

Design guidelines protect and enhance the downtown investment environment.

What are design guidelines?

Guidelines direct development to complement the essential qualities of the community by:

- Ensuring a degree of order and harmony
- Providing a consistent review process for proposed development

Are design guidelines necessary?

Guidelines are a required component of a revitalization strategy.

What subjects do design guidelines cover?

Guidelines often include information on:

- Community character—unique historical features or other special attributes that must be respected
- Pedestrian emphasis—techniques to create pedestrian friendly streets and spaces
- Architecture—characteristics of high-quality, compatible development
- Lighting—concepts for illuminating buildings and streets to improve business opportunities and security
- Signs—functional and tasteful ways to identify services or tenants



How is a guideline described?

Individual guidelines are described using illustrations and text. They should be organized to clearly address:

- Intent—what should be accomplished
- Recommendations—how to achieve the intent
- Appropriate design—photographs of appropriate and inappropriate development

How are design guidelines developed?

Once a revitalization plan is completed, a citizens' committee should be appointed to oversee guideline preparation. The committee is usually assisted by urban design and planning specialists. The completed guidelines must be adopted and supported by city government and the public alike.

How are design guidelines administered?

Decisions concerning major projects require the collective wisdom of an appointed Design Commission. The typical commission includes five to seven members representing the general public, business owners, and the design profession. Projects submitted by architects and developers are reviewed in terms of their response to the guidelines. Projects may be approved, approved with conditions, or not approved. Applicants who do not receive approval may bring the project back to the commission for a second review or appeal the commission's decision to City Council.

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