



Spokane Design Review Board

Wednesday, October 28, 2020

5:30-7:30 PM

Teleconference

TIMES GIVEN ARE AN ESTIMATE AND ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE

Board Briefing Session:

| | | |
|-------------|--------------------------------------|----------------|
| 5:30 – 5:40 | 1) Call to Order | Chair |
| | 2) Roll Call | Dean Gunderson |
| | 3) Changes to the Agenda? | Chair |
| | 4) Motion to Temporary Suspend Rules | Chair |

Workshop:

| | | |
|-------------|--|------------------------------------|
| 5:40 – 7:10 | 5) New Design Guidelines – Open Workshop | Dean Gunderson Taylor Berberich |
| | • Staff Presentation..... | 25-30 m |
| | • Board Discussion..... | 60-90 m |
| | | |

Board Business:

| | | |
|-------------|--|----------------|
| 7:10 – 7:30 | 6) Approve the 10/14/2020 meeting minutes. | Chair |
| | 7) Old Business | |
| | 8) New Business | |
| | 9) Chair Report | Chair |
| | 10) Secretary Report | Dean Gunderson |
| | 11) Other | |
| | 12) Adjourn | |
| | | |

The next Design Review Board meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, November 11, 2020.

In order to comply with public health measures and Governor Inslee's *Stay Home, Stay Safe* order, the Design Review Board meeting will be held on-line

Members of the general public are encouraged to join the on-line meeting using the following information:

To participate via video follow the link on your computer (click on "Join meeting")

[Join meeting](#)

To participate by phone

Call: 1 (408) 418-9388

Enter: **146 356 9823** followed by # when prompted for a meeting number or access code. Enter # when prompted for an attendee ID

While the meeting begins at 5:30pm, you can join as early as 5:15pm on the date of the meeting.

Please note that public comments cannot be taken during the meeting, but the public is encouraged to continue to submit their comments or questions in writing to:

Dean Gunderson, Sr. Urban Designer
dgunderson@spokanecity.org

The audio proceedings of the Design Review Board meeting will be recorded, with digital copies made available upon request.

Meeting Process - Spokane Design Review Board

Call to Order

- Chair calls the meeting to order, noting the date and time of the meeting.
- Chair asks for roll call for attendance.
- Chair asks if there any changes to the agenda.
- Chair asks for motion to temporarily suspend the rules (see Agenda packet)

Board Workshop

- Chair announces the first project to be reviewed and notes the following: a) the Board will consider the design of the proposal as viewed from the surrounding public realm; b) the Board does not consider traffic impacts in the surrounding area or make recommendations on the appropriateness of a proposed land use; c) the Board will not consider un-permitted, possible surrounding development(s) except those which are contemplated under the Comprehensive Plan and Development Code; c) it is the applicant's responsibility to meet all applicable Code requirements regardless of what might be presented or discussed during workshops.
- Chair asks for a staff report.

Staff Report

- Staff report on the item, giving findings of fact. Presentation will be kept to 5-10 minutes.

Applicant Presentation

- Chair invites the applicant(s) to introduce the project team and make a 10-15 minute presentation on the project.

Public Comment *

** During the Stay Home, Stay Safe order, public comments are being accepted in writing.*

DRB Clarification

- Chair may request clarification on comments.

Design Review Board Discussion

- Chair will ask the applicants whether they wish to respond to any written public comments, after their response (if any) they are to return to their seats in the audience.
- The Chair will formally close public comments (unless motioned otherwise).
- Chair leads discussion amongst the DRB members regarding the staff topics for discussion, applicable design criteria, identification of key issues, and any proposed design departures.

Design Review Board Motions

- Chair asks whether the DRB is ready to make a motion.
- Upon hearing a motion, Chair asks for a second. Staff will record the motion in writing.
- Chair asks for discussion on the motion.
- Chair asks the applicant if they would like to respond to the motion.
- After discussion, Chair asks for a vote.

Design Review Board Follow-up

- Applicant is advised that they may stay or leave the meeting, and that the annotated & signed motion will be made available within five working days.
- Next agenda item announced.

Board Business

- Meeting Minutes - Chair asks for comments on the minutes of the last meeting; Asks for a motion to approve the minutes.
- Chair asks is there any old business? Any old business is discussed.
- Chair asks is there any new business? Any new business is discussed.
- Chair Report – Chair gives a report.
- Secretary Report – Sr. Urban Designer gives a report.

Other

- Chair asks board members if there is anything else.

Adjourn

- Chair asks for a motion to adjourn. After the motion is seconded, and approved by vote, Chair announces that the meeting is adjourned, noting the time of the adjournment.



NEW DESIGN GUIDELINES PLANNING

City of Spokane, Washington

u r b s w o r k s

PRESENTATION TO DESIGN REVIEW BOARD

- » Background
- » Memo #1 overview
- » Consultant's guiding philosophy about the project
- » How the problem was defined and what we discovered
- » Findings and proposals

BACKGROUND

» Scope of the project:
New Design Guidelines for four topic areas:

1

Citywide-
applicable
guidelines

2

Public Projects
and Structures

3

Skywalks and
Skybridges

4

Planned Unit
Developments
(PUDs)

BACKGROUND

» Project schedule

» Where we started and where we are now

| Phase | Research and Engagement | | Recommendations * | | Adoption |
|--------------|--|---|--|--|--|
| Objective | Research, present, facilitate, process, synthesize | | Articulate and present recommendations for comment | | Assist staff with adoption |
| Tasks | 1 Research and Preparation | 2 Workshop #1 | 3 Memo #2, Workshop #2 | EXTENDED SCOPE Review Draft Guidelines | EXTENDED SCOPE PC, DRB and CC |
| | Conduct research and interviews in preparation for Workshop #1 Evaluate existing condition of design review within the City Conduct Best Practices for design review | Present Memo #1 Conduct and facilitate Workshop #1 – a 2-day workshop in Spokane | Prepare and present Memo #2 Conduct and facilitate Workshop #2 – a 1-day workshop in Spokane | Review Staff Design Guidelines and Present to PC and DRB City Council Workshop on the new Design Guidelines Attend Workshop #3 – a 1-day Workshop with Staff and Appointed Officials (possibly via teleconference) | Attend Site Visit #1 – a 1-day visit to attend Plan Commission and Design Review Board presentations of the Design Guidelines (same day) Attend Site Visit #2 – a 1-day site visit to attend the City Council workshop. |
| Timeline* | December-January | January -March | April – June | July - September | October - December |
| Deliverables | Complete engagement plan Memo #1 Design review best practices from three cities Workshop plan Draft handout material | Workshop plan Draft handout material Presentation outline | Stakeholder assessment resulting from Workshop #1 Memo #2 * Necessary amendments to streamline the review process. | | |

* Where we are in the process

MEMO #1 ORGANIZATION

- » Interviews: Highlights and observations
- » State of the Practice findings for Seattle, Portland, Boise
- » How Spokane compares with those cities
- » City profiles include:
 - » Review Body (i.e., number of members, staff support)
 - » Review Tools (e.g., design guidelines, design and development standards)
 - » Review Procedures (e.g., review thresholds)
- » Case Study Cities and initial findings for:
 - » Citywide-applicable Guidelines
 - » Public Projects and Structures
 - » Skywalks over Public Rights-of-Way
 - » Planned Unit Developments

u r b s w o r k s

DRAFT

Date 20_0330 | Subject Spokane Memo 1 | To Dean Gunderson, City of Spokane | From Marcy McInelly, Pauline Ruegg

MEMO #1 CONTENTS

1 – Overview

- Project purpose
- Table 1 – Evaluating Guidelines
- Interviews: Highlights and observations
- State of the Practice Cities: Initial findings
- Table 2 – How Spokane’s Design Review system compares with Design Review in three other cities
- Table 3 –How the profile cities address Spokane’s topic areas

2 – Detailed Design Review Profiles

- Summary of Design Review in Spokane Today
- Design Review in Seattle
- Design Review in Portland
- Design Review in Boise

3 – New Design Guidelines for Spokane: State of the Practice from Profile Cities

- Needed New Design Guidelines
- State of the Practice for Citywide Design Guidelines: Seattle
- State of the Practice for Citywide Design Guidelines: Portland
- State of the Practice for Public Projects and Structures: Seattle
- State of the Practice for Planned Unit Developments: Portland
- State of the Practice for Planned Unit Developments: Boise
- State of the Practice for Skywalks over Public Rights-of-Way: Seattle
- State of the Practice for Skywalks over Public Rights-of-Way: Portland

OVERVIEW: NEW DESIGN GUIDELINES FOR SPOKANE

The purpose of this project is to work with the key stakeholders and the public to craft and adopt new Design Guidelines for the following project types subject to design review:

- Areas outside of the city center or downtown / City-Wide (or Base) Guidelines
- Public Projects and Structures
- Skywalks over Public Rights-of-Way
- Planned Unit Developments

This memo summarizes the consultant’s interviews with stakeholders, and presents a comparison of three cities’ design review systems, with a particular focus on how those cities handle design review for the topic areas listed above.

Interviews with stakeholders took place in February, with the consultant interviewing users of the design review system over the phone and in person. About 30 people were interviewed. The consultant also observed a design review board project review and deliberation .

1

CONSULTANT’S GUIDING PHILOSOPHY ABOUT THE PROJECT

Design review is a system

- » Effective tools
- » Clear and fair process
- » Engages community
- » Consistently positive outcomes
- » Right-sized for Spokane

*All the ingredients are necessary
in correct proportion*

Essential Ingredients for Design Review Excellence

| Effective tools | Clear + fair process | Engages community | Consistently positive outcomes | Right-sized for Spokane |
|--|--|---|--|--|
| Tools communicate the City’s vision for design | Creates dialogue | Easy to engage with | Positive design outcomes include excellent buildings and site design | Regulates what is important using the most effective tools and processes |
| Design guidelines | Reliable and consistent process | Educates and encourages engagement by citizens, neighborhoods, designers and developers | Contributes to the public realm and urban environment | Thresholds for design review are appropriate, and appropriate for the context |
| Development standards | Exemplifies high-functioning civic service | Easy to find on city’s website | Implements policy (e.g., Comprehensive Plan, Down-town Plan) | No gaps in coverage: design review for each critical type of project and each critical context |
| Land use, design standards and development standards work together as a complete, coordinated, and complementary suite of regulatory tools | Design review system is streamlined without sacrificing design quality | Straightforward process is easy to understand at a glance | Sets a positive example for the future | Design review system is right-sized for the staff resources and capabilities of the board |
| The City employs the best available tools for implementing the vision | | Design standards and guidelines are easy to read and understand | Reflects and builds on the past | |
| Design review tools and process are informed by best practices | | | Represents the value the Spokane community places on design | |



HOW THE PROBLEM WAS DEFINED

- » DRB is asked to review projects which fall into the topic area categories, e.g., citywide projects and public projects, but **without the right tools and processes their authority is ambiguous and this jeopardizes the DRB's overall credibility.**
- » The system is **not prepared for the possible wave of citywide projects** (such as citywide transit project bus stops), and applicants and city staff have no way to prioritize and selectively review projects as appropriate.



Problem Definition, continued

- » PUD review is likely to be ineffective as **current design guidelines lack objective criteria**. Design Review Board review of PUDs has been controversial.
- » The process for public projects is strained because **the role of design review is not clear to all parties**. Which public projects deserve design review is also not clear. This is also true for Planned Unit Development.

Therefore:

Write new design guidelines for missing topic areas



WHAT WE DISCOVERED

- » There are **many small and medium-sized fixes** that can be made
- » However, when looking at right-sizing a design review system for Spokane, **some larger structural changes** are also necessary,
- » Some of the essential ingredients (i.e., tools, process, engagement, value areas) are **missing or not in the right proportion**
- » These issues can only be **partially fixed** by adopting new design guidelines

Selected findings

RIGHT-SIZING

- » Design review effort should be **right-sized to the capabilities of the review body and staff**. Cities across the northwest continue to grow, and what seems manageable today may not stand the test of time as the number of neighborhoods and the types of projects demanding design review increase.
- » Design review should be **focused on larger and more complex projects with the greatest design challenges** rather than universally applied.
- » As demand for design review increases, **consider which types of projects can be design-reviewed administratively**, rather than increasing the load on the design review board.
- » Cities should be mindful of the **impact design review may have on affordability of housing**.
- » Getting thresholds correct is important; for example, **establishing streamlined or administrative review options for smaller and mid-range projects**.

Selected findings

CLARITY, TRANSPARENCY

- » The process for public projects is strained because **the role of design review is not clear to all parties.**
- » People have a lot of **misunderstanding about how the system works.**
This is true even for people who have been closely involved with the design review process, either as an applicant or as a board member.
- » Multiple tools or criteria exist for the DRB to use in their review. **These tools are referred to in multiple locations** in the Spokane Municipal Code and on the City's Design Review Board website.
- » The city is missing **coherent and clear overarching rationale and explanation** of how their system works.

CLARITY AND TRANSPARENCY

A state of the practice example from Boise

- » All review procedures are listed
- » Described in a two-page table, “Summary Tale of Decision Responsibilities”
- » Table includes all information about every review procedure—both **clear and objective** and **discretionary**
- » Table lists:
 - » Procedure
 - » Review thresholds
 - » Which review body makes a recommendation
 - » Which review body or person makes the decision

Example of a big structural fix and a small fix, in two parts

CHAPTER 11-03: REVIEW AND DECISION PROCEDURES

11-03-01. PURPOSE

This chapter describes procedures for review of applications for development.

11-03-02. SUMMARY TABLE



Table 11-03.1: Summary Table of Decision Responsibilities

R=Recommendation, D=Decision, A=Appeal
NOTE: Exceptions to these general rules apply. Subsequent sections of this chapter contain details on each procedure.



| Procedure | Description | Director | HE* | DRC | HPC | PZC | Council |
|--|---|----------|-----|-----|--------------------------------|-----|---------|
| CODE AMENDMENT, DEVELOPMENT AGREEMENT & REZONE | | | | | | | |
| Code Text Amendment | Generally, except as indicated below | | | | | R | D |
| | To establish a design district | | | R | | R | D |
| Development Agreement | | | | | | R | D |
| Rezone | Generally, except as indicated below | | | | R If in “H” or “HD” overlay | R | D |
| Split-zoned standard parcel of record | To allow less restrictive zone to apply to entire parcel if more than 50% | D | | | | A | A |
| SUBDIVISION | | | | | | | |
| Major Subdivision Plat | | | R | | | R | D |
| Minor Land Division | | D | | | | A | A |
| DEVELOPMENT PERMITS & ZONING CERTIFICATE | | | | | | | |
| Conditional Use Permit | Generally, except as indicated below | | | | | D | A |
| | Child care, drive-through, and parking reduction | | D | | | D | A |
| | Expansion < 20% | D | | | | A | A |
| | Exception, General (including height) | | | | | D | A |
| | Exception, Special | | R | | | R | D |
| | Planned Unit Development Two or fewer acres | | D | | | D | A |
| | Planned Unit Development More than two acres | | | | | D | A |
| Procedure | Description | Director | HE* | DRC | HPC | PZC | Council |
| Certificate of Appropriateness | | D | | | A | | A |
| DESIGN REVIEW | | | | | | | |
| Design Review | Major Projects | | | D | | A | A |
| | Minor Projects | D | | A | | A | A |
| MODIFICATION | | | | | | | |
| Modification (not including HPC) | Minor | D | | | | A | A |
| | Minor, Design Review | D | | A | | A | A |
| | Major, Generally | | | | | D | A |
| | Major, Design Review | | | D | | A | A |
| OTHER PROCEDURES | | | | | | | |
| Annexation | | | | | | R | D |
| Comprehensive Plan Amendment | | | | | | R | D |
| Variance | Minor | D | | | | A | A |
| | Major | | | | | D | A |

NOTES
Director = Planning Director, HE = Hearing Examiner, DRC = Design Review Committee, HPC = Historic Preservation Commission, PZC = Planning and Zoning Commission, Council = City Council



PLANNED UNIT DEVELOPMENTS

A state of the practice example from Portland

- » Referred to as **Planned Developments**
- » Policy tool to allow for **creative development while complementing existing neighborhood character**
- » Master planning tool to **allow additional housing types and uses** that may not be allowed in base zones
- » Facilitates configuring a site to visually **integrate natural and built features**
- » Criteria
 - » Urban design and development framework (e.g., overall scheme and site plan meets applicable Community Design Guidelines).
 - » Transportation system – The transportation and circulation system provides multimodal connections that support the development of the site, and limit impacts to adjacent neighborhoods.
 - » Stormwater Management – The Planned Development meets the requirements of the Stormwater Management.
- » Is administratively reviewed; **not subject to design review**

Existing Downtown Guidelines are organized around five values:



SITE PLANNING
+ MASSING



ARCHITECTURAL
EXPRESSION



PEDESTRIAN
ENVIRONMENT



PUBLIC AMENITIES



VEHICULAR
ACCESS + PARKING

Missing: Urban Design

RECOMMENDATION

- » Establish an **overarching design review framework** that includes **urban design**
- » Apply to entire city, and all project types
- » Establish same structure for all types of review, and all procedures
- » When you revisit the set of values that apply to downtown, add **Urban Design as a value** with criteria
- » Ensure that area and neighborhood plans provide goals and objectives in each value category, including **urban design**

Thank you



New Design Guidelines Planning

City of Spokane, Washington

u r b s w o r k s

Date 20_0330 | **Subject** Spokane Memo 1 | **To** Dean Gunderson, City of Spokane | **From** Marcy McInelly, Pauline Ruegg

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This memo summarizes the consultant’s interviews with stakeholders, and presents a comparison of three cities’ design review systems, with a particular focus on how those cities handle design review for the topic areas listed above.

Interviews with stakeholders took place in February, with the consultant interviewing users of the design review system over the phone and in person. About 30 people were interviewed. The consultant also observed a design review board project review and deliberation .

The three “State of the Practice” cities were selected to represent a cross-section of design review systems that are mature and tested (Seattle and Portland), and design review systems that are fairly new (Boise). The three cities also represent a spectrum of medium to large cities, and a range of attitudes about land use regulations and private property rights.

A design review system is only successful if the city is able to match an improved system to its staff resources and capabilities of design review boards. Therefore, when evaluating the design guidelines of Spokane and the other three cities, the consultant looked at the entire regulatory system that supports the design guidelines.

| Table 1 – Evaluating Guidelines | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|---|
| Effective tools | Clear and fair process | Engages the community | Consistently positive outcomes | Right-sized for Spokane |
| <p>Do the tools that make up the design review system communicate the City's vision for design?</p> <p>These tools should include design guidelines and development standards that work together as a suite of complete and coordinated regulatory tools.</p> <p>Working together the tools and processes should support the City of Spokane in implementing its vision.</p> | <p>The process should be reliable and consistently applied.</p> <p>The design review process should exemplify the City of Spokane functioning at its highest civic service.</p> <p>The process should foster dialogue between applicants and the City, translating into better outcomes.</p> <p>The process should be easy to understand for applicants and streamlined in its use without sacrificing any design quality.</p> | <p>Design review tools are a means to encourage engagement by citizens, neighborhoods, designers, and developers in defining the vision for the City.</p> <p>A straightforward process that is easy to engage with will facilitate this outcome.</p> <p>Design review tools should be easy to find on the City's website, accessible to multiple different users, and simple to read and clearly understandable.</p> | <p>Ultimately the intent of a design review system is to foster positive outcomes.</p> <p>This translates into excellent building and site design.</p> <p>Desired outcomes include buildings and sites that contribute to the public realm, reflect Spokane's past, implement the vision for the City, and represent the values that the Spokane community places on its design.</p> | <p>A design review system is only successful if the City is able to match an improved system to its staff resources and capabilities of design review boards.</p> <p>The level and extent of design review should regulate what is important using the most effective tools and processes that are appropriate for the context and address each critical type of project.</p> |

Interviews: Highlights and observations

- People have a lot of misunderstanding about how the system works. This is true even for people who have been closely involved with the design review process, either as an applicant or as a board member.
- The current design guidelines are intended to focus on urban design, and the Collaborative Workshop is intended to allow for early feedback. However, when the board's evaluation occurs after the buildings have been sited and conceptually designed, urban design feedback may not be very meaningful.
- For public project, school, and park applicants there is a feeling that the DRB review occurs is either too soon or too late in the evolution of the project.
- The process for public projects is strained because the role of design review is not clear to all parties. Which public projects deserve design review is also not clear. This may also be true for Planned Unit Development. (Additional interviews focused on PUDs are being arranged.)
- PUD review is likely to be ineffective as current design guidelines lack objective criteria. Design Review Board review of PUDs has been controversial.
- The system is not prepared for the possible wave of citywide projects (such as citywide transit project bus stops), and applicants and city staff have no way to prioritize and selectively review projects as appropriate.

- DRB is asked to review projects which fall into the topic area categories, e.g., citywide projects and public projects, but without the right tools and processes their authority is ambiguous and this jeopardizes the DRB's overall credibility.
- Superior and creative alternative design approaches are not always allowed, even when the DRB prefers them, because of the way certain tools work.
- Design review is seen as critical to creating a positive urban experience and should be applied to more projects and more neighborhoods.
- Multiple tools or criteria exist for the DRB to use in their review. These tools are referred to in multiple locations in the Spokane Municipal Code and on the City's Design Review Board website.
- The city is missing coherent and clear overarching rationale and explanation of how their system works.

State of the Practice Cities: Initial findings

All design review systems appear to have flaws, but there are lessons to be learned from the state of the practice, including how to streamline the process, how to structure guidelines, and how to encourage a robust yet functional public process. When writing Design Guidelines that will apply to additional neighborhoods and additional types of projects, consider:

- Design review effort should be right-sized to the capabilities of the review body and staff. Cities across the northwest continue to grow, and what seems manageable today may not stand the test of time as the number of neighborhoods and the types of projects demanding design review increase.
- Design review should be focused on larger and more complex projects with the greatest design challenges rather than universally applied.
- As demand for design review increases, consider which types of projects can be design-reviewed administratively, rather than increasing the load on the design review board.
- Cities should be mindful of the impact design review may have on affordability of housing.
- Design review tools should be structured to allow for creativity and unique designs that respond to context. Excellent design should be both facilitated and celebrated. This is best done through intent statements and a broad range of design responses, while allow latitude for departures as long as they meet the intent. In Spokane, this might mean making the design departure process a preferable and less expensive process.
- Getting design review correct on public projects is important and beneficial for design quality and design review credibility citywide. Well-designed public projects set a high bar for design quality, build community, and communicate the level of design that is desired.
- Getting thresholds correct is important. For example, establishing streamlined or administrative review options for smaller and mid-range projects can reduce the impact on the cost of developing desirable housing types.
- A clear process and tools that are easily accessible encourage better use by developers, designers, and members of the public.
- Effective engagement with the public should educate participants about the scope and review process to prime neighborhoods for change without bogging down the review of projects. Increase opportunities for dialogue with community around land use policies and plans for growth so that design review meetings do not become the primary forum to comment on growth issues.
- On design review boards there is a role for next generation leaders or student representatives to increase the diversity and representation of different viewpoints.
- On-going trainings for both design review boards and staff will promote consistency across different skill levels and improve outcomes.
- Regular audits of the process are helpful to assess if the program is functioning as intended. Keep detailed records and assess annually or bi-annually to see impact of review on different types of projects e.g. affordable housing projects, or projects in specific neighborhoods.

| Table 2 – How Spokane’s Design Review system compares with Design Review in three other cities | | | | |
|---|--|--|---|---|
| City | Spokane | Seattle | Portland | Boise |
| Review body | One 8-member Design Review Board (DRB) | Eight boards made up of 5 members each | One 7-member Design Commission | One 8-member Design Review Board |
| Tools or criteria | Downtown Design Guidelines | Downtown Design Guidelines | Central City Fundamental apply to entire Central City; seven Special District Design Guidelines apply to subareas of the Central City | Downtown Design Guidelines; Downtown Streetscape Standards and Specifications Manual |
| Process and procedures | Two types of review: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Standard Board Review Administrative Review <p>The DRB also preforms design departure reviews (recommendation to the Hearing Examiner, Planning Director or other authority)</p> | Three types of review: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Full Administrative Streamlined | For Central City projects, one type of review: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Type III– Major Review | Two types of review: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Full Administrative |
| Thresholds | Defined by square feet or degree of modification to the structure; and location within the Downtown—central, perimeter or gateway areas | Determined by land use zone | Defined by square footage and dollars | Defined by square footage |
| Detailed description | Page 6 | Page 7 | Page 9 | Page 11 |

In addition to the basic design review profiles provided on pages 6-14, The State of the Practice section describes how each city addresses one or more of the New Design Guidelines topic areas, as follows:

- Areas outside of the city center or downtown / City-Wide Guidelines—examples from Seattle, Portland and Boise
- Public Projects and Structures—example from Seattle
- Planned Unit Developments—examples from Portland and Boise
- Skywalks over Public Rights-of-Way— examples from Seattle and Portland

Seattle and Portland added citywide design guidelines to their review systems after establishing design review for their downtowns. In Boise the downtown and citywide design guidelines were adopted as part of a comprehensive design review approach adopted in 2013.

| Table 3 – How the profiled cities address Spokane’s topic areas | | | | |
|---|---|--|---|---|
| City | Topic areas | | | |
| | Citywide | Public Projects | PUDs | Skywalks |
| Seattle | <p>7 of the eight boards conduct design review in neighborhoods outside the downtown.</p> <p>See page 16 for more information.</p> | <p>A separate Seattle Design Commission reviews public projects.</p> <p>See page 23 for more information.</p> | Not studied | <p>Design guidance meeting with Skybridge Review Committee (SRC) first, then review by City Council and Director of Transportation for a term permit.</p> <p>See page 26 for more information.</p> |
| Portland | <p>Public and private projects within design overlays in central city and in neighborhood centers and corridors are subject to design guidelines.</p> <p>See page 9 for more information about design review in the Central City.</p> | <p>Public and private projects within design overlays in central city and in neighborhood centers and corridors are subject to design guidelines.</p> <p>See page 19 for more information.</p> | <p>Planned Development allow additional housing types or greater density, uses not normally permitted in base zone, or non-conforming lots. Review processes vary.</p> <p>See page 25 for more information.</p> | <p>Reviewed by Design Commission based on citywide policy on Encroachments in Public Right-of-Way along with goals and guidelines from Downtown Design Guidelines.</p> <p>See page 27 for more information.</p> |
| Boise | <p>The one Design Review Commission in Boise administers both downtown and citywide design guidelines for public and private projects.</p> <p>See page 11 for more information.</p> | | <p>Reviewed and permitted by Planning and Zoning Commission. Multi-family projects must comply with Citywide design standards and guidelines.</p> <p>See page 26 for more information.</p> | Not studied |

DETAILED DESIGN REVIEW PROFILES

Summary: Design Review in Spokane Today**Review Body**

Spokane has one Design Review Board (DRB) that reviews projects citywide. Projects that require design review include all public projects or structures, shoreline conditional use permit applications, skywalk applications over public rights-of-way, projects seeking a design departure from the design standards of the land use code, and private projects identified in the Downtown Design Review Threshold Map. They may also review other development proposals or planning studies per the request of the Plan Commission, Plan Director, or Hearing Examiner.

The DRB has eight (8) members who represent diverse design and technical professions along with community interests. The DRB includes:

- One (1) architect
- One (1) landscape architect
- One (1) urban planner or urban designer
- One (1) civil or structural engineer
- One (1) member of the city arts commission
- One (1) real estate developer
- One (1) citizen at large
- One (1) designated liaison from the community assembly

The DRB is supported by the Senior Urban Designer and staff. The Board meets twice a month in the evening.

Review Tools

The primary tools used by the DRB are the Downtown Design Guidelines. The Downtown Design Guidelines are structured around five design areas:

- Site planning and massing—responding to the larger context
- Architectural expression—responding to the neighborhood context
- Pedestrian environment—defining the pedestrian environment
- Public amenities—enhancing the streetscape and open space
- Vehicular access and parking—minimizing adverse impacts

Two other tools or criteria are employed by the DRB:

- Design Standards and Guidelines for Centers and Corridors. These are the criteria used by the DRB when an applicant requests a design departure within Centers & Corridors zones.
- Mini-storage guidelines for mini-storage projects adjacent to, or across the Right of Way from residentially developed or zoned properties.

Review Process

There are two types of review. Both require some form of pre-application consultation or collaborative workshop with city staff to garner information about design review and applicable guidelines and set up an on-going dialogue. This early collaboration is intended to allow feedback before any major decisions have been made.

- **Administrative** - projects that clearly meet all design standards and guidelines are reviewed by staff then reported to the DRB Chair. The Chair then may accept the recommendation, modify it, or decide the project warrants review by the full board.
- **Full** – review is performed by the Design Review Board and all meetings are public

Applicants can request a design departure from site and building standards as part of the land use review process at a public hearing of the DRB. Following review, the DRB makes a recommendation to the Hearing Examiner, Planning Director or other responsible authority.

Thresholds

Thresholds for design review are determined by location within the downtown design review area:

- Within the central area, new buildings or structures greater than 25,000 square feet or a modification of more than 25% of a building façade visible from an adjacent street.
- Within the perimeter area, new buildings or structures greater than 50,000 square feet or a modification of more than 25% of a building façade visible from an adjacent street.
- Within the gateway areas, all new buildings and structures or a modification of more than 25% of a façade fronting on a designated gateway street or within 100 feet of an intersection with a gateway street.

Design Review in Seattle

Review Body

Seattle has eight design review boards—one represents the downtown; the other seven review projects for the twenty-three neighborhoods that comprise the city. Each neighborhood has design guidelines in place. The boards only review private development projects. The Seattle Design Commission which is a separate body (see page 22) reviews all public projects. All boards, including the downtown board, have 5 five members:

- One (1) design seat
- Two (2) community seats
- One (1) development seat
- One (1) business/landscape design seat

Seattle has three design review program staff to manage the program, recruit and train residents on the design review boards, and schedule and advertise meetings. There are twenty design review planners on staff who lead developers and architects through design review process, explain the land use code and design guidelines, and serve as support staff for design review boards. The Downtown Design Review Board meets twice a month in the evening. They hold quarterly training sessions.

Review Tools

The intent of design review is:

To promote designs for projects that fit into and relate to surrounding neighborhoods while offering flexibility with code standards to achieve better design.

The Design Review Board for downtown uses the Downtown Design Guidelines to review projects to see if they meet the intent of each applicable guideline.

The emphasis of design review is on:

- Design of building and site, including materials, open space, and landscaping;
- How the proposal relates to adjacent sites and the street frontage;

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- How the proposal relates to unusual aspects of site (views or slopes);
- and pedestrian and vehicle access;

Applicants can also seek design review for requested development standard departures in order to better meet intent of design guidelines. These departures may not include, however, increases to overall square footage allowed, or height of building or types of permitted uses (in most cases). The design guidelines cover five themes (site planning and massing, architectural expression, the streetscape, public amenities, and vehicular access and parking). Each topic area has several guidelines. Each guideline includes an objective (“respond to the neighborhood context”) and an intent statement (“Develop an architectural concept and compose the major building elements to reinforce desirable urban features existing in the surrounding neighborhood”). Specific directives or “considerations” are provided to applicants. These considerations along with photo examples and diagrams provide tools for Design Review Boards to evaluate projects.

Review Process

There are three types of review. All require a pre-application conference and include 1) an Early Design Guidance Review of concept alternatives that determines which guidelines are applicable and 2) a Recommendation Review where the reviewing body determines how well the proposal meets these guidelines:

- **Full** – review is performed by the Design Review Board and all meetings are public
- **Administrative** – city staff assigned to proposal performs administrative review with no public meetings and no involvement from the Design Review Board.
- **Streamlined** – similar to administrative review, city staff perform an administrative review of town-house proposals and other small forms of low-rise multifamily housing. There are no public meetings and the Design Review Board does not review the project.

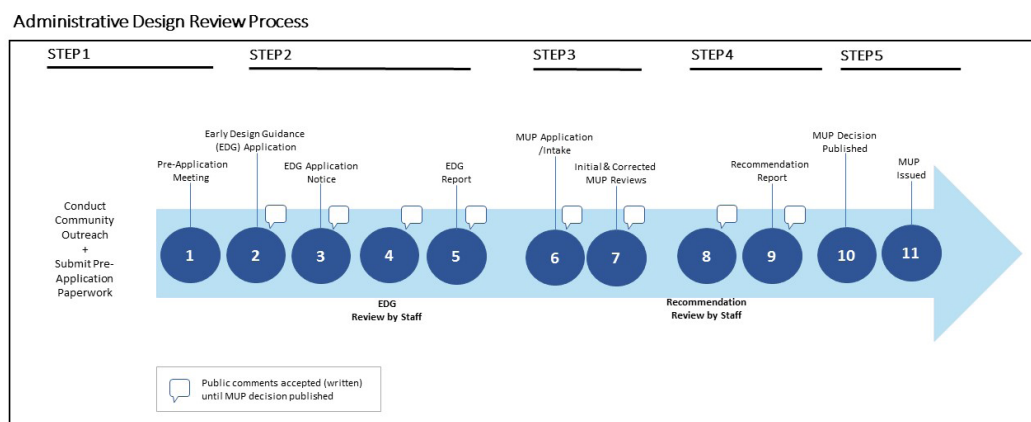
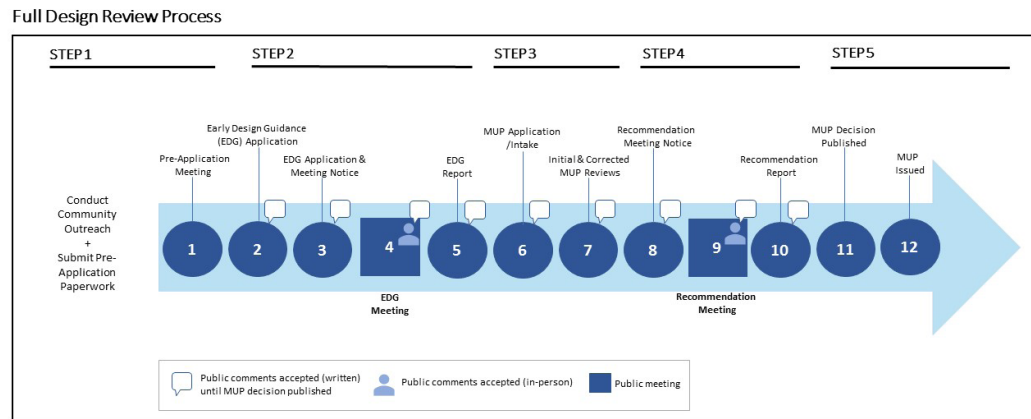
Recent changes require projects going through design review to conduct community outreach before the Early Design Guidance Meeting to establish a dialogue with the community. Previously, outreach for some types of projects was voluntary. Following review, Design Review Boards or city staff make a recommendation to the Director of the Seattle Department of Construction and Inspections (SDCI), who makes the final decision. Decisions can be appealed to a Hearing Examiner.

Thresholds

Thresholds for review are determined by land use zone.

- Multi-family, commercial, and mixed-use proposals must go through Full Design Review when above 35,000 gross square feet. Previously the threshold was as small as four units or 4,000 square feet.
- Downtown and industrial zone proposals must go through Full Design Review if above 50,000 gross square feet in DOC or DMC zones and if above 20,000 gross square feet in other downtown zones and IB and IC zones. Previously only projects in a few specified industrial areas went through Design Review.
- Recent changes to thresholds also allow publicly funded affordable housing projects to be reviewed administratively instead of full design review.

Two track design review process: Seattle



Source: Seattle Department of Construction and Inspections Tip 238, <http://www.seattle.gov/DPD/Publications/CAM/cam238.pdf>

Design Review in Portland

Review Body

Portland's design review process is one of the longest standing in the country. Portland has one Design Commission made up of seven (7) members that reviews all projects citywide that meet thresholds. Initially the Design Commission reviewed both private and public projects within eight Central City areas in a design overlay zone. Over time, the same process has been extended to cover additional design overlay zones in areas outside the central city. The Commission includes:

- One (1) representative from the Regional Arts and Culture Council
- One (1) member representing the public at large
- Five (5) members experienced in design, engineering, financing, construction or management of buildings and land development. There is a limit to two representatives from each of these areas of expertise.

Portland has three to four staff to support the Commission; ten to twelve staff conduct administrative review. The Design Commission meets three times a month in the afternoon and attends regular trainings.

Review Tools

Design review is administered through a design overlay that designates specific guidelines for neighborhoods throughout the city (including downtown) subject to discretionary review. The Central City Fundamental Design Guidelines serve as the approval criteria for review of projects. A second layer of location-specific design guidelines apply to twelve designated areas within the Central City covering the majority of the downtown except industrial areas. Design review seeks to foster the development of high quality and innovative designs. Guidelines give designers flexibility while ensuring the compatibility of new development with the desired character of the area.

Guidelines are structured around four themes (Portland personality, pedestrian emphasis, project design, and special areas). Each guideline has a background statement outlining goals the city wishes to accomplish. Photo examples are provided. Modifications to development standards such as setbacks or landscaping may be made to allow projects to better meet design guidelines; adjustments to use-related standards must still go through an adjustment process.

Review Process

Portland has a two-track approval process: applicants may choose either the discretionary or the clear and objective standards track. Projects in the designated Central City overlay, however, are subject to discretionary review only. In a Type III procedure, staff prepares a recommendation for review body (Design Commission or Landmarks Commission), and the review body makes the decision. A pre-application conference is required. Representatives from planning, transportation, environmental services, water, parks, and others as needed attend. The city recently began requiring a Design Advice Request (DAR) for large projects in the central city (half a city block ~ 20,000 SF). These DAR are timed early enough to allow for meaningful input about the “big picture” aspects of a project without high increase in design costs. All property owners and renters within 400 feet of the site and recognized organizations within 1,000 feet of site are notified and signs are posted on the site. A notice of decision is mailed. Decisions may be appealed to the City Council.

Thresholds

Projects in the downtown design district are required to go through public review if:

- New floor area is over 1,000 SF
- Exterior alteration is over \$481,300

These thresholds vary in other designated districts within the Central City overlay. The extent to which design guidelines are applied to a project is tailored to the size, scale, and complexity of a project.

Scaled design guidelines: Portland

Table 2.

DESIGN GUIDELINE
APPLICABILITY
BASED ON
PROPOSAL TYPE

Indicates applicable
design guideline

| DESIGN GUIDELINE | PROPOSAL TYPE | New Development | Exterior Alterations | Storefront Remodel | Parks and Open Areas | Sign and/or Awning |
|--|---------------|--------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| A PORTLAND PERSONALITY | | | | | | |
| A 1. Integrate the River | | | | | | |
| A 2. Emphasize Portland Themes | | | | | | |
| A 3. Respect the Portland Block Structures | | | | | | |
| A 4. Use Unifying Elements | | | | | | |
| A 5. Enhance, Embellish and Identify Areas | | | | | | |
| A 6. Re-Use / Rehabilitate / Restore Buildings | | | | | | |
| A 7. Establish and Maintain a Sense of Urban Enclosure | | | | | | |
| A 8. Contribute to a Vibrant Streetscape | | | | | | |
| A 9. Strengthen Gateways | | | | | | |
| B PEDESTRIAN EMPHASIS | | | | | | |
| B 1. Reinforce and Enhance the Pedestrian System | | | | | | |
| B 2. Protect the Pedestrian | | | | | | |
| B 3. Bridge Pedestrian Obstacles | | | | | | |
| B 4. Provide Stopping and Viewing Places | | | | | | |
| B 5. Make Places, Parks and Open Space Successful | | | | | | |
| B 6. Develop Weather Protection | | | | | | |
| B 7. Integrate Barrier-Free Design | | | | | | |
| C PROJECT DESIGN | | | | | | |
| C 1. Enhance View Opportunities | | | | | | |
| C 2. Promote Permanence and Quality in Development | | | | | | |
| C 3. Respect Architectural Integrity | | | | | | |
| C 4. Complement the Context of Existing Buildings | | | | | | |
| C 5. Design for Coherency | | | | | | |
| C 6. Develop Transitions Between Buildings and Public Spaces | | | | | | |
| C 7. Design Corners that Build Active Interactions | | | | | | |
| C 8. Differentiate the Sidewalk-Level of Buildings | | | | | | |
| C 9. Develop Flexible Sidewalk-Level Spaces | | | | | | |
| C 10. Integrate Easements | | | | | | |
| C 11. Integrate Rooftops and Use Rooftops | | | | | | |
| C 12. Integrate Exterior Lighting | | | | | | |
| C 13. Integrate Signs | | | | | | |

Source: Central City Fundamental Design Guidelines

Design Review in Boise

Review Body

There is one Design Review Commission in Boise that administers both downtown and citywide design guidelines. The Design Review Commission is made up of eight (8) members. They represent a range of professions including architecture, landscape architecture, and engineering—in addition to one liaison to the Planning and Zoning Commission and a youth appointment. Design Review Committee meets once a month in the evening. There are three staff members supporting the Commission. The Commission also reviews appeals of administrative design review decisions and makes recommendations on ordinance amendments to the Planning and Zoning Commission and City Council. The Commission oversees an annual Building Excellence Award to recognize projects that represent the best of Boise's built environment.

Review Tools

Design guidelines are applied through two overlay zones. A Design Review district covers most of the city, and a Downtown Design Review District covers the downtown area of the city. Applications for both overlay districts are reviewed by the same Design Review Commission. The stated objective for the Commission's review is to *"protect property rights and values, enhance important environmental features, and ensure orderly and harmonious development with the community."*

Downtown and citywide design guidelines follow the same structure and content. The guidelines seek to provide clear objectives for projects while promoting creative and high-quality urban design. The guidelines address four themes:

- Context and considerations
- Block frontages and community design framework
- Site design elements
- Building design

In addition to supporting pedestrian-oriented design, contextual responses, and sustainable designs, the guidelines call for *“maintaining and enhancing property values within Downtown Boise.”* While the Downtown Design Guidelines are easy to find on the city’s website, the process lacks clear definition for community/users; materials are spread across the website rather than being consolidated in one place for clarity and easy of use.

Guidelines for site design and building design are structured with an intent statement and considerations to be used by the Commission to determine if an application meets the stated intent. Both quantifiable standards and discretionary standards that provide multiple different ways to meet the intent are included in the document. Departures are also permitted to allow an applicant an alternative means of compliance. Criteria for departure are provided. Checklists are provided to facilitate applicants’ analysis of the unique context of their site.

Included in the guidelines are block frontage standards. An applicant must first determine their block frontage classification to define applicable standards. Next any future internal connections must be defined. Lastly, if the site is identified as a gateway or high visibility street corner, additional standards apply. Site design elements and building design guidelines apply to all projects irrespective of their frontage type, connections, or designated gateway status.

The Downtown Streetscape Standards and Specifications Manual is appended to the guidelines. Design Review is the process used to ensure streetscape standards are met. The Design Commission considers these standards when reviewing applications. In addition, city staff inspects and enforces streetscape standards through the building division in partnership with the Ada County Highway District, which has approval authority for improvements in public right-of-ways.

Review Process

Boise has two tracks for review:

- Staff level review (e.g., administrative)
- Committee level review (e.g., discretionary)

Administrative review requires no pre-application conference or neighborhood meeting. For Committee level review, an applicant submits schematic designs. An initial staff review is performed. Then a public hearing is held by the Design Review Commission. Notification is mailed to all property owners and residents within 300 feet of the property. Notification is also posted in the newspaper and on the site. Following the hearing, the Commission issues a decision within 44 days that can be appealed by the Planning and Zoning Department or City Council. There are no pre-application conferences or early input on design. Although there’s a link on public hearing processes for the public, there is little emphasis on public conversation about design outcomes.

Thresholds

Minor alterations to existing buildings, signs in conformance with sign regulations, parking lots, and canopies and awnings may be reviewed administratively as can minor modifications. There are three different thresholds for additions and remodels based on the increase in a building’s gross floor area rather than the valuation of improvements.

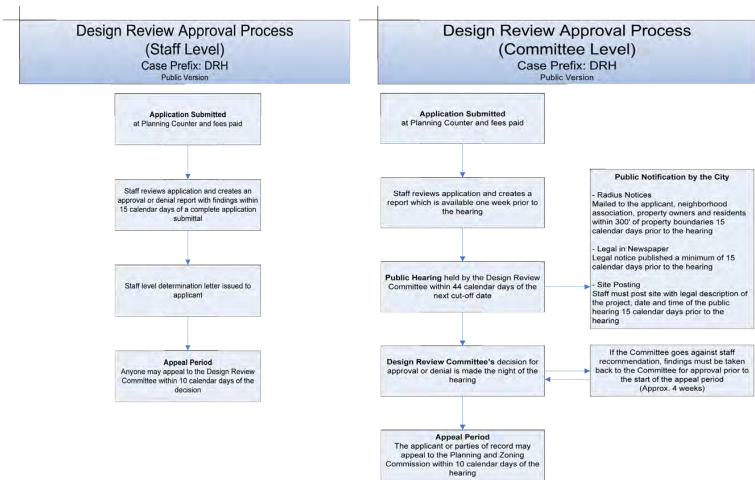
- Level I improvement expands floor area by 0 – 50%
- Level II improvement expands floor area by 50 – 100%
- Level III improvement expands floor area by more than 100%

All new non-residential and multi-family projects in the designated downtown planning area are subject to the Downtown design Guidelines. Any visible exterior improvements to a site, building or structure also require design review. There are more detailed thresholds for design review used citywide based on number of units that may offset impact of costs of design review on housing projects.

Two-track design review process: Boise

How Does the Design Review Process Work?

The charts below diagram the design review approval process under [BCC 11-03-04.12](#). The thresholds for level of review are under [BCC 11-03-04.12 B](#).



Source for all images: Boise Downtown Design Standards and Guidelines

Building façade standards and departures: Boise

Storefront Block Frontage

Description/Intent:

Storefront block frontages are intended to be the most vibrant and activated shopping and dining areas within downtown. They include continuous storefronts placed along the sidewalk edge with small scale shops and/or frequent business entries.

Vision:

Weather protection:

At least 5' average depth along 50% of facades facing south or west

Entry:

facing street

Windows/transparency:

At least 60% of facade between 30" and 12'

Sidewalk:

16' minimum (or per established historic pattern)

Fig. 2-7. Storefront vision and key standards.



Fig. 2-5. 8th Street in the Downtown core is the prime example.



Fig. 2-6. Another good storefront example.

Storefront Block Frontage Standards:

| Element | Standards (☞ indicates a departure opportunity) | Example and Notes |
|-----------------------------|--|--|
| Ground floor: • Land use | Non-residential, except for lobbies associated with residential or hotel/motel uses on upper floors (see BCC 11-06 for the specific list of permitted non-residential uses). | Note large storefront windows, front & corner entries, and retractable awnings on both frontages. |
| • Retail space depth | 30' minimum | |
| Building placement | At front property line/back edge of sidewalk. Additional setbacks are allowed for widened sidewalk or pedestrian-oriented space (see Provision 3.4.2). | On north facing facades, recessed entries may be used to meet the weather protection requirement. Also see applicable Downtown Plan for further sidewalk/streetscape design guidance. |
| Building entrances | Must face the street. For corner buildings, entrances may face the street corner. 60' maximum separation between building entrances is encouraged. 100' maximum separation between building entrances is a requirement. | |
| Facade transparency | At least 60% of ground floor between 30" and 12' above the sidewalk. ☞ | On north facing facades, recessed entries may be used to meet the weather protection requirement. Also see applicable Downtown Plan for further sidewalk/streetscape design guidance. |
| Weather protection | Weather protection at least 5' in average depth along at least 50% of facade ☞. Retractable awnings may be used to meet requirements. | |
| Parking and driveways | New surface and structured parking areas (ground floor) are not allowed along street frontages (must be placed behind or under buildings). New driveways are prohibited, unless no other access option is available for on-site parking (per the design review authority). | On north facing facades, recessed entries may be used to meet the weather protection requirement. Also see applicable Downtown Plan for further sidewalk/streetscape design guidance. |
| Sidewalk width | 16 feet minimum between curb edge and storefront (area includes clear/buffer zone with street trees in grates) OR established historic pattern (whichever is more). ☞ | |

Departure Criteria:

Departures to the above standards will be considered provided they meet the intent of the standards, plus the following special criteria:

Facade transparency: The design treatment of facade area between ground level windows provides visual interest to the pedestrian and mitigates impacts of any blank wall areas. The City shall consider the current and desired context (per applicable Downtown Plan) of the specific site and determine if reduced transparency would be acceptable even with special facade design treatment. No less than 40 percent of the facade between 30 inches and ten feet above the sidewalk may be approved with a departure.

Weather protection: Other design treatments provide equivalent weather protection benefits.

Parking location: Departures shall only be considered for phased developments, where parking occupies up to 120 feet of block frontage in the initial phase of development. Design features are included above and beyond standard parking lot buffers to add visual interest to the pedestrian and help provide spatial definition to the street. The applicant shall illustrate how the subsequent phase(s) meet the standards.

Sidewalk width: Sidewalk/streetscape and/or building design techniques should be employed to increase pedestrian comfort and safety and provide visual interest and character to the specific neighborhood. The City shall consider the current and desired context (per Blueprint Boise or applicable Downtown Plan) of the specific

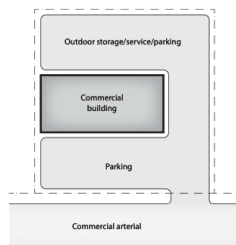
site and determine if reduced sidewalk widths would be acceptable even with special design features referenced above. Minimum widths with departures: ten feet where on-street parking is present, 12 feet where there is no on-street parking, but a bicycle lane or wide shoulder is present.



Fig. 2-8. Design treatments between sidewalks and parking lots that add visual interest and help to provide spatial definition to the street.

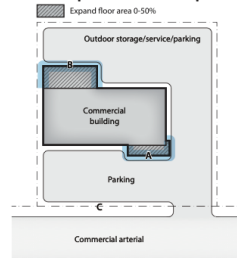
Improvement thresholds: Bosie

Existing



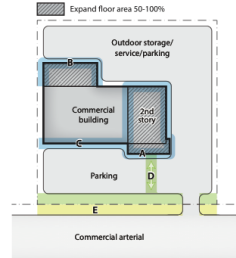
- Pre-existing non-conformities:
- Parking in front of building
 - No pedestrian connection to entry
 - Doesn't meet streetscape and landscaping standards
 - Facade doesn't meet standards

Level I Improvement Example



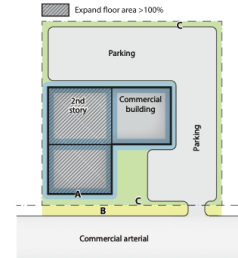
- A. Entry addition meets facade and building design/materials standards (Section 2.2 and Chapter 4)
- B. Rear addition meets applicable building design/materials standards (Chapter 4)
- C. Sidewalk and landscaping improvements are encouraged but not required.

Level II Improvement Example



- A. Entry addition meets facade and building design/materials standards (Section 2.2 and Chapter 4)
- B. Rear addition meets applicable building design/materials standards (Chapter 4)
- C. Facade upgraded to meet applicable facade, building design/materials standards (Section 2.2 and Chapter 4)
- D. Pedestrian access improvements per Section 3.1
- E. Sidewalk improvements per Section 2.2

Level III Improvement Example



- A. Entire building meets applicable facade and building design standards (Section 2.2 and Chapter 4)
- B. Sidewalk improvements per Section 2.2
- C. Site design conforms with block frontage provisions (Chapter 2).

SECTION 3 – NEW DESIGN GUIDELINES FOR SPOKANE: STATE OF THE PRACTICE FROM PROFILE CITIES

Spokane's design review system needs improved tools, clarification about thresholds, and additional procedures to address the four topic areas that are the primary subject of this project:

- Areas outside of the city center or downtown / City-Wide (or Base) Guidelines
- Public Projects and Structures
- Skywalks over Public Rights-of-Way
- Planned Unit Developments

Needed New Design Guidelines

Citywide-applicable Guidelines

This is not a type of project or development but may be best described as a set of urban design Best Management Practices. The reason these are necessary relates back to why we have design guidelines in the first place—in order to facilitate effective conversations about a project or plans design elements in order to meet the community's aesthetic expectations.

Examples:

- When Urban Design staff or the Design Review Board are asked to provide advice on a Plan (not connected to a development proposal).
- When Urban Design staff or the Design Review Board are tasked with evaluating a Design Departure (to determine whether an alternative design proposal is superior in design and may qualify for a departure).
- When Urban Design staff or the design Review Board are asked to provide advice in unique projects that have no adopted design guidelines.

Public Projects

All public projects in the city are subject to design review. Here's a brief list these kinds of projects:

- All City of Spokane Projects (Parks, Bridges, Trails, City Buildings/Structures, Open Space)
- Spokane School District Buildings and Structures (Elementary Schools, Middle Schools, Senior Highs, Administrative and Maintenance Buildings)
- Charter School Building and Structures
- Public Colleges and Universities Buildings and Structures (SCC, SFCC, EWU, WSU, UW)
- Spokane Public Libraries
- Spokane Transit Authority Buildings and Structures
- County, State, and Federal Buildings and Structures

Skywalks in Spokane

This category of project includes any type of structure or building intended that is built over a publicly owned right-of-way. Here's a brief list these kinds of projects:

- Conventional Skywalks (like those in the downtown)
- Buildings over public streets (like those in the hospital district)
- On/Off-ramps to elevated structures located on adjacent parcels
- Open-air pedestrian trail bridges

Planned Unit Development Projects

These are a unique type of subdivision which does not fully comply with the development standards but may be approved based on its superior or innovative design.

A good local example is Kendall Yards.

State of the Practice for Citywide Design Guidelines: Seattle

Seattle has a system of neighborhood-based design review boards. There are eight (8) boards that represent twenty-three neighborhoods comprising the entire city limits. The Downtown Design Review Board is one of these eight boards. Design Review boards have the same number of members and make-up as the Downtown Design Board. Collectively these design review boards review the majority of new multi-dwelling and commercial private development projects citywide. This system emerged in the 1990s in response to long-simmering conflict between the city and neighborhood activists. The intention is to align neighborhood plans and vision into a well-integrated city plan with political support. The de-centralized system emphasizes collaboration and inclusivity over a centralized system like the design review system in the City of Portland.

Seattle has a set of citywide design guidelines and twenty-three sets of neighborhood design guidelines. Designated neighborhoods can choose to develop a neighborhood plan that forms the basis of design guidelines or defer to the comprehensive plan. Neighborhood guidelines follow the same structure and topics as citywide guidelines and are used in tandem. Neighborhood guidelines include a character area map. Specific guidelines refer to these areas; the intent is to reinforce the context, role, and desired future character of each of these areas. Information is provided on additional policies and documents that inform guidelines. The coordination of citywide and neighborhood guidelines translates into consistency and ease of use for applicants. The same system of review and thresholds used for the downtown is applied citywide. Mandatory Housing Affordability (MHA) projects outside of downtown can now be reviewed administratively as well.

Citywide and neighborhood design guidelines give broad guidance on design of buildings and sites to encourage flexible responses. Design intent is expressed through images and language that promote excellence in design. Opportunity to depart from code standards increases ability of projects to respond to unique site conditions. Bi-annual People's Choice Design Awards celebrate innovative designs and encourage creative approaches over those more focused on receiving approval from the Design Review Board.

Changes have been made following an intensive assessment of the design review process in 2018. Changes include:

- Reducing impact of design review on smaller projects (8,000 – 15,000 SF) to decrease associated costs that impact cost of providing housing by increasing thresholds for design review and using gross square footage instead of number of units.
- Guidelines to improve efficiency and effectiveness of review meetings given large number including procedural changes to improve two-way dialogue
- Applicants required to receive and incorporate public comments prior to formal review

The city provides easy and clear access to guidelines and review materials through their website, as well as staff and board member contacts and all meeting minutes. The process is clearly explained, and an interactive map shows all private projects currently under review. "How to guides" and sample community outreach plans are excellent resources and effectively engage community members. Quick links on "How to comment" and an updated process requiring early community outreach for all private project types (including a website that tracks all projects currently under review and provides links to community organizations) encourages discussion with community members. Early outreach program required of all projects prior to Early Design Guidance meeting translates into more dialogue and reduced conflicts in review process. The stress on engaging the community and a clear and fair process has translated into a low number of appeals. For example, between 2014 and 2015 just 2% of projects reviewed were appealed. This emphasis has come, however, at the expense of an increasingly onerous review process that drives up the cost and uncertainty of development.

Additional Information

Below are the issues raised by among others city administrators, developers, architects, and neighborhood advocates as part of the recent review of the current process conducted to address housing affordability concerns.

Unmanageable process

Thresholds for private projects for Full Design Review and large number of Neighborhood Design Guidelines translates into extensive design review. An average of 111 projects are reviewed annually by each neighborhood board. Desire has been expressed by the city through recent review of process to focus attention of design review on most complex projects with greatest design challenges.

Stakeholders note the lengthy process of Full Design Review adds cost and uncertainty to timeline for projects. Review Boards can require more meetings as they see fit.

Administrative review is used much less in Seattle putting a big burden on staff and board members to conduct Full Design Review.

Lack of consistency

While design intent is expressed in guidelines, the city's review of the process noted that the number of review board members and range of experience has resulted in varying success of outcomes; there is a lack of consistency across seven review boards.

Critics in the field have noted that there is inconsistency in how different neighborhood review boards apply similar guidelines. They have noted a lack of predictability for applicants and deficiency in awareness about impacts changes can have on project costs/outcomes.

Increase to cost of housing

Stakeholders in the city review noted that low thresholds for projects has resulted in an oversized impact on the cost of smaller housing projects that are desirable. There was support for the recent proposed Streamlined Design Review. Additionally, the city adjusted thresholds to permit all publicly funded affordable projects to go through Administrative Review.

Coordinated citywide and neighborhood guidelines

Seattle Design Guidelines



CS2

Urban Pattern and Form

Strengthen the most desirable forms, characteristics, and patterns of the streets, block faces, and open spaces in the surrounding area.

Design Approaches and Strategies to Consider:

A. LOCATION IN THE CITY AND NEIGHBORHOOD

- Sense of Place:** Emphasize attributes that give Seattle, the neighborhood, and/or the site its distinctive sense of place. Design the building and open spaces to enhance areas where a strong identity already exists, and create a sense of place where the physical context is less established. Examples of neighborhood and/or site features that contributed to a sense of place include patterns of streets or blocks, slopes, sites with prominent visibility, relationships to bodies of water or significant trees, natural areas, open spaces, iconic buildings or transportation junctions, and land seen as a gateway to the community.
- Architectural Presence:** Evaluate the degree of visibility or architectural presence that is appropriate or desired given the context, and design accordingly. A site may lend itself to a "high-profile" design with significant presence and individual identity, or may be better suited to a simpler but quality design that contributes to the block as a whole. Buildings that contribute to a strong street edge, especially at the first three floors, are particularly important to the creation of a quality public realm that invites social interaction and economic activity. Encourage all building facades to incorporate design detail, articulation and quality materials.

B. ADJACENT SITES, STREETS, AND OPEN SPACES

- Site Characteristics:** Allow characteristics of sites to inform the design, especially where the street grid and topography create unusually shaped lots that can add distinction to the building massing.
- Connection to the Street:** Identify opportunities for the project to make a strong connection to the street and carefully consider how the building will interact with the public realm. Consider the qualities and character of the streetscape—its physical features (sidewalk, parking, landscape strip, street trees, travel lanes, and other amenities) and its function (major retail street or quieter residential street)—in siting and designing the building.

For information about Seattle street improvements and standards, consult the Right-of-Way Improvement Manual (ROWIM) published by the Seattle Department of Transportation at <http://www.seattle.gov/transportation> under the "Resources" link.

See also DC3.C1 Character of Open Space for related guidance.

See also PL1.A1 Enhancing Open Space for related guidance.

Ballard Neighborhood Design Guidelines

CS2

CONTEXT & SITE


Urban Pattern & Form

Seattle Design Guideline:
Strengthen the most desirable forms, characteristics, and patterns of the streets, block faces, and open spaces in the surrounding area.


Ballard Supplemental Guidance

- Location in the Neighborhood - Sense of Place:**
Reinforce the character and role of Ballard's Character Areas (see map on Page 4).
- Character Core:** The mix of historic and heritage buildings create a welcoming business district. Buildings featuring construction techniques from over a century ago establish a distinct character with human scale, detail, and permanence.
- Build structures to the street and include shops and restaurants along Principal Pedestrian Streets to create a vibrant street and solidify the walkable business district.**
- Respond to design precedents of old buildings by incorporating well-detailed, quality construction and transparent street-level facades. Draw attention to entrances, and use variety in awnings and signs.**
- Building massing should create human-scaled buildings, through their approach to the required upper setbacks, and employing massing breaks that avoid creating a continuous canyon - especially on NW Market St.**
- Detailed building form is preferred instead of ornamental decoration.**


Character Core Illustration




The Character Core includes older, highly detailed buildings with businesses at the street, a mix of building heights, and facade widths that reflect the historic 50' lot widths.



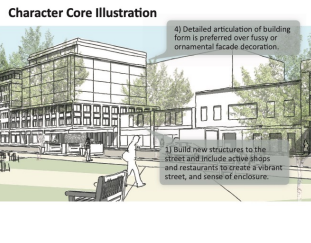
New buildings in the Character Core bring different architectural styles, but maintain strong presence and detailing.



Human-scaled building, upper setbacks, and massing breaks help avoid creating a canyon feel.



Detailed articulation of building form is preferred over busy or ornamental facade decoration.



Build new structures to the street and include active shops and restaurants to create a vibrant street, and sense of enclosure.

Draw attention to entrances. Avoid deep-set windows at street level. Encourage variety in awnings and signage, and transparent street-level facades.

All Design Guidelines at a Glance

The Ballard Neighborhood Design Guidelines work together with the Seattle Design Guidelines, which remain applicable on all projects subject to Design Review. See SMC 23.41.004 for information on Design Review thresholds. Below is a list of the 11 Seattle Design Guidelines. The column to the right indicates if the Ballard Neighborhood Design Guidelines provide supplemental guidance for that topic. A "YES" means both Seattle Design Guidelines and Neighborhood Design Guidelines are applicable. A "NO" means only the Seattle Design Guidelines apply.

| Seattle Design Guidelines | Ballard Neighborhood Design Guidelines |
|--|--|
| CONTEXT & SITE (CS) | |
| CS1 Natural Systems and Site Features Use natural systems and features of the site and its surroundings as a starting point for design | YES |
| CS2 Urban Pattern and Form Strengthen the most desirable forms, characteristics and patterns of the surrounding area | YES |
| CS3 Architectural Context and Character Contribute to the architectural character of the neighborhood | YES |
| PUBLIC LIFE (PL) | |
| PL1 Connectivity Complement, connect and contribute to the network of open spaces around the site | YES |
| PL2 Walkability Create a safe and comfortable walking environment, easy to navigate and well connected | NO |
| PL3 Street-Level Interaction Encourage human interaction and activity at the street-level, including entries and edges | YES |
| PL4 Active Transportation Incorporate features that facilitate active transport such as walking, bicycling and transit use | YES |
| DESIGN CONCEPT (DC) | |
| DC1 Project Uses and Activities Optimize the arrangement of uses and activities on site | YES |
| DC2 Architectural Concept Develop a unified, functional architectural concept that fits well on the site and its surroundings | YES |
| DC3 Open Space Concept Integrate building and open space design so that each complements the other | YES |
| DC4 Exterior Elements and Finishes Use appropriate and high-quality elements and finishes for the building and open spaces | YES |

Source: Seattle Citywide Design Guidelines, Ballard Neighborhood Design Guidelines

Transparency in materials/emphasis on community outreach in process

Find Projects in your Neighborhood

June 22, 2018 by [dreadlyoutreach](#)



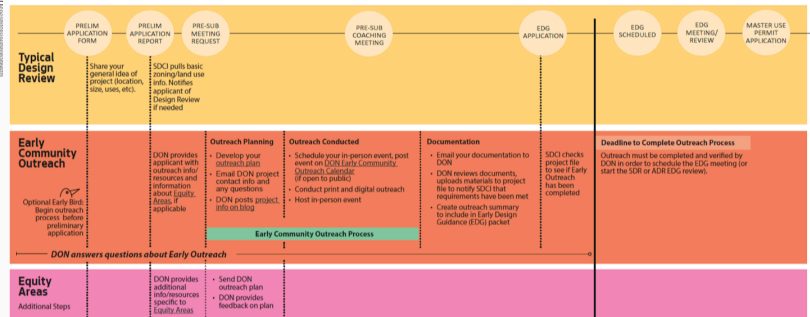
What is Early Community Outreach for Design Review?

New requirements requiring developers to begin conversation with community members before project designs are complete became effective on July 1, 2018. This blog will list all projects subject to Early Community Outreach. To search for projects, enter a neighborhood, address, or other criteria in the search bar.

For more information about the process, please visit the [Early Community Outreach for Design Review website](#). If you would like to track where projects are in the process, please visit [Seattle Services Portal](#).

If you have any questions, please e-mail DREarlyOutreach@seattle.gov.

Early Community Outreach for Design Review



Source: "Engage with Design Review" presentation:

<http://www.seattle.gov/Documents/Departments/SDCI/About/HowEngageDesignReview.pdf>, Seattle Department of Neighborhoods website: <http://www.seattle.gov/neighborhoods/outreach-and-engagement/design-review-for-early-outreach>

State of the Practice for Citywide Design Guidelines: Portland

Portland applies citywide design guidelines through a design overlay that modifies base zones. Any project, whether public or private, is subject to design review if located within a design overlay and over a certain threshold in size. Previously about 7% of the city was covered by the design overlay primarily in the central city. A recent update, however, expanded the area subject to design guidelines to 38%, covering the city's centers and corridors. This change seeks to address the increase in growth outside the central city and a desire to apply the same stringent emphasis on good design that has been in place since the 1980s through the design review process. The intent of review has evolved from a tool that focused on preservation and compatibility to a tool that supports and anticipates areas of high growth. Annual review processes are in place to assess the design review process including caseload by district, type, and land use so the process can be amended to meet the needs of the city. There are also annual design excellence awards celebrating innovative designs.

While all projects in the Central City must undergo discretionary review, there is a two-track process for other areas in the design overlay outside downtown. Based on the type of development or value of improvements, projects either go through a minor or major review. A Minor Review (Type II procedure) is an administrative decision made by staff. Clear and objective Community Design Standards are the review tool. These primarily address the compatibility of infill with existing neighborhoods. A Major Review (Type III procedure) is a discretionary review that goes before the one centralized Design Commission serving the city at large. All major public and private projects citywide are subject to discretionary design review. Designated Design Districts have their own district-specific design guidelines in place as the review tool for the discretionary review by the Design Commission. These guidelines are used as tools by the Commission to deliberate the merits of how an applicant has responded to the intent of design statements that do not offer clear and objective standards but rather guidance.

Recent changes have modified the thresholds for design review to streamline review and reduce the burden on smaller projects and workload for the Commission and staff. While this change does require a high level of staffing to review projects administratively, the hope is that it will reduce the number of projects reviewed by Design Commission. Citywide guidelines were recently updated to reflect the city's Comprehensive Plan. The guidelines now

DRAFT

focus on three tenets of design (response to context, public realm and ground floor design, and quality and sense of permanence). These tenets reflect the concepts that have guided growth downtown for decades. The guidelines are sequenced from the big-picture to site-specific considerations and balance the aspirations of future desired character with today's context. Each guideline has a background statement outlining why the guideline is important and what specific issues it addresses. Diagrams and photographic examples illustrate potential design approaches to meet the guideline.

Other changes to the process reflect the need to better communicate the design overlay and clarify the role of review to the public. These changes came out of a public and stakeholder involvement process. Proposals that add at least 10,000 square feet of net building area to a site are now required to make neighborhood contact prior to submittal of an application. Renters have been added, in addition to property owners, to mailed notifications. Larger signs are posted announcing design review and include a site plan and rendering. The involvement of neighborhood groups in design review has not been consistent or well-documented. Applicants are now expected to document community input. There is support for increasing transparency of both Type II and Type III processes through increased communication between the city and public including through an interactive website.

Additional Information

Below are the issues raised by among others city administrators, developers, architects, and neighborhood advocates as part of the recent review of the current process in response to a changing development environment placing stress on the existing process and tools.

Unmanageable process

The detailed nature of the design review and procedures in Portland is a process built up over time that lacks consistency in both its tools and application. Designated areas of the city have extensive and detailed guidelines while large areas of the city rely on outdated community design standards. While these are in the process of being updated – more here

It is not always clear that the standards and guidelines making up the tools of design review address the same issues in a consistent way and format. It would be helpful to have a tool to collate district design guidelines either into a single citywide set or a checklist.

Given the large number of projects subject to centralized design review, hearings are lengthy and unwieldy. The city is seeking to improve meeting protocol and focus commission deliberation. Recommendations have been made to hold the commission responsible for tying their comments to relevant guidelines that pertain to the current state of review. A checklist tool is being developed to summarize guidelines and group them by the three tenants of design to place greater emphasis in review on response to context over other design issues. The city is also considering adding a second design commission to cover areas outside of the Central City following a trial period of proposed changes to manage meetings more effectively.

Lack of consistency and integrated process

Although the Central City Design Guidelines and Neighborhood Subdistrict Design Guidelines follow a similar outline, they are not a seamlessly integrated tool. The interaction/overlap of overall design guidelines, subdistrict design guidelines, community design guidelines, and designated conservation district guidelines is confusing. One reviewer noted the *"plethora of standards and guidelines can be both daunting and confusing."*

A clear and fair process would make it easier to understand for applicants and streamline the process. A better explained or simplified process would be better navigated by community members and easier for users.

Overly detailed nature

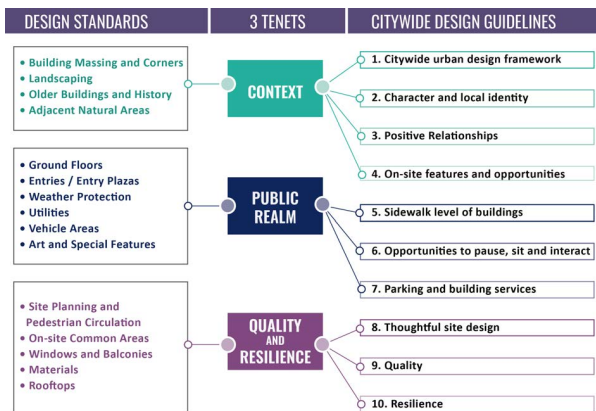
Although design review broadly covers all aspects of a project, the process does allow for flexibility around modifications from design guidelines to allow for better design that is both innovative and appropriate to its location. Some critics argue, however, that the emphasis in review is on the details at the expense of bigger

picture review. The city is seeking to address this by requiring a Design Advice Request (DAR) in addition to a pre-application conference for all projects over a certain size (half a city block) or in specified geographic locations. DAR would be used to set design direction early. DARs would address early schematic design including context analysis, initial concepts, massing, and site planning.

Increase to cost of housing

Applicants argue that the process of design review is not in sync with the typical sequence of designing buildings. Additional review meetings can be added, and input may come too late in the process. Issues that appeared resolved may be. Some have raised the concern that the value review adds to the quality of design does not outweigh the negative impacts on the cost of housing. Recently Portland began providing courtesy pre-application conferences to all 100% affordable projects throughout the city to address these concerns. It is not clear if this goes far enough however.

Core tenant of design guidelines



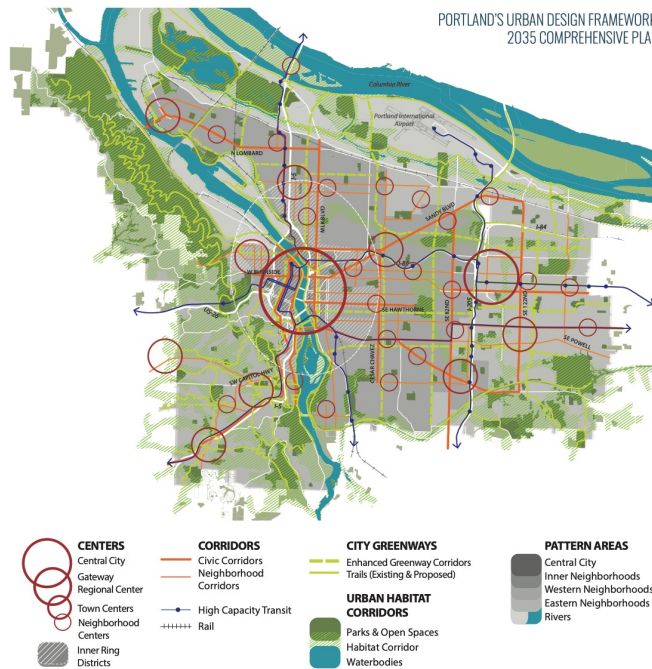
Source: Design Overlay Zone Amendments, Proposed Draft – September 2019, <https://beta.portland.gov/bps/doza/doza-documents-and-resources>

Checklist to streamline design review: Portland

| COMMUNITY DESIGN GUIDELINES (1998) | DATE | PROJECT NAME | PROJECT NUMBER |
|--|--------|--------------|----------------|
| P PORTLAND PERSONALITY | STRONG | FAIR | WEAK |
| P1 Enhance sense of place & identity by incorporating features that respond to area's desired characteristics and traditions | | | |
| P2 Enhance identity of historic and conservation districts, using features that reinforce area's significance | | | |
| P3 Develop/strengthen transitional role of gateways adopted in community plan | | | |
| E PEDESTRIAN EMPHASIS | STRONG | FAIR | WEAK |
| E1 Create a safe and connected sidewalk network for pedestrians | | | |
| E2 Provide comfortable places along circulation routes to stop, meet and rest | | | |
| E3 Create a sense of enclosure through design features, gathering places and differentiated facades | | | |
| E4 Create active intersections through careful scale and location of building entrances | | | |
| E5 Design to protect pedestrians from sun, shadow, glare, reflection, wind and rain | | | |
| D PROJECT DESIGN | STRONG | FAIR | WEAK |
| D1 Create outdoor areas when possible. Design these areas to be accessible and connected to pedestrian circulation | | | |
| D2 Make main entrances to buildings prominent and transit-oriented | | | |
| D3 Enhance building design through placement of landscape features | | | |
| D4 Integrate parking to minimize negative impacts for pedestrians | | | |
| D5 Reduce crime through placement of windows and active ground level use | | | |
| D6 Respect building character when making exterior modifications | | | |
| D7 Incorporate elements of nearby quality buildings such as building details | | | |
| D8 All parts of a building should be interesting and long lasting, forming a cohesive composition | | | |

Source: Design Overlay Zone Assessment, Final Report

Urban design framework guiding citywide design review establish pattern area characteristics and aspirations for centers, corridors, and transit stations: Portland



Draft

Source: Design Overlay Zone Amendments, Proposed

State of the Practice for Public Projects and Structures: Seattle

The Seattle Design Commission (SDC) provides direction on all city-funded capital improvement projects that are located on city land, in the right-of-way, or constructed with city funds. Capital facilities include projects such as parks, community centers, libraries, and fire stations. They also review projects that require permanent or long-term vacation of a street or alley such as skybridges. They also support Light Rail Review Panel and advise the Department of Transportation on permits requesting long-term use of a ROW and review major transportation projects. The SDC has broad authority to review capital improvement projects and coordinate across relevant city agencies. Their purview and tools differ from the citywide process described above overseen by the Design Review Boards. There are ten (10) commissioners who have expertise in the following fields:

- Two (2) licensed architects
- Landscape Architecture
- Planning
- Engineering
- Urban design
- Fine art
- One (1) member at large
- One (1) "Get Engaged" candidate who represents next generation of leaders/advocate for youth voices

The SDC meets twice a month and is supported by four staff members. All meetings are public and allow for comment.

Review Tools

The SDC refers to an internal handbook for guidance on reviewing projects as well as the following broadly defined values:

- Inspired design that unifies the public realm and inspires the community by embodying state of the art practices
- Contextual integration of design that responds to context and enhances the neighborhood
- Innovative sustainability that minimizes environmental impact and emphasizes self-sufficiency
- Social inclusion in design that elevates quality of life for all and responds to cultural context
- Exemplary partnerships that integrate design across multiple disciplines and agencies
- Effective investments that provide high value over total life-cycle of project

There is not a specific set of guidelines the SDC uses. Rather they refer to existing policies. For example, they refer to the city's Sustainable Buildings Policy, equity in the design of public spaces or public facilities policy, street vacation policies, and public benefit policies, among others. A planning handbook is provided to applicants to detail all steps of the review process and requirements for presentations to the SDC. Applicants must submit extensive documentation including design issues, geotechnical conditions, site layout, stormwater collection, and cost estimates. Also submitted are analyses of neighborhood context, an urban design analysis of key project features, intended character, and experiential qualities of the design.

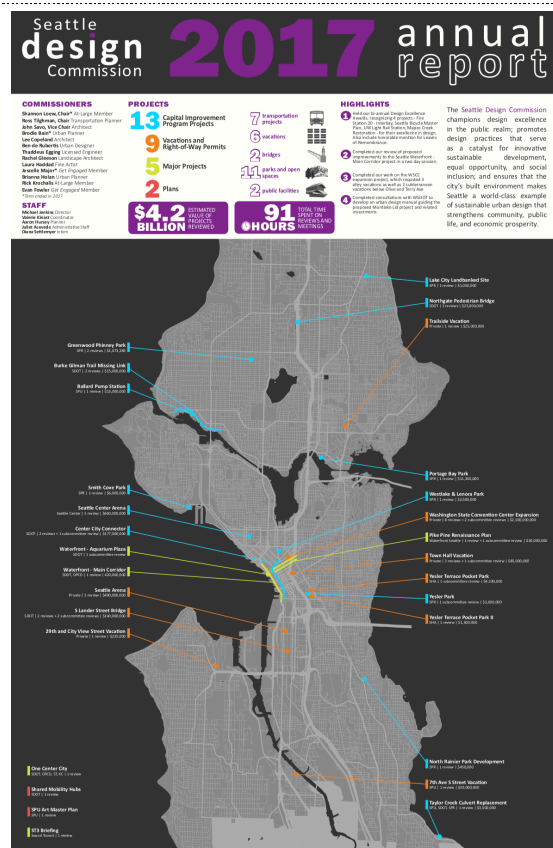
A feedback loop is in place to assess the design review process for public projects; annual reviews keep track of the number and types of projects reviewed; successes are noted along with the amount of time spent in review and total amount in dollars of projects reviewed. The system of review allows for meaningful input about design while seeking to reduce cost impacts on projects; this translates into increased value for public investments and improved results.

Review Process

Projects are reviewed at concept design (30% of final design), schematic design (60% of final design), and design development (90% of final design). If the project is complex in size or mission or assumes a street or alley vacation, a pre-design (15% of final design) review may be held. Leading up to each of these benchmarks, there is extensive internal review by a dedicated project team representing different agencies. The SDC votes to approve a project at each phase. If the Commission does not approve a project progressing to the next phase, multiple reviews may occur.

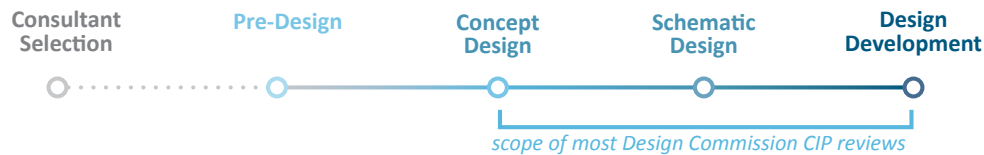
The SDC does not approve a permit but advises the Mayor, City Council, and Planning Commission on design excellence for publicly funded projects. In reviewing public right-of-way proposals (such as skybridges), the intent of the review is to provide clear recommendations to the City Council about what kind of public benefits should be provided to offset the loss of a street or alley.

Annual review promoting accountability and excellence in public projects: Seattle



Source: Seattle Design Commission Annual Report,

<https://www.arcgis.com/apps/MapSeries/index.html?appid=4b00fbd91e624c6abf645a3549123269>

Review that mirrors design process (30%, 60%, 90%)

Source: Design Commission Review Handbook,

<https://www.seattle.gov/Documents/Departments/OPCD/DesignCommission/ProjectHandbook/SeattleDesignCommissionHandbook.pdf>

State of the Practice for Planned Unit Developments: Portland

In Portland Planned Unit Developments (PUDs) are referred to as Planned Developments. They are a policy tool intended to allow for creative development while assuring that the project complements existing neighborhood character. They provide a master planning tool to allow additional housing types and uses that may not be allowed in base zones. The mechanism also facilitates configuring a site to visually integrate natural and built features.

Portland's Planned Development provides a two-part, tiered system with each tier permitting greater density, clustering, land use mix, or larger buildings in exchange for more in-depth review. When in a single dwelling zone, reviews tend to be Type III with a public hearing. When the application is in a commercial or mixed use zone, reviews tend to be administrative with a neighborhood contact. Options include:

Alternative development options in single dwelling zones – Permits additional housing types on a single dwelling-zoned site, including middle housing types (e.g., duplexes and attached dwellings), and multi-dwelling buildings. Certain base zone development standards are allowed to be modified. Lots are permitted to be smaller, and density is permitted to be transferred between sites. Total density cannot be exceeded but can be re-distributed. Even some land uses that are not permitted in single dwelling zones, such as commercial uses (e.g., a small grocery store) are permitted through this provision. Alternative development options in single dwelling zones are processed through a Type III Review.

Planned Development Bonus for commercial and mixed use zones – Applicants with larger sites in commercial or mixed use-zoned outside of the Central City and designated plan districts may propose additional Floor Area Ratio (FAR) and height in exchange for the provision of affordable housing, public open space, low carbon buildings and a public review process. Planned Development Bonus for commercial and mixed use zones are processed through a Type III Review, with some additional steps required, such as neighborhood contact.

When a Planned Development is applied for in conjunction with a Land Division Review—in areas of low-mid-density single dwelling—then the review is Type III with neighborhood contact. All other Planned Developments applied for in conjunction with a Land Division Review are subject to a Type IIx procedure, which is an administrative process, with the opportunity to appeal the planning bureau director's decision to another review body.

Approval criteria

If the Planned Development is not proposing additional height or FAR, then the following criteria apply:

- Urban design and development framework:

- The proposed overall scheme and site plan provide a framework for development that meets applicable Community Design Guidelines and will result in development that complements the surrounding area.
- Scale and massing of the development addresses the context of the area, including historic resources, and provides appropriate scale and massing transitions to the adjacent uses and development specifically at the edges of the Master Plan area.
- Proposed plazas, parks, or open areas are well located to serve the site and public, and are designed to address safety and comfort of users.
- The site plan promotes active ground floor uses on key streets to serve the development and surrounding neighborhood.
- Transportation system – The transportation and circulation system provides multimodal connections that support the development of the site, and limit impacts to adjacent neighborhoods.
- Stormwater Management – The Planned Development meets the requirements of the Stormwater Management

Planned Developments that are proposing departures from site-related development standards must prove that the proposal better meets approval criteria.

For Planned Developments in commercial and mixed use zones, proposed commercial uses must meet other requirements, such as proving a lack of other nearby commercial uses, and that commercial uses will be local-serving.

State of the Practice in Planned Unit Developments: Boise

In Boise Planned Unit Developments (PUDs) are reviewed and permitted by the Planning and Zoning Commission. A pre-application conference is required for all subdivisions over 40 lots, conditional use permits, annexations, variances, special exceptions, rezones, or land use map amendments. This step may be waived by the Director if the project is not complex and has little potential to substantially impact neighboring properties. A neighborhood meeting is required, and notice is sent to all property owners within 300 feet and neighborhood associations. The meeting can also be waived by the Director. A public hearing is held either by the Planning and Zoning Commission or a Hearings Examiner. Approval can be granted by the Planning and Zoning Commission, the Planning Director, or a Hearing Examiner. It is not the intent of design review for PUDs to restrict or specify design; exterior detail or design, color, or materials are not reviewed except to the extent to which they may affect the general appearance and compatibility of a development. All multi-family buildings must be designed to comply with Citywide Design Standards and Guidelines. Otherwise the Commission conditions approval on conformity to approved plans and specifications including the Comprehensive Plan, Building Code and Public Works standards.

State of the Practice for Skywalks over Public Rights-of-Way: Seattle

Applicants wanting to construct a skybridge must petition City Council for authorization under a term permit. Together the City Council and the Director of Transportation review submittals. Prior to submittal there is a Design Guidance meeting with the Skybridge Review Committee (SRC) made up of staff from SDOT, SDCl, and the Design Commission.

At this meeting the SRC will review the proposal, identify issues, offer alternatives, and offer a threshold assessment of the feasibility of the skybridge. Applicants must submit conceptual drawings, cost estimates, alternatives, statement of reasons for necessity of skybridge, whether it is for general public or limited private use, and conceptual public benefit mitigation elements. The Director of Transportation is responsible for circulating the application to all interested city departments and public and private utilities affected for their review, comment, and recommendation. Applicants must also present to the Seattle Design Commission (the same Commission that reviews all public projects), and they will provide a recommendation to the SDOT Director.

The City Council then reviews all recommendations and makes a determination. No skybridges are permitted over streets designated as Downtown View Corridors. A new skybridge will not be approved unless it is found that it is in

the public interest and no reasonable alternative exists. Following conceptual approval of preliminary application, construction plans are submitted to the Director of Transportation and Director of Department of Construction for final review and recommendation to City Council. Skybridge term permits are approved generally for a ten-year term and will be renewed twice. Once the permit expires, the owner must renew their permit for review by SDOT and approval by City Council.

State of the Practice for Skywalks over Public Rights-of-Way: Portland

Portland has design review for skybridges via a Major Encroachment Review process. Pedestrian walkways above ground are allowed on a limited basis through a lease. Skybridges in Portland have historically been strongly discouraged, however with more multi-level senior living projects occupying multiple adjacent blocks, some projects have been recently approved.

. The Portland Bureau of Transportation details the policy guiding design criteria and practices that promote an environment conducive to walking. Broad pedestrian design principles are articulated along with specific conditions which above grade, at-grade, and below grade projects must meet.

Applicants submit documentation of their proposal. Staff then makes a recommendation to the Design Commission (the same commission that reviews downtown and citywide design proposals). Their review is intended to ensure the public use of the right-of-way is protected and that the characteristics of four designated districts (including the downtown) are preserved.

Skybridges must be in conformance with downtown design guidelines for promoting the “Portland Character.” The applicant must demonstrate a public benefit which cannot be achieved without the encroachment. The stated desire is for features that enhance Portland as a livable city and extend the city’s attractive identity. Staff performs a review then makes a recommendation to the Design commission. There is a presentation to the Design Commission and then a recommendation is made to the City Engineer on issues of design, aesthetics, views, and interpretation of city policies. Review is based on policies articulated in the citywide policy on Encroachments in the Public Right-of-Way as well as the goals and guidelines of the Downtown Plans and Downtown Design Guidelines. Skybridges are prohibited over streets designated as primary view corridors, discouraged in secondary view corridors, and discouraged where they block views to visual focal points. The City Engineer then makes a recommendation to City Council for final approval.

Design Review Board - Meeting Minutes Draft

October 14, 2020

Online via WebEx

Meeting called to order at 5:30 PM by Mark Brower

Attendance:

- *Board Members Present:* Anne Hanenburg, Chuck Horgan (Arts Commission Liaison), Drew Kleman, Mark Brower (Vice-Chair), Chad Schmidt, Ted Teske, Grant Keller
- *Board Members Not Present:* Kathy Lang (Chair & CA Liaison)
- *Quorum Present:* Yes
- *Staff Members Present:* Dean Gunderson, Taylor Berberich

Mark Brower moved for the suspension of certain meeting rules due to the COVID-19 teleconference; Anne Hanenburg seconded. Motion Carried. (7-0)

Changes to Agenda:

- None

Workshops:

** Anne Hanenburg recused herself from the recommendation meeting, as she works for a company involved in the project.

- **Albi Stadium - Recommendation Meeting**
- Staff Report: Taylor Berberich
- Applicant Presentation: Greg Forsyth (Spokane Public Schools), Ken Murphy (ALSC Architects)
- Mark Brower closed public comment
- Questions asked and answered
- Discussion ensued

Based on review of the materials submitted by the applicant and discussion during the October 14, 2020 Recommendation Meeting the Design Review Board recommends the approval of the project subject to the following conditions:

- 1. The Applicant is encouraged to further refine the project's architectural detailing and material selection with particular attention to the brick and masonry masses. The Applicant is encouraged to consider masonry selections as represented in the Applicant's precedent images and 3D renderings that add subtle visual texture and enhance the pedestrian experience.**

Please see the following Comprehensive Plan Goals and Policies: LU 1.12 Public Facilities and Services, LU 5.1 Built and Natural Environment, LU 6.9 Facility Compatibility with Neighborhood, DP 1.2 New Development in Established Neighborhoods, DP 2.3 Design Standards for Public Projects and Structures, and DP 2.6 Building and Site Design.

- 2. Upon the construction of the east play fields, the Applicant shall develop a permanent connection for the shared use path on the east side of the stadium to preserve the bike friendly route between Wellesley Avenue and the Dwight Merkel Sports Complex. In the interim the Applicant shall continue to work with the City to ensure a temporary connection through the north parking lot to the existing shared use path on the Dwight Merkel Sports Complex.**

Please see the following Comprehensive Plan Goals and Policies: LU 4.1 Land Use and Transportation, LU 4.4 Connections, TR GOAL A: PROMOTE A SENSE OF PLACE, TR GOAL B: PROVIDE TRANSPORTATION CHOICES, TR GOAL C: ACCOMMODATE ACCESS TO DAILY NEEDS AND PRIORITY DESTINATIONS, TR GOAL F: ENHANCE PUBLIC HEALTH &

SAFETY, TR 1 Transportation Network For All Users, TR 2 Transportation Supporting Land Use, TR 5 Active Transportation, TR 14 Traffic Calming, TR 20 Bicycle/Pedestrian Coordination, DP 1.2 New Development in Established Neighborhoods, DP 2.3 Design Standards for Public Projects and Structures, DP 2.6 Building and Site Design, N 2.1 Neighborhood Quality of Life, N 4.5 Multimodal Transportation, N 4.6 Pedestrian and Bicycle Connections, N 5.3 Linkages, BMP 1 Bicycle Mode Share, BMP 2 Bikeways Completion, and BMP 3 Convenient Bike Storage.

Chuck Horgan moved to approve the recommendations as drafted; Ted Teske seconded. Motion carried unanimously. (6-0, with Anne Hanenburg recused)

Board Business:

**** Anne Hanenburg rejoined the group at 6:51 pm.**

Approval of Minutes:

- Minutes from the September 23, 2020 meeting approved unanimously.

Old Business:

- None

New Business:

- None

Chair Report:

- None

Secretary Report - Dean Gunderson

- There are two applicants vying for the November 11th DRB meeting:
 - The first is a collaborative workshop for the old Umpqua Bank site. DRB already had a collaborative workshop on this project last November, but that was with another developer. It is mixed use on the ground floor with residential apartments above. It is a completely new project, but it is the same architectural program.
 - The second is the NE Middle School recommendation meeting. It's the project at the corner of Perry/North Foothills.
- There is not currently an applicant for the October 28th meeting. A workshop for board members to go over the new design guidelines would be an option for that date. We only have a contract with the consultant through the first part of December. Dean will send board members copies of the documents to review prior to the workshop October 28th.
- Staff are working on a few administrative reviews.

Meeting Adjourned at 7:19 PM

The next Design Review Board Meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, October 28, 2020.