BUILDING LIGHTING
WATER FEATURES
ART IN PUBLIC SPACES
SITE UTILITIES
PEDESTRIAN CIRCULATION
PARKING GARAGE HEIGHT
PARKING GARAGE TREATMENT
PARKING GARAGE ROOFS
BUILDING ROOFS
HISTORIC ELEMENTS

New building projects shall respect the architectural heritage of existing buildings in scale and form.

Discussion:

Downtown Concord's architectural history dates back to the early days of California. Older buildings display design concepts of the Spanish Colonial and Victorian eras of California history. This heritage should be respected by new development in both scale and form. While the City does not intend new buildings to be imitations or copies of period architecture, the generic principles of early California architecture can foster design continuity in the downtown.

These generic principles are based on ideas that are intrinsic to California's climate and lifestyles. These principles, manifested in historic architectural expressions, are still valued today as examples of architectural quality. Many guidelines in this book deal with such principles. For example, arcades and colonnades are specified for parts of the downtown, fountains and water features are encouraged, and the use of building materials with "substance" is discussed.

This guideline is intended to help developers and designers understand the City's concern about historic continuity. For a more detailed discussion of Concord's architectural heritage, see the report entitled: "Todos Santos Design Vocabulary", published in 1979 by the Concord City Planning Department and the Concord Redevelopment Agency.
BUILDING CONTEXT

New buildings shall be designed to be compatible with existing adjacent buildings.

Discussion:

The existing buildings of a city provide references for the design of new ones. To the extent that the height, scale, and texture of the new buildings respond to what is already there, the city is continuously knitted together. Conversely, disregard of the existing building pattern tends to fragment the city and reduce its coherence.

Architectural devices can be used to provide transitions between the old and the new. Such devices include aligning cornice lines, continuing a pattern of wall openings, using similar materials, and relating overall building proportions.

The scale of modern buildings can often be very different from older, existing ones. Therefore, this guideline cannot be applied arbitrarily or dogmatically, but must be used with sensitivity and discretion.
DEFINITION OF PLAZAS

Plazas and courtyards shall be defined on at least three sides with buildings, walls, or landscaping.

Discussion:

Open spaces, plazas, and courtyards in cities are defined by their edges. If the edges are weak, the spaces seem amorphous and lack focus. The most memorable and successful open spaces are well defined by building facades, arcades, garden walls, bosks of trees, or other elements having strong character and clear geometry. Examples of historically successful spaces of this type are Piazza San Marco in Venice, Rockefeller Plaza in New York, and Union Square in San Francisco. Concord has fine examples in Todco Santos Plaza and the courtyard of Salvio Pacheco Square. It is difficult to find successful urban spaces that lack this definition. In fact, without such definition we cannot recognize that the space exists.

Definition and enrichment within open spaces can be achieved by the use of landscape, hardscape, and water features. Fountains, pools, and defined waterways can be combined with planting and paved areas to visually and functionally enliven urban open spaces. Attention should be given to the patterns of sunlight and shadow in open spaces, created by the elements defining each space.
Buildings facing Todos Santos Plaza shall be perceived to create continuous facades along the four frontages and at the four corners which bound the plaza. The buildings shall have cornices which have a minimum number of height changes, which are approximately the same height as Salvio Pacheco Square, and which in no case are less than 30 feet in height at the street edges. Facades shall have breaks only for defined plazas at mid-block and only for 25% or less of a block’s length.

Discussion:

Todos Santos Plaza is the historic core of downtown Concord. As such, rigorous attention should be given to guiding the form of development around it. Facades, cornice lines and heights of buildings around the plaza need to be carefully controlled in order to define the plaza clearly.
BUILDING SETBACKS

Required building setbacks from property lines, as set forth in the Zoning Ordinance for the Downtown Business District, shall be considered maxima and minima. On streets with required setbacks of zero or ten feet, street facades shall be at the setback lines for at least the first 40 feet of their height and for at least 75% of their length.

Discussion:

The intention of this guideline is to give definition to street spaces. The guideline provides for a relatively constant 40 foot height at setback lines, where buildings are at least 40 feet tall. Above that height, buildings may rise vertically, step back, or otherwise vary in shape and distance from the setbacks. For each block frontage the building facades will be at the setback line for 75% or more of their length. The establishment of cornice heights and limits on breaks in facades serve to integrate the architecture of downtown and to carefully shape public outdoor spaces.

For building facades on streets with zero setbacks, retail shops with or without arcades and colonnades are intended to occur at street level. It is paramount for the vitality of downtown streets that blank walls not be at the pedestrian level along streets with zero setbacks. Where setbacks are ten feet or more, landscaping can be combined with facade treatments to create a favorable pedestrian environment, especially in areas where retail uses are inappropriate.
CITY OUTDOOR ROOMS

Since streets and plazas are a city's outdoor rooms, building facades shall perform a civic role as the walls of the rooms.

Discussion:

Facades are part of the public realm of the downtown and, in fact, are the walls of public open spaces. Facades need to be compatible with nearby buildings and to reflect the nature, size, and character of outdoor rooms, which vary from narrow streets to large urban open spaces. While it is not possible to specify what this role may require of a particular building facade in a particular place, this guideline is intended to remind designers that the exteriors of their buildings have a larger role than just reflecting interior functions. This guideline challenges architects to step outside their particular project and consider building design within the larger urban design context.
The bulk of tall buildings shall be minimized by articulating the mass with changes of plane, stepped terraces, and other architectural means.

Discussion:

Tall buildings can appear to loom over the city due to their bulk, particularly the recent generation of office buildings with large floor plates. Bulky buildings can block views to hills around the city and block sunlight to plazas within the downtown. These effects can be mitigated, or eliminated, by design strategies that break up the mass by articulation of wall planes. The tops of these buildings, including the roofline and the facades of the top floors, should also be given design consideration because they become prominent visual features of the City's skyline.
The bases of tall buildings shall be designed to relate to the streetscape and the environment of pedestrians.

Discussion:

The bases of tall buildings, usually the first two or three floors, are experienced by pedestrians at close distance. The base of a building belongs to the streetscape, not to the skyline. The lower floors should reflect these conditions in design solutions which emphasize color, texture, and other treatments of visual interest at the pedestrian scale. This is the place for colonnades, awnings, rich materials, signs, special amenities, and small scale design elements. This is not the place for the more generalized curtain wall patterns that are often used on the upper stories of tall buildings.
BUILDING MATERIALS

Materials that are permanent, durable, and compatible with the architectural character and history of Concord shall be used on building facades in downtown.

Discussion:

Buildings in downtown should have substance and durability in reality as well as in appearance. Materials like brick, stone, tile, stucco, and some forms of concrete have connotations of permanence and substance that are appreciated by urban citizens. These materials are also part of the vernacular of early California architecture, which comprises much of downtown Concord's heritage. Conversely, many metal and glass curtain walls have a surface reflectivity and undulation which to many people denote a flimsy or temporary quality.

Glass should be used carefully with other exterior materials. Special attention should be paid to glass color and reflectivity, surface curvature, opening sizes, color and material of frames, and changes of plane between glass and other exterior materials. Walls which are glazed for more than fifty percent of their surface area are discouraged. Glazing should not have reflective coatings applied to exterior glazing surfaces.
COLOR OF TALL BUILDINGS

Light to medium values of color shall be used on the exterior of tall buildings, especially above the third floor.

Discussion:

Dark buildings appear ominous on the skyline and may seem more massive than they actually are. Dark colors absorb light and increase heat gain. Conversely, lighter shades of color on tall structures can visually reduce their mass, make the downtown appear brighter and more cheerful, and help reduce cooling loads.
STREET LEVEL USES

Retail stores, restaurants, services, and other high intensity pedestrian uses shall be placed on the ground levels of all buildings fronting major pedestrian streets.

Discussion:

The ground floors of buildings should have the most active uses. The ground level is where people walk and drive, and where people expect to find the goods and services they need. If street frontages are active, then the city is vibrant. Conversely, blank facades, open parking garages, and non-active uses at grade level produce dull and dangerous places.

Not every street can be lined with shops, but streets like Grant, Salvio, Mr. Diablo, and Willow Pass should have a preponderance of retail activity. Secondary and minor pedestrian streets might have retail activities only at the corners or occasionally at important places in the middle of the block. Certain kinds of office space, such as insurance brokers or travel agents, are also appropriate in locations where retail stores may not be economically possible.
SIDEWALK LANDSCAPE

On streets where ground floor retail or office uses are not economically possible or appropriate, pedestrian ways shall be enhanced with planting, art, and special architectural treatments.

Discussion:

Major arterials and minor streets may have significant pedestrian traffic, even though few shops or restaurants may be located along them. Pedestrian comfort and civic amenity should therefore be a prime design consideration. Blank walls without special treatment at street level along a pedestrian way should be avoided; amenities, including landscaping, art, and architectural treatments, can occur in various ways where blank walls occur. Landscaping can include ground covers, climbing plants, shrubs, and trees.
SIDEWALK HARDSCAPE

Sidewalk hardscape elements of the Todos Santos Plaza area, such as pavers, planters, bollards, and benches, shall be used for public streetscape in the core area of downtown. Private projects adjoining public streets and plazas shall use hardscape elements which are compatible with public streetscape elements.

Discussion:

Streetscape design is critically important to the quality of downtown. This guideline is meant to promote design continuity in the pedestrian hardscape of the downtown. Building heights and styles may vary within downtown, but the consistent use of hardscape elements can supply part of the "glue" that holds a district together. Street hardscape should be used with other streetscape elements, such as colonnades and landscaping, to unify the BART Station and Todos Santos Plaza areas into one downtown. Elements currently in the design vocabulary of the hardscape around Todos Santos Plaza could be expanded to include such items as shelters, trash receptacles, newspaper racks, newsstands, and information kiosks.
BUILDING SIGNAGE

The location of signs on buildings shall be limited to the first 40 feet in height above street level, except for a maximum of two building identification signs at the parapet level of taller buildings. Building identification signage shall be integrated with the design of a building’s base and top. Retail signage shall adhere to a design program for the building’s storefronts.

Discussion:

Signs located above the first few levels of a building facade are often an advertisement for the distant viewer rather than an informative and vital part of a cityscape. In order to be seen by the distant viewer, the size, color, and lighting of building signs are often out of character with the building facades and are detrimental to the City’s skyline. Therefore, signs at the top of buildings for identification should be carefully integrated with the scale, color, and articulation of the building design.

Signs can add vitality to a streetscape or plaza when incorporated in building facades at the first few levels above the street. Retail shops, walk-in offices, public entrances, and building names can provide an exciting mix of signs to be seen by pedestrians and vehicular passers-by. However, it is important that design of signage be controlled at a project scale, so that it is integrated with specific building design as well as streetscape design. To achieve design control of retail signage at building storefronts, developers and their architects should require specific designs from individual tenants and a system of signage rules and criteria for inclusion in tenant leases.
Arcades and Colonnades

Pedestrian areas and sidewalks in the downtown shall have arcades and colonnades wherever possible. The map in the "Development Controls" section indicates recommended locations of continuous street level colonnades around the core pedestrian area of downtown.

Discussion:

The quality of a city’s design is determined to a great extent by how it is experienced by pedestrians. In Concord, where the climate is warm and sunny, pedestrian comfort can be greatly increased by using architectural devices such as covered arcades and colonnades at the first story of buildings. In addition to weather protection, these devices can bring appropriate scale to shopping and business activities, highlight retail goods and services, and create an environment of comfort, enjoyment, and civic pride.
SIDEWALK CANOPIES

In locations where building arcades and colonnades are inappropriate because of the nature of the street or the building uses, pedestrian areas and sidewalks shall be enlivened with awnings, trellises, landscaping, and other means to create full or partial canopies over pedestrian ways.

Discussion:

Not every street has the activity or importance to justify major architectural gestures such as arcades or colonnades. However, even minor building frontages should address the sidewalks with the pedestrian and streetscape in mind. Awnings over entrances, decorative features on walls, landscaped planters, trees, and similar treatments can make the street life and appearance of the City attractive and vital. Fabric awnings and glazed canopies are encouraged and metal awnings are discouraged.
STREETLIGHTING

The two types of streetlights currently in use around Todos Santos Plaza shall be used throughout the larger downtown area, including the BART Station area and Galindo Street.

Discussion:

All public street and pedestrian lighting in the downtown should be compatible in style, fixture color, and lamp color. The light fixtures will help to give the downtown streetscape a unified appearance during the day and distinctive lighting at night. The lights recently installed around Todos Santos Plaza have dark blue standards and sodium vapor lamps. Public fixtures installed in other sections of the downtown should be identical to or compatible with these fixtures.

The two types of fixtures currently used at Todos Santos Plaza are a low, seven to ten foot high, pedestrian standard and a tall, twenty to thirty foot high, street and surface parking area standard. Other types of public and private fixtures, which could be added to the two basic streetlight fixtures, are lights to highlight landscaping, fountains, and works of art.
BUILDING LIGHTING

Within building projects, exterior lighting for pedestrian areas, building facades, parking garages, landscape elements, and design features shall be complementary in style, color, and lamping with public street and pedestrian lighting.

Discussion:

The purpose of this guideline is to encourage an abundance of high quality outdoor lighting to give the downtown vitality and sparkle at night. Each project must share in this enterprise. It is not necessary to duplicate light fixtures used by the City, but fixtures proposed for building exteriors must work effectively with streetlighting.

Building lighting includes storefront display lights, public lobby lighting, illumination of signs, and special feature lighting such as highlighting facades and tops of buildings. Street level lighting of a building can augment City streetlights in many ways, for example, by accenting a sidewalk, a colonnade, or the vault of an arcade.

Parking garage lighting must be shielded from public view as much as possible, especially from street level vantage points. Placing fixtures back from the street edge and behind spandrels and beams can be combined with a dark ceiling color to minimize the views of lights on intermediate levels. For the roof of a garage, light standards can be kept as short as possible and supplemental lighting can be added to the interior surfaces of parapet walls. In all cases, specified lenses, reflectors, and shields of light fixtures should reduce direct views of garage lighting.
WATER FEATURES

Water features such as pools, sprays, fountains, and sculptures shall be provided in outdoor public spaces, as appropriate. Water features shall not be isolated elements in the landscape, but shall be integrated functionally and visually with the overall design of plazas and courtyards.

Discussion:

Water seems to be a universal "good" in outdoor spaces. People respond positively to pools, fountains, and other water features. Water features are also a traditional element in early California architecture. In addition, running water provides acoustical masking of traffic noise and evaporative cooling in hot weather.
ART IN PUBLIC SPACES

Works of art shall be included in the development of major outdoor and indoor public spaces.

Discussion:

It is the City's intention that public art become a main feature of downtown Concord. Murals, hangings, mosaics, sculpture, flags, banners, light and water events increase the usage and enjoyment of downtown public spaces. Programs have been established which will provide works of art within public spaces of both privately and publicly funded building projects. The purpose of this guideline is to alert building sponsors to the City's desire that art be a part of at least the public portions of their projects.
Utilities shall be minimally visible and minimally audible from sidewalks and other public pedestrian ways.

Discussion:
Transformer vaults, condensers, electrical and gas meters, as well as overhead transmission lines, can have detrimental effects on the public environment when they are placed in visible and audible locations. Careful siting and design treatment can minimize the detrimental effects of utilities. String and design ideas include placing transformer vaults and utility lines underground or within parking garages, pluming equipment away from public spaces, and using landscaping to screen views of utility items.

Pedestrian ways which are not contiguous to streets shall include amenities suitable to a pedestrian environment.

Discussion:
Pedestrian paths separate from streets should have a design treatment that is particular to a walking environment. The scale and landscaping of the spaces should relate to the individual person and small groups of people walking and sitting. Surrounding buildings should be designed to respect the privacy of interior uses which are adjacent to pedestrian ways, especially for residential uses. Hardscape and softscape treatments of pedestrian ways should be appropriate to the urban or suburban character of the setting.
PEDESTRIAN CIRCULATION

Pedestrian ways which are not contiguous to streets shall include amenities suitable to a pedestrian environment.

Discussion:

Pedestrian paths separate from streets should have a design treatment that is particular to a walking environment. The scale and landscaping of the spaces should relate to the individual person and small groups of people walking and sitting. Surrounding buildings should be designed to respect the privacy of interior uses which are adjacent to pedestrian ways, especially for residential uses. Hardscape and softscape treatments of pedestrian ways should be appropriate to the urban or suburban character of the setting.
Parking garages shall be as low as possible, especially at street edges. The height of a parking garage shall not be greater than 45 feet above grade, unless it is surrounded for its full height by non-parking uses.

Discussion:

Parking garages are a necessary convenience for the life of a downtown, but their visual impact should be minimized to the greatest extent possible. The major public views of buildings by pedestrians and motorists are from the street, and therefore the primary area of visibility of parking garages is at street edges. Structured parking can be built underground or enclosed within other uses to minimize its visibility from the street.

Underground parking levels may be used in addition to the height permitted above grade to make a larger overall structure. If parking levels above grade are enclosed for their full height within a building or building complex, then there is no parking height restriction, except as defined in the City's zoning ordinance. A building enclosure at the street edges of a parking garage can include retail, office, housing, and other non-parking uses.
PARKING GARAGE TREATMENT

Parking garage facades shall be enhanced with design treatments and street level uses, as stated in the “Street Level Uses” and “Sidewalk Landscape” guidelines, to improve their appearance and minimize their bulk. Exterior materials shall be harmonious with surrounding buildings, especially adjacent buildings of the same development project.

Discussion:

The architectural treatment of parking garages is important for the downtown streetscape, since garages are seen primarily by street level pedestrians and motorists. The placement of retail shops along street frontages with colonnades, awnings, and controlled retail signage is the most effective treatment to enrich the grade and second levels of a parking garage.

Landscaping is also effective. If a garage is set back from the property line, then berms, trees, and climbing plants along the street can screen views of open parking garages. If built at the property line, stepping back of upper floors and placing planters along floor edges can improve appearance and reduce apparent size. Planting at the top edge softens a structure’s profile as seen from the street.

Building materials and the scale of exterior openings should be compatible with buildings in the same development project and should fit with surrounding architecture. Features such as windows, cornices, and one or two story colonnades can help to achieve compatibility. Openings at street level for vehicular access should avoid crossing major pedestrian paths.
Parking Garage Roofs

Roofs of parking garages, which can be seen from tall buildings, elevated highways, BART trains, and other high vantage points shall be treated to make them as visually attractive as possible.

Discussion:

Planting, lighting, shading devices, and paving are elements that can be used to improve the visual quality of parking garage roofs. The use of planters with trees and shrubs, particularly at the edges of a structure, can soften the appearance of a roof, while also providing needed shade for pedestrians and parked cars. Trellis structures can offer additional shade and amenity. Paving with patterns of color can visually enliven large surface areas. Good lighting can improve safety and also be a visual amenity.

This guideline can apply to parking garages below grade as well as above grade. The roof of a structure below grade is often an urban public open space. As such, the roof should be treated as a plaza or courtyard with spatial definition, planting and hardscape of a quality befitting its urban public role.
BUILDING ROOFS

The design of a building roof shall be integrated with the overall design of a building and shall enhance the surrounding downtown rooftops.

Discussion:

As an individual building in the downtown needs to be designed within its streetscape context, so a building roof should be designed within its rooftops context. Roofs of buildings are often the repository of mechanical and electrical equipment, such as antennas, condensers, ducts, cooling towers, and elevator penthouses. When seen from the street, from buildings, or other vantage points, especially when proximate, building roofs with numerous indiscriminately placed pieces of equipment can be quite ugly. It is important to incorporate the various elements of a roof into the building design, so that the building is perceived as a unified design, regardless of the height of the viewer's vantage point. Elements of a roof design requiring design consideration can include flat or sloped roofing materials, parapet walls, equipment, and elevator penthouses. Special features might also be present, such as a helipad, a large dish antenna, a landscaped deck, or accent lighting for the top of the building.
THE PROCESS AND THE REQUIREMENTS

Design review for the Downtown Business District of Concord is performed by the City’s Design Review Board (DRB), which is assisted by City staff, primarily the Planning Department. Review of individual projects occurs at five stages in the design process and the DRB relies upon assistance from the City staff at each stage. City decisions result from the continuous interaction of project development entities, design professionals, the Design Review Board, Redevelopment Agency Board/City Council members, and the City staff. Design review submissions are made to the Planning Department.

Design review focuses attention upon architectural, planning, and urban design issues within the processes of city redevelopment. Many people with varying agendas and schedules are involved in planning and implementation of downtown development projects. In large projects the complexity can be staggering, the duration long, and the actors numerous. The Design Review Process has been established in order to have an efficient and effective method to assess architectural design from project inception to completion. The process allows the City to ensure excellent design quality in the downtown, both in individual projects and in the total environment.

Some projects require full design review, some require a limited review process, and some do not require review at all. Development entities should check with the Planning Department to determine the extent of design review requirements for each proposal. Renovation projects with no spaces or surfaces accessible or visible to the public are exempt from design review. Small projects, such as retail tenant remodeling, and projects with minimal exterior and public interior work, may require limited design review.

The review process consists of five stages of review with a “milestone” event at the end of each stage. The stages correspond to phases of the standard architectural design process, from first concepts to final construction. The First Milestone is at the end of Conceptual Design, which occurs midway through the Schematic Design phase. The Second Milestone is at the end of the Schematic Design phase. The third is at the completion of the Design Development phase, the point at which all major design and cost decisions should have been made for a project. The milestone for the fourth stage is at the end of Construction Documents and the milestone for the fifth stage is at the end of construction.

The First Milestone review by the Design Review Board (DRB), “Conceptual Review,” is not mandatory, unless assistance is sought from the Redevelopment Agency by the developer of a proposed project. For projects seeking Agency assistance, the First Milestone review may follow an Exclusive Right To Negotiate with the Agency and must precede the signing of a Disposition and Development Agreement (DDA) between the Agency and the developer. The DDA includes a provision which states that all required City approvals must be obtained for a project by the developer. The plan submitted to the DRB for the first milestone review and included in the DDA is called the “Preliminary Development Plan.” The role of the DRB in the First Milestone review is to make comments in an advisory capacity. The DRB comments may or may not be incorporated into the Preliminary Development Plan.

The Second Milestone is a review of the Schematic Design drawings and is known as the “Preliminary Review.” It is undertaken regardless of the existence of a DDA. This stage normally takes place prior to Use Permit approval by the Planning Commission. As in the case of the First Milestone, there is no approval of these plans by the DRB. Comments are made by the DRB members in order to convey their thoughts regarding the proposed design and to provide direction for further development of the plans. The Board may recommend that more than one preliminary review session be held prior to the Third Milestone review of a project.

The Third Milestone is known as the “Final Review” (or “Formal Review”) of the project plans at the end of the Design Development phase. This is a required City approval, determined by a vote of a quorum of the DRB members. The Third Milestone review follows the granting of a Use Permit by the Planning Commission. The plans approved by the Planning Commission and the DRB are called the “Final Development
Plan” by the Redevelopment Agency, for DDA purposes. As conditions of its final approval, the DRB may stipulate specific design details to be approved by the DRB at a subsequent meeting or by the Planning Department staff. Examples of such items are the final landscape plans and proposed facade materials.

The Fourth and Fifth Milestones, the “Design Check” and the “Construction Check,” are performed primarily by City staff with the DRB only reviewing specific design items. The Fourth Milestone check is completed prior to the City’s issuance of the Building Permit and the Fifth Milestone check is completed prior to the City’s issuance of the Certificate of Final Completion and Occupancy.

The scale of drawings for design review submissions are listed for each stage. The drawings must be submitted at 100% of the listed scale, and perspective drawings must have an image which is at least 9” by 12”. For large projects, which occupy a site with the equivalent of more than one downtown block, drawings of a scale smaller than the listed requirements may be submitted with prior written approval by the Planning Department. The Design Review Application with a complete checklist of requirements may be obtained from the Planning Department.
FIRST MILESTONE: CONCEPTUAL REVIEW

The review of the first design submission to the City is the Conceptual Review. The Conceptual Review corresponds approximately to 50% completion of a project’s Schematic Design phase. The First Milestone review is required by the City only if a development proposal requires Redevelopment Agency assistance. The “Preiminary Development Plan” is the name of the plan submitted to the DRB for review and subsequently included in the DDA. The submission requirements include, but are not limited to:

1. Site plan at not smaller than 1” = 20’ scale (1:240).
2. Ground floor plan with proximate site area at not smaller than 1” = 8’ scale (1:96).
3. Above and below ground floor plans including a roof plan at not smaller than 1” = 8’ scale.
4. At least two project sections and two elevations at not smaller than 1” = 8’ scale.
5. One exterior, constructed, two-point perspective drawing from a street level viewpoint with the image contained within a 60 degree cone of vision.
6. Tabulation of areas of major exterior and public interior spaces and tabulation of parking spaces by size and type of space.
7. Dimensions of site, parking areas, buildings, and setbacks.

A view towards the east and downtown, looking down Willow Pass and Clayton Roads.
SECOND MILESTONE: PRELIMINARY REVIEW

The Preliminary Review submission is a set of completed Schematic Design materials, including the required items listed below. The review normally takes place prior to Use Permit approval by the Planning Commission. The DRB can recommend that more than one session be held for this review. The submission requirements include, but are not limited to:

1. Site plan at not smaller than 1”=20’ scale (1:240).
2. Ground floor plan with proximate site area not smaller than 1”=8’ scale (1:96).
3. Above and below ground floor plans including a roof plan at not smaller than 1”=8’ scale.
4. At least two project sections and two exterior elevations at not smaller than 1”=8’ scale.
5. Two exterior perspective drawings, at least one of which has a street level viewpoint, and, if applicable, one interior perspective drawing of a major public space. The perspectives shall be constructed, two-point drawings; the interior view can be a one-point or two-point. The drawing images shall be within a 60 degree cone of vision.
6. Tabulation of areas of major exterior and public interior spaces and tabulation of parking spaces by size and type of space.
7. Dimensions of site, parking areas, buildings, setbacks, exterior spaces, and major public indoor spaces.
8. Material and color selections for exterior walls, exterior hardscape, walls and floors of major interior public spaces.
9. Landscape plan with preliminary plant selections at not smaller than 1”=20’ scale.
10. Outline specifications.
THIRD MILESTONE: FINAL REVIEW

Final Review occurs at the end of the Design Development phase of architectural design, at which time all major design and cost decisions for a project should have been made. The design submission for Final Review includes a completed set of the architect's Design Development materials, which update and supplement the Second Milestone requirements (contact the Planning Department for a complete list of requirements):

2. Update Second Milestone: Preliminary Review ground floor plan requirement.
4. Update Second Milestone: Preliminary Review requirements for sections and elevations plus all remaining exterior elevations at not smaller than 1" = 8' scale (1:96).
8. Update Second Milestone: Preliminary Review requirements for material selection plus material and color boards of exterior walls and major interior public spaces, as well as exterior hardscape at the ground plane, at visible roofs, and at usable roof decks. A mock-up panel of each major exterior building wall treatment, in model form at a scale from 1" = 8' (1:96) to 1" = 1' (1:12), may be required by the Planning Department.
9. Update Second Milestone: Preliminary Review requirement for landscape plus landscape sections and elevations at not smaller than 1" = 8' scale, including hardscape, lighting, equipment, furnishings, and planting for on-site and off-site improvements.
11. Reflected ceiling plans, including soffits, of exterior and major public interior spaces at not smaller than 1" = 8' scale. Spaces such as arcades, colonnades, lobbies, malls, court-yards, and galleries should be included.
12. Interior elevations of major public interior spaces at not smaller than 1" = 8' scale.
13. Graphics and signage: locations, schedules, and samples or manufacturer's literature for exterior and interior public spaces, including parking garage and building identification signs.
14. Lighting schedules with samples or manufacturer's literature for exterior and interior public spaces and parking garages. Lighting locations are to be shown on landscape plans, reflected ceiling plans, and elevations.

An aerial view of Todos Santos Plaza from the Southwest with the Concord Main Office of Bank of America in the foreground.
FOURTH MILESTONE: DESIGN CHECK

The Fourth Milestone: Design Check, occurs at the completion of the Construction Documents phase. The Design Check is performed by the Planning Department, except for specific elements of the submission which may also be checked by the Design Review Board. If the Redevelopment Agency is involved in the project with a DDA, then the Agency will help the Planning Department perform the Design Check. Completed Construction Documents, including final landscape plans, are submitted to the Planning Department and they are checked for conformance with the Third Milestone review. The reviewed documents are given to the Building Department for plan check approval and issuance of a Building Permit. For a development with multiple, phased construction contracts, several Building Permits might be issued, necessitating a Design Check for each permit.

Submission requirements for the Design Check are a complete set of Construction Documents for the construction work being considered, in addition to clarification drawings and text for changes in the design since the Final Review of the Third Milestone.

FIFTH MILESTONE: CONSTRUCTION CHECK

Issuance by the City of the Certificate of Final Completion and Occupancy for a development project is contingent upon a Construction Check by the Planning Department. If the Redevelopment Agency is involved in the project with a DDA, then the Agency will help the Planning Department perform the Construction Check. Change orders will be reviewed and site visits made by the Planning Department for the Construction Check.

Submission requirements for the Fifth Milestone: Construction Check, include construction Change Orders, which affect the appearance or use of the exterior and public interior portions of a project. Clarification drawings and text explaining design changes made since the Fourth Milestone: Design Check, will be submitted upon request of the Planning Department.

For projects over 50,000 gross square feet of built floor area, design review will include approval of a full-scale mock-up of the major exterior wall system, built on the project site. The mock-up will include the actual materials, finishes, and colors to be used on the project. Approval will be necessary before construction of the exterior wall system commences.
CREDITS

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June Bulman, Agency Vice Chair
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Steve Weir

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Photograph on back cover: Downtown Concord as the 1940's center of a primarily agricultural community, seen from the southeast.